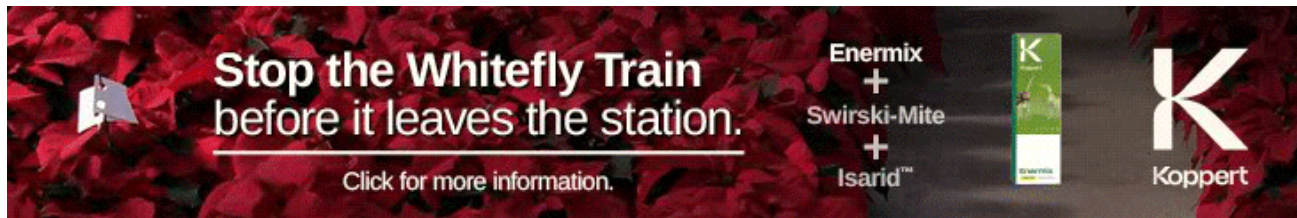


Plug & Cutting Conference Cancelled; at the Field to Vase Dinner



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COMING UP THIS WEEK:

Storm threat causes cancellation
- FNGLA knows what it's like
- How Oelschig's is prepping
Planter gets Kickstarter launch
"Measuring Light" webinar saved
Upcoming webinars:
- Greenhouse v. indoor cannabis
- Botrytis innovations
Field to Vase dinner: Amazing!
PW's Recipe Guide for growers

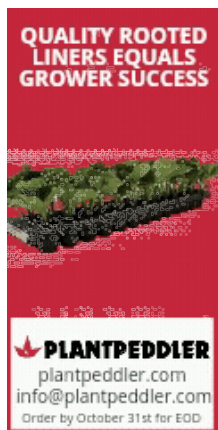


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Plug & Cutting Conference cancelled



I'm sure it was a tough decision, but it was a wise one: Given the approach of Hurricane Florence, AmericanHort has decided to cancel their 2018 Plug & Cutting Conference, which was slated for next Monday through Wednesday in Charlotte, North Carolina. They'll be refunding all registration fees for both attendees and exhibitors.

While Charlotte is inland some 180 miles, and it's still unknown exactly where Florence will make landfall, the storm is certain to cause travel and logistics issues for the entire region. Plus, the greenhouse tour stops may have wind or water damage to contend with.

"The safety and well-being of all participants in this event is our primary concern," stated AmericanHort in a press release. "With near certain weekend travel delays and the potential for significant inland flooding, we are making this decision now to give everyone enough notice to make travel and schedule adjustments." They added, "We are grateful to the hundreds of industry professionals who have registered for the conference, and for our outstanding sponsors and tour stops who have generously supported this event. We apologize for any inconvenience this has caused. Our thoughts and prayers are with those who are impacted by Hurricane Florence."

But the Plug & Cutting Conference will be back! AmericanHort says they will be looking at the options for rescheduling the event. Check Americanhort.org for updates. Or stay tuned to Acres Online.



FNGLA on the decision

If anyone knows what it's like to cancel a big event, it's Linda Adams, COO of the Florida Nursery, Growers and Landscape Association (FNGLA). In September of last year, FNGLA had to pull the plug on their annual Landscape Show due to Hurricane Irma. (The show was later rescheduled for November).

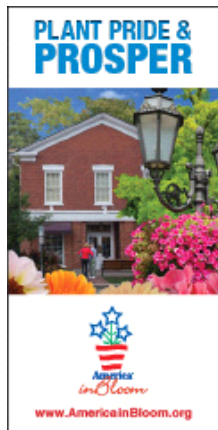
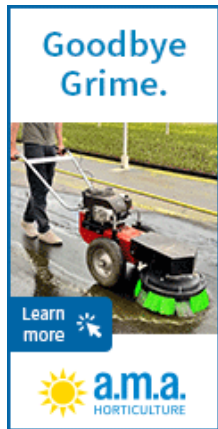
Via email, I asked Linda what it's like, as an association exec, to have to make such a tough decision. Here's her reply:

Our experience has been that it is easier to build an event than to stop it at the last minute. Yet, hurricanes still trump trade shows and conferences, and sometimes you just have to stand down to nature.

