

For Immediate Release

April 22, 2008 — Happy Earth Day!

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Altman Plants Ushers in Earth Day with Sustainably Grown Plants *Southern California Family Run Nursery Earns VeriFlora® Certification*

Emeryville, CA – Gardeners in southern California can now celebrate Earth Day and the spring planting season by choosing from a wide selection of plants and vegetables grown by Altman Plants that are certified as “sustainably grown” under the VeriFlora program. The VeriFlora® label was issued by Scientific Certification Systems (SCS), an independent standards developer and certifier of environmental, sustainability, and product quality achievement.

To qualify for certification, Altman Plants, a wholesale nursery business, was required to demonstrate conformance with high standards of environmental sustainability, social responsibility and product quality. The certification covers annual and perennial “color”, including landscaping plants, house plants and garden vegetables, as well as cactus and succulents, grown in Altman’s San Diego and Riverside facilities on 650 acres. These plants are available to gardeners at major national retail chain outlets, including big box store garden centers and supermarkets.



Deena Altman, vice president of marketing and co-owner along with her husband, company president Ken Altman, described the company’s commitment to sustainability. “There is a cost to operating sustainably,” she said. “At the same time, it’s good for the world, and is the responsible thing to do. VeriFlora certification is looking at the whole picture — the people who work for us, the way we grow our plants, and how we are helping to protect the environment.”

Ultimately, she believes that sustainability will help the bottom line. “Of course, as consumers become more aware, this will drive business toward sustainable businesses,” she explained. “There are also natural savings from sustainable practices. For instance, by being on the forefront of technology, we can cut some of our long term operational costs.”

One example she mentioned is Altman Plants’ new 3-acre retractable roof greenhouse. This is a versatile building with moveable roof and walls that allows plants to benefit from natural sunlight and airflow, yet protects against rain and cold as needed. “Our plants, especially vegetables, have gotten exactly the growing conditions they need, so the plants are more vibrant and strong.” This quality control system also results in energy savings, part of Altman Plants overall efforts to be energy efficient.

Another step recently taken was the opening of Altman’s Riverside facility in order to cut transportation distance. “This step cut transportation costs, which is good for our business. By bringing our product closer to our customers, we’re reducing fuel usage, as well as wear and tear on the trucks and

driving time, for an estimated savings of about \$200,000 a year,” said Mrs. Altman. “At the same time, shorter delivery times improve product quality, and simultaneously reduce our carbon footprint.”

Other sustainability practices recognized by SCS under the VeriFlora certification were Altman Plants’ water conservation measures, including careful, computer-controlled watering practices to monitor water use and prevent run-off, as well as capturing and recycling 100% of the tailwater on the nursery using a UV filtration system. Altman’s is also proud to include among its product offerings a wide selection of CCOF-certified organic herbs and vegetables, and to offer a variety of drought tolerant plants that encourage water savings in landscaping applications.

Linda Brown, Executive Vice President of SCS, noted, “Altman Plants’ commitment to sustainability gives its customers more to celebrate this Earth Day. What comes around goes around, and gardeners know this best.”

So far this year, SCS has certified more than 270,000,000 potted plants, liners and plugs grown in the US as sustainably grown. Altman Plants is the first southern California company to achieve this distinction. Also among the potted plant and bedding plant growers certified are Seville Farms of Mansfield, Texas, Neal Mast & Son Greenhouses of Grand Rapids, Michigan, and Ball Tagawa Growers of Arroyo Grande, California. In addition to potted plants, more than 750 million stems of cut flowers have been VeriFlora® Certified Sustainably Grown since the program was launched in 2005, and certified handlers include three of the largest floral distributors in North America: Delaware Valley Floral Group, Savoir Fleur, and Sierra Flower Trading, Ltd., as well as on-line retailer OrganicStyle.com (Organic Bouquet).

About Altman Plants — Deena and Ken Altman built their business over thirty years. Their son, Matt Altman, now serves as Chief Operating Officer, and is



responsible for the implementation of Altman’s sustainability vision. Today, Altman Plants supplies plant programs to large retailers with point of purchase materials, sales reps to assist with merchandising, a large distribution system that covers the United States, and offers expertise in growing plants from cactus to herbs, from grasses to perennials, and more.

About Scientific Certification Systems (SCS) — SCS is an independent certifier of environmental, sustainability, food quality and food purity claims. Over two decades, SCS has developed internationally recognized standards and certification programs aimed at spurring the highest level of environmental improvements, social accountability and product performance. Its programs span a wide cross-section of the economy, recognizing accomplishments in agricultural production, food processing and handling, forestry, fisheries, flowers and plants, energy, green building, consumer and business product manufacturing, and retail. Additional information about SCS and VeriFlora can be found at www.scs-certified.com and at www.Veriflora.org.