

## Arett, Pinterest, Gardener's Supply, SYF and Katie's big honor



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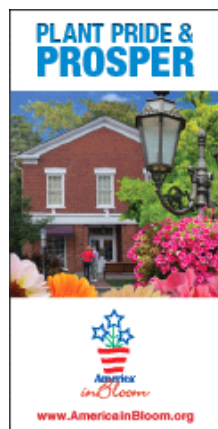
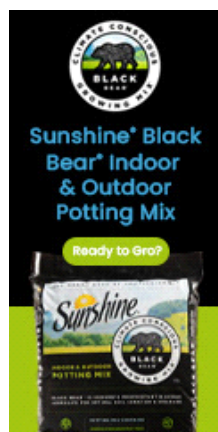
# Summer Hanging Baskets Are Here!

Stock up today and maximize sales

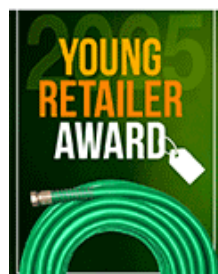


WEDNESDAY, JUNE 25, 2025

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THE GARDEN CENTER  
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PRESENT:



Green Profit's  
**buzz!**  
*Retail news from inside and outside the green industry*

### COMING UP THIS WEEK:

Arett's Pottery Showcase(s)  
Katie's Big Honor  
Another E-News Inspiration  
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Gardener's Supply Chapter 11  
IGC Sale Across the Pond  
Teachers Go to Hort School



### Arett's Pottery Showcase(s)

Arett Sales is trying a new showcase event this year that I think will be pretty exciting. The New Jersey-based company is hosting **Pottery Showcase Midwest**, July 13-15, at the Hilton Columbus Downtown in Columbus, Ohio. If those dates ring a bell, it's because the event is taking place at the same time as Cultivate'25. How convenient! And with the Hilton being adjacent to the Columbus Convention Center, if you go to Cultivate, you'll definitely have access to Arett's showcase. They'll have more than 6,000 sq.ft. of showroom at this location and will feature the same pottery assortment and offers available at their other showcase.





## SHOWCASE EAST + MIDWEST + VIRTUAL

Their other showcase, **Pottery Showcase East**, is, in fact, Arett's dedicated showroom in Moorestown, New Jersey, just 20 minutes from Philly. This 6,000+ sq.ft. space features more than 500 pallets of pottery and offers an easy-to-shop environment. Pottery Showcase East is going on now until July 21.

And if you can't make it to Columbus nor to Moorestown, Arett's Pottery Showcase Virtual is your third option. It may be virtual, but it has guided tours, providing an immersive 360-degree tour of the showroom. This allows buyers to browse and shop from wherever you are. The virtual option runs June 16-July 21.

Regardless of which option you choose, you'll find:

- The best pricing for the 2026 season
- Products from top brands including Harbor Gardens, Deroma, Grosfillex, Pacific Home & Garden, Southern Patio, Sunshine Ceramica, Syndicate, Xierun, TDI, Pottery Paradise, and Terra Verde Home
- Pottery sourced from the USA, China, Germany, Italy, India, Malaysia, Mexico, Spain, Thailand and Vietnam
- Exclusive product offerings available only through Arett Sales

Book your appointment early to take full advantage of these offerings. To do so, visit [potteryshowcase.aret.com](http://potteryshowcase.aret.com) or call 800-257-8220 to schedule your visit or access the virtual tour.



### Katie's Big Honor

You are familiar with Katie Elzer-Peters in a number of ways—either as a *Green Profit* columnist, a stand-in for this *buZZ!* newsletter for the last three Octobers, a frequent speaker at horticultural conferences, as head of digital marketing agency The Garden of Words, as an extraordinary water colorist ... I'm positive I can't list all she does. And because of all these horticulturally related activities, Katie has just been named a GardenComm Fellow. That's a big deal!



