

The Last Weekend of Spring; CC on the Season; Darwin's 14th and 15th



 **New 2027** | PERENNIALS CATALOG [VIEW NOW](#)



**BE IN THE KNOW**  
*Timely news and commentary from GrowerTalks*

THURSDAY, JUNE 27, 2024

subscribe

ii ri Bluetooth  
Controller  
simple irrigation  
automation



**DRAMM**

click for info

No more  
windy-day  
worries.



**PLANTPEDDLER**  
The Complete Grower's Kit

QUALITY ROOTED  
LINERS EQUAL  
GROWER SUCCESS



2026 Plantpeddler 2nd  
Seasons Catalog!  
"Order Now"

plantpeddler.com  
Seasonal "at Once" Availability



# GrowerTalks' Acres Online

News and Commentary from GrowerTalks Magazine

## COMING UP THIS WEEK:

- June 22-23: momentum gone
- Your comments
- About landscapers
- What CC says about the season
- At Darwin Perennials Day
- Webinar on prop media



## "It's hot! All early momentum gone."

The so-called heat dome announced it before I could: Spring 2024 is in the books! For some of you, the record books—especially Mother's Day. For others, "meh" was the word often used to describe this quite average season. But I'm not ready to reveal the full-season results yet. That will come next week, when I also reveal your "gut" scores—how the season felt to you overall, on a scale of 1 to 10 (watch your email Monday for my request for that).

As for last weekend, June 22-23, the third weekend of June, which I consider to be the last

