

Two more from TPIE, plus Caladium Festival and Garden Industries



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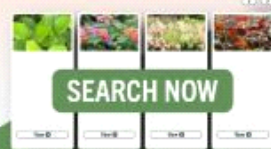
TROPICAL TOPICS

COMING UP THIS WEEK:

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And the Second
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Two from TPIE

As I prepare to fly off to Columbus, Ohio, for Cultivate'26, I'm reminded that I still have a few products to tell you about from January's Tropical Plant International Expo. No sense in keeping them under wraps!

First, these are stunning macrame plant holders, wall hangings and other knotty décor from **MeeshDrops**. The owner (I can't for the life of me remember the owner's name but I believe it is Michelle) started creating macrame products for art markets and festivals across Wisconsin and Minnesota back in 2020. Her business took off when Menards somehow discovered her artful creations at the Minneapolis Home and Garden Show and wanted a thousand hangers. That's a lot of knots!





Six years later, she has contracted with overseas manufacturers to create these items according to exact specifications. With her time freed up from actually producing the macrame, she has been able to come up with a whole range of new designs, including the traditional styles along with more modern designs. She has this retail-ready display that comes pre-filled with 90 hangers in several different colors and lengths, making purchasing way easier for the customer.



And the Second

And what would a trade show be without the introduction of a new soilless potting mix?

Veryplants had their three Molly's Mixes—Aroid Mix, Cactus & Succulent Mix and Orchid Mix—each with “chunky” ingredients such as pumice, black lava, biochar, coco coir and chips and a bunch of other items meant to drain quickly, boost aeration and generally provide a nice home for indoor plants.



What I love about this product is its packaging. Check out how simple it is.



The popular protein bar, Rx Bar, has been praised for how it lists the ingredients right on the front of the package. So do Molly's Mixes! In fact, Molly's Mixes do it better by listing *and* showing the ingredients, and thereby educating the potential buyer. Smart.



And, looking ahead to the weekend, if you are heading to Cultivate'26 and want to meet up, [drop me a note](#).



Caladium Festival's "Yes, And..."

Every year I tell you about the Caladium Festival that happens each July in Lake Placid, Florida. I'm doing this same this year BUT with a "yes, and ..." Keep reading to find out what I mean.

Yes, the Caladium Festival—the 35th annual—is happening again in Lake Placid July 24-26. By all accounts the caladium growers have had a banner year, cementing the area's claim of being the "Caladium Capital of the World." As per usual, the festival is free and is full of family-friendly activities, live music, local vendors, a floral and art competition, a car and bike show and so much more. You can even tour the caladium fields on a guided bus tour led by a local grower.



For anyone hoping to get a sneak peak of some new caladium varieties, the festival will debut

three new varieties from the University of Florida's caladium breeding program. Those new varieties are Lady Bug, a striking fancy-leaf red; Pretty'N'Pink, an elegant fancy-leaf pink; and Pink A Boo, a beautiful strap-leaf variety. You can even buy some bulbs of these and other fan favorites at the festival.

This is where the “and” comes in. Caladiums will be spreading out beyond the festival grounds and growing fields and into the local community. Stuart Park, the Lake Placid Chamber office, the Woman's Club and the pots and garden areas along Lake Placid's Main Street have all been planted with caladiums. It promises to be stunning.

This is where yet another “and” comes in. The nearby Sebring, Florida, area is launching its first-ever Garden Week, September 8-13, and will be incorporating into Classic Caladiums' Annual Open House in Avon Park on September 11 and 12.

So many caladium things to do! You can find out more about the Caladium Festival [HERE](#).



Garden Industries is BBB Torch Award Finalist

I've been including industry-related accolades in *Tropical Topics* for the last few issues, and that trend does not stop with today's edition. Give a big round of congratulations to [Garden Industries](#) in Loxahatchee, Florida, as one of just three finalists in the Better Business Bureau's Torch Awards for Ethics. And that was from a pool of more than 100 nominated businesses, too!

If you're not aware, BBB's Torch Awards for Ethics are among the highest honors a business can receive. They recognize organizations whose leaders demonstrate exceptional character, foster ethical workplace cultures, build trust with customers and make meaningful contributions to their communities. An independent panel of community and business leaders evaluates nominees based on four core pillars: ethical leadership, organizational culture, customer relationships and community impact.

"We are incredibly honored to have been recognized as one of the three finalists," said David Bache, Nursery Director of Garden Industries in a press release on the topic. "This recognition reflects the values that have guided our company for decades. While we're passionate about growing exceptional plants, we're equally committed to operating with honesty, treating people with respect, standing behind our commitments, and building lasting relationships based on trust."

David pointed out that this recognition as a finalist highlights the dedication of the Garden Industries team.

"Whether growing plants, assisting customers, maintaining our nursery, or supporting daily operations, the team members demonstrate the integrity and professionalism that this award represents," David wrote. "We also want to thank our customers, suppliers, and industry partners for the confidence they place in us. Their trust is something we never take for granted."

If you have any comments, questions or suggestions for content, email me about them at ewells@ballpublishing.com.

Handwritten signature of Ellen.

Ellen Wells
Senior Editor
Green Profit

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