

# 3 Management Strategies; Deltini and Speedy; plus the Tasmanian Devil



**BE IN THE KNOW**  
*Timely news and commentary from GrowerTalks*

[f](#) [YouTube](#) [GROWERTALKS MAGAZINE](#)

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2018

[subscribe](#)

9 greenhouses,  
27,000 sq. ft.

Fogged in 20 minutes.  
How long does it take  
you to spray?



**pulsFOG**

**DRAMM**

**LINE BOSS**

*Complete*  
**LABELING SOLUTIONS  
FOR GROWERS**



REDUCE LABOR  
 REDUCE EXPENSES  
 REDUCE INVENTORY

**ADVANTAGE LABEL & PACKAGING, INC.**



## GrowerTalks' Acres Online

*News and Commentary from GrowerTalks Magazine*

### COMING UP THIS WEEK:

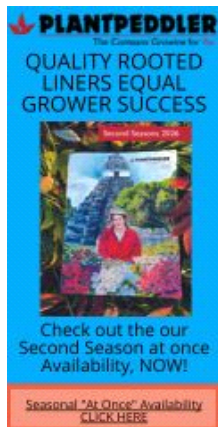
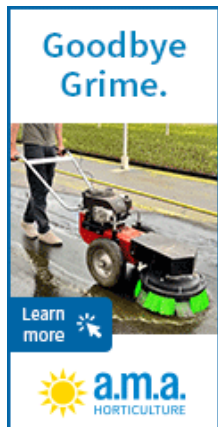
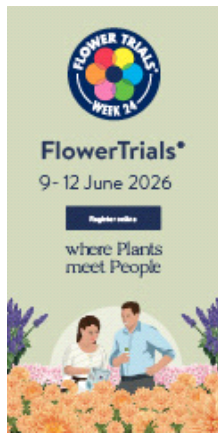
- Innovative strategies
- Are Deltinis teeny Deltas?
- Perennials webinar today!
- Young Grower Award time
- Garden writers at IGC Chicago
- Our two new newsletters
- America in Bloom
- A 60-year-old pet jade
- Finally ...

**DÜMMEN ORANGE.**



**VIEW our NEW ANNUALS CATALOG!**

**Innovative management strategies from three successful**



## owners

I'm giving a talk a week from today on the topic, "Innovative Management & Marketing Strategies" (the unusual location of which I will disclose in my "Finally ..."). While researching it, I thought, "Why not share a bit of this good stuff with my readers? Everybody wants some management tips and these are good ones."

For my talk, I picked three business owners who, in my experience, are doing an excellent job in a tough business climate: Ben Van Wingerden of Color Orchids in Virginia; Gary Mangum of Bell Nursery in Maryland; and Bisser Georgiev of LiveTrend Designs in Florida. Here's one strategy/philosophy from each of them:

**Ben Van Wingerden:** *"Focus on what you ARE good at, not what you WANT TO BE good at."*

What Ben means is that every business has a long suit—something they do better than the competition. But they also have something they struggle with. You might be a fantastic grower who struggles with marketing. Or be fantastic at sales, but your crop quality is inconsistent. Or maybe you grow fantastic annuals, but your poinsettias are iffy.

In Ben's case, he realized he and his team excel at sales and marketing, so they decided to stop growing orchids and instead just finish them. They partnered with two orchid specialists who now prefinish their crops. Ben and his team can now focus on what they do best, and put their resources towards sales and marketing and not towards greenhouse technology.

**Gary Mangum:** *"Act like you own it."*

I knew Gary was going to give this philosophy because I've heard him say it—and watched him do it—for 20 years. He has a knack for instilling this into every employee from the day they start, and his managers and staff all do the same.

But how do you instill that attitude in new staff, some of whom have never held a job before? Through positive reinforcement. Gary is always noticing and complimenting people on the job they're doing. A young kid sweeping a warehouse floor? Gary will stop and praise him for doing a great job. An employee loading a truck? Gary will complement the display of hustle. And why is the employee hustling? Because other employees who "act like they own it" set the example.

But doing this requires spending time in the field, another one of Gary's philosophies. Make sure you've got competent people running the business so you can spend time with staff and customers. Especially customers!

**Bisser Georgiev:** *"The No. 1 'want' from my employees is to learn."*

LiveTrends founder Bisser Georgiev had a vision four years ago to focus on the design and marketing of hyper-trendy interior plants, and so far, his vision has been 20/20: LiveTrends was named No. 256 on the Inc. 500 list of fastest-growing companies in 2017. His primary philosophy—"Do one thing and do it very well"—mirrors Ben Van Wingerden's.

But another key philosophy of Bisser's revolves around taking care of employees. He recently did a major upgrade of his offices, taking a page from the high-tech world, with a bar, Friday happy hour, ultra-modern spaces and the like. And he pays competitively, of course, a requirement in this day and age if you want to attract good people.

