

CAST Day Two: Green Fuse, Beekenkamp, Hem Genetics, Schoneveld; Westhoff, PP&L, PDSI, PlantHaven and Suntory

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Welcome to #CAST2022 Day 2!

Chris: It's Day 2 of our 2022 California Spring Trials tour and we were looking forward to visiting two brand new trial sites: Green Fuse Grove and the Santa Barbara Polo & Racquet Club (where we knew we'd feel right at home—ha!). Of course, we like visiting some of the same locations each year because it's familiar and we know how to cover them, but it's nice to change things up a bit.

As for the aforementioned Green Fuse Grove, it's the new home of Green Fuse Botanicals, where they'll do breeding, maintain stock plants and do cutting production. They've got 12 acres of land, tucked into many acres of lemon groves (hence the name). They've made a big investment in about a half acre of greenhouses and a large production barn. It's also their Spring Trials location and there's enough space to share with other companies—Beekenkamp, Hem Genetics, Schoneveld and Westhoff.



Green Fuse

Bill: Now that you know a bit more about Green Fuse's new location, let's talk about some of their intros for 2023. I'll start with a colorful one, Dianthus Constant Cadence Potpourri. The Cadence series is known for interesting colors, but this variety really takes the cake. The blooms open in multiple colors, including pink, rose and orange on one plant—in fact, each bloom can have multiple colors within the petals! The variety looks like a mix, but it's not a mix.



Constant Cadence Potpourri Dianthus

Chris: As a former potted plant grower—including streptocarpus—I'll make mention of their new Streptocarpus Ladyslippers colors—Azure, Blueberry, Blue Zebra and Raspberry Ice. Owner Steve Jones told us streptocarpus, despite being considered an old-fashioned plant, have taken off along with all the other houseplants.



Streptocarpus Ladyslipper Azure

Bill: Speaking of houseplants, Tradescantia Pistachio White was a standout for its variegated green-and-white foliage—variegated tradescantia tend to be more cream-colored than white. Good for pots, baskets or as a tropical groundcover. They even showed it in a living wall that you could see from all the way across the greenhouse.

Click [HERE](#) to watch our video from Green Fuse.

Beekenkamp

Chris: A quick stroll through the greenhouse brought us to Dutch breeder Beekenkamp, known for begonias, but they've been expanding out into many other genera in recent years, so let's talk about a couple of them, Bill, starting with dahlias.

Bill: Dahlias have undergone a ton of new breeding from many plant wizards in the past five or so years, and it's cool to see consumer demand matching the uptick in breeding. We definitely saw some nice new dahlias at the Beekenkamp display at Green Fuse Grove. Fun Yellow Blush and Fun Flame are both new in their mid-sized Medio series, which is intended for 4- to 4.5-in. pots. For the large-pot Grande series, Fun Red White is new for '22 with huge bicolor red-and-white blooms on a large plant. Perfect for gallons and larger pots.



Dahlia Medio Fun Flame

Chris: Beekenkamp also showed a couple new unique-colored petunias in their Tea series for weather-tolerant containers from 4-in. up to baskets: Purple Vein Green Edge and Flamingo. Both are nice color additions to the series.

For these and more from Beekenkamp, watch our video [HERE](#).



Petunia Tea Purple Vein Green Edge and Flamingo



Hem Genetics

Chris: As we continued exploring the new Green Fuse greenhouses, we caught a whiff of some herbs and were happy to find them at Hem Genetics. They've been focused on the packet seed market for decades, but they've been working on bringing some of their unique offerings to the professional greenhouse market via higher-quality seed. The herbs they showed illustrate this effort. Most interesting was a tagetes (marigold) of the species *filifolia*, which tastes exactly like licorice with a dusting of sugar. Never seen (or tasted) that one before!



The tagetes is the tall one in the middle.

