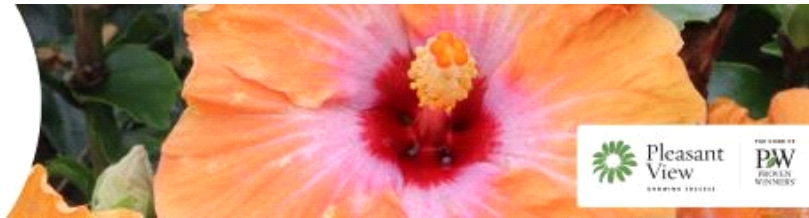


Garden goods, talking fertilizer, bouquet bash and Elmo in Keukenhof

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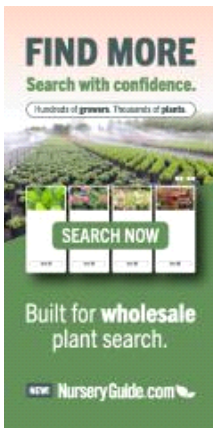
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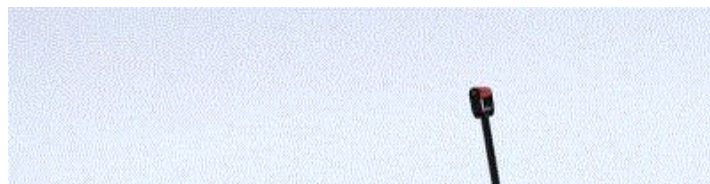
COMING UP THIS WEEK:

- The Spring Reset
- Wirecutter's Top Garden Tools
- Casual Market Atlanta
- Pottery Showcase
- Fertilize!
- Bouquet Bash
- Elmo Goes to Keukenhof
- Finally ...



The Spring Reset

According to the folks at the Retail Brew newsletter, Shopify store sales for April showed that the month was all about preparing for spring. Especially popular on online stores using Shopify were lawn maintenance tools and specifically wagons, which saw orders increase by 4,744%! Other items seeing spikes were grass edgers (697%), plant cages (242%), garden hoses (232%) and sun shades (254%). Speaking of shady spaces, dog house sales were up 1,910% and other dog-related items were selling like hot cakes, too. Do you sell outdoor pet supplies? Looks like you should.





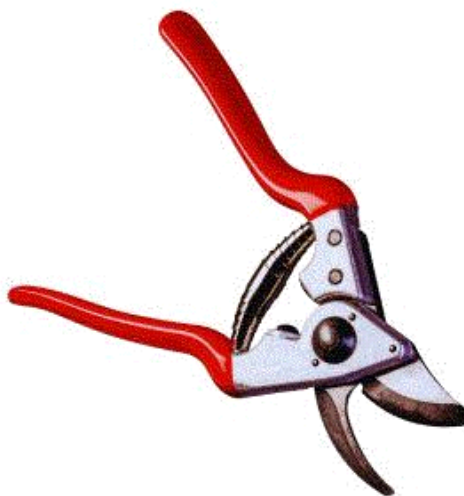
What these sales increases may indicate is an interest in staying home this summer, rather than spending money on fleeting things such as airline tickets, gas and summer getaways. The economy has seen better days, what with gas and grocery prices and the recent inflation numbers all going up. Maybe the earlier prediction of a summer of staycations is coming to fruition.

What have you seen? Thoughts? Drop me a note about it [HERE](#).

Wirecutter's Top Garden Tools

You know about [Wirecutter](#), right? It's a *New York Times* site where journalists thoroughly test and review pretty much anything you can think of—from underwear and chinos to skincare products and TV stands. I've taken their suggestions plenty of times and honestly, my skin has never looked so good, and I finally have a mechanical pencil that I really love.

When these reviewers aren't adequately able to test products, they ask experts for their own recommendations. And in a [Wirecutter piece on garden tools](#) released this week, they asked the landscape teams at some of the nation's heralded botanic gardens what tools they turn to for various gardening tasks.



You should know what these products are, because your customers will come asking. Here are a few for-instances I've pulled from their recommendations:

- Felco 2 bypass pruner
- Silky Pocketboy 170 mm folding saw
- A.M. Leonard's plastic-handled hori hori
- Gorilla Tub (formerly Tubtrugs, I didn't know that name changed)
- 20-gal. Catchy Can
- Showa Atlas gloves

They had plenty of other recommendations, too, some of which were professional hacks you

might be interested (find them at the end of the [article](#)).

