

GROWERTALKS

GT in Brief

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Kickin' It @Cultivate'18

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Two Cultivate'18 insiders, Mary Beth Cowardin (foreground) and Stacy Buttari, enjoy the fruits of their labor as they take in the New Varieties display at the big industry trade show, held July 15-17 in Columbus, Ohio. Mary Beth is Vice President of Marketing and Membership Engagement for AmericanHort, the organization that hosts the show; Stacy is owner and designer with Whitespace, the graphic design firm that creates all the signage and other visual elements of the show.

The New Varieties section got an all-new look last year, when the new wing of the Greater Columbus Convention Center opened, allowing AmericanHort to cover 30% more space than before. This year, the New Varieties section was particularly impressive, with hundreds of varieties from every important breeder serving the American market.

Last year, after the completion of construction on the new wing—plus the concourse and front entrance—there was

some grumbling from exhibitors and attendees who worried that the new trade show configuration and booth locations would cause additional headaches. But like fidget spinners, everyone is pretty much over it. One of the primary advantages of the newer show blueprint, though, is that it allows for more room to hold events and TED-style talks on the show floor, rather than moving to another location outside.

Since we wrote this the day after the show ended, we don't have numbers to share (watch for those details in our complete Cultivate coverage in the September issue), but there were mixed feelings on crowd size. What we did hear from all of the vendors we spoke with is that, regardless of the number of people coming through, they felt the "quality" of the customers they met with was better. So it would seem like the tire-kickers decided to stay home this year and the ones ready to buy made it out to Columbus. **GT**