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Transportation Corner
By Chris Johnson

***This week's
Transportation News!***

- Memorial Day is almost here and I will be emailing the latest trucking schedules and other Holiday information out this week. Also I will include our Airline Contact Reference sheet as well. It lists all the updated contact information for all our Airline carriers. Look for this and other information in the next few days.

- In FedEx news, I wanted to remind members of two important phone numbers to keep handy. One is Revenue Services (800) 622-1147. This department at FedEx can help with all kinds of billing and rate inquires. If you have a question with your invoice, this is the number to call. The other is Technical Support at 1-877-339-2774. This department can help with most technical issues and can even download your rates into your system. And as always, members are welcome to contact me anytime for information or assistance at 760-533-5580.

NORCAL

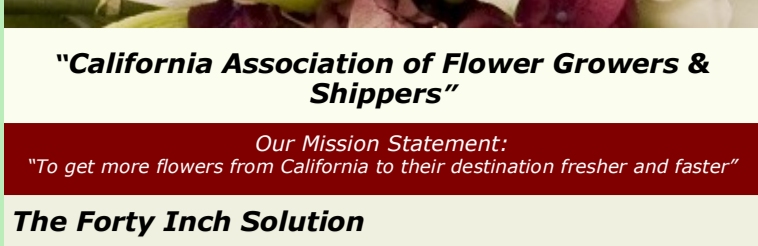
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"We are on a mission to get more flowers from California to their destination fresher and faster".

NORCAL NEWS



"California Association of Flower Growers & Shippers"

*Our Mission Statement:
"To get more flowers from California to their destination fresher and faster"*

The Forty Inch Solution

By Mike Crosby– The Sun Valley Group

Many years ago, Claude Garrison, a veteran manufacturer's rep of floral Styrofoam was fond of telling his customers the story of how one enterprising flower packer managed to get a sheet of Styrofoam into a box of flowers after word was passed to him from the salesperson of an irate florist who demanded against the protests of the salesperson that it would not fit, "I don't care how you get it in the box just get it in there." In those days, many flowers were shipped on the bus with tight schedules and then as now orders came in very late. This hasty command was passed from the customer to the salesperson to the packer. With the delivery truck idling waiting for the box to make the mad dash to the bus station, the solution to the demand was accomplished.

Several hours later the bus arrived at its destination and now the florist was angrier still. He called in to report that the flower packer had solved the problem by slicing the 36"x12"x2" piece of Styrofoam into shavings which fell around the flowers. The flower packer's solution managed to get the sheet in the box but not in the condition anticipated by the customer.

The Forty Inch Solution

Unlike the story just related, the condition of flowers packed in 40 inch boxes have arrived in the condition anticipated by our customers for several years now. Unlike the demands of the angry florist, your request for your flower packers to incorporate the recommended 40 inch flower boxes into your operations will result in your flowers arriving in the same condition as the 44 inch boxes you have been using.

One of the original questions was whether or not this is good for the flowers and do they arrive in the same condition? The proof is that for several years now, growers have been using these boxes successfully. If they weren't, they would have gone out of use long ago.

Test packing has shown that the 40 inch boxes replacing the 44 inch boxes in use for many years are at least as efficient, if not more so, in the number of bunches or stems which can be packed in the 44 inch boxes. You might ask how this is possible. In terms of cubes the 40x16x08 box is 2.96 cubes and the traditional 44x20x06 box is 3.04 cubes. Cube wise the boxes are almost identical. The key is the 8 inch depth of the box. This just allows for more efficient placement of flowers over the 6 inch depth of the traditional box. For example, Asiatic Lilies will pack 12 bunches per 40 inch box and 10-12 bunches per 44 inch box.

More and more growers are finding that the use of the 40x16x08 pallet friendly box replacing the 44x20x06 box and the 40x08x08 pallet friendly quarter box replacing the 44x10x08 box are just as successful in shipping flowers in great condition. The added advantage is the efficiency in which they palletize.

Some may say, "We know that flower boxes are not usually put on pallets, they are put on decked trucks." This is true, however, the trucking companies support the standard because the more this size is adopted, the easier it is to load departing trailers, reducing time needed to depart.

Some may say that my flowers are too big to fit in the 40" box. This is why the industry supports the 48 inch standard which is the other dimension of the pallet. The dimensions of the pallet create the dimensions of the standard.

The fact is that you can adopt the use of these boxes and not anticipate the call from angry customers that your flowers had to be altered from their beautiful condition to "get them in the box". Call your box supplier today to test pack your flowers or call fellow growers or transportation companies to get their take on the 40 inch solution .

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

*NORCAL (California Association of flower Growers & Shippers) invites you to attend your Member Meeting which will be held on **August 10, 2010** in beautiful Carlsbad, CA. The Member Meeting is an excellent opportunity to meet other growers and shippers in California and to learn about what is happening within the industry. It is also an opportunity to become proactive in making positive changes to help California floral businesses.*

The more members that attend, the stronger the meeting will be! Remember, your "membership makes a difference!"

Look for more information coming soon!