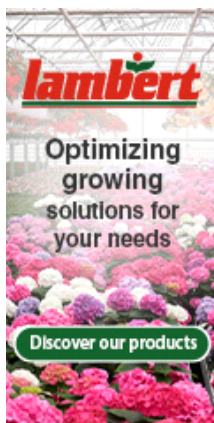


New Products at Cultivate, Trade Agreement & Vertical Farming Retrospective Podcast



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COMING UP THIS WEEK:

P.L. and DLI Partnership
Barracuda and BattleLine
Wadsworth Juniper
Women in CEA
USMCA Support
Podcast



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P.L. Light and DLI Announce Partnership

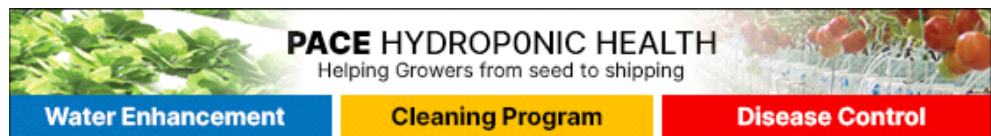
On July 9th, P.L. Light Systems announced a strategic partnership with Dutch Lighting Innovations Holding B.V.

P.L. Light recently celebrated its 45th anniversary this year. The company has grown and evolved from an HID provider into a diverse portfolio of lighting technologies, including LEDs. The innovations and products they've developed will continue to be available and supported through the partnership.

Dutch Lighting Innovations, or DLI, is a Netherlands-based company with a portfolio similar to P.L. Light's. DLI designs and sells advanced LED grow lighting systems to high-tech greenhouse growers in more than 30 countries.

The partnership combines DLI's expertise and innovations with the legacy and customer service P.L. Light brings to the North American market. P.L. Light's president, Todd Phillips, will remain in his role and continue running North American operations, and the company will stay headquartered in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada.

As with many companies in this space, P.L. Light seems well positioned to serve as DLI's North American extension. Ontario hosts many North American offices for European greenhouse companies, often based in Hamilton, London or Leamington. This partnership aims to build on the continued success of the Dutch-fueled North American greenhouse market, run out of Canada.



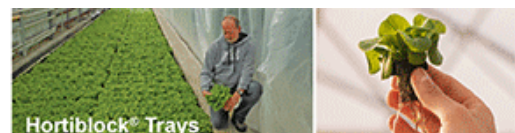
SePRO Barracuda Miticide and BattleLine Fungicide

SePRO Land has released two new pesticides to the ornamental market: Barracuda Insecticide/Miticide and BattleLine Fungicide.

Barracuda is certified only for ornamental crops and non-bearing fruit trees, so it will not be available for vegetable production. Looking through the active ingredients, Barracuda combines two modes of action, and one of them caught my eye: abamectin. We've all grown too familiar with abamectin's cousin, ivermectin, the two differing only by a double bond at carbon atoms 22 and 23. It's interesting to see this class of chemistry surface in the news again, this time as a powerful insecticide. Abamectin has a long track record against mites, leafminers and other soft-bodied pests, so it's a sensible backbone for a new ornamental product.

BattleLine, on the other hand, is approved for use on tomatoes and cucumbers to treat powdery mildew. It can also be used as a drench to aid control of soil borne diseases in ornamentals, though its use in the vegetable industry is restricted to foliar applications.

As is the case this time of year, you can find these products at Cultivate'26 in Booth 3639, or read more about them [here](#).



Wadsworth Juniper

Wadsworth Control Systems will be showing off their Juniper control system at Cultivate'26 this year. First released last year, Juniper has since undergone a series of meaningful upgrades and, more importantly, now has a full year of deployment and operational maturity behind it.

Last September, Wadsworth introduced JumpStart standard panels for a faster turnaround, perfect for quick replacement controllers or rapid installs, and added the option to connect Juniper to their weather stations. Two versions are available, including a Mini Weather Station carrying the three most critical sensors: temperature, wind speed and precipitation. Paired with Wadsworth's Cloud, the company's remote access subscription, it's possible to see what's going on in a Juniper-controlled greenhouse from anywhere.

