

COMPASS HORTICULTURE

Andrew Spencer, Compass Horticulture Woodbridge, Suffolk, UK

Compass Horticulture is a newcomer to the seed industry. The same, however, cannot be said of founder Andrew Spencer. Not by a long shot! After 22 years working with seed producers, packagers, and buyers for Thompson & Morgan, he struck out on his own. “I know the business well and have many relationships with seed breeders and producers,” he explained. “It was time to set up my own wholesale operation, focused mainly on flowers.”



Andrew Spencer lives in a converted barn 15 minutes outside of the small town of Woodbridge, UK.

“I studied Agriculture at University, with the idea that I would become a farm manager,” Andrew said. But instead of specializing in animal production as planned he discovered that he was a good fit with Thompson & Morgan, a horticultural mail order company that has been in operation in the UK since 1855. Working first as a seed crop organizer, and then in sales, he enjoyed everything about the business. His position at T&M gave him occasions to travel around Great Britain, and then to Europe, Japan, the United States, Africa, and India. “The seed business has given me a lot of opportunities,” Andrew explained, travel being high on the list.

“It’s all about personal relationships,” Andrew realizes. After working for many years with customers, small breeders, and colleagues he has built up a level of trust, and is confident that he can offer a product that is uniquely tailored to his customers’ needs. In addition to knowing the business end

of horticulture, he has become familiar with many individual breeders who are passionate about the plants they work with. He plans to put together mixes of flowers, such as calendulas and nasturtiums, that may not be available elsewhere. Asked what will set Compass Horticulture apart from the crowd Andrew replied, “a unique product line, personal service, and great images.”



Andrew and rowing partner Jacq Barnard compete regularly in 22km and 50 km races.

Rowing, cycling, travel, photography, and of course gardening top the list of Andrew’s personal pursuits. He is the treasurer of his local rowing club, and regularly races in his 10-meter 2-person boat on the tidal river that runs through the small town of Woodbridge, near his home. You might also find him cycling around the countryside, or working in his 1-acre garden, where he has been attempting a few breeding projects of his own. An avid photographer, he has amassed a sizable collection of flower photos. “I’ll be using them to create a beautiful catalog for Compass Horticulture,” he noted.