It is a very hard decision to cancel an event, as the ripple effect impacts so many layers of people, companies, service providers and the local community. The safety and wellbeing of the participants are always the first and most important consideration, including safe travel conditions and the uncertainty of post-storm conditions. Each situation is unique, and the folks involved have to use the best information they have at the time to make the decision that makes the most sense for all involved. A timely decision is also important, so it can be communicated and people have time to switch gears well in advance of the storm.



While I know that financial considerations come a distant second to safety, I asked if



organizations carry insurance in case of such instances. She replied:

Financial considerations are also important, not just for the association, but for everyone connected with the event. Cancellation clauses in contracts and cancellation insurance can make all the difference in coming through a bad situation financially whole.

Most importantly, perhaps, as Floridians who have weathered many hurricanes and tropical storms, Linda and the FNGLA staff and members know better than most what those in Florence's path are facing. She led her email reply to me with this:

Our hearts have been and are with our neighbors to the north as we've been watching Florence move toward the Carolinas, as we know so well what they are going through. Florence looks SCARY!

How Oeschlig's is preparing

Savannah, Georgia, is just south of the current landfall target of Florence, but it's close enough for my friend Kurt Oelschig of [Oelschig Nursery](#) to be making preparations. I emailed him to find out what he and his crew are doing to batten the hatches. Here's his reply:

Florence is one of the more fickle storms that I can remember. She just can't seem to make up her mind where she wants to land and then what she is going to do once she gets there. The forecast changes with each update. That being said, we are expecting tropical storm winds and a frog-choker of a rain at this time, but when and for how long seem to be up for grabs.

Our preparations are not as extensive as they would be for a hurricane. We are making sure our roofs are properly clipped in and inflated, gutters and drains are clear, opened pallets are secured. Our skyscrapers of soil will be placed outside of windward greenhouse walls to buffer the wind.

I am more concerned about our customers and allied greenhouse friends in South Carolina. We plan to go into transport mode with supplies for them next week if needed.



Thanks for that, Kurt! Using soil stacks to break the wind sounds like a good idea. And naturally, you're thinking of how you can help others—typical grower! It's why I love this business.

The Only Magazine GROWERS AND RETAILERS FLIP OVER.

Innovative planter launches on Kickstarter

Today (Thursday) is the official launch of a novel planter called brēth (pronounced breathe but spelled in the modern, hip way, like lēf Farms in New Hampshire).

What's a brēth? It's both an all-natural air purifier and a self-sufficient indoor planter, explains co-founder Ray Greenstreet of Greenstreet Growers and Greenstreet Gardens in Maryland and Virginia. brēth launches September 13 on the fundraising website [Kickstarter](#) and at a VIP luncheon in the Washington, D.C. area.

Here's a picture ... so you get the picture, if you know what I mean:



brēth came about from Ray's work with green walls. He sells and installs a product called an Aerogation system that uses pressure to force ambient air through the rootzone of the green wall's plants, putting the roots to work converting air pollutants into organic compounds that feed the plant. Aerogation is said to clean the air 200 times better than passive systems, and laboratory testing has proven that it works.

"We had so many customers asking for smaller green walls for homes and offices with the same technology to clean [air] like our large commercial and residential walls," Ray explains of how brēth came about. "brēth is going to be a line of products for healthy living, green walls, and other types of units, [both] bigger and smaller. And we have some other very cool ideas on the drawing board," he added.

brēth can be used anywhere in a home or office. Not only does it clean the air, it's self-watering for low maintenance (with a 10-day reservoir) and includes an LED light on a 12-hour timer. A sensor and smartphone app tells you if your plants need water and how much air they're cleaning. Research has indicated that three plants in a brēth planter have the air cleaning power of 200 houseplants. Ray thinks this will be a great product for garden centers to sell (and remember, he has a garden center).