**WEEK 6 EMPTY BENCHES?**  
We've Got You Covered

**7**

**8** Start your order now!

**WEBTRACK®**  
Book confidently **24/7**  
with **LIVE AVAILABILITY**  
on **WebTrack®**

**BallSeed.**

**RED**



**CLEMATIS**

**CLEARVIEW**  
Home of Clematis™ Since 1979

**Did you HEAR?**

*National Wave Day is May 3rd!*

Make your Plans ▶

**wave**

**GROWERTALKS**

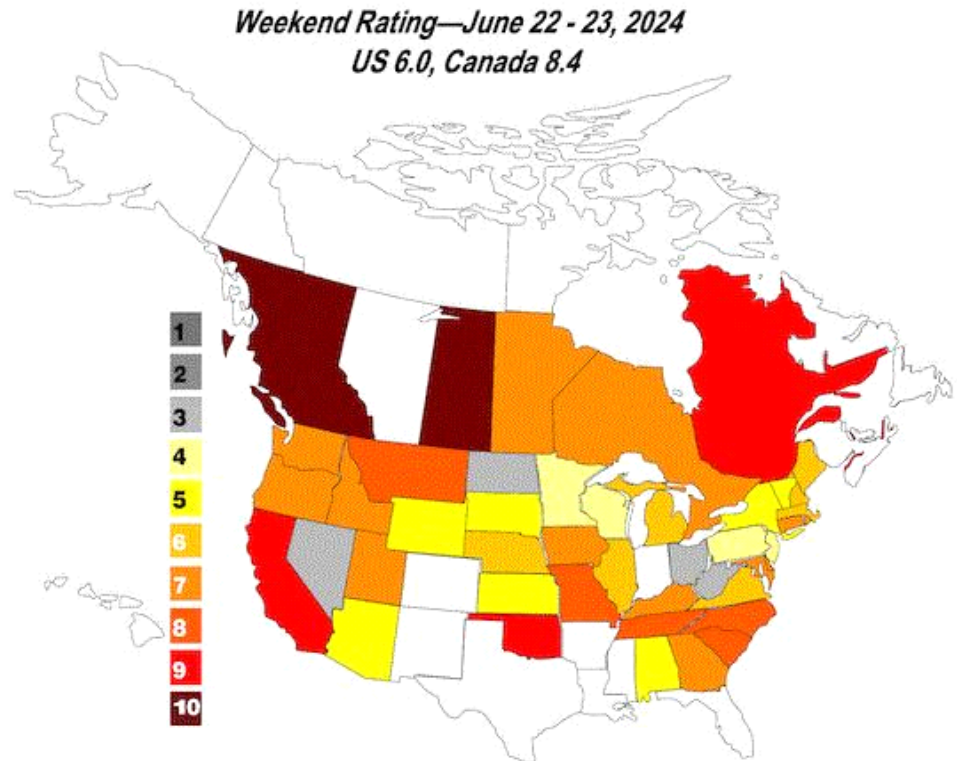


**View ONLINE!**

**BASF**  
We create chemistry

weekend of the season, you scored it **pretty darned sub-par in the U.S.—6.0**—and **pretty darned good in Canada—8.4**. The average for this weekend is 6.7/7.4. Last year's score was 7.1/7.7, so at least in the U.S. some of you were up against some pretty good 2023 sales.

Here's the map:



That's based on 81 scores from 40 states and 5 provinces.

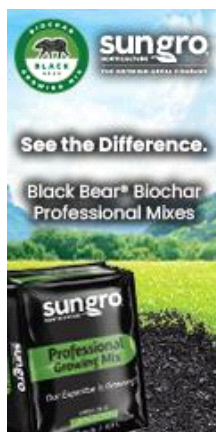
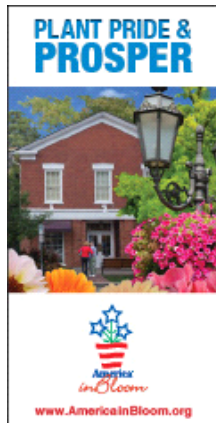
You sent in a whopping two perfect 10s (3%)—both from Canada. Last year you sent in 8 perfect 10s (10%) out of 78 scores.

Regionally, the Mountain states (7.5) and the Northwest (7.0) were the only real bright spots. The South (6.7) managed to beat every other region, surprisingly.

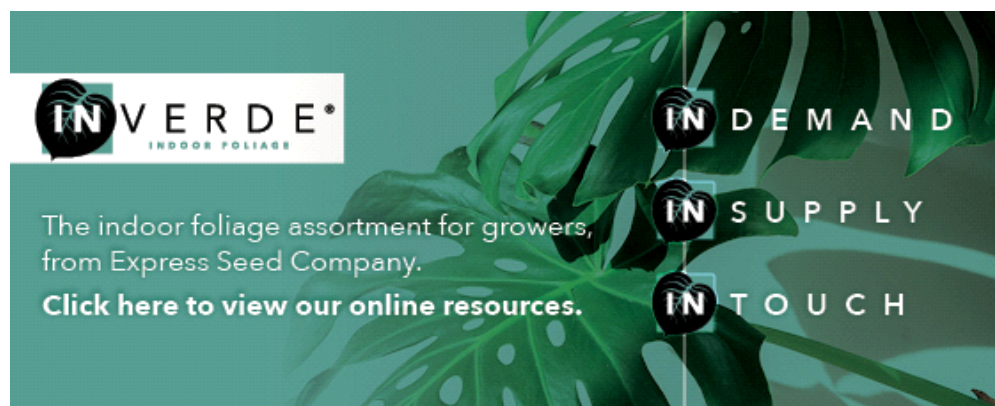
Mountain	7.5
Northwest	7.0
South	6.7
New England	6.3
West	5.5
Plains	5.3
Midwest	5.2
East	5.2

Scanning down the individual state scores, I see a few bright spots: North Carolina scored 9, 8, 6, for a 7.7 average. No, forget what I said about "a few bright spots." That was the only bright spot for states with more than one score. That said, a couple of you in Iowa and Ohio scored your weekend a 7 on the strength of Pollinator Week promotions, which you said drew shoppers in spite of the heat.

In Canada, BC and Saskatchewan each sent a 10. Ontario, the only province with multiple



scores, scored 5, 7, 8 and 6, for a 6.5 average. You'll see from the comments below that the reasons for the good and bad scores are as varied as the folks sending them in.



