

Scholarships, Events, AI & More

BallSeed.

Flourish!

See what's new for GARDEN CENTERS

Monarch Magic  
Ageratum



*News and commentary for the nursery & landscape market*

GROWERTALKS  
MAGAZINE

greenPROFIT  
MAGAZINE

THURSDAY, JUNE 12, 2025

subscribe

Fast Weeding,  
Less Labor.



Learn more



**CUSTOM  
NURSERY  
TAGS &  
LABELS  
ARE EASY!**



Easy to Order  
Shapes

Extensive  
Content

Creative  
Design



**REAL  
CONNECTIONS**



**DISCOVER MORE**

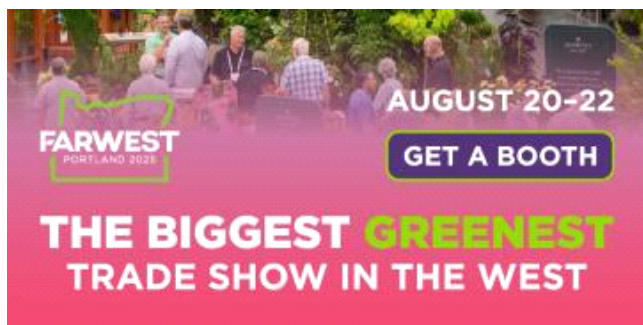


# Nursery & LANDSCAPE INSIDER

News and Commentary for the landscape and nursery market

## COMING UP THIS WEEK:

AFE Awards Scholarships  
Plant Trialing Conference  
Returns  
Cultivate All-Access Pass  
Star Roses and Plants  
Sustainability Award  
BioWorks Bioinsecticides  
Riverbend Acquires James  
Greenhouses



## AFE Awards Scholarships to Four Students

With the goal of uplifting future scientists and educators, four students were recently honored with prestigious scholarships from the American Floral Endowment (AFE). These students each embodied the mission of AFE while excelling in their studies and research programs.

"These exceptional young professionals are working through their studies to bring a fresh perspective and innovative momentum to the industry," said Debi Chedester, executive director of AFE. "We are excited to support them on their career path that will continue to advance the areas of horticulture and floriculture."



Andre Truter, a Master's student at North Carolina State University, is the recipient of the 2025 Paul Eke, Jr. Scholarship, which provides \$10,000 in support over two years.

Additionally, three students received the Altman Family Scholarship, which provides \$5,000 in

**INCREASE  
YOUR  
PROFITS!**

with  
**STOCKOSORB®**



**GREEN SOLUTIONS LLC**  
AGRICULTURE & HORTICULTURE SOIL SOLUTIONS

**CLICK HERE  
To Learn More**

**NOW  
AVAILABLE**



**CLICK TO BUY**

**Plant  
Development  
SERVICES®**

**2025  
Insecticide, Miticide  
& Fungicide Guide**



**Now Available!**

support. The recipients of this award were Rose Elbert, a Master's student at Michigan State University; Henry Gonzalez, a doctoral student at Michigan State University; and Brett Timmons, a doctoral student at North Carolina State University.

Congratulations to Andre, Rose, Henry and Brett! Also, what a showing for NC State and Michigan State.



## Plant Trialing Conference Returns

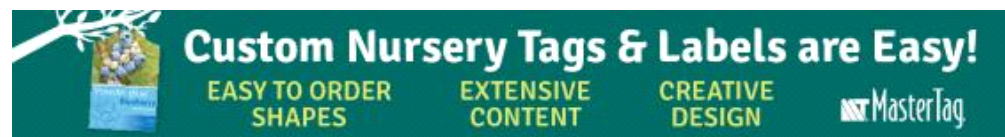
A long time ago in a previous life I was the director of a wonderful trial garden in Hammond, Louisiana. Well, it actually wasn't that long ago, but after six months of not being affiliated with the gardens I have to admit I'm starting to get the itch. I miss driving through the gardens every day to get to my office. Even more, seeing all the new taxa and varieties before they hit the market was exciting. It was truly a very rewarding experience.

For those of you who're still working in plant variety trials, or maybe like me who just enjoy talking about plant varieties, be sure to check out the All-America Selections (AAS) International Plant Trialing Conference. After a decade-long hiatus, AAS has brought back the Trialing Conference, which will be held October 13-15 in Bloomington, Minnesota.

