

## FLOWER GROWING IN THE NETHERLANDS

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For many of us, flowers are an unrelated attribute of celebrations and holidays. However, this is not only beauty, but also business. Worldwide the Netherlands are famous for its beautiful flower fields giving a unique color pattern to the Dutch landscape. Trading and exporting flowers worldwide is one of the most important sectors in the Dutch economy. To this day, the trade in flowers and bulbs is very important for the Netherlands. The Dutch flower auction is the largest in the world. Annually, around 5 billion euros worth of flowers are exported abroad via this auction. Throughout large parts of the world, flowers are associated with the Netherlands. If you buy flowers, the indication that they come from the Netherlands functions as a quality stamp [2].

At the start of the whole growing process the companies buy lots of lilies bulbs, they are being contained in the fridge, then getting prepared for the planting. Then the bulbs are planted into the boxes, after that with the help of machines they are putted in the greenhouses. The whole growing process, people and automatic machines are taking care of the flowers (watering, giving the right amount of the sunlight, pesticides control). In the well-equipped greenhouses, flowers can be grown the whole year round.

When the lilies are in bloom, flowers are cut off, then delivered to the room where bouquets are made. Lilies are getting wired and putted in the special boxes. After that they are being delivered to the place where they are directed. Large amount of the flowers is getting exported with the help of flower auctions in the Netherlands [1].

The Aalsmeer flower auction in North Holland near Amsterdam Schiphol Airport is the biggest floral market in the world. Daily, around 20 million flowers are traded here. Visitors are welcome but must arrive early and observe the action only from walkways which are several meters above the flowers and the busy warehouse floor. Endless numbers of small trains full of carts loaded with containers of flowers and plants are moved by electric-powered trucks or automated rails. It looks all chaotic with a highway system (and clearly a highway code to go with it) allowing the various wagons to be moved to where the schedules demand. Flowers arrive from around 10 pm and are cooled and sorted during the night. The auctions are run early in the morning, bought flowers are distributed immediately. By late afternoon, all the flowers are moved out and the warehouse is getting prepared for the next round [3].

Talking about the technical part, every agricultural company in the Netherlands is equipped with a quite good amount of machinery and automatic lines. In most companies there are automatic lines of watering, light supplying and planting. Also there are a lot of conveyors, transporters and machines. Modern tractors and cleaning machines are very popular in this field.

In Ukraine the choice of predominantly imported flowers has declined over the past couple of years. Five years ago, the share of native flower producers was approximately 30%, the rest was import. Today its share in the total sales structure is at least 50%. The way of growing in Ukraine is not really much different from the Netherlands, but in the Netherlands the equipment and the whole experience is better.

### References

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