

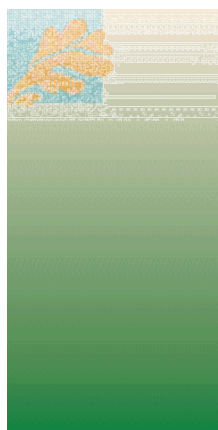
8 new AAS Winners, Gen Z prioritizing meaning and caladiums for T-Day?

Stay Ahead, Stay Inspired!

Twice a month, the Proven Winners® ColorChoice® Shrubs newsletter will deliver *inspiration*, *free POP*, and *exclusive retailer opportunities* to your inbox.

SIGN UP!





Green Profit's **buzz!**

Retail news from inside and outside the green industry

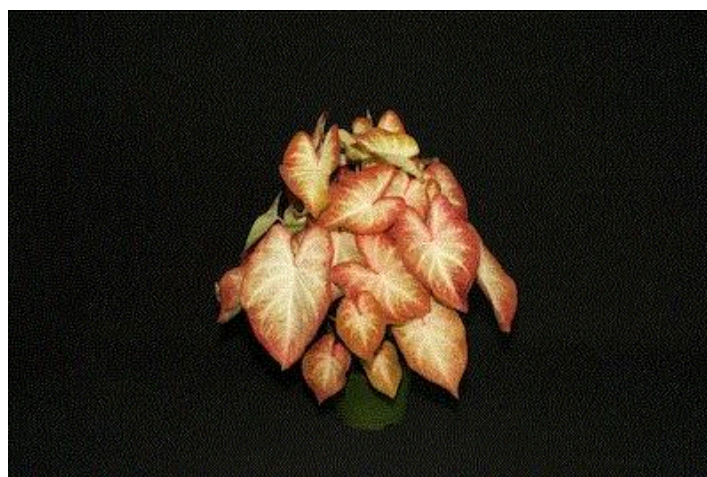
COMING UP THIS WEEK:

Consider Caladiums
Meaning Over Materialism
Speaking of Holiday Games
Rooted and Resilient
New AAS Winners
And the Last Four
Growing Good

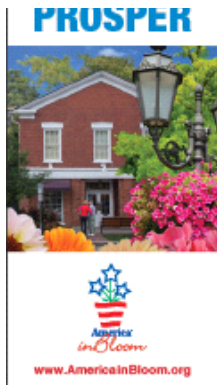


Consider Caladiums for Fall Decor

I've been talking a bunch about the upcoming Christmas holidays and have had poinsettias on the brain thanks to an article I'm writing for the January issue of *Green Profit*. But I'm actually an ardent fan of Thanksgiving and am disappointed that the meal-focused holiday gets such short shrift. That's why when Bob Hartman of Classic Caladiums got in touch about using caladiums to "elevate your poinsettias" and *just happened* to mention using them for Thanksgiving, I was stoked about the idea.



The variety above is called Crème Brulee, and they've been pairing these with kalanchoes and other assorted plants as combos specifically for Thanksgiving. Bob had no photos of those combos, but you get the idea of how the color is appropriate for fall. Use it as a table centerpiece. Or, Bob suggested, "Imagine it with some corn stalks and an orange pumpkin sitting at your front door as a fall decoration." Lovely with yellow garden mums, too. Caladiums



outdoors at Thanksgiving is a possibility for some folks in warm weather climates, but having them indoors no matter your locale is just as feasible as poinsettias. Both are tropical crops, after all. Think about it for next Thanksgiving.

And yes, they look great planted alongside poinsettias, too. More on that in the January issue! But here's a sneak peek of a combo of poinsettias planted with Snow Flurries caladium.



Gen Zers Prioritizing Meaning Over Materialism

Back to the commercial holiday season. My friend Gail Pabst at National Garden Bureau forwarded me a link to a [piece from market researcher Pam Danziger](#), written in response to the National Retail Federation's statement that Gen Zers are expected to reduce their spending by about 34%.

That is a staggering amount. And think about it, if these 18-28 year olds get in the habit of spending less now, that behavior just may stick with them for some time to come. Even though this is the first generation to be digital from the get-go, Gen Zers would rather have IRL (in real life) relationships and experiences than shop and spend. Cutting back 34%? That's okay by them.

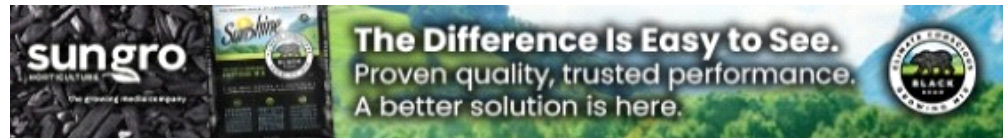
"Zoomers have learned quickly that technology is but a tool to support their lifestyle and no substitute for real-life experiences," wrote Pam. "In a confounding countertrend to the rise of digital convenience, they increasingly value community, authenticity, hands-on engagement and real-life experiences. It is driving a resurgence in analog rituals and reimagined holiday traditions that prioritize meaning over materialism."

