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After 25 years on Forest Hill Avenue, The Great Big Greenhouse & Nursery moved in 2001 to a larger site at the intersection of Huguenot and Robious roads.

Chain buys greenhouse

Great Big Greenhouse is sold to Meadows Farms, a family firm based in N.Va.

BY LOUIS LLOVIO
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After 34 years in business, The Great Big Greenhouse & Nursery has been sold to a Northern Virginia-based chain of nurseries.

The Winsor family, which opened the nursery and garden center on Forest Hill Avenue in South Richmond in 1976, said they decided to retire and

have sold the business to Chantilly-based Meadows Farms Nurseries.

The new owners will take over operation July 1. The center will shut down for the July 4th weekend and reopen July 5 as The Great Big Greenhouse & Meadows Farms Nursery.

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"The Winsor family would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for helping make The Great Big Greenhouse a garden center we can all be proud of," the family said yesterday in a statement.

Details of the sale were not made public.

After 25 years in its Forest Hill Avenue location next to the Shops at Stratford Hills, The Great Big Greenhouse moved in 2001 into new, larger digs at the Huguenot Village Shopping Center, at the intersection of Huguenot and Robious roads in Chesterfield County.

Meadows Farms had been looking for several years to expand into the Richmond market, according to the Winsor statement.

"When the opportunity to join forces with Great Big Greenhouse presented itself, the Meadows said yes," the Winsor family said.

See **GREENHOUSE**, Page B5

Greenhouse

From Page B3

sor family said, adding that it was happy to be selling to another family-owned business.

Meadows Farms was founded in 1976 by John and Betty Meadows, who

still operate the business with their son, Jay, who is president. They were not available for comment yesterday.

Meadows Farms Nursery already operates 23 retail locations employing about 750 people mostly in Maryland and Virginia, and one garden center in West Virginia.

It also owns a 27-hole golf course

west of Fredericksburg as well as a landscaping operation.

Since it opened in 1960, Meadows Farms "has grossed over a half-billion dollars in sales, with recent annual sales of more than \$60 million," according to its website.

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