Bill: I definitely ate more than my share of the tagetes ... it was good! Moving past the salad bar, we saw some petunias that were introduced last year, but have a new story: Mambo (multiflora) and Limbo (grandiflora) Yellow Lime were both exclusive to one particular distributor last year, but both are now open for sale by anyone.

We shot this [VIDEO](#) of the Hem varieties.

Cyclamen & Petunias

Chris: Dutch breeder Schoneveld was another guest at the new Green Fuse home. They didn't have lots new to share, but they did have some nice color additions to existing series. But when it comes to primula, another Schoneveld specialty, Bill, you learned something new, eh?

Bill: I sure did! In fact, I think I learn something new every day at Spring Trials—sometimes a bunch of new things. At Schoneveld, I was interested in a new primula collection called Touch Me Mini and I was able to add a new word to my horticultural vocabulary: primin. The astute horticulturists out there probably know that traditional *Primula obconica* plants contain a compound called primin that can cause an itchy allergic reaction in some people. Schoneveld's long-standing Touch Me series does away with the primin, making them safe to handle for all. New in the collection is Touch Me Mini, which joins Touch Me Midi and Touch Me Large, so now you can get primin-free obconicas for all pot sizes.

Check them all out [HERE](#) in our video from Schoneveld.



Touch Me Mini Primula

Chris: Moving on to Westhoff, the German breeder of many colorful annuals, I want to focus on their calibrachoa, which offer some of the brightest color patterns you'll see anywhere, such as my favorite, Chameleon Blackberry Tart Mix (not new, but definitely wild!). They've got the Chameleons, which feature exciting multicolors; and Calitastic, the more typical calibrachoa. New colors in Calitastic include Tricolor Pink, Bright Red, Merry Cherry and Violaceous. There are also some cool standalones, including Illusion, Dracula and Caramel.



Calibrachoa Chameleon Blackberry Tart Mix

Bill: It's cool to see the unique genetics Westhoff has been bringing to market in petunias spreading into their growing calibrachoa assortment. And at the same time, they're continuing to add to the Crazytunia Petunia portfolio. There are so many now that I've lost track. I'm pretty sure they added seven new ones this year. Chris, correct me if I'm wrong.

Chris: I wrote down "loads."

Bill: Westhoff actually pulled two petunias out of the Crazies and started a new series called Flower Showers, a trailing, basket-type collection with six colors to start. The two existing varieties (former Crazytunias) are Mayan Sunset and Patrick Star. Joining them are Flame, Golden Harvest, White and Ziggy Star.

Want to see all of these and more? Watch our [VIDEO](#).

