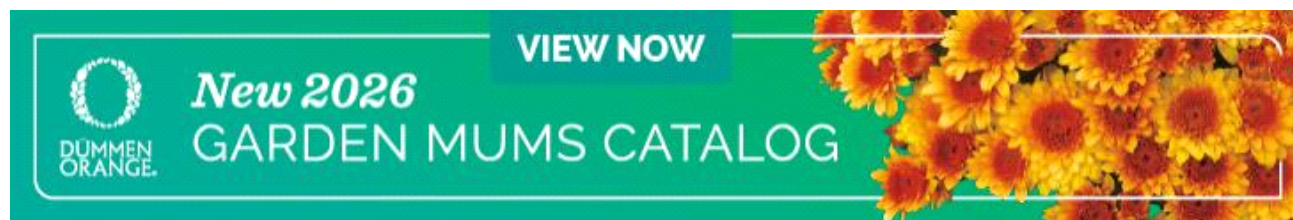


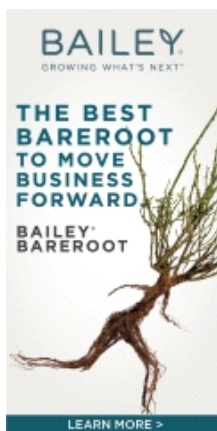
## A Sale, a Merger, an Acquisition, and Bloom Beat



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### GrowerTalks' Acres Online

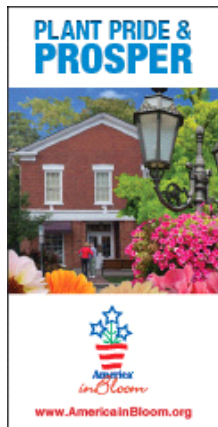
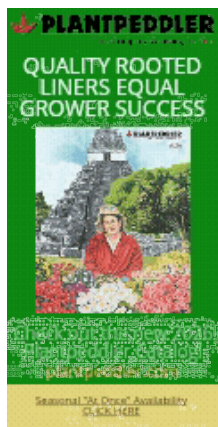
*News and Commentary from GrowerTalks Magazine*

#### COMING UP THIS WEEK:

Former ColorPoint GH purchased?  
AgriNomix, Zwart join forces  
Willowbend acquires Losely  
Serve on the AmericanHort Board  
Beacon to support vision causes  
Kientzler joins CAST  
Finally ...



**Former ColorPoint greenhouse has a buyer?**



I received word recently that the nearly 2 million sq. ft. Paris, Kentucky, greenhouse complex that once grew flowers for ColorPoint LLC and later (for a short time, anyway) produced hemp for AgTech Scientific, has a high bidder in its receivership sale, although no name has been made public as of yet.

The sale is being conducted by A&G Real Estate Partners and Murray Wise Associates on behalf of Aurora Management Partners, Inc., the Receiver for AgTech Scientific Group, LLC; Color Point, LLC; and other affiliates, as part of a federal receivership case pending in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Kentucky, Lexington Division. The ultimate sale will be subject to approval by the federal receivership court.

Whomever buys the operation will be getting 1.57 million sq. ft. of gutter-connected greenhouse, 150,000 sq. ft. of poly tunnels and 155,000 sq. ft. of warehouse and office space on 151 acres. Price for the site is said to have to meet or exceed \$22.85 million. A CBD production facility and office/warehouse space is being offered separately.



From the ColorPoint Facebook page.

For a quick history, ColorPoint was founded in 2001 by brothers Art and Ken VanWingerden, some years after they sold their Floral Plant Growers operations in Maryland and Delaware, and relocated to New Zealand to try out the greenhouse business there. In 2019, they announced the switch from annuals to CBD via a merger with AgTech Scientific. The hemp business in Kentucky started out with a bang, but quickly fizzled due to numerous factors, leading AgTech's lender(s) to put the company into receivership to facilitate the sale.

"With the oversupply of hemp in the United States, many CBD producers continue to face challenges in today's marketplace," noted Emilio Amendola, co-president of A&G Real Estate Partners. "Nonetheless, other agricultural companies, as well as healthy hemp and CBD producers, now have the opportunity to acquire high-quality growing and production assets such as these at significantly below replacement value."

Not to mention how time-consuming and expensive it would be to build something like this from scratch.

I'll share the name of the buyer when I get it.



## AgriNomix, Zwart Systems now part of AdeptAg

In merger news—and also controlled-environment agriculture news—there's a new player in the greenhouse equipment, irrigation, technology and automation market: AdeptAg, a startup by Rick Parod, an executive with years of experience in agriculture and especially irrigation. Rick retired as CEO from Lindsay Corporation of Omaha, Nebraska, prior to launching AdeptAg. Lindsay provides water management and road infrastructure products and services. Before that, he was VP of Irrigation for Toro and President of James Hardie Irrigation.