The distinction of Fellow recognizes an active **GardenComm** member who has repeatedly demonstrated exceptionally high degrees of skill, professional ethics and dedication to GardenComm's mission and values. I asked Maria Zampini, GardenComm's past president and

chair of the Honors Committee, which of the many things Katie does prompted GardenComm to bestow this honor?

“Beyond her membership, Katie has supported the organization as a sponsor of events, as a speaker by sharing her knowledge and expertise with members and non-members alike at educational classes, has served on committees and has brought potential regular and allied members to the table, as well as sponsors to the table,” Maria said. “She has also passed on her Great Garden Speakers to GardenComm to carry on having accessibility to exceptional speakers by the general public and the green industry trade. As you can see, Katie has gone above and beyond for GardenComm and acknowledging her contributions by naming her a Fellow was the least we could do.”

Well said, Maria. And I agree—if anything, Katie is dedicated to bettering the communications of this industry. Congrats, Katie!

Katie and others who received honors from GardenComm will be presented with their awards at the annual Honors & Laurel Media Awards on Friday, July 11 at the [Gather & Grow Mega Connect](#) event in Columbus, Ohio.



## Another E-Newsletter Inspiration

Last week I told you about Jenne Martin's U-Pick cut flower garden at her garden center in Myerstown, Pennsylvania, something I had spotted in her monthly newsletter. This week something in the newsletter from [Mitchell's Nursery and Greenhouse](#), King, North Carolina, caught my eye and I loved the idea.

They include a map of the nursery layout and greenhouses at the bottom of each newsletter. Here's what that looks like:



In addition to parking and indicating what plant material is located where on the lot, they include cashier locations, restrooms, overflow parking and more. It lets their customers plan their visit. And it's also easy for them to pull up the map on their phone while on location.

I emailed Judy Mitchell to ask how long they've included this map in their e-newsletter. Here's what she had to say:

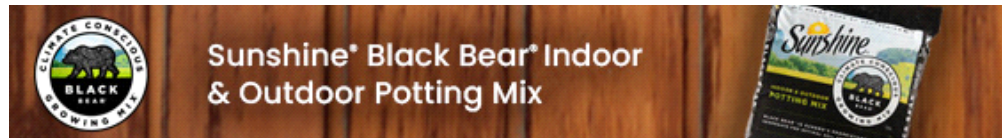
*We did a major revamp of our sales area in the last year. We demolished our four cold frames for overwintering shrubs in May 2024. The first was erected in late 1992 and were rusting off at the ground. We sold a log barn and our potting shed. We had bought additional acreage just down the road and built a new potting shed there, along with all of our tree and shrub growing. We graded and leveled that area to build a four-bay greenhouse and four cold frames—all gutter connected.*

*With all of this rearranging, we had to revamp our map on our website. Scott decided to include the map in our newsletter in our second newsletter in March, when we moved benches in our retail area ... We try to include pertinent information that customers and callers are asking for ... The changes have helped streamline our operation and get retail more consolidated. Everyone doesn't wander all over and we try to keep sales in just the new greenhouse and retail yard, which is still a big area. Some complain, but most are appreciative of the changes. Everything is clean and new.*

Even if you haven't gone through a renovation or rearranging, maps are a great way to help your customers navigate your store. And the easier they can get around, the easier it is for them to make purchases.

Sign me up for your newsletter ([ewells@ballpublishing.com](mailto:ewells@ballpublishing.com)), and maybe I'll spot something awesome and share it with your peers.





























## Pinterest Says ...

Maybe color sales have dropped off after the busy spring season and you're wondering how to get customers to your store to buy something. Look to Pinterest for clues as to what your customers are interested in. Yes, this is another installment of What NGB's Pinterest Users Are Searching For, and it's plump with ideas for what to offer your customers.

Your customers are not necessarily looking for plants. They are looking for ideas and inspiration.

