

# AMERICAN ORCHID SOCIETY

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Providing Global Leadership in Orchids For 84 Years

*For Immediate Release*

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## ORCHID POPULARITY STILL "GROWING" IN US

DELRAY BEACH, FL (June 4, 2005) — According to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Floriculture Crops Survey for the year 2004, compiled by the National Agricultural Statistics Survey, orchids are growing in popularity in the United States. Currently second in potted flowering plant sales with a wholesale value of \$128 million, orchid sales increased by five percent this past year. This is the second highest percentage increase of all the potted flowering plants in the category. Orchids are second in sales behind poinsettias, which experienced a one percent increase with \$248 million in sales, and they are significantly ahead of third-ranked chrysanthemums, which increased eight percent to \$75 million in sales.

There were more than 17.2 million orchids sold in the United States in 2004, an increase of 13 percent from the previous year. This reflects the growth of the flower's popularity. "People are increasingly learning that orchids are not the delicate plants that they were once perceived to be, but are hardy, easy-to-maintain plants that have the ability to bloom all year long," said Lee Cooke, executive director of the American Orchid Society.

Orchids have been included as a separate entry in the annual USDA Floriculture Crops Summary Report since 1995, when they were first submitted by the nonprofit AOS. Floriculture refers to plants in the categories of bedding, cut cultivated greens, cut flowers, flowering potted plants and foliage plants. California and Florida lead the nation and are nearly tied in production, accounting for 38.1 and 37.6 percent of the country's orchids, respectively. Together, these two states account for more than 75 percent of the country's orchids.

(more)

"Orchids are the largest group of flowering plants in nature. There are more than 25,000 identified species, with the total number probably reaching 30,000, and new species are being discovered each year," said Dr. Rob Griesbach, genetic researcher of floral plants for the U.S. National Arboretum, and past president of the American Orchid Society (AOS). "In addition to that, there are more than 120,000 hybrids registered with the Royal Horticultural Society. With so many choices, there's an orchid for every person's taste."

Long known as a flower of distinction, orchids have an undeniable mystique. Orchids are included as backdrops in many cinema and television scenes, and are featured in countless advertisements for everything from clothing and furniture to architecture and design. Because of their beauty, relative low cost and hardiness, orchids are also increasingly becoming a central aesthetic touch to the home lifestyle. Exceptional plants are produced at low cost by nurseries throughout the United States, but the huge volume of quality plants grown and marketed by large commercial growers in Florida and California contributed to most of the sales boom.

Attached are several charts on plant production figures compiled by the U.S. National Arboretum from data provided by the USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Survey and other organizations.

For information concerning membership, orchid-related topics such as orchid education, research and conservation, orchid shows and events, plant-care suggestions and more, visit the American Orchid Society's Web site at [www.aos.org](http://www.aos.org) or call the AOS Visitors Center and Botanical Garden in Delray Beach, Florida, at 561-404-2000.

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*\*\*\*\* Want a comment from one of the leading orchid experts in your area?*

*Contact Lee Cooke, the AOS's executive director, at 561-404-2010 or [lcooke@aos.org](mailto:lcooke@aos.org).*

*The AOS would be pleased to get editors and writers*

*in touch with local growers, both commercial and hobbyist. \*\*\*\**