New Intros, Lots on Worker Safety and More



News and commentary for the perennial market

GROWERTALKS MAGAZINE greenPROFIT MAGAZINE

FRIDAY, MAY 8, 2020

subscribe



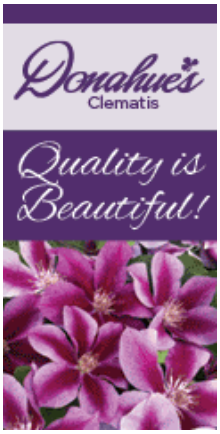
Perennial PULSE

News and commentary on the global perennial plant market

COMING UP THIS WEEK:

Worker Safety & Social Distancing
Bill's Findings
New from Danziger
Syngenta Flower Intros
Darwin Digital Days











Worker Safety and Social Distancing

The pandemic isn't behind us yet and for at least the near future businesses will be faced with many challenges on how to get the job done while keeping their workers safe. There's lots of useful information out there on employee safety, but wouldn't you like to hear how some of our industries top companies are doing it?



Ball Publishing's very own Bill Calkins recently interviewed Metrolina's Abe VanWingerden and Four Star's Jeff Back to discuss how their companies are navigating through these challenging times.

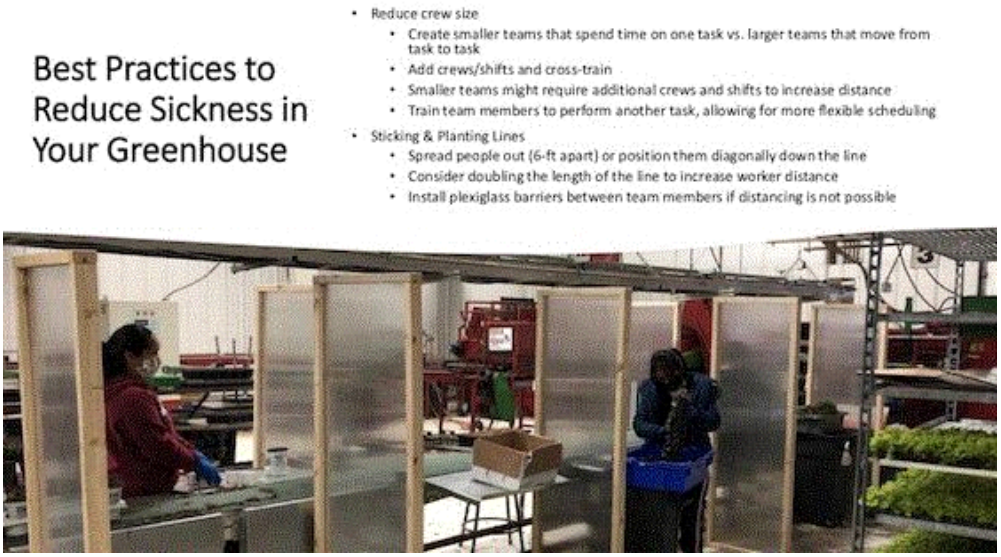
Not only do Abe and Jeff discuss monitoring employee health, sanitation protocols and social distancing in their greenhouses, they discuss how many of these COVID-19-related changes might impact the future production of greenhouse crops in North America and around the world.

Click here or on the image above to watch this informative and timely interview.



Bill's Findings

If you know Bill Calkins who conducted the interview above, I think you'd agree he never under-delivers. Not only did he do an excellent job interviewing Abe and Jeff, he managed to pull together some excellent information on keeping workers safe in greenhouses.



First, Bill has made the slides shown in his interview available. They include helpful information on keeping greenhouses germ-free, best practices greenhouses are implementing to keep their workers safe and other helpful tidbits. Click here to view these slides.

Next, Bill did his research and compiled many best practices he gleaned from the interview, as well as a variety of other sources. Here are the best suggestions for keeping workers safe that he came up with:

- DO NOT ask your existing staff to do the extra cleaning—hire a crew or talk to your normal cleaning/janitorial crew to add additional staff; they will most likely have people available with so many other businesses closed
- Keep in mind that if you try to rely on your staff to clean up or delegate, it may not last long
- Have isopropyl alcohol and hand sanitizer/cleaner available for human use
- Use Quat disinfectant cleaner or 3% bleach solution for surfaces and equipment

- Watch all touchpoints—handles, seats, knobs, microwaves and time clocks
- Remove lids from trash cans and prop open doors
- Limit the number of people in bathrooms
- Reduce chairs in your breakroom to nine or fewer
- Use tape on the floor to indicate safe distancing
- Best practices should start with management, who should wear masks and eliminate face-to-face meetings with multiple people
- Encourage staff to clean all personal tools, including phones, frequently
- Ask your staff to give input on areas to be cleaned
- Encourage managers to check in with employees frequently—how are they feeling?
- Don't punish staff for missing work if they feel ill or they won't take precautions
- Hand out masks, bandanas, face coverings—don't make staff buy their own
- Many of these precautions should stay in place past the pandemic
- Operations should expect to answer questions from prospective employees about their health and safety measures now and into the future

Thank you, Bill, for putting together and sharing these helpful safety guidelines.



