

California reveals pesticide residue results, plant DNA in the honey, and a royal influence on the nature gardening movement



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#### COMING UP THIS WEEK:

Get Your Town into Bloom  
CA's Pesticide Residue Results  
Gro More Grassroots Grants  
Their DNA is in the Honey  
Duchess Goes Back to Nature  
Nominate a Young Grower or Retailer



## How to Get Your Town into Bloom

We've heard that the America In Bloom (AIB) program works magic in many communities—bringing people, government and businesses together to “plant pride in their communities.” We've also heard that retailers and growers who get their city involved in the national awards program see their businesses grow.

Both of those are good reasons to get your city signed up for this year's America In Bloom program. Cities need to enroll by February 28. (And if you recruit another AIB participant, you can save up to 25% on your registration costs.)

Learn more [HERE](#). And register [HERE](#).



## California Reveals Pesticide Residue Results

The California Department of Pesticide Regulation says that most of the fresh produce they tested in 2017 met national pesticide residue standards. They state that 96% of all samples had either no detectable residue or were below levels allowed by the EPA. A total of 41% had no detectable residues at all. That leaves about 4% of samples that either contained traces of pesticides not approved for that produce item or that had residue levels in excess of EPA standards. The California Department of Pesticide Regulation works to remove any produce that

has illegal residues.

The produce sampled included California-grown items, as well as those from across the U.S. and 28 different countries, including those labeled organic.

How did organic fare? Remember that organic producers can use certain pesticides, and organic produce may have residues of other pesticides at less than 5% of the U.S. EPA commodity tolerance. Based on that, California had 42 out of 288 tested organic samples with quantifiable residues, and only three of those samples had illegal residues—a lemon from Mexico, a lime from Mexico and kale from California.

A quick glance at the list of illegal samples (both conventional and organic) showed that many of the problems were found with cilantro, kale, snow peas and tomatillos.

You can read the full report [HERE](#).



## Gro More Grassroots Grants

The 2019 Gro More Grassroots Grant program is open for applications. Presented by Scotts Miracle-Gro Foundation and KidsGardening, this is a new program that will dole out 175 grants worth more than \$100,000 in total.

So if you know of a youth garden or greenspace that needs a little help, encourage them to apply. Recipients will receive \$500 to \$1,000 to help install new or expand gardens or greenspaces. Deadline to apply is February 15, 2019. More information is available [HERE](#).

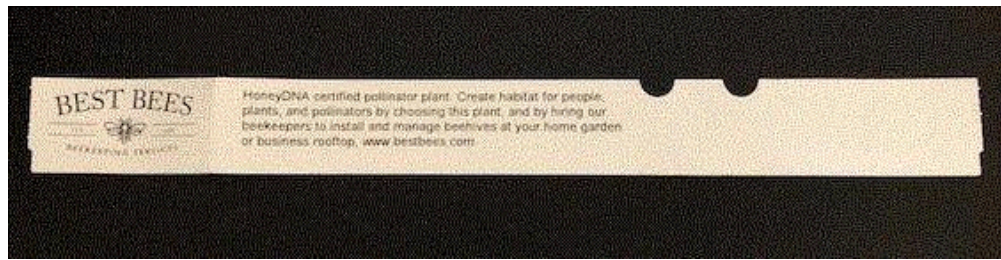


## DNA in the Honey = Best Bees Plants

*My colleague Ellen Wells reported on this in her Buzz newsletter:*

Two people told me the best thing they saw at MANTS a few weeks ago was the HoneyDNA-certified pollinator plant tag from Best Bees, a Boston-based business. I've known about Best Bees for a while, having seen them at New England Grows several years ago and being attracted to their artist-designed, hand-painted beehives. (They also do installations, maintenance and harvesting at residential and commercial properties in a number of locations nationwide. Great idea for this product in particular, don't you think?)

The folks at Best Bees went about analyzing DNA collected from honey in nine different regions of the country to determine what plants the local bees were visiting for pollen and in what percentages. That is, these folks know which plants bees in a certain area are visiting the most. Garden retailers can help their customers looking for honeybee-friendly plants by stocking those plants their local honeybees enjoy the most and then tagging them with this tag.



I like this company because they keep taking the extra step. They could have stopped at pretty hives or installations in one part of the country. But they take the extra steps—adding services and locations and exploring ideas—not just as part of a business plan, but because these guys believe the bees need help. I can't wait to hear about their next steps.—Ellen Wells

## The Duchess Goes Back to Nature

The Chelsea Flower Show will have an extra draw at their annual event in May. They'll be showcasing a woodland garden created by the Duchess of Cambridge. But it's not just a woodland garden; the "RHS Back to Nature Garden" was inspired by the Japanese "forest bathing" concept and a parenting book on nature deficit disorder. According to a Kensington Palace spokesman, "The garden seeks to recapture for adults the sense of wonder and magic that they enjoyed as children, in addition to kindling excitement and a passion for nature in future generations."

To be clear, the Duchess didn't create it all by herself. She collaborated with two award-winning landscape architects, Andree Davies and Adam White.

Here's yet another good excuse to talk about how gardens can connect us to nature and how plants can improve our health and well-being. And maybe it's something that can inspire a similar garden in your garden center. Granted, it won't have that royal touch.

## Young Grower and Young Retailer Nominations

Our young leaders need a little recognition. Help *GrowerTalks* and *Green Profit* find the bright talent that will bring our industry into the future. We're seeking nominations for the 2019 *GrowerTalks*/Nexus Young Grower Award and the 2019 *Green Profit*/RBI Young Retailer Award.

Nominees should be under 35, and to nominate someone (or yourself), you just have to fill out a short form. Three finalists will be chosen to: write a guest editorial in the June issue, receive a free trip to Cultivate'19, and attend a special dinner with industry luminaries. The winner of each award will appear on the respective covers of our September issues and serve as a judge for next year's award.

Click the links below for more information.

[15th Annual \*GrowerTalks\*/Nexus Young Grower Award](#)

[14th Annual \*Green Profit\*/RBI Young Retailer Award](#)

Until next time,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennifer". The script is cursive and fluid.

Jennifer Duffield White

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