

Podcast w/Quinten; the First Weekend in June; Our Place in U.S. History

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# GrowerTalks' Acres Online

News and Commentary from GrowerTalks Magazine

### COMING UP THIS WEEK:

- Meet 4th gen grower Quinten Henning
- Webinar on container supply chain
- First weekend of June: Solid
  - The Canadian asterisk
  - Regionally speaking
  - Nothing but 8s
- M&M, Smithers-Oasis collab
- Our place in U.S. history

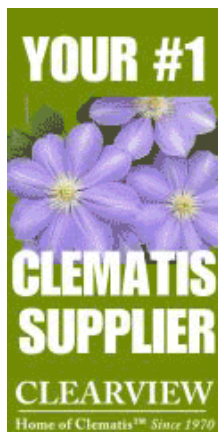
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← VIEW our **NEW ANNUALS CATALOG!**



[View my newest podcast with 4th-gen. grower Quinten Henning](#)



This time, my Chris Beytes Podcast features our 2022 Young Grower Award Winner Quinten Henning, vice president of his family's business, Henning's Farm & Greenhouse in Indiana.



Quinten was just 23 when he earned the big prize, but he already knew he was destined to take over the family business, even skipping the opportunity to go to college. It was a tough call at the time, he says, but he has no regrets. His passion for the industry, for his family legacy, and for the lessons he's learned from his dad and business partner all come through.

Learn where Quinten gets his growing blood and entrepreneurial spirit, why he still drives a "beater truck," and how parents can encourage kids to follow in their footsteps.

Check it out [HERE](#). And take a gander at all the others in my podcast playlist.



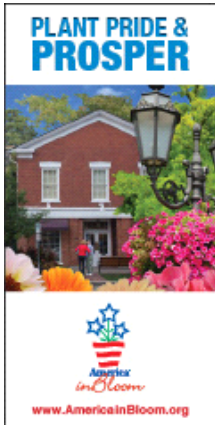
### Webinar on containers and the supply chain

A *GrowerTalks* Livestream is similar to a podcast, except you can attend it LIVE and ask questions, and I've got one coming up later this month—Thursday, June 24, at 1 p.m. Eastern to be precise.

The title? **"Reducing Surprises in the Container Supply Chain."** And who doesn't want to do that? I mean, with the cost of inputs like pots, plus freight and oil and tariffs and all the rest, if you can take some of the mystery and worry out of keeping a supply of containers on hand, why wouldn't you?

To do that, I'm going to be interviewing Ed Cooper, the CEO of Growscape (formerly the HC Companies and Classic Home & Garden). My plan is to pick his brain about how growers and retailers can navigate the challenges of container sourcing, from peak-season volatility and product availability to forecasting, sustainability requirements and rising production costs.

GrowerTalks Magazine,  
Ball Horticultural  
Company, BASF &  
AmericanHort are  
happy to present:



Growerscape is one of the industry's largest suppliers of containers, planters and growing systems, and they've taken a serious, proactive approach to supply planning, domestic manufacturing, customer collaboration and service reliability. It should be an educational conversation! Oh, and if you are looking for ways to be more sustainable with your containers, we'll be talking about that, too!

Sign up [HERE](#).

