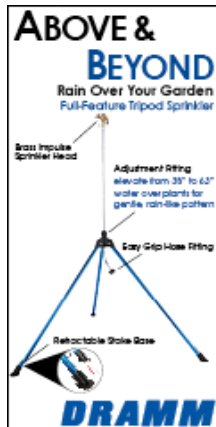


Cultivate sessions for IGCs, plus a new garden center and NGB’s YouTube milestone



THURSDAY, JUNE 12, 2025

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Retail news from inside and outside the green industry

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Upping Our Confidence
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Mighty
Hear From Young Retailers
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Finally ...

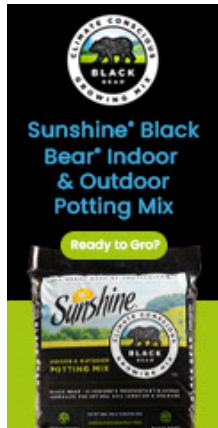


Greenhouse at Lambs Farm

A new garden center opening always warrants a celebration, especially one with a mission to help those with developmental disabilities. Colleague Jen Polanz has this to say about the new kid on the block, the Greenhouse at Lambs Farm.

A new retail-growing greenhouse operation opened in May at Lambs Farm, a nonprofit organization in Libertyville, Illinois, dedicated to employing those with developmental disabilities. I received the announcement and reached out to Marisa Rademaker, associate director of marketing and communications there, for more details.

"The Greenhouse will serve as another training site for our 200-plus participants at Lambs Farm," she replied. "We currently have a Farmyard, Pet Center, Country Store & Bakery, Cafe and Thrift Shop for our residents to learn job-training skills, which help them learn, grow and explore other employment opportunities in the community."



"All of these businesses are open to the public, and in addition to these areas, we have residential homes, an art studio and enrichment programs. The Greenhouse is another amazing addition to give our residents opportunities to thrive!"

Folks at the greenhouse will grow and sell annuals in pots, as well as hanging baskets and upright planters, along with a selection of veggies and herbs. They'll also carry garden decor and growing supplies. Find out more at lambsfarm.org.

Thanks for the announcement, JP!



Upping Our Confidence

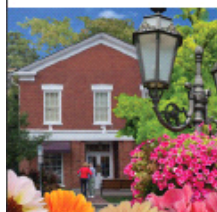
Things are feeling a bit brighter on the business front, according to the National Federation of Independent Business. The [NFIB's Small Business Optimism Index](#) went up three points to 98.8 in the month of May. This is the first time the index has increased since December.



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The reason? There's no hard data from NFIB on that, but it could be the Trump administration's trade truce with China, which cut tariffs to 30% through early August. The biggest portion of the Optimism Index's increase was from the share of small businesses that expected higher inflation -adjusted sales—this rose to 10%. There was also a rise in the proportion of folks expecting better business conditions. On the flip side, the share reporting taxes as their single-most important problem increased, as well.



Inventory worries were also getting some attention in the survey. The share of folks who saw current inventory as "too low" was the highest it's been since August 2022. Pair that with lengthening times of inputs to factories and we may have some shortages coming in the next few months.

How are you all feeling about inventory issues? Are you preparing for possible shortages of holiday items? Drop me a note about it [HERE](#).



Cultivate Sessions for IGCs

Cultivate'25 is about a month away, and I know you're going (right?). With a show that big and with so much to offer, it's always best to make a plan. The folks at AmericanHort wrangled up some educational sessions that are sure to be of interest to you.



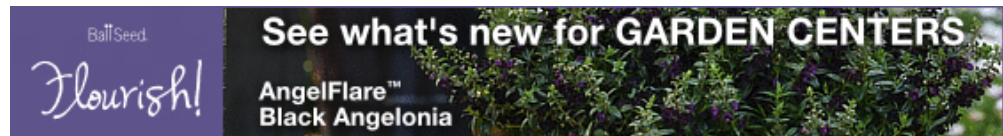
Actually, "wrangling" is the completely wrong word to use. They thoughtfully categorized sessions around major topics with you, the retailer, in mind. For instance, the sessions listed under [Succession-Focused Series for Family-Owned Garden Centers](#) include "Managing and Motivating the Multi-Generational Green Industry," "Bringing Them Up Green," "We're the Next Gen IGC Owners ... Now What?" and "Transition and Expansion: Generations Shaping the Future." In a way, they've organized the listings as a "If you like this, then you'll enjoy X, Y and Z."

Other major topic themes include:

- [Achieving excellence in your garden center business](#)
- [Elevating your leadership & team culture](#)

- Driving the future with trends, youth innovation, and community engagement
- Innovative marketing strategies

If you're looking for all of the sessions that are of interest to garden retailers, find them [HERE](#). And here is the full listing of other more general [business and management topics](#). All are included in the All-Access Pass!



Empowering the Small But Mighty

I want to call out one particular Cultivate topic series that takes place all in one day. The Small But Mighty: Empowering Independent Plant Retailers is a series of six sessions taking place on Saturday, July 12. It's a come-and-go sort of deal where you can attend whichever sessions you have time for or have interest in. Each of the six has the goal of making you feel more confident, inspired and ready to tackle whatever may come—whether that's some new tech issue or business planning or just finding time to take care of yourself.

The geniuses behind this full day dedicated to small indies are Katie Elzer-Peters of The Garden of Words, Amanda Thomsen of Aster Gardens (and both of them are *Green Profit* contributors, too!) and Benjamin Futa of Botany. They've spent months planning this, and I got a good rundown of what's in store. You're going to love it! Find out more about it [HERE](#). By the way, this entire series of sessions is sponsored by *Green Profit* and Square!



