

GROWERTALKS

GT in Brief

10/1/2019

Three Bits of Ball Hort News

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Quite a few things happening around Ball HQ in West Chicago these days—three things, actually—worth writing about:

New R&D building. In August, Anna Ball and her daughter, Susannah, put toes to gold shovel in the groundbreaking for the Ball Helix Central R&D Center. This is the most exciting construction to take place here since the Ball Premier Lab (where they do all the seed testing and coating and pelleting and such).

Pictured: From left to right: Jim Kerwin, Paul Chemler, Anna Ball, Susannah Ball, Todd Frauendorfer and Matt Mouw at the new Ball Helix Central R&D Center

groundbreaking in August.

As a division, Ball Helix is the home of the company's experts in molecular biology, cell biology, analytical chemistry, pathology and intellectual property. They're currently doing amazing work in small, aging labs and greenhouses. This new Central R&D Center will rival the best in the world, allowing Ball's scientists to work in-house with the most cutting-edge technologies available, such as genome mapping (which hastened the development of Beacon Impatiens). The Central R&D Center is slated to be completed by March 2021.

Houseplant agreement. Ball Seed has entered into a partnership to distribute ForemostCo's line of foliage, tropical and succulent plant liners. ForemostCo, a Miami-based, family-owned business, has been around since 1987. The partnership helps Ball meet the growing market demand for houseplants and other trending genetics, and helps ForemostCo reach more customers. You can download the current ForemostCo catalog at www.ballseed.com/CatalogsBrochures.

Garden mum growth tracker. Ball Seed has created some online resources for garden mum growers, including a graphical-tracking tool. You tell the tool when you want the mums to be ready, and how tall you want them to be, and it provides a space to enter weekly plant growth and lets you know if you're too short or too tall, and provides some advice for adjusting your growth accordingly.

In addition to the growth tracking tool, a new resource web page at the Ball Seed website gives you an easy way to search for garden mums by color, category, timing and more. There is a quick A-Z reference guide available for

download, too. Access the Garden Mum Growth Tracking Tool at www.ballseed.com/GardenMums. **GT**