



(Andrew Morse, Bob Martin, Gerry Harrison)

Flowers Canada (Ontario) Inc. 2018 Lifetime Achievement Award Winner

Each year Flowers Canada (Ontario) Inc. (FCO). honors an individual who has made exceptional contributions to Ontario's floriculture sector. FCO's **Lifetime Achievement Award** is presented to individuals who have shown a lifetime of commitment and dedication to the floriculture sector, their businesses and local communities.

Bob Martin is the owner and operator of Martin Farms Ltd. originally established as a market garden in 1913 by Leo Martin Senior. In its early beginnings, Martin Farms grew a wide assortment of vegetables for sale to local grocery stores and at a stall at the St. Catharines' Farmers Market. In the late 1920's, Leo Sr. built his first greenhouse to supply vegetable plants to local farmers. By the 1930's, Martin Farms was the second largest employer in the area. Martin Farms now focuses exclusively on the production of greenhouse grown plants for the home gardener. Although vegetable plants remain their specialty, Martin Farms produces an extensive catalogue of flowering garden plants. They supply independent garden centres and chain stores across Ontario with quality products under the store brand as well as Martin Farms own brand under "The Veggie Guy" premium label.

Carrying on with the traditions that Leo Sr. installed in them, Bob and his son Charlie along with a group of dedicated staff, strive to ensure that they are environmental stewards using both the legacies and lessons Leo left behind combined with modern innovations and practices.

A graduate of the University of Guelph, with a degree in economics, Bob took over the family business in 19__ and grew the farm into what it is today – a thriving, successful business. However, it is with mixed emotions that Bob and his family will say good-bye to Martin Farms later this summer. Bob commented that: "It is the right time to let go. We have no regrets at all. It has been an incredible journey to work in this amazing industry and I feel privileged to have been a part of it for so many years."

And although Bob will be leaving the family farm to begin new adventures, Bob has set a shining example of what service to the floriculture industry looks like. Combining his wealth of knowledge, love of growing and his community spirit, Bob became a Master Gardener. As a Member of the Niagara Master Gardeners, Bob has been on the lecture circuit for a number of years. Bob is also somewhat of a local television celebrity hosting Cogeco's "Simply Gardening" program for over 10 years.

Bob has also committed his valuable time to benefit the floriculture industry by serving as a board member for Flowers Canada, Flowers Canada (Ontario), The Ontario Greenhouse Alliance (TOGA) and the Cecil Delworth Foundation (CDF). He has also represented the greenhouse industry at the Canadian Horticultural Council (CHC) and participated in a number of Queen's Park delegations.

To the benefit of the local community, Bob has contributed both his time and expertise to a number of organizations that are close to his heart including serving as: a Board Member of the St. Catharines Children Centre, on the Niagara College Foundation Board, as the past Chair of the Vineland United Church, as a member of the Grimsby Rotary Club and has participated on the Board of Directors for "Forces and Families" helping to establish an agricultural therapy program for Canadian soldiers suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

With all of Bob's remarkable contributions, according to Bob, the accomplishments that he is most proud of are his son Charlie and his two wonderful grandchildren Lark and Flora.

We would like to heartily congratulate Bob on receiving Flowers Canada (Ontario)'s Lifetime Achievement Award for 2018 and wish him all the best on his future endeavours!