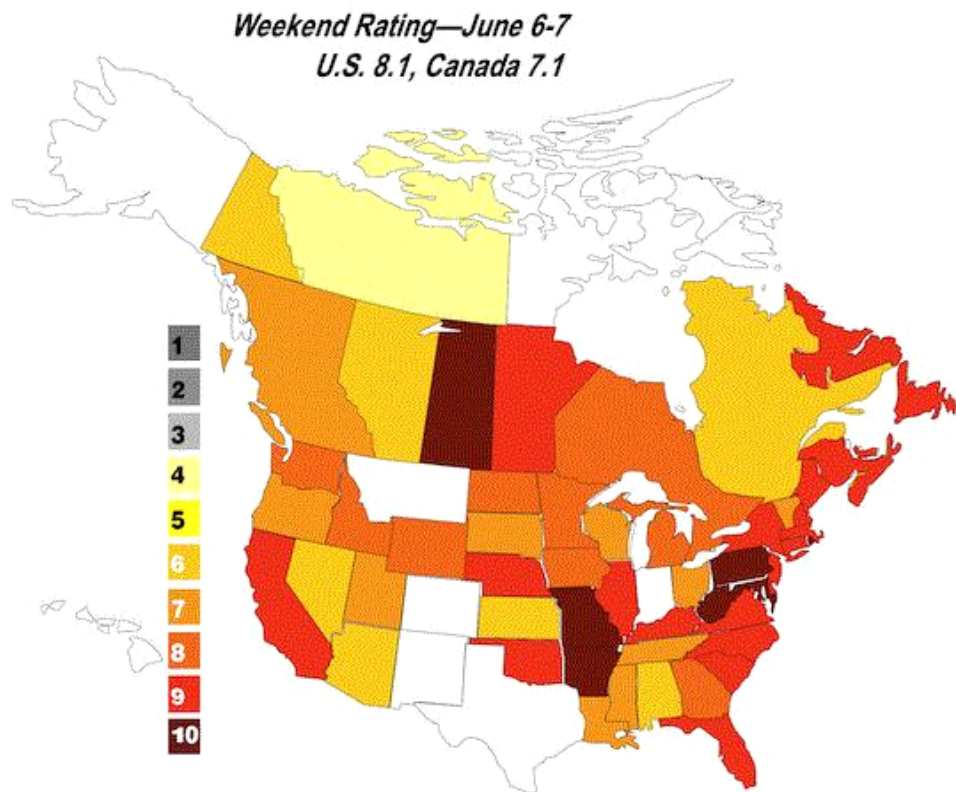


### How was the first weekend of June?

We want spring to last as long as possible. Weather, please don't get hot. Customers, please don't go on vacation. Plant inventory, please hang on so we can sell out.

We'll take heart: June 6-7 was a good one for lots of you—above average in the U.S., in fact. And about on the average in Canada if I give it an asterisk. The score: **8.1 in the U.S.** and **7.3 in Canada**. The 14-year average is 7.6/7.9. And actually, as I look at the historical scorecard, this was the best first weekend of June for the U.S. since the still-pandemic-driven 2022 season, which scored 8.5. And other than good weekends in '19 (8.2) and '20 (8.3), the previous years of 2012 through 2018 were in the 7s or even 6s. So a strong start to June!

Here's the map:



That's based on 97 scores from 43 states and 12 provinces (every one except Nunavut ... if there's a nursery or garden center up there, I want to hear from you!)

This is not a weekend that generates a lot of 10s, so this week's 16% is in range—the last two years both produced 13% 10s; 2023 delivered 20% 10s). Another 25% of you scored it 9, so 42% of respondents scored it well above average. That's solid!



## The Canadian asterisk

If I remove a pair of 4s from the Northwest and Yukon territories where the season is still struggling to get off the ground, the Canada average climbs to 7.7—still below average, but not as much. But of course, I've been begging for scores from NT and YK and am grateful for them, so they're included in the overall score and map. (In fact, I got TWO scores from the Yukon!)

I think it was British Columbia, though, that really hurt your overall average. BC could score 9s and 10s this time of year. But instead they were mixed at 9.5, 7, 7 and 4, for a 6.9 average.

Then again, looking back a few years shows that this weekend can be really good or really bad in BC—2023 scored 9.3, 2024 was a dismal 4.2, and last year you sent just one score, an 8.

At least you've got a few weekends left to make up for it!



## Regionally speaking ...

This time, most of both the U.S. and Canada seemed to enjoy pretty good weather. Southern markets are starting to heat up and slow down, but they aren't dead yet, with respondents mostly pleased that customers are still stopping in. New England and the East were super strong—which they need to make up for lost weekends. The Midwest and Plains were solid. It seemed to only be the Pacific Northwest, including British Columbia, that truly suffered from rainy, cold weather.

