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# It's not too early to begin planning for International Women's Day

November 15, 2016

Even though we're all currently preparing for the Christmas holiday season and Valentine's Day, it's also time to begin making plans for International Women's Day. Observed annually worldwide on March 8, Women's Day has become the fastest growing floral-focused holiday in the U.S.

The earliest Women's Day observance was held in 1909 in New York and it is now an official holiday celebrated in more than 24 countries around the globe. It's a day set aside to express respect, appreciation and love and to celebrate women's achievements. Around the world, many people give fresh flowers to their mothers, wives, grandmothers and daughters, as well as to coworkers, teachers and friends, in recognition of Women's Day.



The California Association of Flower Growers & Shippers and the Association of Colombian Flower Exporters are both proud of their partnership over

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the past two years working together to build awareness for Women's Day in the U.S., to promote flower-giving, and also to generate awareness for nonprofit organizations that support some of the most vulnerable women and girls in our society. They are partnering again to continue this valuable initiative in 2017 and their message remains steadfast — "Celebrate the women in your life."

For the past two years their efforts have generated strong, increased awareness, driven primarily by social media, engaging consumers as well as wholesalers and florists in their local markets. CalFlowers and Asocolflores launched the trial project in Arizona in 2015, where 39 florists actively participated in using posters, postcards and social media messaging. Florists' sales grew from 9 percent to 16 percent year-over-year for the holiday week — a healthy increase at a time of year when there are no major floral holidays. Building on that success, in 2016 they expanded the promotion to 137 florists in 26 states.

There was strong market acceptance of Women's Day, as evidenced by increased sales similar to the previous year for those participating florists. The 2016 Women's Day social media campaign reached over 4 million people with almost 9 million impressions.

Beyond recognizing and celebrating the achievements of women, one of the main goals of the Women's Day campaign is to raise social awareness of, and donations for, the national outreach program Where Hope Lives. The floral community donates large amounts of roses each week to the street teams that use them in their heroic outreach efforts as an expression of love when rescuing young women from enslavement. The purpose of Where Hope Lives is to rescue trafficking victims, while offering them love, hope and a way off the streets. Learn more at [www.wherehopelives.org](http://www.wherehopelives.org).

Both CalFlowers and Asocolflores welcome and invite growers, wholesalers and florists to join in the efforts of raising awareness for Women's Day. They are also encouraged to identify organizations in their own communities to benefit from their own Women's Day campaigns. With the additional participation and support, the 2017 Women's Day initiative looks to be the best yet.

For more information on the Women's Day holiday or to how your business can participate, visit [www.womensdayholiday.com](http://www.womensdayholiday.com) or email [info@womensdayholiday.com](mailto:info@womensdayholiday.com).

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