But Bisser says that what his employees want most (he asks them in quarterly surveys) is learning opportunities—the chance to grow and expand personally and professionally. To that end, he brings in guest speakers once a month for three-hour seminars on a wide range of topics, from marketing to technology.

"That's a big difference from the '90s when [employees] wanted bonuses or cars or whatever."



## Are Deltinis really teeny Deltas?

That was my guess back in January, when, at the Costa Farms Season Premier Trial, I spotted a new-to-me viola series from Syngenta called Deltini. They breed Delta, so that must be the case, right?

Indeed it is, said Syngenta's Mike Murgiano via phone the other day. Deltini Viola will be launched to the North American market at Spring Trials in April, along with a new pansy series called Delta Speedy.

Deltini and Delta Speedy will fit a specialized niche: growers in the south doing late fall production for winter/early spring sales. The two series are "near-daylength neutral," Mike says. "And extremely uniform across the color range." This will help them keep flowering during short days when other pansies give up. Deltini and Speedy have been "optimized for fast culture under short days," Mike says. He adds that Midwest and northern growers can see benefits as well when growing under low light and short days of winter for early spring sales.

Once light is high and days are longer, the benefits go away; in fact, the plant won't bulk up as well as regular Delta and Penny Viola, he says.

Deltini has been on the market in Europe for quite a few years and Speedy for a bit less time; there, they're used in traditional biennial production, where you grow on in the fall, overwinter cold, then bloom them for spring sales.



Anyway, that's the scoop on Deltini and Delta Speedy. Texas and Florida growers take note!



**Perennial Plants for Every Season: A free webinar**

If you're reading this and it's not yet noon Central time on Wednesday, there's still time to sign up for our Valentine's Day webinar, "Perennial Plants for Every Season—the Right Material at the Right Time," by guest expert Jeremy Windmuller of Walters Gardens.

If you plant most of your perennials in late winter and spring, you may be missing out on markets, crops and plant quality, says Jeremy. This FREE one-hour webinar will be Wednesday, February 14, at 1:00 p.m. Eastern/Noon Central. That's Valentine's Day! (If you missed it, don't worry, it's archived at the website below.)

Jeremy, a veteran of *GrowerTalks'* webinars, will take you through the ins and outs of summer perennial planting, including:

- The benefits you'll gain
- The crops to grow this way
- Details on cultural requirements
- Pinching and trimming
- Preparation for overwintering

Sign up now at [www.growertalks.com/webinars](http://www.growertalks.com/webinars).

I'll be your host and moderator, so you know it'll be info-packed, fast-paced and fun!

And did I mention it's free?



## It's still Young Grower Award time!

We, the preliminary judges of the annual *GrowerTalks/Dümmen* Orange Young Grower Award, are still accepting nominations for bright, hard-working, inspirational candidates. The only caveat: they can't be over age 35 by the date of the award ceremony, which is Monday, July 16 at Cultivate'18.

Why nominate yourself, a co-worker, an employee or your own son or daughter? For the honor and recognition, of course! This is a tough business, and we've used our annual Young Grower Award as a way to reward and recognize that hard work and dedication to our industry. Our three finalists get a trip to Cultivate'18 where they'll dine with the editors and judges. And the winner gets a cover story in the September issue of *GrowerTalks*!

To sign up, go to [www.growertalks.com/YoungGrower/](http://www.growertalks.com/YoungGrower/).

One insider tip for becoming one of our three finalists: Provide as much detail in the application as possible—we want to know why the candidate is worthy of the honor. Accomplishments, training, education, how he or she gives back to the industry—all that weighs heavily in the judging.

So sign up now ... and good luck!

Oh, if you're a retailer, you've got your own competition, the *Green Profit/Dümmen* Orange Young Retailer Award. Sign up at [www.greenprofit.com/YoungRetailer/](http://www.greenprofit.com/YoungRetailer/).

**New Project? Build it Efficiently.**  
Heating systems engineered for performance from day one.  
BioTherm-designed heating systems with RBI boilers and Sterling unit heaters.

BioTherm RBI STERLING  
HVAC PRODUCTS

## Garden Writers to flock to IGC Show

If you're looking for a reason to exhibit at or attend the Independent Garden Center Show in Chicago this coming August, how about the chance to rub elbows with (and tell your business or product story to) some 450 garden writers? Their association, GWA: The Association for Garden Communicators, has announced that they'll be holding their 70th annual conference and expo during IGC Show, August 13-15 (GWA goes one day longer).

GWA members include authors, bloggers, staff editors, syndicated columnists, freelance writers, photographers, speakers, landscape designers, television and radio personalities, consultants and publishers. Whew! That's a mess of press!

GWA's Annual Conference & Expo co-location with the IGC Show at Chicago's Navy Pier begins August 13, the day before the show opens, and runs through August 16. GWA members will be able to show their event badge for instant, seamless access to the IGC Show exhibit hall, as well as all three morning keynotes and Tuesday's party with The Marshall Tucker Band live in concert.

