



Holiday Floral Trends

Poinsettias account for one quarter of November and December flower purchases, according to Ipsos study

December 10, 2004, New York, NY – The Ipsos/AFE Consumer Tracking Study, which tracks consumer demand within the floriculture industry, shows consumer preference for traditional holiday floral choices—particularly the red poinsettia.

Last holiday season, poinsettias accounted for one-quarter of all consumer floral purchases during the months of November and December. Most people continue to choose the traditional red, particularly when purchasing poinsettias for gifts. In recent years, demand for mixed and novelty color poinsettias have become more fashionable reducing the popularity of pink and white poinsettias.

Many shoppers pick up poinsettias at the supermarket, but turn to retail florists for more expensive and elaborate offerings that capture one-quarter of consumer spending on poinsettias. Consumers are purchasing their poinsettias earlier, too. Ten years ago, nearly 50% of poinsettia plants were bought during the three-week period between November 21st and December 10th with the remaining plants being bought by early bird customers or last minute shoppers. Comparatively, consumers purchased just over one-third of poinsettia plants during this same three-week span in 1993.

The month of December typically accounts for 6% of annual flower and plant purchases and 8% of consumers' annual expenditures. While consumers made slightly fewer floral purchases in 2003 than in 2002, they tended to spend a little more on each purchase.

“Although total floral buying during the 2003 holiday season was on par with expectations, Americans have cut back on buying flowers and plants specifically for Christmas and/or Chanukah since the mid-1990s,” said Barrie Rappaport, Chief Analyst & Manager of the Ipsos/AFE Consumer Tracking Study. “Interestingly, we’ve noted a modest lift in the percentage of end-of-year buying focusing on Thanksgiving Day, with consumers stepping up buying of both arrangements and poinsettias compared to the past several years.”

“Just like other product categories, floral retailers depend on consumer demand for holiday specific flowers and plants during the holiday season—which used to contribute roughly two-thirds of December’s total volume,” continued Rappaport. “However, over the past several years, consumers have shifted their purchasing to other floral products. Instead of buying specific Christmas, Chanukah, or Kwanza themes, floral customers are fulfilling needs for home decorating and birthdays, as well as trying to stretch out the holiday season by beginning to purchase poinsettias as early as Thanksgiving.”

For more information on the Ipsos/AFE Consumer Tracking Study, please visit: www.ipsos-insight.com/flowers.cfm.

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Methodology

The Ipsos/AFE Consumer Tracking Study has been tracking the floriculture industry and providing consumer purchase information for more than twelve years. Reports are compiled from information gathered from a panel of 12,000 nationally representative households who maintain daily purchase diaries for Ipsos.

For more information on the Ipsos AFE Consumer Tracking Study, please visit:

<http://www.ipsos-insight.com/analytics/behavior/FloralEndowment.cfm>

Ipsos-Insight's Behavioral Tracking Division

Ipsos-Insight's Behavioral Tracking Division is comprised of syndicated and proprietary tracking services that analyze longitudinal consumer purchase behavior, which provide the unique advantage of marrying consumers' behaviors and attitudes and monitoring how each change over time.

In addition to the Ipsos/AFE Consumer Tracking Study of floriculture products, other syndicated longitudinal tracking programs include PharmTrends, DietTrends, and BookTrends. The Behavioral Tracking business also custom designs, operates, and analyzes proprietary tracking programs for clients who require special populations or analytic designs.

For more information, please visit:

<http://www.ipsos-insight.com/analytics/behavior/>

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About the American Floral Endowment

The American Floral Endowment (AFE) is the leading not-for-profit, non-governmental source for floricultural/environmental horticulture research and development funding in the United States. AFE funds research and educational development in floriculture and environmental horticulture designed to produce solutions to industry needs and promote the growth and improvement of the floral industry for the benefit of the grower, wholesale, retail, allied segments and the general public. For additional information, please visit <http://www.endowment.org/>