

Biochar wins in Elon Musk competition, plus a pitch for sustainability reports



A sustainable e-newsletter from GrowerTalks and Green Profit

GROWERTALKS  
MAGAZINE

greenPROFIT  
MAGAZINE

subscribe

Be part of  
the Latin  
American  
horticulture  
industry

QUERÉTARO  
24-26 MARCH  
2026

Register  
now



Stay Ahead.  
Get Connected.  
Grow Your Business.  
*Join Today!*



greenTalks  
sustainability e-news

#### COMING UP THIS WEEK:

Elon Musk's Biochar Winners  
Look at this Report  
Nat'l Pollinator Subcommittee  
Free Webinar  
Dramm's Solar Panels  
p.s. from the Outpost

CELEBRATE  
250 YEARS



### 3 Biochar Winners in Elon Musk Prize

Elon Musk has been hitting the news a lot lately for his Twitter endeavors, but receiving a little less attention are the winners of his recently announced [XPrize Carbon Removal](#) competition. Fifteen winners each received \$1 million and they will all go on to compete for the balance of the \$100 million in prize money.

Notably, three biochar efforts are among the 15 winners:

[NetZero](#): this French company aims to deploy large-scale biochar production in tropical areas.

[BioEconomy Institute](#) at Iowa State University: developed a self-heating pyrolyzer for making biochar.

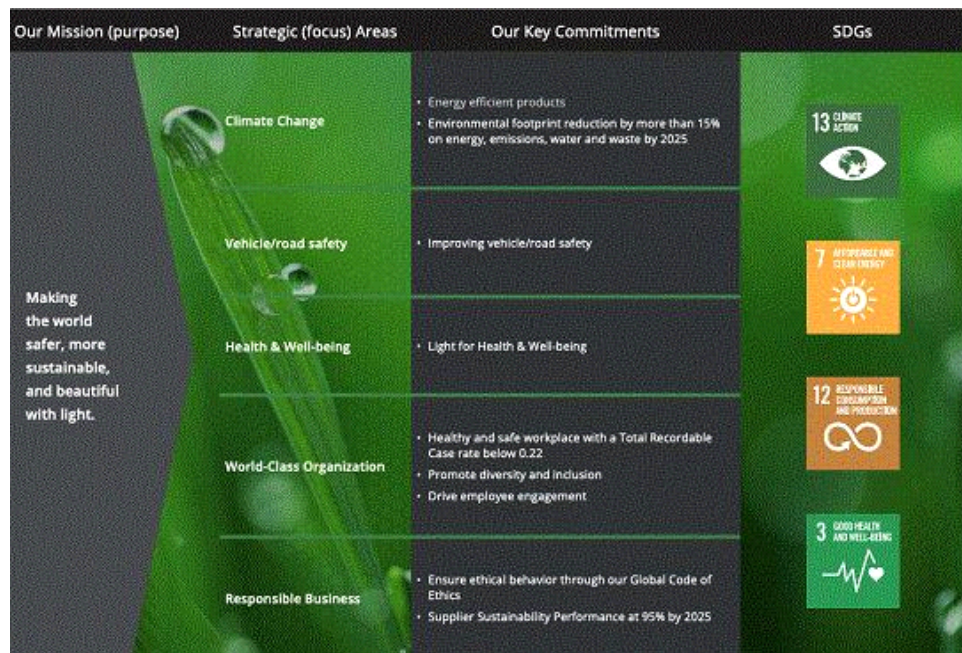
[Takachar](#) and [Safi Organics](#): a joint venture that built a low-cost system to rapidly and profitably scale biochar deployment without being dependent on carbon offset credits or centralized facilities.



### Why You Should Look at Sustainability Reports

Lumileds just released its 2021 Sustainability Report. [Take a look](#). Now, I know most

greenhouses and retailers probably aren't in a position to create their own sustainability reports (if you do, share it with me!), but I bet you can find some great ideas for ways to communicate sustainability to your customers, even if it's one infographic or social media post at a time.



And if you're trying to formally articulate your sustainability, browsing the sustainability reports of other companies is a great way to see the kinds of priorities they focus on and what kind of metrics they measure.

If you're already involved in a certification program such as MPS, you are already probably sitting on a pile of data and information that could easily be transformed into graphics to tell the story of your business and its sustainability.

