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For Immediate Release

## **W.J. Cowee, LLC Moves to Direct Orders Only**

### **Anti-Inflationary Program also Includes an Immediate Extra 5% Discount Promotion**

Berlin, New York (July 1, 2008) – W.J. Cowee, LLC, has announced a new direct ordering program for their wholesale floral trade customers that will hold prices steady by streamlining distribution and operating costs. This new anti-inflationary program will allow W.J. Cowee to absorb rising costs without passing them on to their customers. The program will begin immediately when W. J. Cowee offers a 5 % discount, in addition to any other discounts, on all wholesale orders over \$1,000 placed and shipped from July 1 to August 30, 2008. Cowee intends to offer additional, ongoing specials and promotions to its customers throughout the year.

According to Brian Suslak, CEO of W.J. Cowee, LLC, the nation's largest and oldest manufacturer of wood floral picks and plant stakes, streamlining distribution and operating costs is one of the most effective ways of countering inflationary pressures during a period of dramatically rising costs. "We've been looking at a variety of ways to reduce the cost of our product in order to stay competitive against imported picks of inferior quality. We know that florists prefer to use the Cowee pick because of its superior performance and the fact they don't have to be concerned about potential health or environmental hazards with the dyes and metals on imported picks."

Suslak noted that moving to a direct distribution model would incur significant savings at all levels, so W.J. Cowee will no longer accept orders through sales representatives or brokers. "Removing that link in the distribution chain saves everyone money, and this is an opportunity to pass those savings on to the wholesaler and encourage their loyalty to our brand." Cowee products have not had a price increase in three years, and no increases are expected in the foreseeable future, said Suslak.

An additional cost-saving strategy has been the successful implementation of an energy reduction program at the company's Berlin, New York manufacturing plant that has reduced energy costs by nearly 75% over the past 2 years. Virtually 100% of the manufacturing plant's wood waste is used as a clean source for renewable energy. With no dependence on fossil fuels, the manufacturing process is well positioned to weather the continuing rise of the cost of oil. As an added bonus, the environmentally friendly manner in which Cowee products are manufactured provides extra market value in an era of growing consumer concerns about sustainability and global warming.

"We are committed to producing a safe, high-quality and affordable product that's made in America," said Suslak. "We're looking at the existing ways we do business and

figuring out what we can change to keep our product affordable in this very competitive industry. W.J. Cowee has been a leader in the floral industry for over a hundred years, and I believe that's due to the outstanding and consistent quality of the products we produce. Our mission is to make it possible for our wholesalers to give their customers what they want and make a profit at it. We're working hard to make that win-win situation happen for everyone."

The anti-inflationary program is ongoing, and promotions and specials will be offered throughout the year under the new direct ordering program. Customers can opt for electronic updates on upcoming promotional specials by advising the customer service department they desire notification.

W.J. Cowee's new direct ordering program is effective immediately. Orders submitted to W.J. Cowee by outside sales representatives or brokers will no longer be accepted and commissions will not be paid to outside sales agents. Wholesalers should order directly from W.J. Cowee by calling 1-800-862-6933.

#### **ABOUT W.J. COWEE, LLC**

W.J. Cowee, LLC is the nation's leading manufacturer of wooden floral picks, plant stakes and other products for the professional floral industry. Located in Berlin, New York, the manufacturing company employs approximately 30 workers and has been in continuous operation for more than a century. The current facility has been recognized for its commitment to sustainable forestry, environmental responsibility and community service. The company is a proud member of WFFSA, AIFD, SAF and many other floral industry trade associations. The company's website can be accessed at <http://www.wjcowee.com>.

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