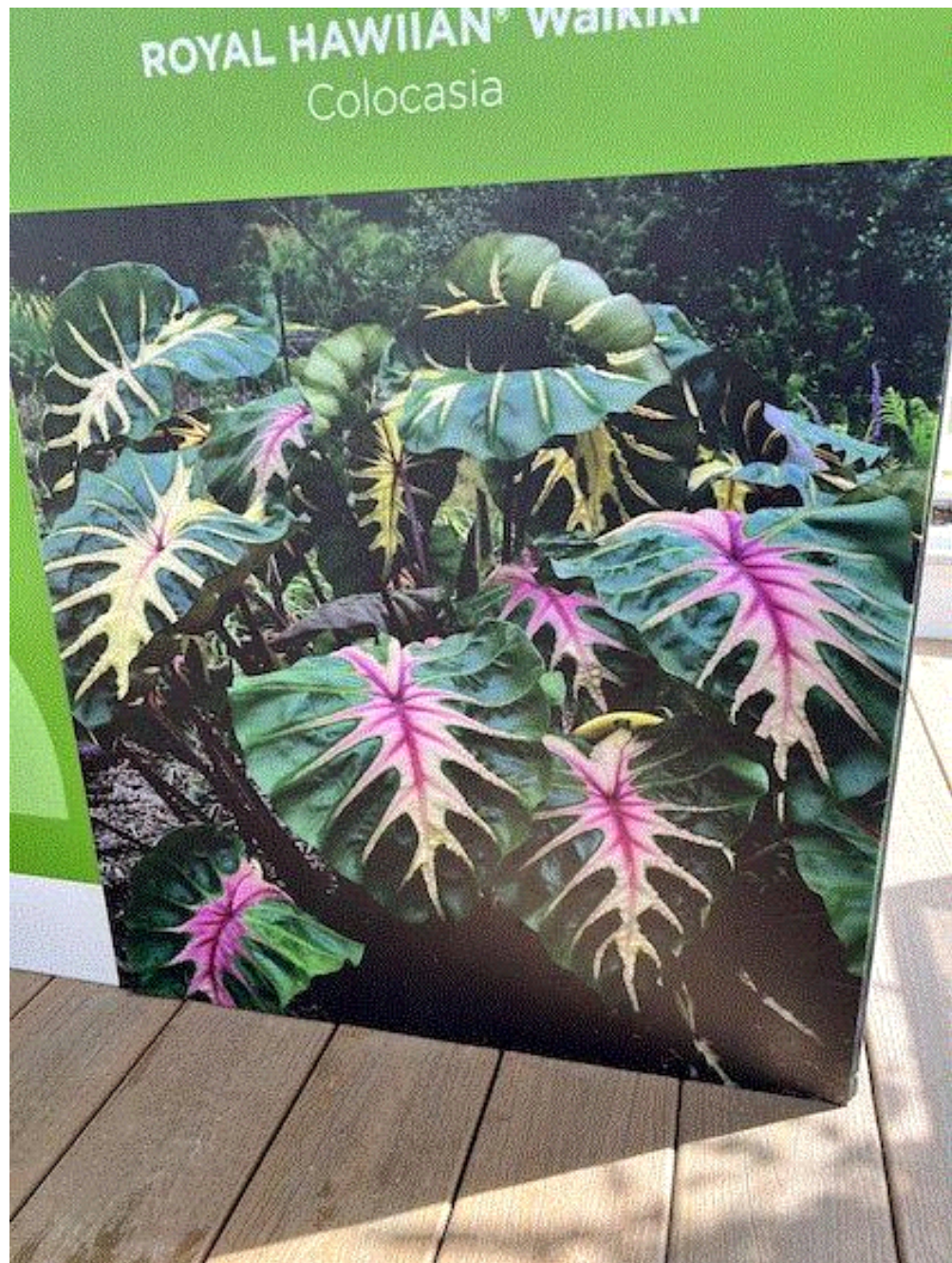


At the Polo Club

Chris: On to our afternoon stop at the Santa Barbara Polo & Tennis Club in Carpinteria, home to a large greenhouse industry. Now, we've visited trials at garden centers, wineries, breweries and golf resorts, but never a polo pitch. It was pretty, with acres of smooth turf as a backdrop to the flowers. And while there were no polo games being played, there were plenty of new varieties on display from PlantHaven, Suntory, Pacific Plug & Liner and the Southern Living/Sunset Collection and Encore Azalea family of brands. Bill, what was your favorite from PlantHaven?

Bill: Probably my favorite new intro is a perennial viola that's the third in a series called Magnifiscent Delft Blue. It's a classic viola color, but with a nice fragrance and good hardiness. I definitely want this one in my garden next year.

Chris: My pick at PlantHaven was a colocasia called Royal Hawaiian Waikiki. The sign said, "Flamboyant tropical foliage" and it didn't lie—it's the most caladium-like colocasia I've seen, with rich pink-and-white veins in the center of each leaf.



Colocasia Royal Hawaiian Waikiki

Bill: Speaking of colorful, they have two new additions to the Vibe Salvia collection—Ignition Cranberry and Sunrise—bringing the series to five. These are intended for gallon or larger production, and the flexible flower stems make shipping less risky.