Becky Heath, President of GWA, says, "We are excited about the opportunities our GWA members will have to see all the latest gardening products in person, under one roof at the IGC Show, while networking with the independent garden center owners and operators who are instrumental in bringing the most current outdoor trends to consumer gardeners. It's a win-win for everyone."

IGC Show's trade show, three morning keynotes, and Tuesday's party and concert with The Marshall Tucker Band are free if you register now at [www.IGCShow.com](http://www.IGCShow.com). Early bird savings are currently in effect for the Continuing Education @IGC conference and the IGC Show Store Tour.

Canna  
**TROPICANNA**

- The perfect "thriller" in containers
- Available in 3 colors

tesselaar.com

## Check out our two new newsletters

If you haven't already, I encourage you to give a read to both *PestTalks* by JC Chong and *HortCalendar Highlights* by Allison Westbrook, the two newest newsletters from the fine folks at *GrowerTalks/Green Profit*.



# PestTalks

*PestTalks*, as the name implies, is all about insect and disease management. This twice-monthly newsletter isn't cut-and-paste press releases, it's practical, real-world insights from a Ph.D. pathologist, Dr. JC Chong of Clemson University. It just so happens that JC is also a clever and funny writer, making it a pleasure to read about the latest greenhouse or nursery scourge. Check out the latest issue [HERE](#).

subscribe



# HORTCalendar.com highlights

*HortCalendar Highlights* should prove to be the traveling horticulturist's best friend. We all have events to plan for and around, which is the purpose of our website, [HortCalendar.com](http://HortCalendar.com) (bookmark it!). Now, twice a month, we'll be brining upcoming events right to your inbox, with more detailed event descriptions and links for registration. Hopefully, we'll help you uncover some shows, seminars or other learning opportunities you never knew existed. Check it out [HERE](#).

Watch your inbox for both of these. If you don't spot them, go to [www.growertalks.com/newsletters](http://www.growertalks.com/newsletters) to subscribe.



## You should try America in Bloom

If you're looking to get your community involved in the annual America In Bloom program, you've got less than a month to do so! [REGISTRATION](#) for the community beautification program ends February 28.

Consider America In Bloom that rallying cry your community can gather behind to bring more horticultural diversity, appreciation and engagement to all members—especially those who may never have noticed the beauty of flowers and foliage. AIB has loads of videos showing why you and your community should get involved. I honestly don't know why more greenhouses and garden centers don't spearhead an AIB effort in their hometown—what better way to get free publicity and sell some plants, too!

For an understanding of what America In Bloom is all about and how the program can boost pride

in your community, click [HERE](#).



### Meet a 60-year-old jade plant

Bill Bos of Bos Greenhouse and Farms in Grand Rapids, Michigan, was afraid it was too late to show off his nursery's pet plant. But it's never too late, Bill! This pet jade is over 60 years old, he says, and flowers dependably every Christmas.



By the way, the plant is half the age of the business, which turns 105 on March 5. Happy birthday!

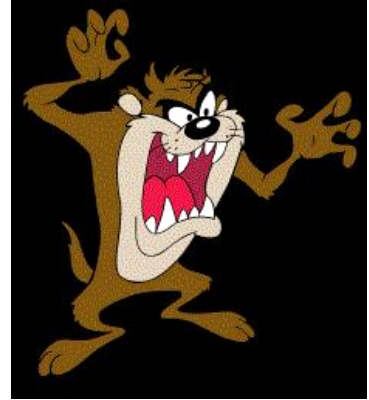
If you've got a pet plant, either at home or at your business, tell me about it [HERE](#). I'm especially interested if you've found a way to use a venerable old plant specimen as a marketing tool for your business. As I said, when I started this search, I think consumers will be enthralled by the idea a plant can last for generations.

## Finally ...

Ever wonder how Tasmanian growers keep Tasmanian devils out of their greenhouses? That's what I'm going to find out next week when I take a trip down under to speak at the Australian Nursery & Garden Industry Conference in Hobart, Tasmania, Australia.

Tasmania, for those who don't know, is an island state of Australia, located off the southeast coast of the country, a couple hours below Melbourne. It's known for its rugged, scenic terrain. I'm told it's like one giant park. I will certainly take in the beauty of the place, but I'll also be hitting greenhouses and garden centers to get a feel for the island's industry. I'll also study the viticulture of the region ... hey, wine is agriculture, too! And since I'm going all that way, I'm laying over in Sydney for a couple of days and will visit some of their garden centers and the Royal Botanical Garden, where my friend Jimmy Turner, formerly of Dallas, now plies his Felcos. Stay tuned for my full report!

As for controlling Tasmanian Devils, I'm thinking sticky tape.



See you next time!

Chris Beytes

Editor

*GrowerTalks* and *Green Profit*

**This e-mail received by 22,846 loyal readers!**

Thanks to my loyal sponsors, who help me reach the 22,846 readers of *Acres Online* in 66 countries! Want to be one (a sponsor, that is)? Give **Paul Black** a shout and he'll hook you up.