Gail Pabst over at National Garden Bureau earlier this week clued me in to the trends for all of Pinterest that folks in the U.S. are searching for. Take a look:

Keywords		Weekly change	Monthly change	↓ Yearly change
 home garden ideas		-30%	10,000%+	10,000%+
 hippie garden		1%	1,000%	90%
 baking soda for hydrangeas		7%	1,000%	-20%
 fairy house diy natural materials		6%	600%	500%
 outdoor fire pit seating		3%	500%	-20%
 solar water fountains outdoor diy		2%	500%	400%
 dry garden		4%	400%	-70%
 landscaping retaining walls		-6%	400%	200%
 outdoor wall fountains		20%	300%	-70%
 nice above ground pool ideas		4%	300%	2,000%
 kids yard		-7%	300%	-70%
 backyard oasis		-4%	200%	-60%

Look at that, "home garden ideas" are up by more than 10,000% over the last month and the last year. That tells me people are perhaps staying home more or planning to stay home more. Or maybe they want to get their home garden ideas finalized and the products purchased before any potential tariffs kick in. Regardless of the reason why, an increase of this magnitude means opportunities for you to help these folks bring the "ideas" into reality.

With the other search terms—the fairy house and solar water fountains, for example—it seems DIY is making a comeback. And it seems like they want to build things—retaining walls, fountains, something for the kids and so on. Give them ideas and then give them some help creating it.

I misspoke a bit. Folks are indeed looking for plants, at least according to the growing trends of NGB's followers. Here are some of the plants NGB's Pinterest users are search for the most:



spirea bush landscaping

340.7x

more searches



coleus plants

82.7x

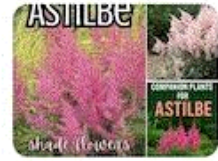
more searches



salvia plant

74.4x

more searches



astilbe

72.4x

more searches



caladium

64.7x

more searches



salvia

54.6x

more searches



foxglove

47.1x

more searches



petunia

36.2x

more searches



beautiful roses

31.9x

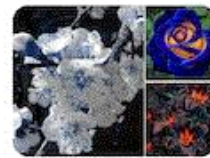
more searches



marigold

29.4x

more searches



rare flowers

25.6x

more searches



lavender plant

21x

more searches

By the way, NGB just published a professionally informed article on whether or not baking soda helps to change the colors of hydrangeas to blue. The answer is no, even if the Interwebs are saying yes. And it debunks other hydrangea hacks, too. Don't believe everything you read/see on the Internet, kids! This [ARTICLE](#) is something you should reference and repost in-store and online for your customers' benefit.

## Gardener's Supply Files for Chapter 11

According to [Bondoro](#), The Burlington, Vermont-based Gardener's Supply Company filed for Chapter 11 protection on June 20. The filing for the gardening supplies and equipment retailer of some renown is meant to facilitate a sale of all assets with Gardens Alive Inc.

Bondoro reports that Gardener's Supply faced liquidity constraints that resulted from "a combination of adverse macro- and microeconomic factors," ESOP repurchase obligations and a host of other issues. Hey, this business is hard, and is especially so due to its seasonality and the whims of Mother Nature.

The unsecured creditor's list is a Who's Who of some of our industry's biggest names—including one that has already been mentioned in this edition of *buZZ*—as well as names such as Meta, Google, Listrak and UPS. In fact, UPS is the vendor that holds the largest trade debt.

I've ordered my fair share of items from Gardener's Supply (maybe not enough, I guess) and I can say this about the company: They have the most pleasant customer service folks answering the

phones.

## IGC Sale Across the Pond

The UK's Gardenforum reports that Blue Diamond, the UK's largest garden center group, is expected to purchase **Barton Grange Garden Centre** as well as its wholesale nursery Garden Centre Plants. The sale will be completed by July 21 of this year.

According to Gardenforum, this is not the typical type of purchase for Blue Diamond. In the past they have acquired garden centers that were well-located but not doing so well, business-wise. Barton Grange has been doing very well and is much-admired business. In fact, it has been the Garden Centre Association destination garden center of the year several times.



