

## Floral GTIN Initiative Moves Forward Quickly

Implementation Resources Now Online at [www.floralgtin.com](http://www.floralgtin.com)

ALEXANDRIA, VA — June 10, 2009 — Momentum is building toward a change that will make the floral delivery system dramatically more efficient, accurate and less labor intensive than ever before. Driving that change will be the implementation of two data standards, the Global Trade Item Number (GTIN) at the box level and the Universal Product Code (U.P.C.) for bunches and bouquets.

Used for some time in other industries, the GTIN (pronounced “gee-tin”) and U.P.C. are part of an internationally recognized data standard behind bar-coding systems that allow supply chain partners to eliminate redundancies, reduce manual labor and minimize the chance for human error in the distribution process.

To help trading partners move ahead with implementation, the Floral GTIN Initiative has created a website — [www.floralgtin.com](http://www.floralgtin.com) — as an online resource for growers, importers, distributors and their trading partners. On it are step-by-step implementation instructions, the full GTIN Implementation Guide, and a time line designed to have the system operating by the middle of next year.

“Our goal is to have all suppliers assign box and individual item numbers to their products by September 30, 2009. The Web site has all the information they need,” says Christine Boldt, executive vice president of the Association of Floral Importers of Florida (AFIF) in Miami. The GTIN time line calls for suppliers to inform buyers of the new codes by March of next year, and to have bar-coded boxes, bunches and bouquets begin moving through the system by June.

The Floral GTIN Initiative is a coalition of six industry trade organizations that have been working for more than two years to define, test and refine the coding strategy. Coalition participants include the Produce Marketing Association (PMA), Wholesale Florist and Florist Supplier Association (WFFSA), Association of Floral Importers of Florida (AFIF), California Association of Flower Growers and Shippers (CAFGS), California Cut Flower Commission (CCFC), and the Society of American Florists (SAF). Also involved is GS1 US, the organization which oversees the international supply chain standard in the United States.

“What all this is leading to, of course,” is the introduction of more automation into the floral distribution system, so that we can get fresh product to market faster,” says Gary Fleming, vice president, industry technology and standards for the PMA in Newark, Del. But that’s down the road a bit: “First we have to get the data standards in place throughout the industry.”

Industry members with questions about the GTIN Initiative should visit [www.floralgtin.com](http://www.floralgtin.com) or contact their respective organizations.

