

## McGregor Plant Sales and Florexpo Grow Organic

*McGregor Plant Sales now offers USDA Certified Organic Herbs from Florexpo*

**CARLSBAD, CA** –McGregor Plant Sales and Florexpo offer USDA Certified Organic Herbs for U.S. and Canadian markets.

McGregor's goal is to offer U.S. and Canadian growers a faster opportunity to take advantage of the emerging organic market. With offshore certified organic unrooted cuttings, growers will no longer have to hold their own mother stock in organically certified houses for 12 months before being able to ship.

"We owe a lot to Tim Wada and the Plug Connection for helping us get started," stated Doug McQueen, VP McGregor Plant Sales. "Plug Connection has been committed to organic production for years and they were looking for a partner to help them with their vegetative liner production." After touring Florexpo in October of 2006, Tim Wada connected Florexpo with the CCOF to develop the protocols which would be approved in an audit. The California CCOF auditor became the consultant in Costa Rica. She wrote the production and traceability manual and performed the mock audit. After preparing this way Costa Rican CCOF auditor was invited to the Florexpo facility and granted certification in September of 2007.

For several months Florexpo has been shipping certified Organic unrooted cuttings to the Plug Connection. Also, Florexpo quietly introduced the program to a handful of key growers across the U.S. and Canadian markets.

"The reception has been encouraging. Growers are looking for a way to get into the game without the expense of holding mother stock for a year," reports McQueen. "They also recognize that certified organic is a pedigree that can earn them better margins and loyal customers. We did a quiet and careful release because this is an important program for our industry's future. Our goal was to ensure the logistics and the quality of cuttings met expectations before we began wide scale distribution." After strong success in the early shipments, McGregor Plant Sales is selling most of the availability in the first wave of production. The second wave of availability will come online in June of 2008 as a new block of production crosses its 12 month holding cycle.

Florexpo is a progressive operation and works hard to be ready for new needs in the market. Florexpo's owner, Fernando Altmann, and General Manager, Menachem Ganon, are committed to the success of this organic offering. Furthermore, the timing of the launch is excellent for the Altmann family as Fernando's son, Fernando Jr., returned to the farm as head grower for the organic program. Fernando Jr. is a specialist in organic and sustainable production. He has a degree in horticultural science from the prestigious EARTH University.

Beyond the standards of CCOF, Fernando Jr. has taken the production to a level ahead of expectations. Florexpo's organic production now requires absolutely zero procurement of pest control or fertilization chemicals. Pest control is achieved in fully enclosed greenhouses with beneficial insects, beneficial fungi, organic fumigation and strict adherence to sanitary requirements of staff. Florexpo has made a recent discovery of what they call the Killer Fly; a natural predator of White Fly. Killer Flies consume White Flies and then when White Fly population is down, it

consumes its own population. The Killer Flies are gathered in a very interesting way. Florexpo periodically vacuums plants with 6-inch mouth vacuums. If there is a gathering of White Flies with the mix of Killer Flies, they take the bags to a cooler. The White Flies have a lower tolerance to cool temperatures and will fall first. The remaining population in the bag will be the Killer Flies which are again released back into the greenhouse. These practices and discoveries are important to the future of the organic movement. Florexpo preserves a philosophy of sharing discoveries with its partner customers. Their desire is to strengthen the economics of growers it serves.

McGregor Plant Sales will offer the organic herb program and will help growers find certifying agencies in their states. The important development here is that this program now allows growers to introduce vegetative organic herbs without the burden of holding mother stock for one year in their valuable greenhouse space.

Contact your McGregor Plant Sales representative, call MPS at 760.431.1006 or email Shaunna Junge at [shaunna@mcgregorps.com](mailto:shaunna@mcgregorps.com) for more information about USDA Certified Herb Cuttings.

*McGregor Plant Sales is recognized as a leading horticultural distributor in North America. McGregor Plant Sales supplies professional greenhouse growers and nurseries with the most reliable source of unrooted cuttings and other young plant starts. For further information, call your McGregor Plant Sales representative, or contact McGregor Plant Sales at 1902 Wright Place, Suite 140, Carlsbad, CA U.S.A. 92049. Phone: 760.431.1006, [www.mcgregorplantsales.com](http://www.mcgregorplantsales.com)*