That said, Gen Zers *will* be spending money this holiday season—just not a lot of it. A report from TikTok about recent holiday-related searches found the following terms to be trending, and gives you an insight into what might be on the holiday lists of Gen Z and others:

- Holiday games
- DIY
- Embroidery and crochet
- Nostalgia
- Baking

- Matching pajamas

Have any of these on your shelves?



Speaking of Holiday Games

The unsinkable Katie Dubow of Garden Media Group started a side hustle as a game developer. Not the digital kind, either. It's an IRL game that has been the unofficial sport of the Dubow family for 38 years. And by the looks of it, it's going to be the unofficial sport of your family, too.

The game is called Jason's Nuts, and it started with a bag of mixed nuts in their shells, perhaps spilling out of a cornucopia on a holiday table. Being a competitive lot, the Dubow cousins took these nuts and played a tabletop version of shuffleboard, seeing whose nuts could slide the furthest or knock others off and out.



Your holiday dishes will pile up and leftovers will remain unboxed as your family slides their nuts all over the table (it's okay, go on and chuckle). First to five points wins, with the losers shouting "again!" "This game has sparked fierce competition and nonstop laughter in my family ever since my oldest cousin, Jason, invented it," said Katie's husband Ethan Dubow, co-founder of Jason's Nuts. "Now we're thrilled to share that joy, and a few flying nuts, with the world."

And it looks darned fun, too, as evidenced by how much fun the kids and adults alike are having in the video on the [Jason's Nuts website](#) (guest appearances by Katie and her mom Suzie!). Each game includes 10 custom nut pieces, a measuring tape, rules and a tin for storage. Wholesale pricing is available, so get this game on your shelves. I just bought a few as stocking stuffers! Find out more at [Jason's Nuts](#), or [email Katie](#) if you're interested in carrying this game.

Rooted and Resilient

Old friend and *Green Profit* contributor Katie Elzer-Peters is pairing up with business coach Megan T. Morrison to create an event that women attending the Northern Green Conference will not want to miss. Held alongside that conference, they've designed Rooted & Resilient to be an interactive leadership experience to help women in horticulture recharge, reconnect and grow stronger together.



Are those caladiums behind Megan and Katie?

Taking place Wednesday, January 21 from 7 a.m. to 9 a.m. at the St. Paul Hotel in St. Paul, Minnesota, the morning program will get you energized not just for the day ahead but for the life ahead of you. They'll weave together facilitated networking, creative expression, and meaningful conversation that will spark authentic connections and cultivate the resilience you'll need to thrive in today's fast-paced horticulture industry.

And because Katie's involved, expect a collaborative art project, a ton of creativity and whole lot of laughter sprinkled with time for honest reflection. You'll come out of that gathering feeling renewed, inspired and more deeply connected to your peers, your purpose and the broader horticulture community.

Do you have to attend Northern Green to get a seat at this breakfast table? Nope. Any woman working in horticulture or curious about working in horticulture is welcome to attend this stand-alone event. Head over [HERE](#) to learn more and to register. [Sponsorship opportunities are available!](#)



New AAS Winners

All-America Selections just announced eight new AAS winners for 2026. These rigorously tested seed varieties, as you know, offer your customers superior garden performance, above and beyond that of close comparisons currently on the market. They're tested side by side—that's how they know! And among them are two varieties that are also Gold Medal Winners, the best of the best.

I'll tell you a bit about each one and provide a sales contact, too. Let's go over the edible winners first.

Basil Treviso, National Winner. Tight, compact and highly branched habit. Great for larger containers. Stays tender for longer into the season. Judges loved its vigor, heat tolerance and its slowness to flower. Resists oxidation, which means brighter pesto—yum! [Bred by Seeds By Design](#), and here's the [sales contact](#).



Pole Bean Majesty, Regional Winner. An early-maturing variety with high yield. Dense, dark green foliage that has notable resistance to insect damage and excellent recovery from summer heat stress. Uniform pods with a sweet flavor and tender, non-bitter texture. Bred by [Pure Line Seeds](#), and here's the [sales contact](#).



Kale Rubybor F1, Edible Winner, Ornamental Winner AND a Gold Medal Winner in both categories! Winning a Gold in both categories has never been done before, so this must be some sort of kale. Rich, deep purple foliage and a uniform, compact habit that maintains its color and shape. Its leaves are exceptionally tender and non-bitter, providing a continuous harvest of delicious, high-quality greens from spring until frost. Bred by Bejo Seeds, and here's the [sales contact](#).



Winter Squash Butter Lamp F1, Regional Winner in Northeast, Southeast and Mountain/Southwest. A mini, pumpkin-shaped butternut squash with excellent resistance to Powdery Mildew, heat and insect pressure. It produces lots of 15-30 oz. squashes with a smooth, sweet, nutty and buttery flavor. Bred by Known-You Seed, and here's the [contact info](#).