During the 30-day Kickstarter campaign, you'll be able to get a brēth for \$99, which is 50% off the retail price. Five percent of sales on Kickstarter will go to the Bonobo Conservation Institute

to protect the endangered rainforest in the Congo Basin.

brēth is manufactured and sold by Air8Green, LLC and marketed by Wexler. Ray's co-founder is Mark Prescott, Chief Technology Officer at Air8Green.

Learn more at <https://gobreth.com/>. Find the Kickstarter campaign [HERE](#).



Measuring Light webinar archived

Earlier this week, I hosted a great webinar on the specifics of measuring light in the greenhouse. It's an important topic because we simply don't pay nearly as much attention to the quality and quantity of light our crops are getting as we should. I mean, look at how much we know about our water, from pH to EC and overall quality. But light? Nada.

My guest experts from Signify (formerly Philips) and LI-COR (a maker of light sensors) offered up all the whys and hows of measuring light, including some great details on modern quantum and PAR sensors.

You can find the archive at the same spot you sign up for our webinars, www.growertalks.com/webinars. (The link is down below the upcoming webinars.)

Check it out!

Upcoming webinars on Cannabis, Botrytis

While you are at our webinar site, take note of the next two webinars I've got scheduled:

Greenhouse vs. Indoor Cannabis Growing October 4, 1 p.m. Eastern

This is the first of several webinars I plan on doing in conjunction with the [National Greenhouse Manufacturers Association](#), which wants folks in the cannabis world to know how much better it is to grow in a greenhouse rather than the indoor warehouse spaces they had been relegated to before legalization became a reality.

My guest expert for the webinar will be Nick Earls of Wadsworth Control Systems. Nick studied Controlled Environment Agriculture under Gene Giacomelli at the University of Arizona and has experience working in both indoor and greenhouse cannabis operations in Colorado—a knowledgeable young guy! Now he's the cannabis specialist for Wadsworth. Nick will cover the following topics:

- Equipment similarities and differences
- Power consumption
- Light deprivation/light pollution
- Single-source lighting vs. supplemental lighting
- Greenhouse vs. indoor environmental controls
- Integrated pest management

Whether you're growing cannabis, thinking about it, or just curious, it's a must-attend webinar!

New Research, New Innovation in Botrytis Management October 16, 1 p.m. Eastern

This webinar, sponsored by Bayer, will feature guest experts Dr. Janna Beckerman and Dr. Aaron Palmateer, who will provide the very latest information on Botrytis, including: The latest research in Botrytis management; topline results from research trials on fungicide efficacy for Botrytis control; and details on the new fungicide **Broadform**, by Bayer.

Sign up for either or both at www.growertalks.com/webinars.



Field to Vase dinner was amazing!

Normally, I like a quiet dinner in my own garden with one or perhaps two other couples for company. Two hundred people? Definitely a crowd.

Yet the American Grown **Field to Vase** dinner I attended last Saturday at Star Valley Flowers in Wisconsin was a delight, not in spite of, but because of the 200 fellow flower lovers with whom Laurie and I shared the scenery, cuisine and laughter.



Note the chap on the right with the flowers in his beard.

This was the fourth Field to Vase dinner of the 2018 season and the 28th since the idea came to fruition in 2015. Hosted by American Grown Flowers, the idea is to build upon the “farm to table” concept of enjoying fresh products right where they’re produced, and reminding folks how essential flowers are to our lives and celebrations.

And what a celebration it was! Perfect weather, local musicians and, as I said, 200 people from all over the Midwest and beyond. About 25% were in the flower business, as wholesalers, florists or fellow flower growers. But more than half of the attendees were our end consumers—folks who simply love flowers and jumped at the chance to dine in the middle of a flower farm.



Star Valley features an historic barn and 200 acres of “fruiting, flowering and decorative branches” as owner John Zehrer describes his cut woodies. He also sells annual cuts, courtesy of some other local growers, including one Amish family. The farm is located in Soldier’s Grove, which is in the heart of what’s called the “driftless” region, an area of Wisconsin, Minnesota and Illinois that was untouched by the glaciers, leaving a much hillier terrain than you find in the rest of the region.

