



Foto: Ron Sarendse

Chris Roggeband, Director of Floramedia:

“We believe in the Plantbeeb concept and are happy to offer it to growers.”

Floramedia and Plantbeeb start collaboration

Since the beginning of this year, customers of Floramedia have been able to choose to equip their labels with Plantbeeb QR-codes. Through these QR-codes, consumers can access information about houseplants and garden plants. With this initiative, the parties are preparing for the future QR-code that is set to replace the traditional barcode.

In the spring of 2024, Plantbeeb introduced a way that allows consumers to learn everything about plants, both online and in-store: Professor Plantstein from Plantbeeb. Since then, consumers in garden centres have been able to scan any plant with a Plantbeeb QR-code, which takes them directly to Plantbeeb. Downloading and using the Plantbeeb app is free of charge. Consumers who do not wish to download the app can scan the Plantbeeb QR code on the plant using their smartphone camera, after which they are also directed to Plantbeeb. Since the beginning, 25 garden centres have joined the initiative.

From 2026 onwards, Floramedia, supplier of plant labels and packaging for the ornamental horticulture sector, will introduce Plantbeeb to its customers. This will make the Plantbeeb QR-code available via plant labels to the entire sector: growers, traders and retailers.

Explaining the choice for Plantbeeb, Chris Roggeband, Managing Director of Floramedia, says: “We believe in the Plantbeeb concept as it currently stands, and for us it is an added value to be able to offer this to the growers who are our customers.”



QR-code 'powered by GS1'

One of the reasons Floramedia is entering into this collaboration with Plantbeeb is that, in the long term, the current barcode will be replaced by a GS1-powered QR code featuring multiple layers of information. Floramedia wants to prepare for this development. "As of 1 January 2027, no new barcodes will be issued," says Roggeband. "Products that already have a barcode will retain it, but new products will no longer receive barcodes. This means there will be a transition period in which barcodes and QR-codes will be used side by side. In the long run, QR-codes will achieve 100% market share, but how long that transition period will last, I do not know."

Pilot in 2026

In 2026, Plantbeeb and Floramedia will run a pilot to gain experience with a QR-code that allows multiple layers to be scanned. The aim is to develop the QR code in such a way that it not only provides consumers with reliable product information via Plantbeeb, but also offers new opportunities for growers and retailers. For example, retailers will be able to use their own app to direct consumers straight to plant information on the retailer's own website. In doing so, retailers will use the information from Plantbeeb that Plantbeeb shares with them via the GS1 platform.

Field of tension

Roggeband observes that there is a field of tension regarding the destination to which a QR-code refers. "Large buyers, such as supermarket chains, want to be or remain the owner of the data. I think they will be less inclined to choose Plantbeeb. Perhaps we can find an intermediate solution for that: for example, allowing them to use the data in Plantbeeb, while also enabling them to partly apply their own branding towards consumers. The idea is that a large retailer, via its own app, lets the consumer land on its own website. The coming year will involve some trial and error: what is happening among customers? In any case, we want to relieve customers when it comes to informing consumers and be at the forefront of developments surrounding the new QR-code."

Is much of the information currently available in Plantbeeb not easy to generate through AI? Roggeband responds: "Developments in AI are moving fast, but reliable information on the 48,000 plants currently listed in Plantbeeb is not something you can just obtain. In addition, the percentage of green products sold by supermarket chains accounts for only a few percent of their total turnover. They will therefore be less inclined to set up their own plant information system. That is where opportunities lie for Plantbeeb."

Regarding Floramedia's revenue model, Roggeband says: "It is a simple concept. Growers who wish to work with the Plantbeeb QR code via us pay a small fee per label. That amount is just about cost-covering, but for us customer retention is particularly important. Growers and retailers can better inform consumers and thereby sell more plants."

Access to data

Plantbeeb was developed by Jochem Nieuwsteeg, director and owner of garden center supplier Plant Collect. Are growers or other potential customers not wary that the scans made by consumers could eventually be accessed by the people behind Plant Collect? Roggeband says: "Access to data can be encrypted so that only those who are authorized can access it. We guarantee our customers that information scanned by consumers via Plantbeeb cannot be viewed by people from Plant Collect." (See below: 'Plant Collect really cannot do anything with Plantbeeb data'.)

Growers are not yet using the Plantbeeb QR-code. After all, Plantbeeb was set up two years ago and designed for the retail sector, and only customers of Plant Collect currently use it. Roggeband: "It is difficult to make an estimate, but I hope that by the end of the year some of our customers—houseplant and garden plant growers—will be using the Plantbeeb QR code. We have already started promoting it, and after our press release about the collaboration was published in early December, a number of growers have already contacted us for more information."

Jochem Nieuwsteeg; director-owner of Plant Collect and Plantbeeb

'Plant Collect really cannot do anything with Plantbeeb data'

Jochem Nieuwsteeg is owner-director of Plant Collect and Plantbeeb. When asked whether customers are wary that scanned plant information could be viewed by Plant Collect, he says: "The user data that consumers leave behind in Plantbeeb does not belong to Plant Collect. Plant Collect is a third party and cannot and may not do anything with that information. Plantbeeb may only share information with retailers and growers if the user (mostly consumers) gives permission when using the Plantbeeb app or website.

Growers and retailers, in turn, are not allowed to share this data with others. I would like to emphasise that Plantbeeb, via its website and app, does not collect sales data of plants, but only scan data from users of the website and app." Nieuwsteeg further refers to the conditions that apply to data within Plantbeeb: "Plantbeeb collects, when consumers use the website or app, exclusively scan data as controller/processor in accordance with the GDPR and under supervision of privacy authorities such as the Dutch Data Protection Authority."