

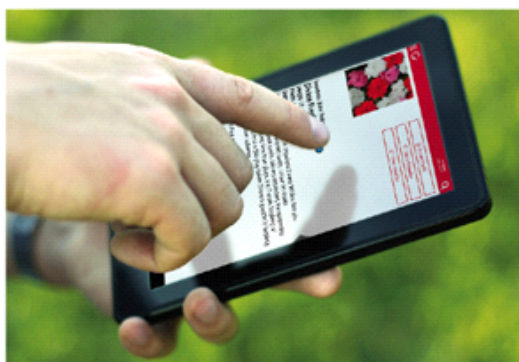
# GROWERTALKS

## Features

1/1/2015

## Tools at Your Fingertips

*Compiled Jennifer Zurko*



### Gro Getter

Designed especially for growers, the Gro Getter app puts all of the Ball Seed catalog and cultural information in the palm of your hands via your smartphone or tablet. With information and photos of more than 5,000 varieties—you'll be a walking encyclopedia of crop knowledge with this tool in your device. Launched this past Labor Day, it's already been updated with new crops, including poinsettias and flowering shrubs.

Available for Apple, Android and Windows devices, you won't need Wi-Fi or Internet access to get at the info once you've downloaded the app. Plus, there's a place for notes and even a way to share info via email. Visit [www.grogetterapp.com](http://www.grogetterapp.com) to find direct links to the app stores.

### WebTrack

Although Ball Seed's business management system isn't new, some exciting new elements have been added. Launched this past fall is the new catalog search tool, where you can look for any product sold by Ball Seed using a number of different filters beyond color and crop—like supplier, form, special features and more. Once you find what you're looking for, you'll see high-resolution photos (Ball is still working on getting all of the images up), culture information and downloadable benchcards for that product. You also can see the availability status—which is live and updated instantly—and click on "Buy Now" to place your order.

Ball Seed also has been sending out special promotions for their customers that include a code they can use (provided they're signed up for WebTrack) to get free seed or to take advantage of exclusive offers. You can find WebTrack at [www.ballseed.com](http://www.ballseed.com).

### Sage HRMS

Short for Human Resources Management System, Practical Software Solutions has offered Sage HRMS since 2001. Sage HRMS helps growers keep track of the HR parts of their business, like benefits costs, OSHA reporting, payroll, H2-A verification and more.

With the Affordable Care Act in mind, Sage has added a new functionality to Sage HRMS to help companies fill out the appropriate paperwork that's required under the ACA. If you have more than 50 full-time employees, you'll be required to report the type of healthcare coverage you're providing. As we saw in the results of our Wage & Benefits Survey in the December issue of *GrowerTalks*, many of you are nervous about the impending paperwork and this software can help.

"Sometimes, new legislation puts a spotlight on a need in the industry," said Greg Lafferty, senior account executive for Practical Software Solutions. "The ACA is very complicated and the reporting part of it is not straightforward if you're doing it by hand."

In the horticulture industry, HR is the most neglected department when it comes to getting the right tools, said Greg. Sage HRMS can actually do all of your HR tracking, and integrates seamlessly with Grower Vertical, helping you with production planning, sales forecasting and inventory management, so you'll have the ability to run your entire operation on one system.

To find out more, visit [www.growervertical.com](http://www.growervertical.com).

## GrowIt!

Launched this past summer, GrowIt! is the only social app that helps home gardeners find plants to fit their lifestyle and connect them with other local gardeners—sort of like a cross between Pinterest and Yelp. Users can snap pictures of plants, upload them to GrowIt! and rate them by how much they like them (or don't like them). The ratings are "Leave it," "Like it" or "Grow it." The app uses geolocation and user ratings to help gardeners find plants specifically for their area.

In November, GrowIt! and their programmers, Eight Bit Studios, were Gold Winners in the Home & Garden market category for the design100 2014 U.S. Mobile & App Design Awards. The judging process collects ratings from a leading industry panel, and the marketplace that commission and consume the apps.

Mason Day, one of the co-creators of GrowIt!, said they're currently developing a profile system, where each user can include personal information about themselves (à la Facebook). Mason said that this is a perfect tool for retailers because they can create a profile for their business and connect with users directly through the app. The plan is to have the profile part ready by spring.

Retailers interested in setting up a profile on GrowIt! can access a special Dropbox folder (at [goo.gl/6l0bJc](http://goo.gl/6l0bJc)) that includes logos, pictures and templates that can be used in their email blasts. They're also working on POP concepts with MasterTag for the retailers who create a profile on GrowIt! based on recommendations by users in that store's area.

Go to [www.growitmobile.com](http://www.growitmobile.com) or find the app at the iTunes store now for Apple devices. The Android version will be available in February.

## Grower's Guide

Suntory's Grower's Guide app has been newly updated with all of their 2014 varieties, including Surfinia Sumo Petunias and Sundenia Dipladenias. The app includes complete cultural information for the entire

Suntory Flowers catalog, where you can sort by temperature, light and fertility requirements, view crop times at a glance and customize your page by the plants you grow and sell. There's also a video library where you can view how-to and product videos. Plus, there are links to Suntory's YESS digital tools, where you can create bench cards and posters, mobile sites, videos and even other apps. The Grower's Guide is available for iPads at the Apple store.

## RIO & Retail Lynx

First unveiled at Cultivate'14, RIO (for Rack Item Optimizer) helps growers assemble their shipping racks based on the most optimized configuration. What's new since then is that the RIO software will be available on the Cloud so the information—how many racks are needed, which product should go on which shelf of the rack and in what order—can be accessed anywhere since it's not stored on a computer or other device. It has advanced shipped notice capability.

Once your shipping team scans a barcode on the rack sheet, it'll send the information to the customer, letting them know in advance what has been shipped to them. Gary Cortes, one of the founders of Flow Vision, said that Cloud-based tools are the trend in new technology now. Soon, we won't be purchasing separate software to be downloaded on our computers—all of these tools will be SAS ("software as service") that you'll subscribe to.

Another tool is Retail Lynx, which is similar to the ION (Inventory Optimization Network) software that Flow Vision has already introduced in many different industries, where it helps growers, big boxes or IGCs analyze how much product they need based on patented statistical algorithms. Retail Lynx will tell the user which products need to be replenished based on sell-through and consumption—not on what they "think" they need or will sell, said Gary. It's very data focused. Retail Lynx also provides analysis reports of your sales history and writes orders based on calculated inventory reorder points. And it's just not for live goods—Gary said that growers and retailers can use Retail Lynx to track hardgoods like pots, soil, etc. He's hoping that Retail Lynx will be available on the Cloud soon. Visit [www.flowvision.com](http://www.flowvision.com) to find out more.

## Back Pocket Grower

If you've been reading *GrowerTalks* during the last couple of months (and we know you have), you've probably seen the article series on the new Back Pocket Grower—an online application that has calculator tools, training videos and crop guides for growers. Options currently available include dilution calculators for parts per million; a tool to balance fertilizer, crop and water quality for pH management; and a database of water treatment technologies. Being developed by Paul Fisher at the University of Florida IFAS Extension as part of the Floriculture Alliance Research group, the Back Pocket Grower can be accessed through a browser on any device at [www.backpocketgrower.com](http://www.backpocketgrower.com). **GT**