Hear From Young Retailers

Speaking of *Green Profit*, I'd be remiss if I didn't mention the Cultivate session "[Insights from the Industry's Top Young Retailers](#)."

Our very own Jen Polanz moderates a panel of previous *Green Profit*/The Garden Center Group Young Retailer Award finalists including Esmeralda Carrasco, Michael Fiore and Tanner Jones. You'll hear about their expertise on attracting younger shoppers, the products that resonate with their generation and creating a workplace culture that supports work-life balance for young employees.

The session takes place Sunday, July 13 at 4 p.m. Be there!



Palomino Roots

I included the following product in this week's *Tropical Topics* newsletter, but it bears repeating especially since it is retail related. I'm referring to the Colombian company Palomino Roots, which has come up with a great way to use the waste product from another industry.

Palomino Roots makes a dozen or more different products—deco pots, baskets, wall bags, pressed pots, grow poles, etc.—using the waste of the Colombia's coconut industry. I have written in my notes that they recover 100 tons of coconut coir, or the fiber of the coconut husk, per month. This is material that would otherwise be unused—I'm not even sure the Colombian coconut industry composts it. Palomino is the only one in the country collecting and using the waste material.



If memory serves, the coconut plantations allow the workers to sell the coco fiber to Palomino, so that puts a little extra money in the workers' pockets. As for creating the pots and other products, they employ folks in small shops in the cities to sew each item using a sewing machine. I've checked out some of the items—all the seams are excellent quality!

They also produce these microgreens kits. I'm a fan of any grow kit that includes a container. Bonus points for it being biodegradable.



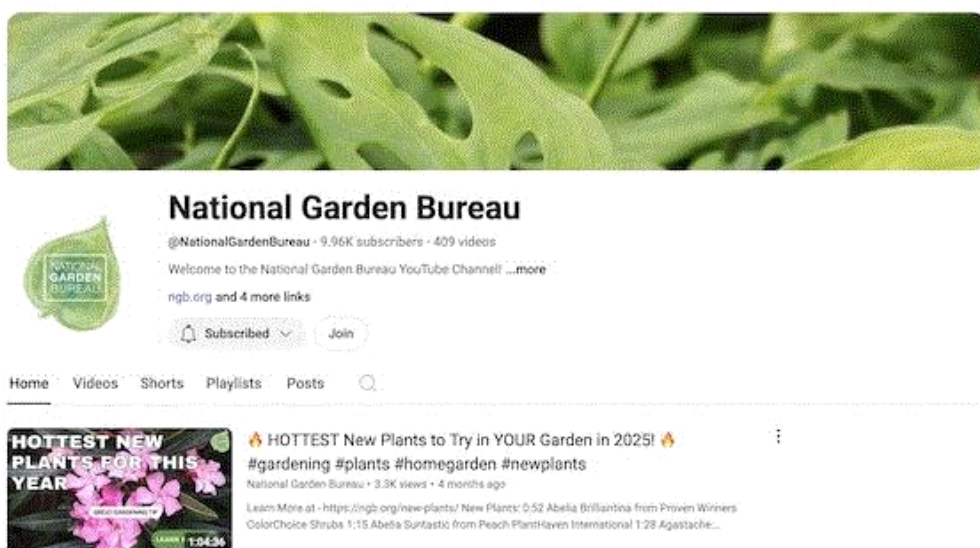
Find out more about Palomino Roots [HERE](#).



NGB YouTube Milestone

Move over, Mr. Beast, because National Garden Bureau's YouTube channel is on fire! In early May, NGB passed a major social media milestone, surpassing 1 million views on its YouTube channel. And since then, it's soared to more than 1.2 million and climbing rapidly.

It just so happened that the day NGB's YouTube channel hit 1 million views, it also hit and soared passed the 9,500-subscriber market. At last check, it was maybe 400 subscribers from the 10,000 mark—in fact, I just went to their [YouTube page](#) and subscribed to help them get there!



NGB currently has more than 400 videos with plans for many more. Most of them feature the expertise of NGB members and include a variety of popular topics. The types of videos they post include “Ask the Experts” webinars, quick tips provided by members and “Authors Talk Gardening” book events, many of which are in collab with GardenComm members.

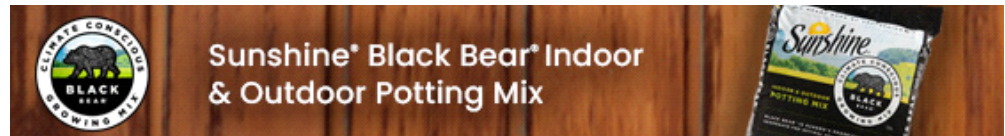
A press release on NGB reaching this milestone said, “These milestones are a direct reflection of the engaging content that NGB’s members provide, and they highlight the immense value NGB brings in amplifying an inspiring gardening message and products to a global gardening community. NGB is excited to continue leveraging this powerful platform to drive awareness and interest in the horticulture industry.”

Garden center social media managers, you can link to all of [NGB's YouTube videos](#) and generally use them for your benefit. They are there to promote the industry and your expertise—it's such a great opportunity!



Finally ...

Fellas, happy Father's Day to you! I'll do the same as I did with Mother's Day and ask what you'd like for Father's Day. A day over a hot grill searing some steak? A day on your boat? Could it possibly be some free time so you can actually work in your yard? [Drop me a note](#) with your Father's Day wish list, and I'll wish upon a star that it comes true. Cheers!



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