East	9.2
New England	8.7
South	8.1
Midwest	8.0
Plains	7.6
Northwest	7.4
Mountain	7.3

I skimmed my spreadsheet for states or provinces with multiple scores that did well, but didn't really see anyplace that truly killed it. I note two high scores ... and then a lower score. Like Minnesota: 9, 9 ... and then 6. Kentucky: 10, 9 ... 7. New York: 10, 10 ... 7.4. Ohio: 10, 8 ... 3.5. Perhaps Virginia—9, 9, 9, 8.5—was the most uniformly consistent state. And in Canada, Saskatchewan scored 10 and 9.



## Nothing but 8s

As I started copying and pasting your comments, I realized the first handful were all 8s. Seeing how the average was 8.1, it seemed appropriate to stick with comments explaining 8s:

**Iowa (8).** "Muggy and hot on Saturday, but decent sales. Heavy rain (much-needed) off and on all day Sunday. Sales were still pretty good considering the weather. I think the rain will keep people planting now that they aren't as worried about drought and browning lawns. Hot this week (of course—it's mum-planting time) and then back to 80F for the weekend."—*Kate Terrell, Wallace's Garden Center*

**New Jersey (8).** "This past week was very busy, shipping the balance of the spring material to our garden centers and landscapers. But, as is usually the case, we had to lower the prices to stimulate sales. This, though, is not a bad thing to do versus recycling the old material. Now that the balance of the spring material is gone, we can focus on the fresh summer crop. The only thing that kept this past week from being a 10 was the 95F-plus days last week. This week looks beautiful, with cooler days and nights."—*Bill Swanekamp, Kube-Pak*

**Washington (8).** "Our weekend weather was a bit cooler, but I think that is a bonus this time of year. Traffic is still looking good, and we are now able to discount some late-season overstock to entice some extra volume out of a market getting distracted by upcoming summer festivities."—*Tom Van Wingerden, Van Wingerden Greenhouses*

**California (8).** "Crazy weather, all mixed up ... warm one day, cold the next. Very strange!"—*Tom Courtright, Orchard Nursery*

**South Dakota (8).** "I'd go with an 8. Good, steady weekend, although it was very hot, in the 90s and windy. But a decent start for June."—*Tim L. Sime, Jolly Lane Greenhouse*

**Ohio (8).** "Decent sales considering the late season and the rainstorm Saturday morning. People are still looking for vegetables as well as flowers. We see first-time customers this time of year if we can keep nice products after everyone else sells out."—*Kim Grant, Strait Gate Greenhouses*

**Washington (8).** "Cool weather, cool weekend. People were determined to shop. Sales were strong. Solid. But not the earth-shattering strong we had hoped for."—*Kathy Wheaton, Kathy's Corner*

**North Carolina (8).** "89F for high on Friday and Saturday ... sales slowed considerably after lunch on Saturday. Friday was better than Saturday, thanks to a big landscaper order and a garden center order."—*Judy Mitchell's, Mitchell's Nursery & Greenhouse*



## **M&M Wintergreens, Smithers-Oasis collab on greens kits**

Here's an interesting partnership: You may recall that Smithers-Oasis has introduced a brand called **Oasis Forage Products**, designed to help the home gardener and decorator create floral designs and décor using foraged products—greenery, wild flowers, flowers from the garden, dried stems and seeds ... you name it.

But not everybody has access to good foraging. What if you have no evergreens in your yard? What if you live in a city high rise? What if you want the look but don't have the time ... or the boots?

M&M Wintergreens solves that by putting together kits to make your own holiday porch pots. They include M&M's greenery, Oasis' Forage Porch Pot Foam and Stay Green Spritz anti-transpirant. They'll all be featured in a shoppable display that lets consumers create their own winter and holiday porch pots. There will be two styles of porch pots, both featuring the appropriate thriller/filler/spiller mixture.



