

Perennial Accolades and Challenges Abound





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COMING UP THIS WEEK:

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Wage & Benefit Survey
2020 AAS Breeder's Cup
The Answer is ...

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What's Happening Here?

Here's an end-of-season challenge for you to diagnose. While walking the perennial crops at one of my customers, I observed the symptom below on every block of salvia:



It looks like a pretty straightforward diagnosis doesn't it? Think again—sometimes things aren't what they appear. Hmm, now what possibilities are going through your mind ...?

The answer actually isn't that complicated, but the point I wanted to make is that sometimes there can be multiple causes for similar symptoms. I think this is one of them. I'll let you ponder the possibilities as you enjoy the newsletter and then I'll reveal the cause of these symptoms before signing off for the week.



People's Choice Award Winners

Several perennials were chosen as People's Choice Award winners during the [2020 New Varieties Showcase](#) presented by the Oregon Association of Nurseries, the Farwest Show and sponsored by Hip Labels. As you're probably well aware, the Farwest Show didn't take place (something about a pandemic), but the New Varieties Showcase did go on, albeit virtually.

There were 39 plant selections entered into this year's showcase. After the votes were tallied, perennials received numerous awards. Here some of the top award recipients:

Dryopteris Jurassic Gold



This alpine wood fern received second place overall. Jurassic Gold has excellent spring foliage color, emerging golden-orange fading to bright golden-yellow and green. It may appear similar to the widely popular autumn fern, but is bigger, bolder and richer in color. Introduced by [Concept Plants](#) and is hardy in Zones 5 to 9.

Clematis Little Lemons



This unique clematis has many great attributes, including its compact size, yellow bell-shaped

flowers, shiny seed heads and long flowering period. The cheerful yellow blooms contrast nicely against the shiny foliage. It blooms from mid-May to early September. This stunning introduction took third place in the Varieties Showcase. Little Lemons was also introduced by [Concept Plants](#), who landed two of the top three awards. Excellent work, Concept Plants!

Echinacea Artisan Red Ombre



Echinacea Artisan Red Ombre from [PanAmerican Seed](#) received the Pinnacle of Perennials Award. Red Ombre is the first F1 hybrid echinacea to ever hit the market. With great germination, ease of production and first-year flowering, Artisan Red Ombre is one to keep an eye on.



Previous Challenge Concludes

In the past two newsletters, I shared the images below I received from a subscriber asking for ideas to what could be causing the discolored flower petals on the echinacea.



I received lots of great possibilities, including:

- Boron deficiency
- Environmental response
- Herbicide injury
- High temperatures
- Mutation
- Physiological stress
- Phytotoxicity
- Pigment synthesis interruption
- Plant growth regulators—during flower formation
- Sunscald due to dry conditions
- Systemic disease
- Thrips damage—during early flower development
- Unusual type of aster yellows/phytoplasma
- Viroid (Chrysanthemum stunt)
- Virus (Cucumber Mosaic, Bidens mottle)

The grower would like to thank you for sharing your thoughts and is working to widdle down this list to the most viable options. I personally suspect the symptoms are a type of physiological response due to environmental conditions or an event that occurred while the flower petals were developing. I appreciate your help and participation in this diagnostic challenge.



Technical Training from Ball Tech On Demand

Fall is the industry's spring training—the time to make plans and implement changes. Ball Tech On Demand is planning a month of short and targeted training to enhance your greenhouse production team's cultural and technical knowledge. Spend some time every Tuesday and Thursday in October tuning up your production strategies. Learn the latest on sanitation, watering and plant nutrition, and dive deep into core perennial and annual crops. This is your chance to learn new approaches, refresh on established protocols and find solutions to make 2021 your best year ever.

BALL TECH ON DEMAND™

Since travel to conferences and meetings is challenging these days, grab a phone, tablet or laptop (and a sandwich) and head to the break room twice a week for timely tech tune-ups. In 30 minutes, you'll hear from experts sharing real-world information in Live Webinar and video formats.

Register now for the LIVE webinars at www.growertalks.com/Webinars. Twice-weekly videos will be posted to the [Ball Seed's Tech On Demand YouTube Playlist](#). Subscribe to the channel so you don't miss a video.



Wage & Benefit Survey Time

I'd like to extend an invitation for you to participate in the 25th Annual *GrowerTalks* Wage & Benefit

Survey (for growers) and the 12th Annual *Green Profit* Wage & Benefit Survey (for retailers and grower-retailers) sponsored by Florasearch. Each survey takes approximate five minutes to complete and participants will be entered into a drawing to win a Yeti cooler.

The results will be published in upcoming issues of *GrowerTalks* and *Green Profit* magazines. Thank you in advance for your participation and good luck with the Yeti drawing.

Click [HERE](#) the 25th Annual *GrowerTalks* grower survey.

Click [HERE](#) for the 12th Annual *Green Profit* retailer and grower-retailer survey.



2020 AAS Breeder's Cup



I'd like to extend a great big congratulations to Dr. Jianping (Ping) Ren, Senior Plant Breeder at PanAmerican Seed, who recently was awarded the prestigious 2020 [All-America Selections](#) Breeder's Cup. For the past 20 years, Ping has worked on over 150 vegetative and seed cultivars of calibrachoa, echinacea, gaillardia and petunia.



Gaillardia Mesa Yellow (left) was Dr. Ping Ren's first AAS award-winning perennial in 2010. Echinacea Sombrero Baja Burgundy is her latest AAS winner (2019).

Ping Ren has bred several AAS award-winning perennials, including the first F1 hybrid blanket flower—Gaillardia Mesa Yellow (2010)—and the very popular echinacea cultivars PowWow Wild Berry (2011), Cheyanne Spirit (2013) and Sombrero Baja Burgundy (2019).

Dr. Ren earned her Ph.D. from the Plant Breeding Department at Cornell University where she worked on breeding vegetables for two years before joining the flower industry. With the great perennial introductions she's bred over the years, I'm sure glad she became a flower breeder.

I appreciate your craft, and like AAS, think you're very deserving of the 2020 AAS Breeder's Cup. Congratulations, Dr. Ping Ren,



The Answer is ...

At the top of the newsletter, I shared this symptom on salvia with you and challenged you to determine its cause:



If you're like me, the first place your mind went to was twospotted spider mites. I can confidently tell you that spider mites weren't the cause of these symptoms. Like many challenges in the past, I've emphasized the importance of looking at more than one image or plant before coming to a final conclusion. Take a look at a couple other plants:



When looking at the salvia (left) and rudbeckia (right), the symptoms look different than those in the original image I showed. I think most of you would agree that the symptoms in these last two images don't even closely resemble those caused by twospotted spider mites.

If you're as good a diagnostician as I think you are, I'm guessing you switched your answer to some type of chemical injury (phytotoxicity). If that's the case, you correctly solved this week's mystery. All of the plants above (and a few others) were injured following a thermal fog application of

Kontos plus Eagle. Thanks for stepping up and playing along!

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

Take care,

Paul Pilon

Editor-at-Large - Perennial Pulse

Perennial Consultant - [Perennial Solutions Consulting](#)

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