So why the sale? The current owners—brothers Peter and Guy Topping—are preparing for retirement. According to a statement released by Barton Grange, “The aim is to ensure Barton Grange continues to be recognized as one of the world’s leading garden centers for many years to come.” Going out on top is the dream, isn’t it? Good for them for recognizing their desire to retire and knowing what would be best for the continued success of the business beyond their tenure.

## High School Teachers Go to Hort School

*Colleague Jen Zurko of GrowerTalks provided this update about Seed Your Future and its second-annual Seed to STEM program for educators.*

About a week ago, Ball Horticultural Company was one of the host sites for 30 teachers from around the country for the second annual Seed to STEM Teacher Immersive Program coordinated by Seed Your Future.

Seed to STEM is a professional development program that immerses high school educators in



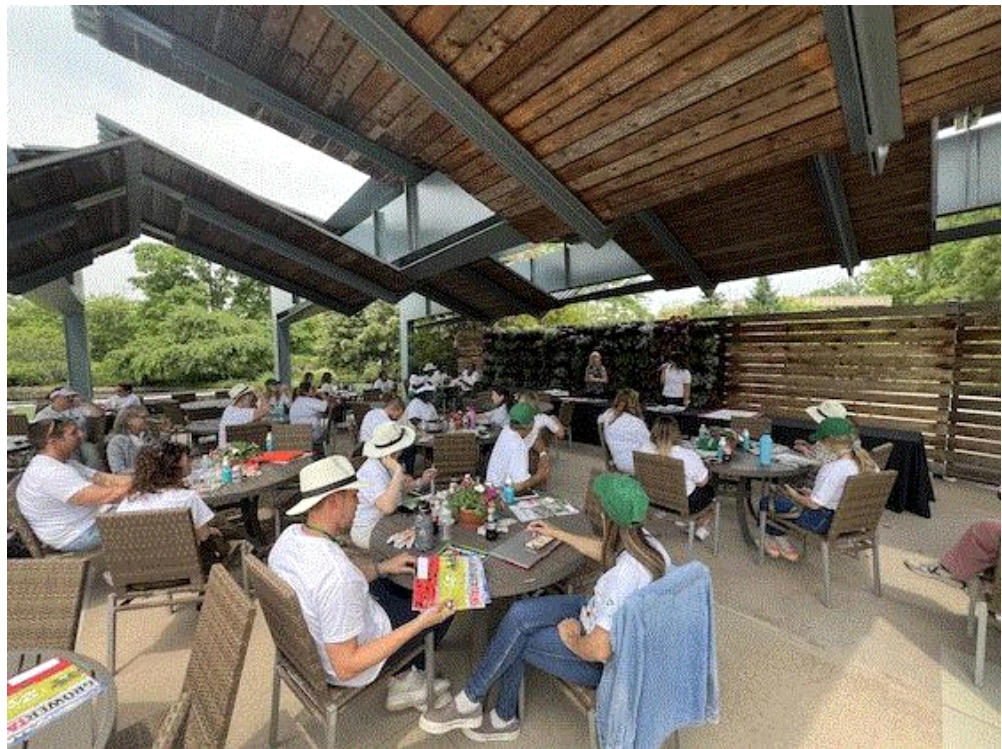
hands-on experiences, site visits and direct engagement with horticulture professionals. The program equips teachers with industry insights, classroom-ready resources and real-world connections to help students explore different career pathways in the plant and horticulture sciences.

Other industries like beef suppliers have taken advantage of the program (called On The Farm STEM), and Jazmin Albarran, executive director of Seed Your Future, thought it would be a perfect way for teachers across all concentrations to learn about the horticulture industry. After discussions with the program organizers, she collaborated with them to develop what became Seed to STEM.

During the inaugural event last year, 25 high school science teachers visited multiple hort businesses, including Corteva Agriscience and Heartland Growers. This year, the event was held in Chicagoland with stops that included Midwest Groundcovers, Kennicott and Ball. This time, instead of strictly science teachers, there were about 30 teachers of math, art, English and business in attendance.

