

For fresh fruit and vegetable marketing and distribution in Asia



By Matthew Jones

Tuesday 29th September 2020, 6:39 GMT

Autogrow eyes European expansion

Ag-tech specialist creates Netherlands-based sales role to service expanding customer base



Autogrow's wireless smart sensor, Foliium

New Zealand-headquartered Autogrow is laying the groundwork for expansion in the Northern Hemisphere.

The ag-tech solutions specialist is looking to appoint a sales director - Europe and UK. Based in the Netherlands, the newly created role will support Autogrow's expanding customer base in the region.

While the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic has seen many businesses shelve expansion plans, Autogrow CEO Darryn Keiller said the timing was right for his company, given the growing demand for its new digital farming solutions [FarmRoad](#) and [Foliium](#).

"This expansion into Europe is counter-intuitive during a pandemic, however, innovation and crop production doesn't slow down, and the challenges growers face haven't disappeared because of Covid-19. In fact, they have been exacerbated by the pandemic," Keiller explained.

"We think now is the perfect time to introduce solutions that will help growers with productivity, gain greater economic benefits and transform the market. Added to which, with cross-border restrictions and travel limitations likely to remain in place in the foreseeable future, establishing a local presence is the right move."

Keiller said the Netherlands was the logical choice when it came to the location of the new role.

"The Netherlands has been recognised by the World Economic Forum as a leader in efficient and sustainable agriculture and, after the United States, is the second-largest exporter of agriculture in the world," Keiller said.

"By establishing a role in the region, we create strong ties with growers and, like our partnerships in the United States, introduce our new digital farming solutions FarmRoad and Foliium."

Autogrow has been working closely with

customers and distributors in the Netherlands over the past few months, including some of the country's largest tomato producers.

Among them is Van der Voort, a member of the Prominent farming cooperative. Van der Voort shares Autogrow's focus on sustainable farming practices.

"We have been growing tomatoes for over 50 years and technology has always played a pivotal role in our success," said Joost Van der Voort, co-owner of Van der Voort. "With multiple farms and increasing production, we look for solutions that are leading the ag-tech market."

"The work the Autogrow team are doing with sensor technology and farm management solutions is cutting edge and we are excited to be working together."

Autogrow has also had assistance from InnovationQuarter, the regional

<http://www.fruitnet.com/americafruit/article/1474/parts-of-san-diego-quarantined-as-psyllid-count-mounts>

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economic development agency for the Dutch province of Zuid-Holland.

"The Netherlands, and Rotterdam – the Hague area specifically – is the worldwide centre of horticulture," said Chris van Voorden, head of internationalisation at InnovationQuarter.

"We are eager to attract and facilitate innovators with exciting solutions such as Autogrow. They are a great addition to our region and the sector and support our regional economy.

"Next to that, they benefit and contribute to strengthening

our ecosystem of innovative companies in horticulture, impacting the societal challenge for feeding and greening the mega-cities of the future."