

Young Retailer panel, new at PPA and Espoma, Monrovia & GardenComm in Oregon

Top-performing plants that bring the buzz.

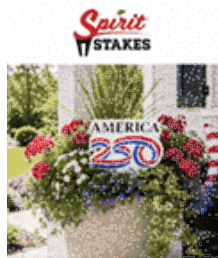


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COMING UP THIS WEEK:

- JP's Young Retailer Panel
- Rooted & Rising Fellowship
- All Sorts of New from Espoma
- PPA's Offerings
- Monrovia's Breeder Showcase
- GardenComm Conference
- Therapeutic Garden Grants



JP's Young Retailer Panel

Colleague Jen Polanz wants to get the word out about the panel she will host at Cultivate in just a few weeks. I'll be there, so join us! Here's what JP has to say about it.

For the second year in a row, I am hosting a panel called "Insights From the Industry's Top Young Retailers" to chat with them about what they're seeing in their operations, how they're reaching younger generations and find out about some of their unique ideas and challenges.

Join us in Room A110 at 4 p.m. on Sunday, July 12 to hear insights from:

- Samuel Di Rito, Manager, Collier's Greenhouse & Garden Center, Jackson, Georgia
- Brandon Kirby, Partner, Business Development, Rainbow Gardens, San Antonio, Texas
- Jake Scott, General Manager, Piedmont Feed & Garden Center, Chapel Hill, North Carolina

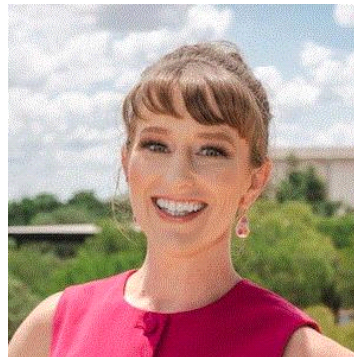


I've got a long list of questions and topics, so we may not get to all of them, but we're hoping to cover topics like new technology, how they source products, what events are resonating for younger crowds, how they hire to get the right people in the right positions, ways to build community, retail trends and more.

If all this sounds interesting to you, please join us! The session is included with the All-Access Pass. If you haven't registered yet, what are you waiting for? Visit the [Cultivate'26 website](#) for details, and don't forget to stop by the *GrowerTalks/Green Profit* booth at 2403 to say hi!

Rooted & Rising Fellowship

This next one has nothing to do with Cultivate, but it does have something to do with a Cultivate'26 speaker, executive coach [Megan Taylor Morrison](#). Megan leads the [Rooted & Rising Women's Leadership Program](#), now in its second year. From what I heard from the inaugural season's participants, it is not to be missed.



The news here is that one Rooted & Rising Outstanding Leadership Fellowship will be awarded to one green industry participant, giving them a full ride to participate in the program. That's huge! Not only is it an honor, it is a nice pile of funds that stay in that person's pocket.

You're worth the investment in your future. Find out about participating and the details of the Fellowship [HERE](#).

All Sorts of New from Espoma

The organic fertilizer company Espoma has several new things—people, products and such—to tell you about. First, the family-owned company has just announced its fifth generation has joined the business! Jordan Brunner joins the marketing team after building her skills at JPMorgan.

“Welcoming the fifth generation into Espoma is a proud moment for our family and for the future of this company,” said Jeremy Brunner, President of The Espoma Company, in a press release. “Jordan is starting to learn the business and the industry, and we couldn’t be more excited to have her on board.”



Jordan and Jeremy Brunner

Espoma also has five new products available for 2027, all of which meet growing consumer demand across several key gardening categories:

- **Houseplant Mix:** a rich, lightweight organic soil blend enhanced with earthworm castings and mycorrhizae, available in a convenient 8-quart bag.
- **Earthworm Castings:** a new larger 16 qt. size of this popular product.
- **Citrus! Plant Food:** an 8 oz. liquid concentrate returns packed with natural proteins and beneficial microbes and is a great add-on sale for tropical plants.
- **Lawn Starter:** a smaller 6.75 lb. size fertilizer covers up to 700 sq. ft. and provides customers with a true organic option for establishing new lawns from seed or sod.
- **Berry-tone:** one of the company’s fastest-growing fertilizers now has an 8 lb. size that gives retailers an additional price point to the existing 4 lb. and 18 lb. sizes.



But wait, there's more! Espoma also redesigned its website this year, bringing its consumer and dealer resource sites together under one domain at [Espoma.com](https://www.ESPOMA.com). The new platform gives dealers direct access to a dedicated [Dealer Portal](#) featuring marketing materials, product information, merchandising resources and account support in one convenient location. By combining both experiences into a single destination, the website delivers a more seamless and efficient experience for dealers and consumers alike.

That sure is a lot of "new" happening at Espoma.

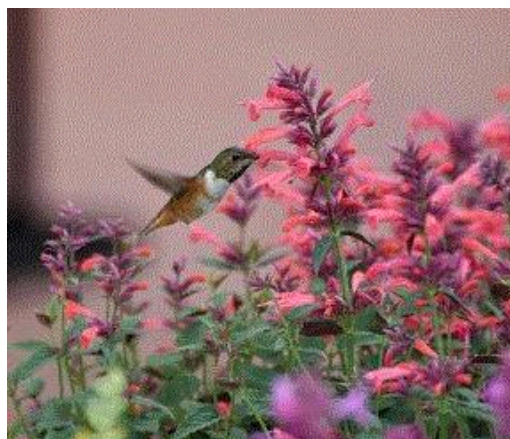


“What Else Does PPA Have For Me?”