## Your comments

**British Columbia ("Easy 10").** "Well, one more weekend for June and it definitely was a 10 overall for June. Strong annual and perennial sales. It definitely helps being a retailer growing some of our own product, as supply is running out from growers. We should be good until mid-August with new sets of baskets, planters, annuals and perennials arriving every week. Looking forward to (a) great summer."—*John Derrick, Elk Lake Garden Center*

**Saskatchewan (10).** "Friday & Saturday & Sunday were great—double from last year. Sunday was the first football game of the year so we were very surprised to have the turn out that we did have."—*Lucille Bouvier, Plant Ranch Inc.*

**Quebec (9).** "Excellent Saturday, heavy rain on Sunday."—*Botanix Garden Centre Pépinière Lapointe*

**North Carolina (8).** "It was the hottest weekend yet, but it was still a good weekend for June. Perennials were the top category. But we were -8% over the same weekend last year."—*Jake Scott, Piedmont Feed & Garden Center*

**South Dakota (7.5).** "Not a bad weekend. Of course, it's slowed down, but has remained steady and good for the time of the season we're in. A lot is dictated by the weather at this point, have had some heat, and could use more rain, which I think has some bearing on buying habits."—*Tim L. Sime, Jolly Lane Greenhouse*

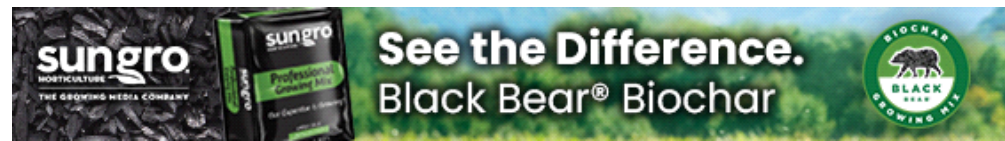
**Iowa (7).** "Hot weekend, but we did a nice houseplant text promotion that was redeemed by over 100 people. We also had a food truck and some perennial sales to go along with our week-long promotion of National Pollinator Week. We also competed with the local air show and an art festival. Saturday was very steady with nice traffic. Slower on Sunday as severe weather threatened all afternoon but never came."—*Kate Terrell, Wallace's Garden Center*

**Ohio (7).** "All things considered (the heat dome!), we had a good weekend—good customer turnout and nice sales. Promoting pollinator week helped—really surprised we had as many customers in the greenhouse with 90F-plus heat! Southwest Ohio needs rain!"—*Duke Stockslager, Stockslager's Greenhouse & Garden Center*

**Maryland (7).** "I was surprised that we had any business at all during our current heat wave. Customers braved 98F temps anyway."—*Georgeann Hall, Grasshopper Garden Escapes*

**New England/New York (scores from 8.7 in NH to 6.1 in MA).** "The heat wave did hit us hard. Many stores lost 50% of their sales or better. Bear in mind, half-sales are still okay in the New England area. For context, it knocks most stores back to revenue levels they saw back in early May when the revenue rockets were just getting lit. The real question is the weather between now

and the Fourth of July, our traditional end-of-season holiday. The place to be is still New Hampshire, even in the heat.”—*Lowell Halvorson, Liberty Family Farms*



## More comments

**Ontario (7).** “Meeting expectations (sort of) but quite a bit lower than the last two years average. Acceptable, especially considering the heat and humidity. I should add that the bigger portion of the traffic is farm market, not garden centre.”—*Joanna Steckle, Steckle’s Produce & Flowers*

**Virginia (5).** “The heat is on very high here in Virginia, and it looks like it will be with us for a while. It seems that the season is over! A few large hot-weather tubs with vinca and zinnias have been strong, but with this extreme heat people are just not coming out. Pair that with extreme drought right now and you have a double whammy that just brings gardening to a screeching halt. Still good material [available], but we will just have to wait and see if the weather will change and people will grab some color for the upcoming holiday.”—*Mark Landa, Boulevard Flower Gardens*

