

Hortipoint ➤ Grower of the Week ➤ Danish grower Malene Juhl Jensen

## Danish grower Malene Juhl Jensen (/grower-of-the-week/5259-danish-grower-malene-juhl-jensen)

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'2016 has been a good year for us'

What kind of company have you got?

"My husband and I breed potted asters, cut asters and trifolium at our 3,000 sq metre nursery. We're one of the smallest horticultural companies in Denmark. We run the company together, spring time is our busiest period and that's when we get some extra

help. We have another 5,000 sq. metres in Vietnam, which we use for the production of our cuttings. It's too expensive to do that in Denmark. We sell our asters under the name 'Mystery Lady'. We don't grow them, but we breed and sell cuttings and young plants. We don't want to compete with our customers. And we don't have the space either, to produce asters."

How's it going?

"2016 has been a good year for us. Trifolium in particular, was very successful. We grow trifolium ourselves, as an end product. Sweden is our biggest market. That's where we ship 85% of the trifolium to. We've managed to breed seven varieties of this clover plant. As far as I know, there's one other breeder in Germany, but he doesn't have the same, vibrant colours that we have. One of the aspects we look at in the breeding process, is the leaf markings."

How do you explain trifolium's success?

"Trifolium is a wild and trendy plant, and currently very popular with Swedish and Danish consumers. It also combines well with other products. It can be used both indoors and outdoors. And it's a hardy plant. When temperatures drop below -10, it will die off, but it comes back up the following year. We also supply trifolium propagation material to growers. We sell it to a Dutch grower, one American, one Japanese and three German growers."

Is your cut aster a relatively new item?

"We were exhibiting it at IFTF for the third time now, and we feel it's quite difficult to get into the market. Our asters have large, double flowers and have great durability. They have a vase life of ten days. We sell propagation material to growers in Germany, Portugal and France. We've noticed that they've been struggling to break into the market. However, our German customer is quite happy and the Portuguese customer has just ordered more propagation material, so things seem to be improving."

How is the potted aster doing?

"We used to need three cuttings in a pot in order to create a nice, dense plant. The past three years we have two varieties that only needed one cutting per pot, and we have a new color coming. That is a great improvement. We distribute potted aster propagation materials to customers in France, Germany and the

Netherlands. The latter two are the bigger markets.”

About: Malene Juhl Jensen

Company: Gartneriet Råhøj

Place: Malling (Denmark) and Vietnam

Acreage: 3,000 m<sup>2</sup> + 5,000 m<sup>2</sup>

Products: potted aster, cut aster and trifolium




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