Wirecutter fans do not wait on pursuing recommendations, either, so be prepared! In my case, Wirecutter recommended the Blick Premier 0.5 mm mechanical pencil, and I waited a few weeks to visit my local Blick store to purchase one. All sold out. “We just weren’t expecting the demand,” the sales associate told me. (The 0.7 mm model works just fine.)



Casual Market Atlanta

On the topic of stuff to sell in your store, I’m sure you are considering going to one or several of the markets happening this summer. Casual Market Atlanta at AmericasMart is happening twice this year—July 21-23 and again September 15-18. You’ll see more than 150 permanent showrooms and exhibits representing the largest concentration of outdoor living brands in the U.S., all in one place.



They are offering a new take on the temporaries with Outdoor Living Expo, which will feature expanded floors of curated brands and product categories for furniture, shade, fire, lighting, performance fabrics and accessories. In September, this section will include LUXE Outdoor Living, a dedicated high-design showcase with a juried collection of premium, design-forward brands.

Both the Summer and Fall editions of Casual Market Atlanta will have access to the AmericasMart campus experience, including cross-category sourcing opportunities across home décor, gift and lifestyle. During the July market, the dedicated garden and outdoor collection in Building 2 (Floor 9) will be open for a limited time on July 22. The September market runs concurrently with AmericasMart Atlanta’s Fall Market. For more information and to register, visit CasualMarketAtlanta.com.

The timing of the outdoor show is a bit different this year. They had been running it with their summer gift show called Atlanta Market. If you’re in the market for just gifts, find out more information, including dates for that show, [HERE](#).

Pottery Showcase

Arett Sales is once again offering its [Pottery Showcase](#) this year—and offering you a few different options to explore it.



Pottery Showcase East is one way to see all Arett’s offerings, and it happens at their dedicated

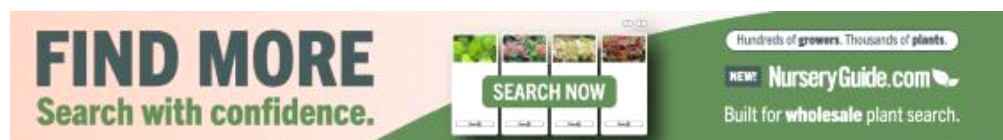
showroom in Moorestown, New Jersey, June 15-July 24. See more than 500 pallets of pottery! There's something for everyone for the upcoming season.

Pottery Showcase Midwest will once again have a presence adjacent to Cultivate in Columbus, Ohio. This year, their location within the Hyatt Regency has even greater visibility and convenience to the Cultivate trade show floor (and Starbucks, too). See them in this new 6,500 sq.ft. showroom July 12-14.

Pottery Showcase Virtual is just like it sounds. Experience guided 360-degree virtual tours of the showroom from June 15-July 27. See it all in a personalized and remote shopping experience without leaving the comfort of your office.

What will you see there? Exclusive offerings only from Arett, for one. Some of the leading brands include Harbor Gardens, Deroma and Pacific Home & Garden, and others sourced from the U.S., China, Germany, Italy, India, Malaysia, Mexico, Spain and Vietnam.

Visit potteryshowcase.aret.com or call 800-257-8220 to schedule your visit or access the virtual tour, or book your appointment [HERE](#).



Fertilize!

I received a message from Sue Adams of Mark & Sue Adams Greenhouses in upstate New York who wrote, "Loved your article about fertilizer. I've been trying for YEARS to get customers to understand about fertilizer." If you haven't read my "[Fertilizer=Healthy Plants](#)" article in the April issue of *Green Profit*, it's all about communicating the "why" of plant nutrition, whether it's fertilizer or a living microbiome, to our gardening customers. Not even our gardening customers—to me! I'm famous for not fertilizing, but researching this article made me buckle down and do it.

Although a wholesale operation, Sue recognizes the importance of getting that fertilizer message across to the end consumer. Sue worked with the marketing department of one of her biggest customers—a local market chain with attached garden center—to make a sign showing a sunflower with a spoon filled with blue, next to a green and yellow container with the sign saying "Feed Me." Maybe that message will get across to customers.



Help! My hanging basket (or container) looked great in the spring, but by mid summer they look terrible. What can I do?

Here are a few simple tips for keeping baskets and containers looking their best:

- Water! Don't let the basket dry out. On hot days they may need to be watered more than once a day.

