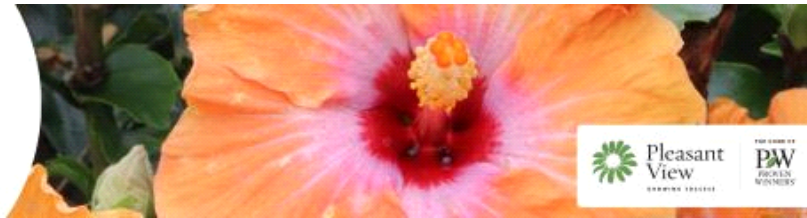


MANTS, pollinator survey and join SnowCare for Troops

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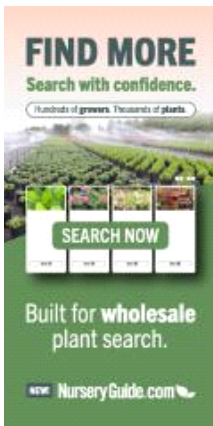
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COMING UP THIS WEEK:

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- Pollinator Survey
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MANTS Scam

MANTS exhibitors, watch for scammers! The MANTS organizers sent a notice about “a plethora” of scams going on relating to the MANTS Show. These scams are for hotel rooms, attendee lists, freight and logistics, even audio-visual needs. MANTS does NOT send out solicitations, so the folks doing this are “NOT LEGITIMATE” (MANTS’ emphasis). The only folks related to MANTS that may reach out to you are Shepard Exposition Services (decorators) and Naylor Association Solutions, the ad sales folks for the MANTS Buyer’s Guide and website.

By the way, like robocalls and those mysterious voicemails left in Mandarin, scams are a plague in the trade show industry worldwide. Other than those two MANTS business partners listed above, it’s just best to delete any of those other emails claiming to be part of the show.

While we’re talking about MANTS, it’s taking place January 9-11 at the Baltimore Convention Center. It’s a trade-show only show, which is a good concept if all you’re interested in is getting business done. And it’s a show that is growing phenomenally. Register for it [HERE](#).

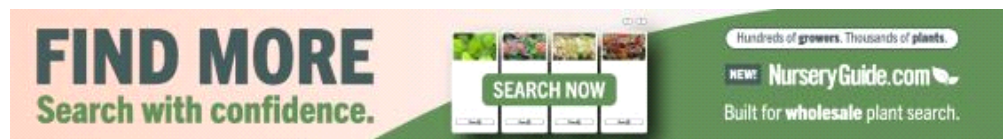


Pollinator Survey

I ply you with survey results all the time—what consumers will spend for Mother's Day, what's the ratio of online to in-store shopping, what this season's top pet costumes are, etc. etc. But now I am soliciting you to take a survey.

The National Pollinator Garden Network (NPGN) wants to survey both the public and the trade to see how the individuals and businesses have responded to the predicament that pollinators and monarchs are in. The survey responses will go into a report that the NPGN is developing and plans on releasing in early 2019. The results will undoubtedly shed light on how people respond, and it will likely help you gauge your current response to the issue and adjust it according to consumer demands.

Find and fill out the [NPGN SURVEY](#) by November 29. The NPGN, by the way, brings folks in conservation, garden trade and civic groups together to promote and advocate for pollinator issues. The co-founders include AmericanHort, National Garden Association, National Gardening Bureau, National Wildlife Federation, Pollinator Partnership, and American Public Gardens Association.



National Floriculture Forum

The 2019 edition of the National Floriculture Forum (NFF) will meet in Chicago, Illinois, this coming February 16-17. The theme for the event is "Adding Value: Back to Our Roots" and it'll be the basis around which industry leaders, the greenhouse industry and folks from academia and government discuss floriculture's pressing issues. The event also brings these seemingly diverse groups together to collaborate, build relationships, improve communications and distribute information.

The NFF begins with an optional tour to the Chicago Botanic Garden led by Dr. Jim Ault. He'll show folks around the renovated greenhouses and give some updates about the Garden's breeding and introduction program. The meetings and speaker presentations take place Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning. During that time the academics in the room will have a chance to update the group about their universities' programs. On Saturday evening, attendees will be treated to a talk by Dr. Charlie Hall, who'll speak on "Incorporating the Value of Plants and Our Industry into Curricula." I'd go for that talk alone!

Registration is a good deal (\$150) and the hotel rate at the Crowne Plaza O'Hare Hotel and Conference Center in Rosemont is good too, considering the free shuttle back and forth to O'Hare, wifi and breakfasts.

Got a question about the NFF? You'll want to contact the organizer of this year's event, Dr. Marvin Miller. You can reach him at mnmillier@ballhort.com.



Let the Snow Fly

If just the last few weeks are any indication, Winter 2019 is going to be a bear. The East Coast has already been hit by a major snowstorm, and it seems like the snow won't stop falling in northern New England. This does not portend well for the next few months.

If you or your business is committed to volunteering, the forthcoming snow will give you an opportunity to do so. Project EverGreen, partnering with BOSS Snowplow, is looking for volunteers ("snow management professionals") for SnowCare for Troops. Now in its ninth year, SnowCare for Troops volunteers provide snow removal services to families of deployed military personnel. If you volunteer, you'll be matched with families within your service area.

Sure, you'll clear the snow, no big deal, right? But it IS a big deal. You'll be helping families who have at least one family member away from the household. Any help you can lend to clear snow means more time a parent can take to get their kids ready for school and get to work on time.