Alas, we arrived too late to go on the VIP wagon tour of the property, but we did catch John’s speech about how he founded Star Valley in 1988 after a career milking cows. He wanted to do something else in agriculture, and contemplated broccoli, for which he could get 35 cents a head.

It was while helping a carpenter friend rehab a florist shop that he was introduced to cut flowers. When he learned that a bunch of zinnias fetched \$3 wholesale, he quickly forgot about broccoli. Today, John and his 15- to 30-person staff, guided by his right-hand-man Phil Mueller, sell throughout the Midwest, to wholesalers, florists and some grocery chains.



But back to the event

As I said, this was the 28th Field to Vase Dinner, and the largest yet, said Kasey Cronquist, the event “ambassador” (and head of the California Cut Flower Commission). Normally, they’d cap registration at 150, but American Grown kept getting calls for tickets, and farmer John kept agreeing to add tables (he’s got a long dirt road, he joked). The next thing they knew, they had 200 people seated at a 200-ft. long dinner table under arches of farm-grown bittersweet.



John describes his foray into cuts.



Kasey Cronquist gets boutonnièred. Attendees got to craft their own.



Floral designers Erick New and Greg Campbell with owner John Zehrer.



Chef Luke Zahm grilling local organic beef tenderloin.

Floral design work was provided by Greg Campbell and Erick New of Garden District in Memphis, Tennessee, who spent two days working exclusively with flowers and branches from the farm to create both the tablescape and the many vignettes throughout the property. Dinner was prepared by local chef and James Beard honoree Luke Zahm of the Driftless Café, using all locally sourced, mostly organic ingredients. Wine was by Geyser Peak. All of it was delicious!

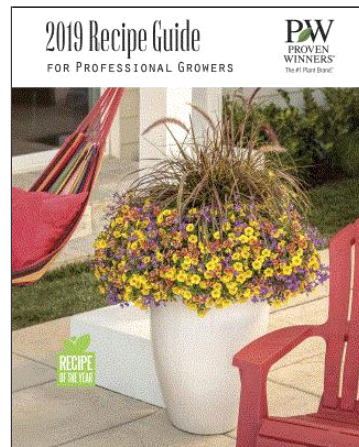
A thanks to my parent company, Ball Horticultural Company, sponsor of the Field to Vase Dinner Tour, for making a pair of seats available to us. We enjoyed it so much, we've already signed up for the Homer, Alaska, dinner in 2019!

PW's Recipe Guide for Professional Growers

Ideas! That's what you growers are looking for, especially when it comes to container recipes. Proven Winners has your back with their new Recipe Guide for Professional Growers.

Proven Winners' recipe guide includes everything from creative design tips to critical production knowledge, all put together by their lead growers. It includes planting diagrams for nearly 200 recipes that make use of the new varieties for 2019, including Proven Winners' Annual of the Year, Lemon Coral Sedum.

The handy thing is, it's online. Click [HERE](#) and you can view the entire 20-page booklet right now and be planting up some containers in just minutes ... provided you have some Proven Winner plants on hand, of course.



Finally ...

Forget this nonsense about "It's a tough job, but somebody's gotta do it." You can see from my Field to Vase coverage that I'm blessed with an amazing job. When you hear that my next stop is Prague, in the Czech Republic, where I will be visiting garden centers with the annual [International Garden Center Association Congress](#), well, you'll probably want to strangle me.

Still, it is for work: Starting this weekend, I'll be joining 200 or so of my closest garden center friends from 20 countries for five days of visits to retailers, gardens, tourist stops, castles, a zoo ... even the world-famous Budweiser Budvar Brewery. Naturally, you'll read all about it in the next *Acres Online* and in the November *Green Profit*.



Zahradnické centrum (garden center) Ferencík, one of our many scheduled stops. Looks promising!

Sound like fun? It is! And loaded with inspiration and ideas. This will be my seventh IGCA Congress. My eighth (Lord willin' and the creek don't rise) will be in Windsor, England, September 1-6, 2019. Plan on joining us.

See you next time,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chi".

Chris Beytes

Editor

GrowerTalks and Green Profit

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