- Fertilize— A slow release fertilizer like Osmocote added to the soil of your container is ideal. Petunias and million bells are heavy feeders, so water with liquid fertilizer every couple of weeks. Use a granular fertilizer if there are many rainy days-it won't wash away.



What's fertilizer?



Fertilizer is plant food—not compost, not manure... Plants, like us, need like to eat. Vigorous plants like petunias eat like teenagers. There are lots of choices in the garden center, including organic ones. An all-purpose fertilizer is a safe choice to recommend. Liquid or dry? Liquid has the benefit of already being in the form that the plant's roots and foliage can take up and use. But liquid will be washed away during rainy periods. Granular is more cost effective. A slow release fertilizer is a great choice for containers. Please encourage the customer to fertilize for happy, healthy plants!

A portion of Sue's training manual.

"I also do trainings at each of the stores with a manual that is not only given to the garden centers, but also to each of the cashiers in grocery and produce," Sue wrote. "Believe it or not, I

see the teenagers reading these and receive lots of positive comments.”

Read the [ARTICLE](#) and pick up some pointers on educating consumers about fertilizing. And if you have had success with getting the plant nutrition message across to home gardeners and want to share your technique, [please do so!](#)



Bouquet Bash

There's a flyer in the entry to my yoga studio that is advertising a Neighborhood Main Streets fundraiser. The event is called Bouquet Bar, and for \$50 you get 5 floral stems, a vase, food and a cocktail. Chat with friends, meet your neighbors and create a floral piece to take home. I might sign up for "research purposes."

Bossman Beytes then sent along information from a company called Postal Petals about their new [Bloom Bar Kits](#). These shipped kits include waterproof wrapping paper, ribbon, bouquet tags, two garden shears and enough flowers for seven bouquets. Use them for get-togethers, family gatherings or however you want.



I made the mental connection between the two, added in the resurgence in cut flowers and came up with the proposal that you, too, can get in on the burgeoning bloom and bouquet revival.

You may very well already be offering bouquet-making workshops, much like Paint Night or Plant Night events. Are you delivering them? Or perhaps put a "plant it now, get this later" spin on the event by offering both cut-flower plants for the garden and stems of what that garden will eventually produce. Something for now, something to look forward to later.

Elmo Goes to Keukenhof

I've mentioned here before that DeVroomen has a Sesame Street Collection that was developed to help "educate the next generation about gardening, sustainability and the wonders of nature." The collection has a number of Sesame Street-themed products already, and you can see those [HERE](#).

To celebrate the most recent addition to the collection—the Sesame Street Tulip Blend—they were able to create something spectacular at the world-famous Keukenhof Gardens in Lisse, Holland.



Elmo! DeVroomen created this Elmo Mosaic in the most famous spring bulb garden in the world to get the younger generation excited about gardening. And who wouldn't be excited by all those dazzling colors, especially since they are in the form of the cutest Muppet ever? Elmo and Cookie Monster were both in attendance on April 18 to celebrate the occasion. During this event the Sesame Street-themed tulip blends were officially baptized, honoring the unique mixes.



Along with the Sesame Street display, DeVroomen's main garden displays a blend of bulbs

offering seven full weeks of blooms to provide a lasting sea of color. This garden showcased a strategically planned design, starting with early spring bulbs and transitioning to mid and late season tulips, daffodils and allium. DeVroomen's blend of soft pastels along with an impressive mix of colors gave visitors a lasting display of blooms throughout the season.

"We are honored to share our gardens with visitors from across the globe and to be part of an event that celebrates the beauty and impact of flowering bulbs," said Angela Schultz, General Manager from DeVroomen Garden Products.

Don't play [THIS VIDEO](#) if you have children in the room—it might make them dance and giggle!

Finally ...

Don't underestimate the power of a successful bloom to make you want more. Take this for instance.



I grew this! I mean, the real miracle is nature can create something so delicate out of thin air. But it was under my care as it did so!

Thanks to the folks at Star Roses and Plants for gifting this Poppin' Passion passion fruit to me last year—and now I want to grow more. While it didn't produce any flowers last year, it did grow at least 5 ft. before I brought it into my sunporch for the winter. I'll move it outside next week for the summer—and hopefully it'll bear some fruit, too. This is one of those "and" plants—beautiful, almost unbelievable flowers *and* tropical fruit. I want more!

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

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