"It's been very eye opening for the teachers," said Jazmin. "When we were walking through Heartland Growers, they were just amazed. They never realized all the jobs that it took to get those plants into the stores or into their front lawns. They saw how much people love what they were doing in the industry and wanted to really bring that into the classroom."

They spent all day at Ball, touring the Seed Distribution Center to see the new Perfect Pick system, visiting the R&D labs at Ball Helix and walking around the gardens. They also heard from multiple Ball employees about their jobs and the career path they took to get here. I was one of the employees asked to talk about my professional journey and how I ended up at the oldest (and bestest) horticulture magazine in the industry.



**Thirty teachers participating in the Seed to STEM Teacher Immersive Program spent all day at Ball Horticultural Company, taking tours and learning about different horticulture careers. Here, they're learning about marketing from Katie Rotella and Sarah Makiejus.**

It was great talking to them about what I thought I was going to be when I grew up and where I ended up. I told them I didn't know a thing about business-to-business publications or that it was even an option for me as a way to develop what I learned in Journalism School. They asked a lot of great questions, including what advice I would give to high schoolers who are interested in pursuing a career in journalism. (Write for your college newspaper or intern at a local paper [if



you still have one]—the hands-on experience you get is invaluable!)



Seed Your Future hosted a gala for donors and teachers to network and talk about the Seed to STEM program.

Anna Ball was one of the featured speakers.

One of the outcomes is the hope that these teachers take back what they've learned to their classrooms so that more students become interested in a horticultural career path. But each one is also expected to come up with a formal lesson plan that can then be shared with teachers from around the country on the Seed Your Future website (the current lessons have been downloaded almost 800 individual times). Combined with last year's teachers, Jazmin said they'll have about 50 lesson plans that incorporate horticulture not just in science classes, but other subjects, too. It offers a chance for those non-science teachers to be creative with their curriculum, especially in classes like art.



One of the educators who spoke at the gala was Dr. Shawn Hearn, a teacher at the Savannah High School of Liberal Studies in Savannah, Georgia. He told me he's built a school garden for the students to learn about plants and it has especially helped kids who've experienced trauma. They've recently incorporated more vegetables because maintenance and harvest time is during the summer—the timing helps keep the kids occupied and decreases the chance of them getting into trouble when they're not in school.

"We wanted these teachers that didn't know before to understand this industry," said Jazmin. "And now they get to walk away with very practical examples of how their subjects can lead to finding something their students are interested in."

And now that these formal lesson plans have been developed, Seed Your Future can now take advantage of other ways to engage with teachers through specific educator conferences.

Next year's Seed to STEM Immersive Program is scheduled to be in the Philadelphia area, where they'll get to visit Longwood Gardens and other local horticulture businesses. Eventually, Jazmin would like to have multiple, more regional immersive events just for teachers in that area that's focused on local businesses and local job opportunities. Not to mention all of the other things Seed Your Future does, like organizing specific programs for Green Career Week and the digital tools they provide to educators. Jazmin has a very full plate.

All of this vital outreach takes money, and as a non-profit, Seed Your Future counts on donations and grants to fund all of their efforts. Jazmin said she just hired a grant writer whose expertise is in finding ways to secure grant money from different sources. Since their usual federal grant funding has been frozen this year, they will be applying for state funding to offset the shortfall. Jazmin said Seed Your Future has three main corporate donors, but they'd like it to be spread out over a wider pool.

"If 300 of the nurseries and greenhouses in the industry gave us \$1,000 we would be set," she said. "The future is building awareness and, luckily, we have some testimonials from students

who found horticulture in high school because of Seed Your Future. And educators are starting to realize that there are many career paths in horticulture that their students can take regardless of what their passion or interest is."

To learn more about what Seed Your Future is doing and if you'd like to donate, [GO HERE](#).

*Thanks, JZ!*

If you have any questions, comments, suggestions, etc., drop me a line if you'd like at [ewells@ballpublishing.com](mailto:ewells@ballpublishing.com).



Ellen Wells  
Senior Editor-at-Large  
Green Profit

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