The Last Four

Now for the pretty flowers.

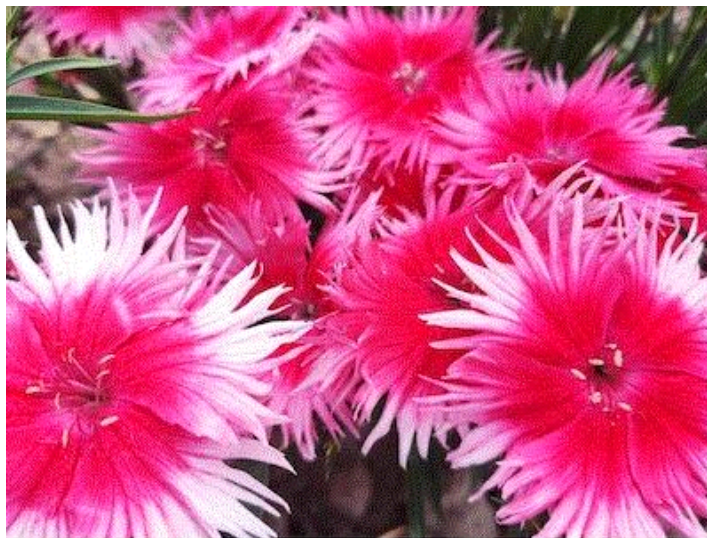
Zinnia Profusion Double White Improved, Gold Medal Winner. The Profusions continue their world domination with this one. It features impressively large double flowers, sturdiness, disease resistance and the ability to thrive in diverse climates. At just 14 in. tall, it sure does pack a pretty punch. Bred by [Sakata Seed Corporation](#), and here's the [sales contact](#).



Coreopsis SunGlobe F1, National Winner. This was praised by judges for its great habit and impressive bloom quantity. It produces tons of fluffy, golden yellow, semi-double flowers on sturdy stems slightly earlier than comparisons. It has a tidy, compact and densely branching form, with multiple flushes of vibrant gold flowers spring through fall. Bred by Hem Genetics B.V., and here's the [sales contact](#).



Dianthus Supra Cherry Picotee F1, National Winner. Judges praised its excellent habit and strong heat and drought resistance on a compact, bushy plant, keeping the foliage green and the flowers vibrant all summer. Fringed blooms feature a lovely picotee pattern, opening with dark cherry centers and soft pink edges. No deadheading and three seasons of fancy color. Bred by Hem Genetics B.V., and here's the [sales contact](#).



***Sedum spectabile Spectacular*, National Winner.** This perennial winner from seed is remarkably sturdy and full, and does not flop, maintaining a tight, compact, mounded habit. Noted for its excellent vigor and uniformity in both height and spread, this variety flowers slightly earlier than its comparisons. Bred by PanAmerican Seed, and here's the [sales contact](#).



These eight join three previously announced 2026 AAS Winners, which you can find [HERE](#).

Growing Good

Coast of Maine's Growing Good Program has reached the 2,000 garden milestone, helping schools, nonprofits and community gardens transform outdoor spaces into classrooms, food gardens and wellness hubs. Each project they are involved in connects soil, science and people through shared purpose and organic growth.

Through the Growing Good Program, Coast of Maine partners with local retailers—folks like yourselves—to provide donations of their soil and other supplies. More than 200 IGCs have participated by donating Coast of Maine soil to 629 school and non-profit gardens in 38 states. Examples of who has benefited from the program include:

- The Congregation Beth Israel Ner Tamid in Wisconsin created an educational garden that

blends environmental stewardship with intergenerational learning.

- In New York, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Ulster County's 4-H program is building a sensory garden where students explore mindfulness, pollinators and plant life.
- In Washington, D.C., FRESHFARM cultivates school gardens that connect children to nutrition, agriculture and environmental responsibility.
- In Massachusetts, The Marion Institute is helping communities grow health and wellness through its urban food initiatives.
- In Tennessee, the Chattanooga Area Food Bank is using Coast of Maine soils to grow fresh produce for families experiencing food insecurity.
- In Colorado, Boulder County Public Health and early childhood programs across the region are engaging young learners in garden-based education—teaching science, math and ecology through planting and harvest.

And those are just *some* of the projects that have benefited communities across the nation. It's not just Coast of Maine making the local impact—it's you folks who do the groundwork of donation and education. Pat yourselves on the back for a making a difference. See more of what the Growing Good Program has done [HERE](#).

If you have any questions, comments, suggestions, etc., drop me a line if you'd like at ewells@ballpublishing.com.



Ellen Wells
Senior Editor-at-Large
Green Profit

This week's BuZZ! was sent to 28,755 loyal readers!

If you're interested in advertising on BuZZ! contact [Kim Brown](#) **ASAP!**

The Only Magazine
GROWERS AND RETAILERS FLIP OVER.