

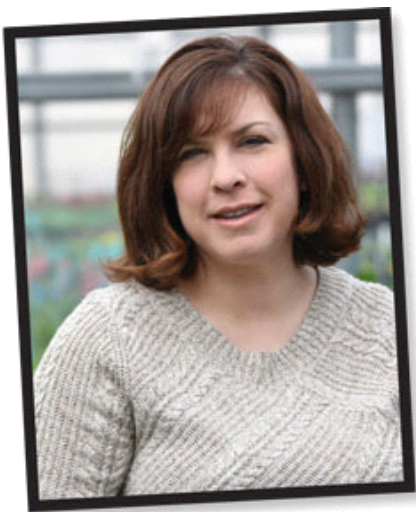
GROWERTALKS

Inside Look

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Grant Yourself a Pat on the Back

Jennifer Zurko



JENNIFER ZURKO

I've been in this industry for almost 20 years and I'm still amazed at how you growers can produce so many plants so well and get them to retail in such a short amount of time.

Certainly, I'm reminded of this every time I enter a greenhouse filled wall to wall with plants. But I think that maybe some of us take the fact that we've got some really excellent producers and plant breeders in this industry for granted.

I thought about this as Chris Beytes, Bill Calkins and I were traveling with Osvaldo Cuevas, our new video producer, up the coast of California for Spring Trials. Since it was his very first CAST, we asked Osvaldo in the middle of the trip what he thought about our little industry so far after seeing a handful of breeders, and meeting some notable growers. (Osvaldo came to us from Apple, so we were very interested to get his take.)

He pondered for a few seconds and then said he was surprised at how complicated the supply chain is for our industry and how much goes into getting plants to the garden center.

After hearing Osvaldo's comments, the three of us smiled and nodded, acknowledging that growing is hard. Which is a simple, funny way to sum up a complicated, serious thing because there's so much more behind that statement.

Osvaldo's observations made me wonder if we sometimes take what we do for granted. Do we need to make it a point after each season to sit down with our teams to take a quick breather and say, "We did that"? Do we need to celebrate our accomplishments and appreciation for each other a bit more—especially since it's a rare commodity these days?

I try not to take for granted the job we do for these pages (and in our newsletters, videos, webinars, etc.), which is to make your life a little bit easier by providing the latest growing information.

Poinsettias are a ubiquitous holiday staple, but from what I've learned, aren't the easiest crop to grow. So we've tried something a bit different in this month's Poinsettia Issue: Bill took all of the steps for poinsettia production he's gleaned from the Tech On Demand podcasts and webinars and packaged them in a handy "task checklist" that you

can tear out, print out, forward, make copies, post in the greenhouse/conference room/breakroom, whatever. (Snaps to our Creative Director Chris Truesdale for making this crazy idea work.)

We also have new cultivar highlights for this year that we saw at the N.G. Heimos Poinsettia Open House last November. And with poinsettias comes the inevitable insect and/or disease issue. Learn how you can finesse your pest management strategy.

Once in a while—usually when we see someone complain on social media or on a garden blog about the plants they just bought—we may utter under our breath: “Man, if consumers only knew how much went into making this plant ...” But then it’s April and there’s an issue in bay #4, so the thought floats away to make room for more problem-solving. Don’t take for granted all that you do to make that plant exist, even if other people do. **GT**