The conference will cover a wide variety of topics, including ornamentals, edibles, techniques, industry trends and more. All the sessions will be presented in a panel discussion form to allow attendees access to diverse perspectives and insights from multiple experts. This is such a neat idea, as it will not just be one person presenting on a topic.

Diane Blazek, Executive Director of AAS, made a point to say that the International Plant Trialing Conference has never been an annual event and that goal remains. It's special—something that's hosted every few years. That's why it's such a great opportunity for breeders, growers, trials managers and other industry professionals to take advantage of the opportunity while it's available. Plus, if you're a member of AAS this conference will encompass double duties, as the AAS Summer Summit activities will also take place at the conference.

Early bird registration ends August 1. You can find more information [HERE](#).



## Get Your Cultivate All-Access Pass Now

As the summer rolls on, we start to think more about everyone's favorite annual July trip to Ohio. If you're planning on attending Cultivate '25, or even on the fence, you might want to register soon to save some money. Early bird rates end next Thursday, June 19. Just as the name implies, an all-access pass will give you access to everything live at Cultivate '25. The education sessions, the trade show floor, keynote presentations and much more. There is so much to do, sometimes it's difficult to fit everything in with just a few days – my calendar is almost entirely booked already! If you're in the same boat as me, you might want to consider an On-Demand access, which can be purchased for an additional \$99. This gives you access to 46 educational sessions,



including 14 taught in Spanish, which you can access on your own time after the show. What a great opportunity, especially if there are several overlapping sessions you want to attend.

However, Cultivate is not just about learning. It's also about developing connections and exploring new opportunities. Several networking events are available to interact with colleagues and meet people. Explore everything the all-access pass has to offer [HERE](#) and register for Cultivate while there is still time.



## Star Roses Wins Sustainability Award

The American Rose Trials for Sustainability (A.R.T.S.) program identifies the most sustainable, pest-resistant and, of course, beautiful rose cultivars used in U.S. landscapes. Roses entered into consideration for A.R.T.S. awards are evaluated under minimal maintenance and input conditions. Several data points are observed and used for evaluation, including plant form, growth habit, foliage health, flowering, pest presence, and general plant health and quality. To be selected for an award, roses must be resilient without repeated fertilizer applications or chemical sprays. Each rose is evaluated in different U.S. regions. This year, two Star Roses and Plants entries were selected for A.R.T.S. awards.

Blushing Drift earned the prestigious Master Award after it received Local Artist Awards in five climate regions. This groundcover rose displays double pink flower clusters with a yellow center. The disease resistance and abundant blooming make this rose an entirely reliable landscape choice.



Ruby Red also earned a Master Award, receiving Local Artist Awards in four climate regions. Ruby Red is a non-fading, dark red rose with a compact habit. It performs well on its own roots and makes an excellent addition to containers.



You can find out more about the A.R.T.S. program [HERE](#).

 BLOOM·ables

Stop selling plants.  
Start selling a garden.

[LEARN MORE](#)

## BioWorks Moves Bioinsecticide Forward

BioWorks has received approval for Principle WP, a biological insecticide, for use in the U.S. Principle WP delivers highly effective control of thrips, aphids and whiteflies, based on the active ingredient *Beauveria bassiana*, which is a beneficial fungus that grows naturally in soils across the world. The fungus targets several common agricultural pests, providing a biological solution to manage arthropod pests. This proprietary formulation is labeled for indoor and outdoor use, foliar spray, soil drench, dipping and aerial applications.



“This news further expands our sustainable insect management solutions portfolio for commercial horticulture and specialty ag markets. We are thrilled to continue serving growers with excellence,” said Troy Bettner, VP of Sales and Technical Services.

BioWorks has two decades of experiments implementing *Beauveria bassiana* into commercial operations and supporting growers to overcome technical complexities of biological insect control. Principle WP is registered for use by the EPA and should be available soon. Registrations for Principle WP are anticipated in all 50 states. Contact your BioWorks representative for more information.



## Riverbend Acquires James Greenhouse

Riverbend Nursery Holdings, LLC has Acquired James Greenhouses, Inc. in a move that CEO Steve Ronyak indicates will “enhance product offerings, logistic services and customer communications with a continued focus on bringing high quality liners and finished products to the market.”