Chris: I'll wrap up PlantHaven with Abelia Suntastic Peach. Abelia is a pretty variegated Zone 6-shrub that can double as a component plant in combos. It's reasonably fast—you can produce a quart pot in about 16 weeks from a 72-count liner.



Abelia Suntastic Peach

Bill: Before we were done touring PlantHaven's new varieties, owner Robert Bett showed us their new catalog, the "Look Book." They've moved to a two-year catalog, so it covers 2023 and 2024. You can order copies at www.planthaven.com/lookbooks.

Suntory

Chris: It's tough to decide which of the Suntory intros I want to highlight here, but I think I'll pick the two new Senettis because they're my wife's favorite early spring flower. The additions are White Red Heart and Blue Halo. The first has bright white flowers with a deep red center—it'd be great for Valentine's Day, I think. And Blue Halo has a rich blue flower, a dark eye and a white halo around that eye.



Senetti White Red Heart Pericallis

Bill: The Senettis are nice, but I'm glad you didn't take my favorite, the Surfinias. This year, they introduced a new series called Heavenly. It's a semi-trailing type with uniform vigor, habit and timing across four colors—Amethyst Burst, Cabernet, Blue and Deep Red. They also have a couple new additions to the vigorous XXL Surfinia series—Salmon Vein and Watermelon Jazz.

Chris: How about branding? We haven't seen any new branding yet this year, so I was somewhat surprised when we saw that Suntory's newest Million Bells Calibrachoa was named Orangina. What did that cost the company to license? Then we learned that Suntory actually owns the Orangina drink brand and so was able to secure the plant name. The POP they showed is only a concept ... but maybe it could be more than that if the right customer came along.



Calibrachoa Million Bells Orangina

Bill: Last, but not least, are three new colors in the Bracteantha Granvia series. New Pink, Harvest Orange and Peachy Keen. Suntory promised more colors a few years ago and I'd say they certainly came through.

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Hellebores & More

Chris: Next up at the Polo Club was Pacific Plug & Liner, who gave up exhibiting at their own

greenhouse in Watsonville when space became a premium during spring production. My favorite at PP&L was their newest hellebore, Vibey Velvet. It's part of their Winter's Angels collection of early blooming (December/January) hellebores. It's got dark rose flowers, grows 12- to 18-in. tall and wide, and grows in Zones 5 to 8. It joins Charmer in the Winter's Angel series.



Hellebore Winter's Angels Vibey Velvet

Bill: Delphiniums are always impressive in bloom and I was happy to see three new ones in the Delgenius interspecific delphinium series from PP&L. Blue Fabulosa has huge flower spikes and is the earliest in the series. Chantay is covered in pink flowers and Neva is a true white.

Chris: Our last stop at the Polo Club was Plant Development Services, Inc. home of the Encore Azalea, Southern Living, Sunset ... and now Better Boxwood! This is a new line of blight-resistant boxwoods bred in Belgium after years of breeding and selection (over there they call them Better Buxus). The end result is four different boxwoods: One for tall hedges, one for wider hedges, one for standard-sized hedges, and one for lower hedges, like knot gardens and the like. We can't vouch for their disease resistance, but we were told they've been planted at some premier gardens in Europe, so they're certainly getting a good test.



Better Boxwood program

Day 2 in the Books

Chris: Okay, Bill, that's it for Day 2!

Bill: Two new locations. Nine companies. More than 100 new varieties. Plenty of networking with industry friends. I'm ready to get some rest so we can do it again tomorrow. What's the plan?

Chris: Thursday (which you will read about on Friday) is Dümmer Orange, Sakata and Takii. Stay tuned!

Bill: Oh wait, before we close, a quick reminder: For even more videos from each day, be sure to check out our [CAST2022 Playlist](#). Subscribe to the *GrowerTalks* YouTube channel and hit the Subscribe button so you never miss a new video.



Thanks for reading! See you next time,

Chris, Jen & Bill

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