**Wyoming (5).** “Three-day total [was] less than a year ago. Now it is just replacement plants, very late gardeners, perennials, shrubs, trees, houseplants, etc. Spring excitement wanes, but there are still opportunities to make some money and serve the public.”—*Jeff Jones, Great Gardens*

*(Editor’s note: I like that way of thinking, Jeff!)*

**New Jersey (5).** “Summer heat is here. It was over 90F every day, and one day was over 100F. Sales have slowed down tremendously. Hopefully, cooler weather this week will bring more sales.”—*Bill Swanekamp, Kube-Pak*

**Minnesota (5).** “Another weekend that was below where we would have liked to see it. Big clearance sales are happening everywhere, including here ... time to wrap it up and move on to the next season.”—*Jay Holasek, Fred Holasek and Son Greenhouse*

**Kansas (4).** “Summer has arrived and it’s gotten hot. We finished shipping last week for the spring and have now turned our focus on fall crops.”—*Kathy Miller, Sedan Floral*

**Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York (3).** “The heat killed sales all week and weekend.”—*Andy Sausser, Corso’s Horticulture*

**Nevada (3).** “It’s hot! All early momentum gone.”—*Bruce Gescheider, Moana Nursery*

**Alabama (3).** “So so so hot. That’s part of it, I know. But it just won’t rain!”—*John David Boone, Dothan Nurseries*



## About landscapers

I mentioned National Pollinator Week and how some retailers used it as an opportunity to boost

traffic. But a couple of others mentioned landscapers as a “saving grace”:

**Virginia (5).** “New week same story. Hot and dry. Our only saving grace has been landscapers that are catching up on spring work.”—*Gary Garner III, Gary’s Garden Center*

**New York (7).** “I sell to retailers, who seem to be slower than other years. Landscapers are still going strong.”—*Debbie Haigh, Valley View Wholesale Greenhouses*

I don’t talk much about the landscape business here, but landscapers move (and plant) a lot of our product ... I’d be curious what percentage! Anybody know?



But talk to me about landscapers, whether your own landscape division or your customers’. How is that business, dollar-wise? What are the trends? Is it a growth opportunity for growers or retailers? How do you capitalize? Let me know [HERE](#).



## What CC says about the season

I was corresponding with my friend AJ Lambert, VP of Sales & Account Management for

Container Centralen (aka CC Racks) this week, and it struck me that, since they rent racks to growers all across the country, perhaps their season would somehow reflect your season. So I asked. Here's what he replied:

*"It was certainly an unusual spring, with signs of decent growth until Mother Nature intervened. Many of our growers cited weather as the cause for shipping delays, while others experienced a robust spring, depending on their geography. Many of our larger and more densely populated markets faced colder, wet weather followed by intense heat, which compressed the spring season. Now, retailers are scaling back on orders to reduce their inventory, resulting in fewer racks being shipped to stores. The future remains uncertain, with some growers suggesting a return to pre-COVID volumes, while others project low single-digit growth for 2025."*

That about jibes with what you've been telling me.



AJ asked me what my thoughts were about the second half of 2024, and I said I don't see any particular headwinds for growers or retailers, other than labor costs, which are pretty much baked into the cake now. This spring, customers were buying when weather permitted. They weren't going pandemic-crazy, but if you had a good offering and made it interesting (with events like Pollinator Week), you could even lure them out of their air-conditioned comfort.

Summed up AJ, "Hoping we can get more clarity from retailers and growers alike at Cultivate'24 as everyone begins to look ahead to 2025."