"Most consumers don't have a forest in their backyard to forage fresh evergreen cuttings," says Shannon Kuhrt, president of M&M Wintergreens, "so our fresh evergreen porch pot kits provide the foraging materials to sell alongside the Wintergreens Forage Kit. This combined solution is easy to set-and-sell to the consumers in a grab-and-go format."

The Wintergreens Forage Kit will be available for order starting in July, exclusively through **M&M Wintergreens**.



## Our place in America's 250th history

As we approach the semiquincentennial, I am reminded that horticulture was the first scientific enterprise in our new republic. I mean, think about it: As soon as the Pilgrims jumped off the Mayflower and kissed the ground and slapped one another on the back and lit a fire, they had to figure out what they could grow to eat. There were no chemistry labs or engineering schools, but the first settlers could test which fruit varieties survived American winters, which grains tolerated humidity, which ornamentals adapted to the new soils, and which rootstocks resisted local pests.

Jefferson, Washington and other early agrarian thinkers were running experimental farms—the nation's first R&D labs. Jefferson's Garden Book is a 60-year record of his work in his Monticello garden, where he experimented with some 330 vegetable varieties.

Land-grant universities were created by the Morrill act in 1862, but the intellectual groundwork had been laid for that by many decades of horticultural experimentation, nursery-based research, plant exploration, and even early societies like the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, which dates back to 1829 and is still going strong.



Dingee & Conard Company, West Grove, Pennsylvania, circa 1892. Born as a botanical garden in the 1770s, forerunner to Conard-Pyle, which begot Star Roses & Plants, now one of Ball Publishing's sister companies.

In the 1800s, mail order seed and plant catalogs brought fruit trees, roses and ornamentals to settlers and households across the country, often from their own breeding programs. It was the Shakers of Enfield, Connecticut, who invented the small, standardized seed packets that gave rise to companies like Ferry-Morse and W. Atlee Burpee and their iconic seed catalogs and store racks.

Fast-forward to post-World War II and the first subdivision, Levittown, which birthed the modern L&G industry that we enjoy today, and you can appreciate that our little industry has helped feed, landscape, decorate, celebrate, marry and bury a quarter-millennium of Americans.

We should be proud!



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## Finally ...

Remember my hibiscus from last week, with the big puffy colorful buds that refused to open?



Several of you offered possible explanations, from boron or calcium deficiency to a PGR application that the plant is struggling to grow out of.

But I'll defer to the producer of the plant, Costa Farms, and an explanation from their Director of R&D, Brand Marketing and Horticultural Content, Justin Hancock:

"Good news and bad news on your tropical hibiscus inquiry in the last *Acres Online*.

"The good news: Technically, there's nothing wrong with your plant.

"The bad news: That variety—HibisQs Longi-Tropic Pink—has issues holding its buds in high summer temperatures. (Like me, perhaps of its Danish roots, it's not at its best when temperatures soar.) Because it's a genetic issue, you're unfortunately going to see this continue through the summer (unless you haul it inside to the air conditioning overnight every night or something crazy like that)."

Justin then very kindly offered to send me a summer HibisQs variety, which I gratefully accepted.

I hope he expedites the shipping, because I now have a bigger problem:



Pests. Namely deer.

Feel free to email me at [beytes@growertalks.com](mailto:beytes@growertalks.com) if you have ideas, comments or questions.

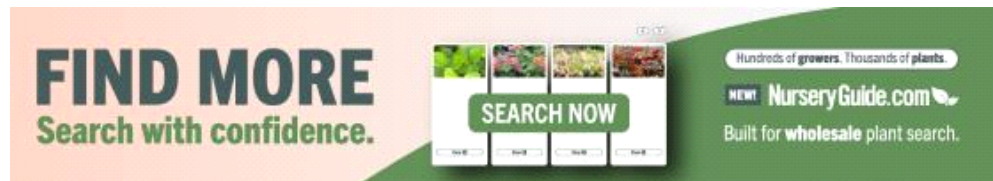
See you next time!



**Chris Beytes**  
Editor-in-Chief  
*GrowerTalks & Green Profit*

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