

## Darwin Colombia Qualifies For MPS-A

The facility succeeds with steps towards integrated pest management and other implemented efforts in the area of sustainability.



During Cultivate'18 in Columbus, Ohio, MPS honored the achievements of Darwin Colombia SAS in the area of sustainability by officially presenting the recognition for obtaining the MPS-A qualification in July 2018.

Darwin Colombia began perennial unrooted cutting production in 2002. In August 2014, Ball Horticultural Company acquired the company and since then has significantly increased production and sales. Besides their own greenhouses, the farm also has a Tissue Culture Lab on site that supplies certified stock material to the farm and to the local flower industry.

After customers in North America and Europe increasingly asked about the [MPS-ABC certification](#), Darwin Colombia started the process of obtaining the MPS-ABC Sustainability Certification in early 2017. As part of Ball Horticultural Company, which has sustainability as a primary driver within the organization, it was also a natural step forward.

"Knowing that you are sustainable but also having independent proof through the MPS-ABC qualification is one of the key elements of our certification," explains **Arthij van der Veer**, MPS General Coordinator for North & Central America. From the side of MPS, Arthij has been responsible for the contact with the production locations of Ball Horticultural Company in Guatemala, Costa Rica, Nicaragua and Chile. "All of these locations are currently MPS-A or MPS-A+ certified and this shows the dedication of the local teams to sustainable production."

**Cristina Brusco**, General Manager of Darwin Colombia, explains that the certification process was challenging. "It made us think deeper about looking for safer active ingredients in our production to comply with MPS-ABC. As we researched alternatives, it also offered the opportunity to work more with Biological Control."

Besides this step towards Integrated Pest Management, other efforts have been implemented in the area of

sustainability. Darwin Colombia is currently using 90% of its water from rain collection, and as a substrate they use coco fiber, which allows them to irrigate less frequently and therefore is more efficient in fertilizer and water usage.

#### *About MPS*

*MPS develops and manages sustainability certificates for the international flowers -and ornamentals industry and conducts certification through its sister organization MPS-ECAS. The MPS-ABC certificate is recognized around the world as the international standard. While based in the Netherlands, MPS is active in 46 countries. In total, more than 3,000 growers participate in MPS-ABC around the world (4,300 production locations). In North America 76 growers are currently participating in MPS-ABC. For more information on MPS please visit [www.my-mps.com](http://www.my-mps.com)*