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Floral Marketing

News and Views of the Supermarket Floral Industry

Resendiz Bros. creating increased interest for protea blooms

By JOHN S. NIBLOCK

How do you move exotics into the floral mainstream? To paraphrase the immortal words of Tom Cruise, you show them the flowers. At Resendiz Bros. Protea Growers near Fallbrook, CA, Ismael Resendiz, the owner, and Diana Roy, the sales and marketing manager, take every opportunity to showcase their products.

"We try to donate flowers to as many conferences and shows as we can," Ms. Roy said in an interview. "Our flowers are seen at events held by groups like the American Institute of Floral Designers, the California Floral Convention put on by NORCAL, the Wholesale Florist & Florist Supplier Association, the Society of American Florists and the California Cut Flower Commission. Until recently, you didn't see a lot of our flowers at these shows, so they were often

forgotten."

Resendiz Bros. also supplies flowers to designers for their shows or educational symposiums. "We have had the pleasure to work with René van Rems on several of his events, and supplied flowers for his book, *René's Bouquets*," Ms. Roy said. "René is a huge fan of protea."

The firm also provided flowers to Els Teunissen, president of Floral Productions, for use in Accentdecor catalogs and floral symposiums. Its proteas can be seen throughout the pages of *Wedding-Winning Bouquet Combinations*, and have been featured in several trade publications and newspapers.

For day-to-day reminders, there is nothing like the Resendiz Bros. calendar, which carries full-color photos of its products each month, with a special display introducing each season (the March page welcomes spring with photos of the

Proteaceae family).

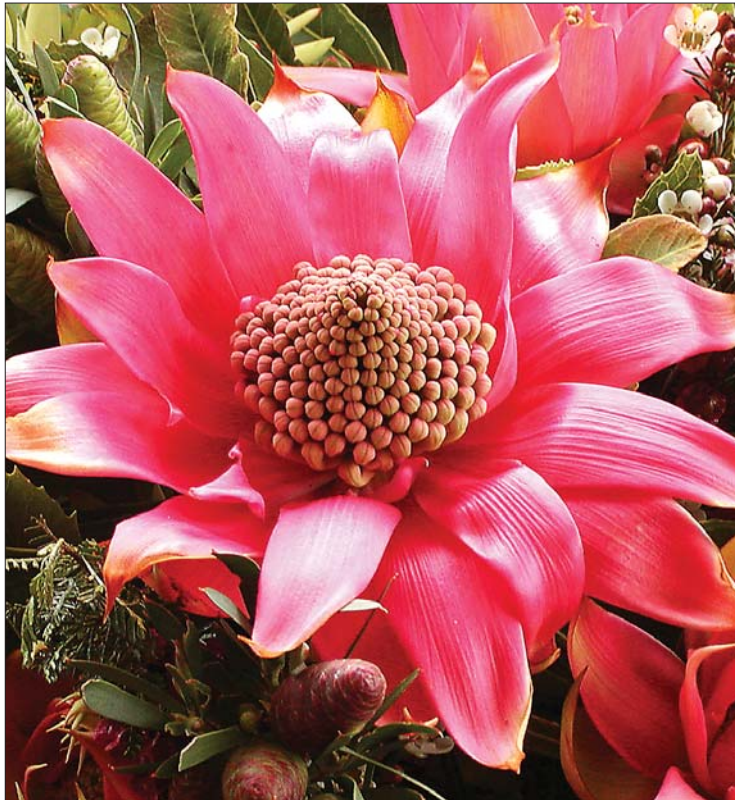
"I have customers who start asking in December when they'll get their new calendar," Ms. Roy said. "Others look though it and call to ask when they can start buying certain flowers. It is also useful when I add a new item to my weekly product list. If someone asks what that new item is I can ask them to pull out their calendar and turn to a particular month."

The Resendiz Bros. newsletters create interest as well. "I can tell right away who looked closely at them," explained Ms. Roy, who was a journalism major in college, "because they start requesting the featured flowers. It's fun to put out the calendar and newsletters. These are some of my favorite tasks around here. They get me involved in the flowers and that is where I get my inspiration."

Resendiz Bros. sells directly to the New Seasons chain in

Oregon and supplies protea to bouquet-makers who sell to supermarkets and mass-market stores across the nation. It specializes in more than 200 South African and Australian flowers and plants ranging from wax flowers to kangaroo paws. The flower farm is one of only 50 in the United States that grows these exotics. All are located in Southern California, north of San Diego, where the climate is just right for them.

Mr. Resendiz has been in the protea business here for about 30 years, but was puzzled by proteas when he first saw them. "I couldn't imagine them being used in flower arrangements," Mr. Resendiz said. "But now that protea have become so popular and we have seen them mixed and match with all types of flowers and foliage, I can't imagine the flower industry without these beautiful flowers."



'Pink Parfait' (Telopea, also called Waratah), a dramatic flower, has a different texture, color and shape than its better-known relatives. It is slow-growing, often very difficult to grow. It is a popular offering from Resendiz Bros. Protea Growers.



These South African natives, Leucadendron (Pom Pom and Red Eye) and Leucospermum (Flame Giant and Tango), display striking shades of crimson and ivory. They are only a few of more than 200 exotic flowers grown by Resendiz Bros. Protea Growers near Fallbrook, CA.