Rick explained that he recognized the need to offer the North American controlled-environment agriculture industry a consolidated platform of technologies, which is what led him to make his first acquisitions, [AgriNomix](#) and [Zwart Systems](#).

AgriNomix, based in Oberlin, Ohio, is a top supplier of greenhouse automation, internal logistics and robotic solutions. Beamsville, Ontario-based Zwart supplies a full line of irrigation, water recycling and treatment systems to controlled environment growers.

AdeptAg will simply be the umbrella company under which AgriNomix and Zwart (and any other acquisitions) operate. Rick says his company's mission is to "design and provide controlled-environment growers a suite of complete solutions that enhance their productivity and yield." Both companies are good at this, he says, but they had only a small percentage of overlapping customers.

"This allows us to bring Zwart's irrigation products into AgriNomix's customers and to give AgriNomix a bigger reach into Canada, as well."

They plan to be "structure-agnostic"—meaning they don't care whether they're serving a traditional greenhouse operation or an indoor vertical farm. It's about "what's inside that will enhance yield and productivity." They'll service all markets—flowers, vegetables and hemp/cannabis.

Will there be other technology companies added to the platform? Yes, says Rick, but nothing specific to talk about yet. They'll be focused on integrating the two companies.

I asked Rob Lando, co-founder of AgriNomix, for his view of the deal. He replied that he certainly wasn't looking for a partner or buyer, but an email three years ago prompted him to talk to Rick. He was impressed by Rick's vision for building a consolidated North American-based technology provider to the CEA world.

Rob's role? "In short, anything Rick asks me to do," he said. He's not retiring, and no AgriNomix or Zwart people are leaving. He hopes to do more R&D (one of his favorite areas) and continue to build customer relationships.

What will customers notice? Nothing at first, Rick says. The two companies will continue to operate separately in their current locations, and customers and suppliers shouldn't expect any significant changes other than increased investments. AdeptAg will be exploring additional investment opportunities to support the growth and development of the new platform.

As for Rick's long-range goal, he wants to keep building and strengthening the business, and also building a management team to run the organization. At some point he may step back from the CEO role and bring in someone else. "But I have a lot of work to do before we get to that point."





## Willowbend acquires Herman Losely & Sons

In more acquisition news, **Willowbend Nurseries**, owned and operated by Angelo Petitti of Petitti Garden Centers, has purchased the assets of woody ornamental producer **Herman Losely & Son, Inc.** of Perry, Ohio. The deal will double the Petitti family's production space, giving them 2,000 acres of field production, 500 acres of container production and 300 employees, all located in Lake County, Ohio, and geographically positioned within a 500-mile radius of 75% of the North American market. The deal was finalized December 31.

Herman Losely & Son, a third-generation business encompassing 1,200 acres of field production growing a diverse selection of more than 1,000 varieties of mostly woody ornamentals, will operate under the name Losely Nursery. Losely joins Ridge Manor Nurseries under the Willowbend umbrella.

"With the combination of Losely to our family of companies, we are now a 2,500-acre, one-stop-shop for bareroot, container and balled-and-burlapped trees and shrubs," said Angelo Petitti.

Willowbend President Joe Allio, who also happens to be Angelo's son-in-law, affirms additional benefits expected to be achieved through greater infrastructure at Losely.

"We're committed to invest in new technology at Losely that's consistent with what we've implemented at Willowbend and Ridge Manor over the past several years, and it will have an incredibly positive impact," he said. "Adding that technology will enhance the quality of Losely's product offerings and achieve efficiencies that are expected to result in consistent inventory, reliable supply and an overall better value for customers."



## Serve on the AmericanHort Board!

Now is your chance to give back to the industry that has given so much to you by serving a stint on the Board of Directors of your industry association, AmericanHort. They've opened nominations to interested members, but you have to apply by February 18! The application for nomination is available at [AmericanHort.org/BoardApply](https://AmericanHort.org/BoardApply). Elections will take place over four weeks beginning in March.

AmericanHort's mission is to unite, promote and advance the horticulture industry through advocacy, collaboration, connectivity, education, market development and research.

"We welcome industry members who will help us strategically meet industry needs now and for years to come," explains Ken Fisher, CEO & President of AmericanHort. "We appreciate those who have served in this volunteer capacity helping to make AmericanHort the organization we are today."

The organization supports more than 16,500 members and affiliated businesses, including breeders, greenhouse and nursery growers, garden retailers, distributors, interior and exterior landscape professionals, florists, students, educators, researchers, manufacturers, and all of those who are part of the industry market chain.

The nominating committee includes Cole Mangum of Bell Nursery USA, who serves as board chairman; Jon Reelhorn, Belmont Nursery, board vice chairman; Tom Hughes, Hughes Nursery and Landscape, immediate past chairman; and J. Harvey Cotten Jr., board treasurer.