New from Danziger

Agastache Sunny Sparks Series



Orange Glow



Pink Glow

The Sunny Sparks series from Danziger has many great attributes you're likely looking for in an agastache. They have rounded habits, vibrant-colored blooms and lots of flower power from late spring through the fall. The Sunny Sparks series blooms the first year without vernalization, have nice, rounded, sturdy habits and fill out the pots quicker than other series on the market. They grow 18- to 20-in. tall and are cold hardy to Zone 5.

Coreopsis Solanna Series



Solanna Sunset Starburst



Solanna Sunshine

I’m a fan of perennials that are super easy to grow and have lots of flower power. The Solanna series of coreopsis from Danziger sure fits the bill. Did you know there are now eight cultivars in the series with several growth habits and colors to select from? Please allow me the privilege of introducing you to the newest member of the Solanna family.

There are actually two additions to the Solanna series this year: Sunshine and Sunset Starburst. They're both *Coreopsis grandiflora* cultivars, first-year flowering and don't require vernalization. Solanna Sunshine has bright yellow flowers and Solanna Sunset Starburst has large red-and-yellow bicolored blooms. They're both easy to grow, colorful and hardy to Zone 4.

Iberis First Flush Lavender



You’ve likely experienced the very early blooming most iberis cultivars offer with flowering occurring before you’re even able to sell the plants. You like them, but wish they’d flower later in the spring

and into the summer. (Wait, that sounds familiar ...) You've tried those summer blooming iberis only to find they weren't hardy. Well, do I have some good news for you!

Danziger has just introduced a summer blooming iberis with cold hardiness all the way to Zone 5. I hope that got your interest. Iberis First Flush Lavender is a first-year flowering perennial with no need for a fall bulking period and has no vernalization requirements. It actually begins blooming in the late spring and continues right on through to the fall. The soft lavender blooms blanket the plant providing lots of flower power for a 5- to 8-in. tall, mounded plant. I'm excited to give First Flush Lavender a try—are you?



Syngenta Flowers Introductions

Aubretia Glacier Series



Glacier Red



Glacier Sky Blue

Aubretia are great for providing lots of flower power into early spring perennial programs. Syngenta Flowers recently introduced the Glacier series to its perennial offerings. This series compliments its already popular Axcent series. The Glacier series is just slightly more compact and blooms two to three weeks later than the Axcent series. This makes the Glacier series great season extenders for those already offering aubretia in their spring programs. Hardy to Zone 5.

Campanula Spring Bell 2.0 Dark Blue



Spring Bell 2.0 Dark Blue is one of two new cultivars being added to the Spring Bell 2.0 series (the other is Spring Bell 2.0 White). Actually, these additions make it a series, as last year there was only one cultivar—Spring Bell 2.0 Blue—available. With its intense, dark blue, upward-facing flowers that completely cover the plant and cold hardiness to Zone 5, Spring Bell 2.0 Dark Blue is a great option for late spring and summer programs.

Lavender Vintro Forte Blue



Vintro Forte Blue is the newest addition to the Vintro series of English lavenders from Syngenta Flowers. Forte Blue has good vigor, a compact habit and large dark blue flowers. Lavenders are incredibly popular, and with numerous cultivars on the market, Vintro Forte is definitely worth trying. Hardy to Zone 5.

Phlox subulata GoldiPhlox Series



GoldiPhlox Cherry



GoldiPhlox Light Blue

GoldiPhlox is an exciting new series of *Phlox subulata*. The cultivars are well-matched, meaning they have similar growth habits and flower times. There are currently four colors being offered; Light Blue, Pink, Rose and White. These cultivars are incredibly uniform, bloom in the early spring and are all cold hardy to Zone 3. If you're looking for a uniform and consistent series, GoldiPhlox is for you.

Darwin Digital Days

As they say in show business, the show must go on. With the uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic, Darwin Perennials has decided to replace its one-day Darwin Perennials Day typically held at The Gardens at Ball in West Chicago, Illinois, in June each summer to a special five-day digital experience, now called Darwin Digital Days.



Darwin Digital Days is being held Monday, June 15 through Friday, June 19, 2020. The event will consist of virtual tours of its Zone-5 perennial gardens, educational opportunities with key perennial suppliers, interactive keynote speakers and the ability to learn about the newest perennial genetics in the industry.

The final details of Darwin Digital Days will be ironed out in the weeks ahead; I'll be sure to pass along more details as they're announced. In the meantime, you can learn about all Darwin Perennials' 600 plus varieties, check out the 2021 introductions, see their selling tools and get cultural information on their varieties by visiting www.DarwinPerennials.com.

Thanks for reading this edition of *Perennial Pulse*. My email is ppilon@ballpublishing.com if you have any comments or suggestions.

I'd like to leave you with this inspirational quote from an unknown author:

"You should never regret anything in life. If it's good, it's wonderful. If it's bad, it is experience."

Take care and stay safe,

Paul Pilon
Editor-at-Large
Perennial Pulse

This email was received by you and 30,355 other fine subscribers!

If you're interested in advertising in Perennial Pulse, contact **Kim Brown** ASAP and she'll hook you up.