Riverbend Nursery in Riner, Virginia, is a provider of quality perennials, groundcovers, annuals, ornamental grasses, herbs and vegetables sold to independent garden centers and landscape distributors in the Mid-Atlantic and Southeastern states. James Greenhouses is based in Colbert, Georgia, and is a producer of perennial liners for wholesale growers in the U.S.



“This acquisition will enable both companies to leverage the respective geographic production strengths to better serve customers across north America,” said Jon Herbst, Chairman and Managing Member of Riverbend Nursery Holdings, LLC. “We believe it is critically important for James to maintain its focus as a supplier of superior genetic liners to its core customer base utilizing exiting strategic broker sales network.”



“Both companies enjoy a similar culture with an intensive focus on premium flowering perennial genetics,” said Ken James, who founded James Greenhouses with his wife Leah in 1998. “This integration provides a strong foundation for the next decades of young plant production as we endeavor to better serve our growers across North American with exactly the liners they want, when they want them.”

Riverbend Nursery was founded in 1984 and purchased by an investor-led group that formed Riverbend Nursery Holdings, LLC in 2014.



## AI in Horticulture

AmericanHort has officially announced Sage, their new AI-powered assistant designed to help you navigate AmericanHort's extensive library of resources. I'll be honest, I've actually never used an AI chatbot before and am very skeptical of their power. As a child of the '80s and '90s, The Terminator and Skynet are too prominent in my psyche to fully trust the computers!

My craziness aside, AI is a powerful tool that helps many people complete tasks and increase their productivity. I talk with growers, landscapers, university workers and many more who regularly use tools like ChatGPT and other AI platforms to answer questions, and help with writing emails and other memos. Unlike these other tools, Sage uses resources hosted by AmericanHort to develop answers, and may help provide more accurate and relevant information.

# Hello, My Name Is Sage

I am the new AI-powered assistant designed to help you by answering your specific questions about AmericanHort programs, services, and resources.



On a side note, regardless of how you feel about AI, it's here and becoming a bigger part of our world. Students are learning to rely on these tools just like students in the past began to rely on calculators (something I also try my best to avoid in order to stay sharp with remedial math).

My unsolicited advice (which nobody cares or needs): If you use these tools, try not to rely on them entirely. Otherwise, you might lose your ability to perform without them. I remember when I moved to Raleigh, North Carolina, GPS were becoming accessible to everyone. I relied on my GPS and never learned my way around. Once I moved to Virginia and then Louisiana, I made a point to not rely on GPS and I developed a strong sense of direction and can find my way around fairly easily.

I expect AI will be similar. When used as a tool it can boost your productivity, but when relied upon completely it can reduce your ability to function without it.

I heard a funny metaphor from a later-career colleague about how everyone was similarly concerned with the internet and email when they first came into the fold, but as we moved forward it seamlessly integrated in our lives.

I'll try and poorly paraphrase an excerpt from one of my favorite books "Sapiens" (or maybe it was one of the subsequent books from the author), which made an interesting point about technology expanding our ability to perform and causing expanded expectations. With the dawn of email, rapid communication allowed us to complete much more than our predecessors. As our capabilities grew, so did our expectations. I can attest to academia, where metrics of success keep increasing, and this is in part with the increased access and integration of tools that allow our similar effort to produce greater results.

By no means am I smarter or more capable than scientists of the past (quite the opposite in fact), but based on metrics alone, we tend to have more papers, presentations, grants, students, etc. than colleagues just a few decades ago. It's similar with athletes who use nutrition and training advancements to get stronger and faster. Athletes aren't working harder or putting in more effort than they did in the past, but we advance with the tools available and break records constantly. Perhaps AI will do the same for our society or perhaps it will take over the world. Only time will tell.

You can try Sage [HERE](#).



Think big,



Jeb Fields

Editor-at-Large

*Nursery & Landscape Insider*

**This has been received by 31,755 of the hardest-working horticulturists in show business!**

If you're interested in reaching 32,182 clients who eagerly await every *Nursery & Landscape Insider* and surely read every word, contact **Kim Brown** ASAP and she'll hook you up.



**WHOLESALE BUYERS GUIDE**  
Hundreds of Growers | Thousands of Listings  
Millions of Plants **NurseryGuide.com**