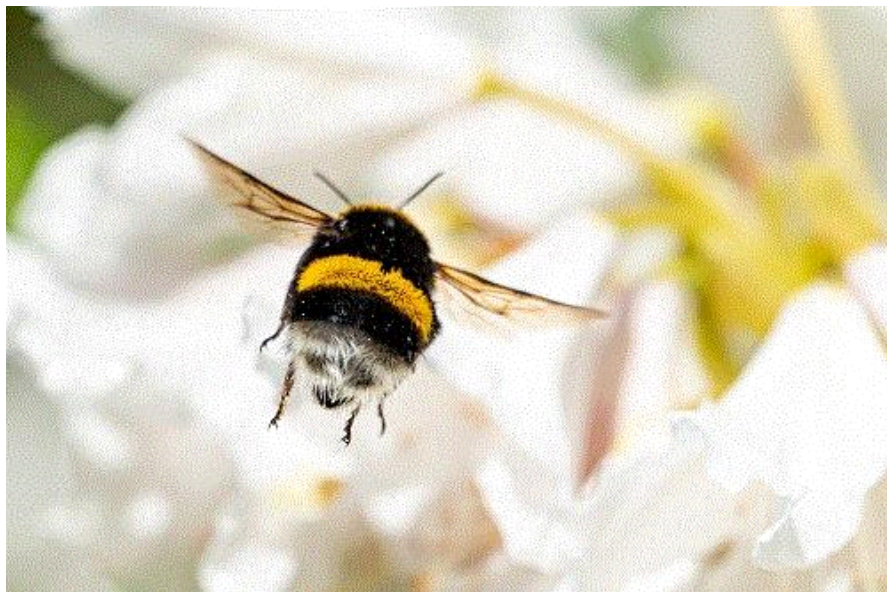
If you flip through Lumileds' report, you'll see they address everything from climate change to the impacts of their products, a safe workforce, conserving water, reducing waste, supporting their communities and their environmental targets for the future.



## National Pollinator Subcommittee

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is seeking nominations for members to their newly formed [National Pollinator Subcommittee](#). The subcommittee will be part of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education and Economics (NAREEE) Advisory Board, which provides feedback to the Secretary of Agriculture, USDA's science agencies, and university collaborators on food and agricultural research, education, extension, and economics priorities and policies.





The new group will provide input on USDA pollinator priorities and goals and will make recommendations to strengthen USDA pollinator research efforts. They're looking for individuals with diverse expertise in pollinator health to serve one- to three-year terms.

Interested? Or know someone who should be? The USDA will only take nominations until May 31, 2022. For application info, go [HERE](#).



## Webinar Alert—Intrinsa: Plants Powered for a Greener Future

That's the title of our newest FREE webinar, scheduled for 1:00 p.m. Eastern/Noon Central on Tuesday, May 24.

What does that mean? It's about a new way of breeding called Intrinsa from Dümme Orange, which is a method that analyzes the plant's genetic code to speed up the traditional breeding process, resulting in better disease resistance, plant performance and (germane to this newsletter), more economical and sustainable crops for the future.

That was a very short description, but our webinar presenters Stephanie Whitehouse (Regional Product Manager—Decorative Annuals) and QiuXia Chen (Regional Product Manager—Garden Mums) will go into greater detail to discuss how this breakthrough in breeding will benefit you, the grower.

Hosted by Chris Beytes, editor, *GrowerTalks/Green Profit* and *Acres Online* and sponsored by the fine folks at Dümme Orange, who put the free in free webinar. Sign up at [www.growertalks.com/webinars/](http://www.growertalks.com/webinars/).

## Dramm's Solar Panels

I received word the Dramm Corporation has installed 286 solar panels at their new headquarters in Manitowoc, Wisconsin. That's 18,000 sq. ft. of ground-mounted solar panels that will bring an energy savings of 161,990 kw each year.



In a [press release](#), Dramm's president, Hans Dramm, said, "The addition of solar PV enhances our long-term commitment to saving energy and being environmentally conscious. We expect the array to provide at least 90% of our annual energy needs with options for future growth. The panels are dual-sided, which adds to their efficiency by allowing for the collection of photovoltaic energy refracting from the ground and collected from direct contact. It's all very cool!"

Dramm's new warehouse is complete and they expect the office building to be done in the late summer of 2022.

## P.S.

I have nothing new to report at the Outpost. It snowed again last weekend. (Yes, I've been saying that for the last 6 weeks.) All my starts are leggy and leaning towards the window in despair. And in fact, at this very moment, another round of snow is spitting through the morning fog. Stay tuned.

*Until next time,*

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennifer".

Jennifer Duffield White  
[jwhite@ballpublishing.com](mailto:jwhite@ballpublishing.com)

**This email received by 27,257 loyal readers!**

Want to be one of the lucky sponsors who reach those readers of *GreenTalks*? Drop **Paul Black** a line and he'll tell you what a bargain it is!

*The Only Magazine*  
**GROWERS AND RETAILERS FLIP OVER.**

GreenTalks® is a registered trademark of Ball Horticultural Company in the U.S.