

Hibiscus, canna, greenhouse trends and a compelling video



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TROPICAL TOPICS

COMING UP THIS WEEK:

Hibiscus "As Big as Yah Head!"
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Hibiscus "As Big as Yah Head!"

"As big as yah head!" is how a Boston friend describes various things—usually food-related items like burgers and funnel cake—but I'm pretty sure that is exactly how she would describe the new BloomSelect hibiscus varieties offered by Costa Farms. The blooms are indeed as big as an adult's head, no kidding (see below).

Costa Farms is expanding their 12-year collaboration with Graff Breeding, adding genetics and enhanced packaging to drive sell-through. Costa's BloomSelect hibiscus line has been hand-picked by their in-house hort experts from exclusive Graff varieties, choosing those that have superior performance and long-lasting blooms.

Graff Breeding, based in Denmark, has some phenomenal experience in hibiscus breeding. Who would have thought such amazing tropical plants would be coming out of a very non-tropical place? But lucky for us, they've been consistently breeding hibiscus for more than 40 years.

"We focus on helping our retail partners win at the bench with high-quality, stunning new hibiscus varieties that perform," says Justin Hancock, Horticulturist at Costa Farms. "These new BloomSelect introductions bring vibrant color, innovative combos, and premium genetics to create an irresistible plant."

What exactly is new in the BloomSelect line? This amazing Trio Bowl! It contains three distinct hibiscus colors in one container. Talk about tropical curb appeal!



Costa Farms has also added some other varieties to the BloomSelect line that are exclusive to them and offer up vigorous growth, improved disease resistance and lots and lots of flowering. And they've enhanced the packaging and merchandising to help these hibiscus fly off the retail benches.

And you know how I said the BloomSelect hibiscus flowers are "as big as yah head"? Here's some proof! Justin shows off just how large the bloom is for BloomSelect Tropical Hibiscus Flora in [THIS VIDEO](#) (scroll through the thumbnails until you see the video).





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Cannas from CAST

Speaking of new plants, California Spring Trials (CAST) is another place to find a whole bunch of them. Admittedly I didn't attend. And admittedly the exhibitors focus on new bedding plants and fun and funky annuals, and not a lot on tropicals and houseplants. But my Ball Publishing colleagues who were in attendance did spot a few from the late-March new plant intro event.

First up, what's a visit to Takii without a load of very tropical-looking cannas? Bossman Beytes shared that Takii is working on some experimental cannas in the Cannova and South Pacific series.

The experimental Cannova colors are at the moment going by the names Deep Pink, Orange Golden Flame and Crimson, left to right in this photo Chris provided.



The Cannovas are bred in the Netherlands so they are better suited for cooler temps and lower light growing conditions, so good for you northern growers. All Cannovas are a Ball Seed exclusive in North America.



As you can see, Takii has done a lot of work in the Cannovas.

As for the South Pacifics, those are bred in Japan, which is conducive to breeding cannas better suited for tropical conditions, so maybe better suited to southern growers. “No dark-leaf varieties yet in the South Pacifics,” Chris told me, “but they are looking at that, as you can see in this photo.” Chris provided the reminder that the South Pacific series contains two AAS winners—Orange and Scarlet—so you know they’re excellent!



Takii is working on new colors for the South Pacifics, and these include Experimental Deep Orange, Experimental Orange Gen 2, Experimental Scarlet Gen 2 and Experimental Bronze Rose.

Three other CAST exhibitors had houseplant-type plants, but I need to hunt down some photos before including here (“pics or it didn’t happen”). Next time!



Live Stream Alert!

Got yourself a greenhouse? Then this hour spent in Ball Publishing’s latest live stream, “Greenhouse Trends 2025: Smarter, More Sustainable & Cost-Effective Growing,” is for you. With energy costs rising, and climate change and sustainability practices in the driver’s seat this year, spending next Thursday, May 1, at 1 p.m. Eastern (noon Central) with your eyes on this live stream would do yourself and your business a whole lot of good.

It will feature Felix Chassouant, Vice President of Sales—Poly Greenhouses for Harnois Greenhouses, who will explore the key trends shaping the future of controlled environment agriculture. Felix will dive into multiple topics, including:

- Smarter resource management with renewable energy, heat recovery and water-saving solutions
- The rise of soilless growing systems

- The transition from open-field farming to protected culture with high tunnels

You'll learn how growers like yourself are investigating lower-tech high tunnels, optimizing costs, looking for ways to have more predictability, and making greenhouses more autonomous.



Who is Felix? A passionate agronomist who loves what he does. He spent some time in Australia during university that opened his eyes to farming and greenhouse techniques. He also has five years of working in the greenhouse sector in Southeast Asia under his belt. Felix has seen a lot! And he's excited to share what he's learned from his international travels and also during his time at Harnois Greenhouses with you.

Again, this webinar takes place May 1 at 1 p.m. Eastern. Sign up for it [HERE](#). And if you miss it, you'll find it in our Live Stream archives (under "Available Now") located on that same site.



NHF's Very Compelling Video

This item is about something that National Horticulture Foundation (NHF) is doing. At first blush, it may not seem to be a topic that is tropicals-related, but it's more related than is obvious. That's because the NHF got its start in the foliage industry, and so owes a lot to what you all are doing.

With that said, we want to let you know that NHF has been working on a campaign to highlight the industry overall and what NHF does for it. NHF has been working with a company called Pioneer Productions to produce at least one 30-second video and a 5-minute documentary-style video. These are produced for a program called Viewpoint with Dennis Quaid, and are like mini documentaries that PBS uses as fillers between segments—i.e. not all of their programming fills a 60-minute slot, so they need to fill that space with independent programming such as these mini-documentaries. Actor Dennis Quaid records an intro and outro for these segments, as he did for one featuring the work of the NHF.



A 30-second clip is also available for other outlets to use, and thus exposes the work of NHF to an even wider audience. For example, the NHF clip found its way into a commercial break within a Fox Business broadcast. Where else it appears and when these 30-second and five-minute viewings appear, we are not entirely sure.

But maybe it'll appear on your website! NHF Executive Director Linda Reindl says the 5-minute video is currently on the NHF website, but the link to the video could be on anyone's website who wishes to host it. It's a compelling video, too. I'm not one to watch a video longer than 2 minutes, but I found myself watching this entire video. It's one I could relate to— I found it to have interesting interviewees and was inspired by it at its conclusion.

If nothing else, [WATCH THE VIDEO](#) and get reacquainted with why you're doing what you do in the horticulture industry. Maybe you'll want to include it on your own website or social pages, as well. If so, [contact Linda](#) to find out how to include it on your own site or pass it along in other ways.

If you have any comments, questions or suggestions for content, email me about them at ewells@ballpublishing.com.

Ellen Wells
Senior Editor
Green Profit

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