Current board of directors' members are Gerry Dockstader, Advanced Horticultural Solutions;

Mike Gooder, Plantpeddler; Joe Hobson, Midwest Trading Horticultural Supplies Inc; Rob Lando, AgriNomix; Amy Morris, N. G. Heimos Greenhouses; Steve Mostardi, Mostardi Nursery; Lyndsi Oestmann, Loma Vista Nursery; Ed Overdevest, Overdevest Nurseries LP; and Jonathan Saperstein, Everde Growers.

New board members will be announced in the spring and will officially join the board at the association state of the industry keynote held on Sunday, July 17 at Cultivate'22, the association's trade show and conference held in Columbus, Ohio.

For more details visit [AmericanHort.org/BoardApply](https://AmericanHort.org/BoardApply), contact immediate past chairman of the board Tom Hughes at [TomH@hughesnursery.com](mailto:TomH@hughesnursery.com) or contact the AmericanHort office at (614) 487-1117.



## Beacon Impatiens to support vision charities

Since the introduction of the impatiens downy mildew-resistant impatiens series Beacon two years ago, PanAmerican Seed has donated a portion of the variety's global seed sales to a charity or charities that benefit a little-known disease. This third year of Beacon sales will go to help fight low-vision issues, such as macular degeneration—a disease affecting the eyesight of millions of people worldwide. In fact, the affliction was brought to PanAmerican Seed's attention through the experience of one of its own team members.

Low vision is the loss of eyesight and vision capabilities that cannot be corrected through lenses or general surgery. While not blindness, as limited sight remains, low vision can include blind spots, poor night vision and blurriness. Low vision can affect people of all ages.

Two charities will receive a portion of 2022 global seed sales of Beacon: Spectrios Institute for Low Vision ([www.spectrios.org](http://www.spectrios.org)) and the Macular Society ([www.macularsociety.org](http://www.macularsociety.org)). Both groups provide family support, fundraising and education empowerment for their members. In addition, they invest in research to offer the hope of new and improved treatments for those living with low vision.

"As we enter the third year of our charitable giving through sales of Beacon Impatiens, we are gratified to see the impact gardeners are making through their purchases on the lives of so many fellow humans across the world," says Sean Valk, Global Sales Director for PanAmerican Seed.

To learn more about the Beacon Story, and to get a closer look at the 2022 charitable foundations, visit [www.BeaconImpatiens.com](http://www.BeaconImpatiens.com).



## Kientzler to take part in CAST

We've got one more global breeder lined up for the 2022 California Spring Trials: [Kientzler North America](#). They skipped last year's summer version of the event, but will be back again this year, at a new home for them: Sakata Seed America in Salinas. They'll be open Wednesday, March

30 through Saturday, April 2 from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. daily.

"We are very excited about participating in CAST 2022," said Steve Rinehart, sales manager for Kientzler North America. "There is something truly special about being back together as an industry and we look forward to seeing everyone at the Sakata location in just a matter of weeks."

What will you see there? Steve gave us a hint: *Begonia boliviensis* Summer Wings Compact Orange; landscape petunia Kuyamba Red; Bidens Spicy Electric White; and Helianthus Suncatcher, a hardy, Zone 5 perennial sunflower.



To keep up with all the CAST participants, to sign up for individual trials, or to track our daily video and e-newsletter coverage from the road, bookmark [www.californiatrials.com](http://www.californiatrials.com).



**Finally ...**



Get ready for the latest Ball Publishing e-newsletter, *Bloom Beat*! *Bloom Beat* will serve the specialty cut flower market, focusing on crop production and marketing ideas, and news and opinions from professional cut flower grower Lindsay Dashner of Forget Me Not Farms in Michigan (with occasional paw-mentary by her four-footed assistant, Tater).

Lindsay is a Michigan State horticulture grad with a passion for locally grown specialty cuts, and she's got six years under her belt growing and selling an eclectic range of cut flowers, including



sweet peas (the topic of her first newsletter), amaranth, anemone, dahlias, delphinium, freesia, hellebore, hydrangea, larkspur and more. Her excellent writing combines practical science-based crop culture with the reality of hands-in-the-dirt flower farming. You'll enjoy it even if you're not a cut flower grower—in fact, she might just convince you to give it a try!



The twice-monthly newsletter debuts Monday, February 14 (Valentine's Day—how appropriate) and you'll be able to sign up once it launches at [www.growertalks.com/newsletters](http://www.growertalks.com/newsletters).



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Feel free to email me at [beytes@growertalks.com](mailto:beytes@growertalks.com) if you have ideas, comments or questions.  
Beefs, even ... especially if barbecued!

See you next time!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Chi'.

**Chris Beytes**

Editor

*GrowerTalks and Green Profit*

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