

# The Cool Chain: Perishable Logistics



## BEAUTY BLOOMING INTO BUSINESS:

### DUBAI FLOWER CENTRE: An appropriate link in the Cool Chain

The US\$ 50 million Dubai Flower Centre, on a site overlooking the Dubai-Sharjah highway, is being planned in three phases and is expected to be operational this year. With a 300-metre frontage and a floor area of 60,000 square meters, the center will have a combined throughput capacity of 450,000 tonnes a year. The Centre will eventually have a fully automated system of sorting flowers at the end of a five to seven year period. The flower centre's excellent infrastructure and world-class cool chain will transform Dubai into a specialized & efficient redistribution hub. Strategically located between the growers and the consumers, the center will minimize the transit time between the two - an onward connection to the rest of Middle East, Europe, and the United States being provided by the Dubai International Airport - a service remaining virtually unmatched by any airport in the world.

Cut flowers travel through many hands before they reach the consumer. The goal of each handler is to prolong the flower's life. The grower ships to an importer who then stores the flower for a brief period, usually a day or two, before shipping the flower to a wholesaler. While being transported between these various handlers, the flowers have to be kept at a very low temperature, thereby significantly slowing their physiological development and, in turn, prolonging their life.

**DUBAI IN BLOOM** will also bring to the notice of the average reader, certain aspects of logistics management, like the Cool Chain for example - that has hitherto remained a part of the supply chain industry only. In the air, flowers fly in a precisely controlled thermal environment: roses can fly at one temperature on the maindeck and tropicals at another in the belly. On the ground, the temperature-controlled environment remains unbroken, right from unloading the freighters to carriage through the flower centre - so that customers get their delicate stems fresh and undamaged.

