



# IMPACT25

## Blue City Circular Challenge: Van Dijk Flora & The Floral Connection



By José van der Klauw – Van Dijk Flora

“From low-worth waste to valuable product”

Ever since I started working at Van Dijk Flora (VDF), I’ve wanted to do something about the waste that comes out of our business. Because, let’s be honest, there’s plenty of it alongside the beautiful bouquets we produce. If we can find a use for that waste, we can add extra value to our product. Leonie Dorresteyn of The Floral Connection (TFC) was thinking the same. So together, with approval from both companies’ management, we decided to take part in the Blue City Circular Challenge.

The Circular Challenge, which spans a six-week period, sees teams of young professionals developing circular business cases involving industrial waste. Our team got to work on what they could do with our green waste. This was already used to make compost and biogas, but that actually reduces the value. After lots of experimentation, the team found a solution that adds value. It appears that rose stems can absorb a lot of moisture. A property which is really important in products such as sanitary towels. This links perfectly with the challenge of period poverty, a cause supported by the Dutch Flower Foundation through sponsorship of projects undertaken by our African rose suppliers. By turning our rose waste into sanitary towels and offering them to women within our value chain, we close the circle.

We are really proud of our team’s effort and will work together with The Floral Connection to further develop the prototype and, eventually, the final product. Stay tuned!