

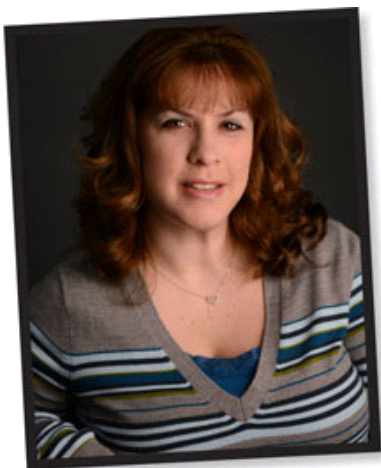
# GROWERTALKS

## Inside Look

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## The Trials of a Guinea Pig

*Jennifer Zurko*



**JENNIFER ZURKO**

The term “being a guinea pig” doesn’t have a very good origin. According to Wikipedia, experiments had been conducted on guinea pigs since the 17th century. I’m not a fan of testing on animals, but you can’t deny that when you say that phrase, people know what you’re talking about.

Sometimes it’s nice to be the “guinea pig” for the excitement of trying something new, like taste-testing wine or potato chips (two of my favorite things).

Or you could be venturing into the unknown, still with the taste-testing, but with your partner’s new foray into Indian cooking. You could be pleasantly surprised or surprisingly disgusted; it could go either way.

It could also go horribly awry. I put people who volunteer to try out experimental medicines and the guys from the show “Jackass” into this category. But I suppose if you’re willing to be the “guinea pig” to see what happens when you snort wasabi up your nose, you kinda know it’s probably going to end badly. That’s all on you.

Our cover story discusses guinea pigs of a different sort—growers who were willing to venture down the colorful path of LED lighting. Every year, there are a few interesting observations from the Cultivate show; for the last two years, it’s how many LED lights are illuminating the aisles in blue, pink, red and purple. And it’s interesting how growers of all types—ornamental, hydroponic, cannabis—are trying or thinking about LEDs.

Research shows that LEDs provide numerous benefits, especially for herbs and leafy greens, and for finishing plants in the greenhouse. But what about in the early stages, when you’re rooting cuttings and growing seed? We heard about a few growers that had been conducting trials and that they went so well, they’ve completely switched for their young plant production. Although they’re using similar modules, they all had different needs to be addressed, so it’s interesting to hear how it worked for them. Read if they think LEDs are worth the investment.

Remember when Lean Flow was a new-fangled idea? Nowadays you hear about a lot of businesses that have gone through the process, but there was a time when we had a few guinea pigs try it out first. For those of you who think that your operation is “too complicated” for Lean Flow, read what Gary Cortes has to say about that.

We also have information on the new trucking regulations and the biggest mistakes you can make with your heaters.

Being the one to try something for the first time can be difficult and risky, and I commend all of you who make those decisions all the time. But it seems that often those hard choices end up paying off and moving your business forward in the most positive ways. And any guinea pig would appreciate that. **GT**