Do something that'll warm your heart this winter; register to volunteer for SnowCare for Troops. Just visit the [Project EverGreen](#) website.

Getting Facebook Ads Right

I don't know about you, but I get a lot of Facebook ads based only on the very general facts that I'm a white woman in my (ahem) 40s who lives in Boston. That type of hit-and-miss advertising leads to a lot of misplaced advertising dollars on your part. And with the holidays coming up, you want to make sure your ad spends hit their targets as best as possible.

I ran across a relevant article that shares with you the seven reasons why your Facebook ads are not converting eyes to dollars. Which of these seven are you guilty of?

1. **You're targeting the wrong people.** We're often targeting a "cold audience"—people who fit a certain demographic. But it makes much more sense to target folks you know are interested in you.
2. **You're targeting the right people with the wrong message.** Depending on where your potential customer is in the journey to purchasing, you either sell the brand, sell empathy or sell products *hard*.
3. **You're targeting the right people with the wrong types of ads.** Start using "Facebook ad types" to help you figure out what types of ads your customers responded

to previously and go from there.

4. **Your targeting is too broad.** Use the “Detailed Targeting Tool” to narrow your market.
5. **You're pitching sales to a cold audience.** Start them off at recognition first, then retarget them from there.
6. **Your Facebook Ads relevance scores are too low.** Tighten your targeting and reconsider your ad frequency.
7. **Your Facebook ads don't align with your landing page.** A landing page should include social proof, counter any objections, use clear and concise headlines which make it easier to skim and include friendly content free from errors.

Of course I simplified it for brevity. But go ahead and read the [ARTICLE](#)—or pass it along to the folks in your company that are in charge of this sort of thing.

Your Next Trend?

You know how much I loved the Trendwatching.com group's 2018 trends to watch, especially that trend they called “tribefactoring” in a post-demographic world. What new trend will be as relative? Trendwatching.com just released their next [FIVE TRENDS for 2019](#) to watch for, so it could very well be one of these:

Legislative Brands: More than just “brand activism,” the most progressive (little p, not big P) brands are looking to do *more* than just raise awareness. They are looking to influence—and even change—the rules of the game for the better.

Lab Rats: Human wellness and lifestyle are increasingly becoming engineering problems to be fixed. Technology lets us both measure ourselves and find customized “solutions” to better health.

Open Source Solutions: Businesses are developing, sharing and giving away their solutions to problems we all solve, especially those solutions that have a positive impact on the environment and sustainability.

Fantasy IRL: The lines between the real and imagined worlds are blurring. From fantasy football to Fortnite, consumers have more avenues of escaping reality than ever before.

Superhuman Resources: Consumers will demand that algorithms and artificial intelligence be employed fairly and ethically.

Follow the Food & Bev Trends

You know by now that I keep a watchful eye on both the grocery and food/beverage industries. What happens in those categories—items we humans need to live—is a good indicator as to where secondary, less essential categories are headed. (Yes, plants are necessary but we don't eat ponytail plants and heuchera.)

Consumer market analysis firm Mintel released three [broad-based trends](#) for the food and beverage category last week, and I believe each trend has a corresponding partner in the horticulture biz. Here are the synopses for Mintel's trends and my takes on them.

Evergreen consumption: Sustainability is extending to the entire product lifecycle—“from farm to retailer to fork to bin to rebirth as a new plant, ingredient, product or package.” They also note “a seismic shift in how consumers think about plastic is underway.” For horticulture, that

consumer concern doesn't stop at food and beverage. They'll scrutinize our use of plastics, not just for pots but also hangers, wraps and anything extraneous.

Through the ages: Food and beverages will be one of a growing number of solutions for better aging and wellness. For horticulture, those plant-based food and beverage solutions are items we can grow and offer straight to the consumer. Maybe there's a "health and wellness garden" department in your future.

Elevated convenience: As Mintel summarizes this, "to match the premium expectations of consumers in the on-demand age, convenience food and drink will get an upgrade." People are increasingly on the go, eating solo and wanting easy-to-prepare *healthy* food. Think individual meal kits, upgraded prepared meals and shortcuts in accessing these. For horticulture, this means continued expansion of pre-made containers, easy-to-complete one-day garden project kits and convenient options for ordering do-it-for-me garden-related services.

Does that sound about right for you? Let me know [HERE](#).

Speaking of Food ...

Thanksgiving is my favorite holiday, because it's a holiday that invites everyone to the table—quite literally. And aside from a few PETA billboards I've spotted this year, it's also one without too much controversy (unless the controversy is amongst family members).

If I am required to find controversy, then I'd locate it in that bowl of cranberry sauce or relish. People are particular. Some enjoy the jellied stuff straight out of the can. It's not bad and it has its place, but I prefer my mother's recipe that grinds some cranberries, oranges and maybe a small bit of onion.

This year, however, I'm finally going to make [Mama Stamberg's Cranberry Relish](#). I've heard it recited on NPR for years, but have never tasted it, let alone made it. Sour cream, onion and horseradish—yes, horseradish—distinguish this version from the rest. Wish me luck.

What's the controversy on your Thanksgiving table? Rant about it [HERE](#) and get it out of your system before your guests arrive.

Happy Thanksgiving, friends! And may Small Business Saturday work in your favor. Meanwhile, comments, questions or suggestions? Email me at ewells@ballpublishing.com.



Ellen Wells
Editor-at-Large
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