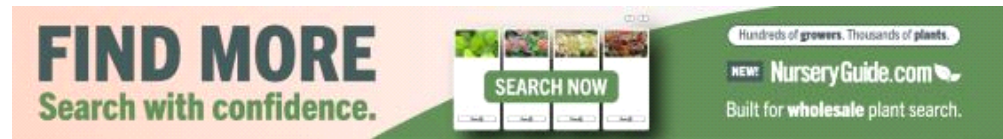
While it's still perennials month, I'll remind you that the Perennial Plant Association National Symposium is right on the heels of Cultivate'26. Taking place July 27-30 in and around East Lansing, Michigan, the weeklong gathering of professional perennial folks has a lot in store for you—tours, a trade show, educational sessions and a good time networking with great peers. Find out all about it and register [HERE](#) before July 14.

You might be saying, “I'm busy that week, what else does PPA have for me?” Quite a bit, actually. Here are a few more PPA events and sessions for your consideration:

New to Market Review: If you missed the National Symposium's New to Market Forum, PPA will showcase these new plant intros in webinar form with information on performance, unique traits and potential uses in today's landscapes and garden centers. August 25, 1 p.m. Eastern.



Fall Perennial Plant Symposium at Olbrich Botanical Gardens: Happening in Madison, Wisconsin, October 8-9, the event includes an optional bus tour of nurseries, research centers and gardens, as well as a full day of educational sessions.



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Monrovia to Host Giant Breeder Showcase

Heading out to Oregon for Farwest? Here's something else to put on your agenda for that week—courtesy of Bossman Beytes.

As part of the company's 100th anniversary celebration, Monrovia will be hosting what they call "the largest interactive perennial and shrub showcase in the West." To be held August 24-28 at their Dayton, Oregon, headquarters as part of their **Centennial Celebration Week**, this will be an expanded version of their annual Expo.

Besides Monrovia varieties, of course, you'll see perennials and shrubs from Bull Plant Genetics, Concept Plants, Danziger, Darwin Perennials, Green Fuse Botanicals, Green Trade, Intrinsic Perennials, PlantHaven, Plants Nouveau, Syngenta Flowers, Terra Nova Nurseries and Anthony Tesselaar Plants. Breeder representatives will be on hand for the entire five-day event, answering questions and presenting on new genetics.



Monrovia's trial gardens are headed up by trials manager Fela Lafi (pictured) and supported by Georgia Clay, Monrovia's new plants manager.

"The Breeder's Showcase is a great opportunity for attendees to get a first look at more than 400 perennial and shrub varieties, many of which have not been seen in the market," said Joey Wiseman, Director of ThinkPlants, who's assisting with the showcase.

The event also includes nursery tours, new plant presentations, marketing clinics and retailer workshops. The celebration will also feature a 100th Anniversary party featuring special guests, dinner and entertainment.

"As we celebrate 100 years of Monrovia, we are excited to welcome our partners and customers to the Oregon nursery," said Jonathan Pedersen, Monrovia president and CEO. "This year we're celebrating more than just the legacy of selecting and growing the highest quality plants. We're honoring all those that made it possible and focusing on an exciting future for our industry."

Click [HERE](#) for more.

Thanks for letting me steal the write-up, Chris!

GardenComm's Annual Conference

The Garden Communicators International's 2026 Annual Conference will coincide with both Farwest and Monrovia's big shindig, too. You don't even have to be a so-called "garden writer" to be involved! If you have marketing, social media, communications, visual production and other word- and photo-related responsibilities within the green industry, this conference is for you.

Here's what is in store for you at GardenComm in Portland, Oregon:

- Connections that turn into collaborations, bylines and opportunities
- Behind-the-scenes tours of working farms, nurseries and private gardens across the Pacific Northwest
- Four days alongside the horticulture industry's best writers, photographers, educators and brand leaders
- Access to the Farwest Show
- Awards and honors recognizing the best in garden communications

If you've been thinking about the GardenComm Annual Conference, this week is the time to decide because early-bird pricing for the conference ends June 30th—that's this coming Tuesday! Find out more about the conference and register [HERE](#).

NGB's Therapeutic Garden Grants

Another deadline to not miss is the application for National Garden Bureau's Therapeutic Garden Grants, sponsored by American Meadows, Ball Horticultural Company and Sakata Seed America.

Therapeutic gardens of all sorts provide a great service to our communities through the healing powers of interacting with plants. This Therapeutic Garden Grants program helps these organizations provide community space and programming for healing, health and education.



National Garden Bureau's judging committee annually selects five Therapeutic Gardens to receive a grant that will help the organization expand or perpetuate their initiatives. How much they receive is determined via a social media voting contest! Each of the selected gardens submits a one-minute video featuring the gardens' operations for First place, Second place and three Runners-up financial prizes.

If you are a school, non-profit, hospital, retirement center, rehabilitative facility, veteran facility, community center, inter-generational group, job-training center, food pantry or public garden in the United States and Canada, you are eligible for entry.

Anyone who applies needs to document that they have had a therapeutic garden program completed for at least one year at the time of application with at least a five-year commitment for the garden to remain on that property.

The reward is substantial! \$7,500 is available and will be divided among the five gardens chosen, with graduated amounts going to the first, second and third-place contestants, as determined by online voting. Head over to [HERE](#) to apply—and do so before July 1!

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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