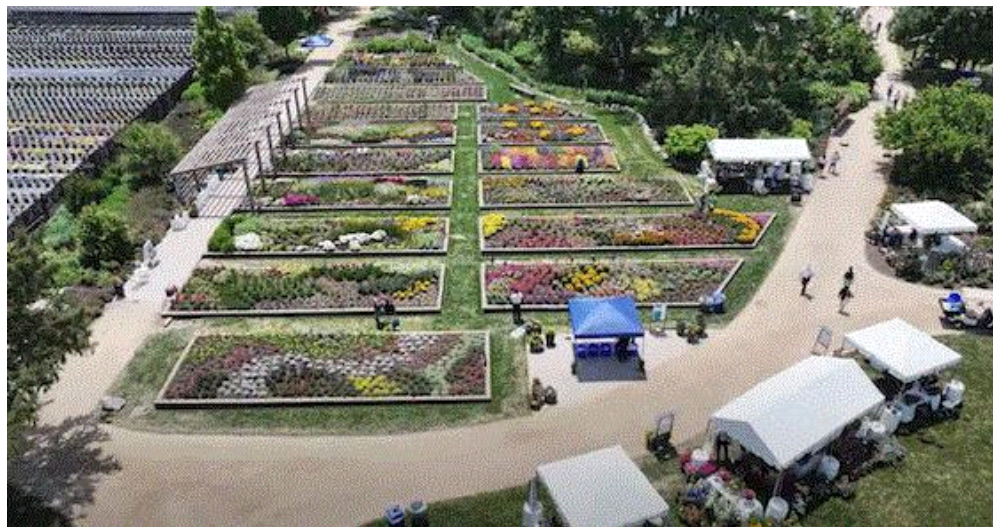
Aren't we all?\*

*\*Know what that is? That's called an interrobang, the combining of a question mark and an exclamation point—for when you exclaim with a question. Or vice-versa. You were today years old when you learned that.*



## **Darwin celebrates 15 Years with 14th Perennials Day**

Wednesday of last week was Darwin's 14th annual Darwin Perennials Day event, when they host growers, suppliers, academics and other perennials enthusiasts for a day of education, networking and looking at varieties in the perennial beds at The Gardens at Ball in West Chicago, Illinois.



This year, 500 registered attendees helped Darwin celebrate its 15th anniversary with 26 supplier tents, interactive sessions that showed guests a peek into Darwin's production farm in Colombia, an in-depth panel discussion on perennial production (moderated by *GrowerTalks* Editor Jen Zurko) and more.

Alas, this was the first time I've missed the big event, but Jen and Videographer Osvaldo Cuevas captured some of the highlights in [THIS VIDEO](#).

Our on-call perennial guru Paul Pilon was there, too, and he wrote about some of his favorite introductions in his most recent [Perennial Pulse newsletter](#). Check it out for his expert opinion.

If you didn't get to go to Darwin Perennials Day, they'll be showing some of their newest perennial introductions in their booth (#3239) at Cultivate'24.



## **GrowerTalks webinar: How to Choose Your Propagation Media**

It's not until August 1, but now is the time to sign up for my next hot-topic webinar. Do it before you get busy with summer vacation and Cultivate'24 and all that fun.

In this webinar, titled "How to Choose Your Propagation Media," guest expert Mike Cade will present a comprehensive guide to starting your plants off strong by selecting the right propagation media for successful plant growth. Mike will compare all the various products on the market, including loose fill trays, paper-style pots, so-called "glue plugs" and more, including Jiffy's popular Preforma plug technology. Mike will then do a deep dive on Preforma, including technical aspects, case studies, cost evaluations and more. You'll even get a sneak peek inside Jiffy's new factory.

Mike, Key Accounts Manager for Jiffy Products of America, has more than 45 years of industry experience selling and competing with every form of propagation material on the market, so he knows what works and why.

It's slated for Thursday, August 1, at 1 p.m. Eastern/Noon Central.

[CLICK HERE](#) to sign up.

Did I mention it's free?

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

See you next time!



**Chris Beytes**  
Editor-in-Chief  
*GrowerTalks and Green Profit*

**This e-mail received by 28,856 loyal readers!**

Thanks to my loyal sponsors, who help me reach the 28,856 readers of *Acre's Online* in more than 60 countries. Want to be one of them (a sponsor, that is)? Give [Kim Brown](#) a shout and she will tell you about our many advertising opportunities.