Juniper bridges a much needed gap, especially in urban greenhouse production where large, multiacre ranges are infeasible. The system is simple, managing temperature and humidity in a sophisticated way without being prohibitively expensive for small greenhouses. Two stages of heating, four stages of cooling, and modulating outputs for vents or curtains cover the essentials, and a color-coded touchscreen shows at a glance whether the house is heating, cooling or sitting on target. If you're managing a smaller greenhouse, it's a great option for doing better than a thermostat without stepping up to a high tier solution.

Learn more about the product here or visit Wadsworth at Cultivate'26 in Booth 1017.



My dog Mabel takes representing Juniper seriously.



Women in CEA (WiCEA)

Women in CEA (WiCEA) recently hosted a conversation with a former lab member of mine, Chelsea Lee, about the transition from early to mid-career. Chelsea's path has tracked the ups and downs of North American CEA. Her first job out of grad school was at Fifth Season, a Pittsburgh-based vertical farm, where she experienced the unpredictability and uncertainty of vertical farming employment firsthand. She has since made her way to Greenhouse Climate Specialist at BrightFarms, one of the biggest CEA success stories of this decade.

WiCEA, founded in 2023, is a growing group providing community for women in the CEA industry. In addition to bi-weekly meetings, it's currently hosting the second cohort of its mentorship program. If you're interested in mentoring or joining the program, it's a great way to get involved with the next generation of ag leaders. A lot of the mentors are men, so everyone is welcome to support.

Learn more about the group [here](#).

USMCA Support

A coalition of 24 U.S. food and agriculture companies has come together to send a letter supporting renewal of the USMCA (U.S. Mexico Canada Agreement), the deal that allows duty-free trade of agricultural produce, especially seasonal produce. Among those signing are greenhouse companies including Mastronardi, Nature Fresh Farms, NatureSweet and Red Sun Farms.

The letter comes after a July 1st decision in which the U.S. declined to renew the agreement. The deal remains in force, but negotiations are ongoing between the three North American countries to revise it.

Seasonal produce appears to be causing much of the friction, since imports from Mexico tend to dominate during the winter. Many greenhouse companies operating in North America have locations in all three countries and shift their schedules to take advantage of climate and seasonal economics. The signers stress that the North American agricultural system operates across borders, and trying to isolate it country-by-country through tariffs isn't ideal for anyone, including the United States. Growers also fear retaliation would reduce their ability to profitably export.

The issue is contentious, though. Growers in warmer regions like the Southwest and Florida would stand to benefit from higher seasonal import prices. This deal will likely keep getting negotiated and revised on a yearly basis, so opportunities for congressional outreach and engagement with government officials will remain important for years to come.

It's also worth a brief mention that the recently introduced [SAWA bill](#) (Securing Agriculture's Workforce Act of 2026) explicitly includes controlled environment agriculture among the sectors eligible for the H-2A guestworker program. It's early in the legislative process, but for CEA growers watching their labor costs, it's worth keeping an eye on.

Vertical Farming Retrospective Podcast

The Plant Frequencies Podcast recently hosted Jamie Burrows, a British-American entrepreneur who serves on the board of directors for the CEA Alliance and is the former CEO of Vertical Future. The conversation focused on the collapse of billion-dollar vertical farms. Spoiler alert: Vertical Future is among them. Jamie has always been forthcoming about the company's failures and shortcomings, and he hopes to share what he's learned because he wants the best for the industry.

I especially appreciated his comments on lighting science. After a decade of intensive LED research, I can confidently say we know much more about what we don't know than what we do. Jamie explains that testing every possible permutation of lighting strategy to improve productivity would take decades for any given plant, and the ideal approach differs with every species, or even every variety. It's an honest insight I appreciate. Vertical farm companies often boast about delivering perfect light, but I've always had my doubts, for exactly the reason Jamie mentions.

Jamie also has a thorough grasp of the business side, including topics that are important but bore me terribly, like the structure of stocks within a company. There are also lessons about supply chain shakeups (thanks, COVID) and how bad luck can cost you the one key buyer keeping you afloat.

Watch the podcast [here](#).



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dr. Jake Holley'.

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