More from FMF’s Houseplant Study, Plantmania and SYF’s fundraiser



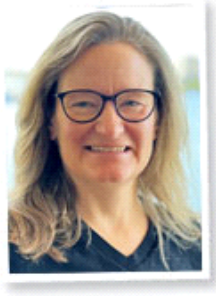
News and Inspiration from the world of foliage and tropical plants

GROWERTALKS MAGAZINE greenPROFIT MAGAZINE

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2026

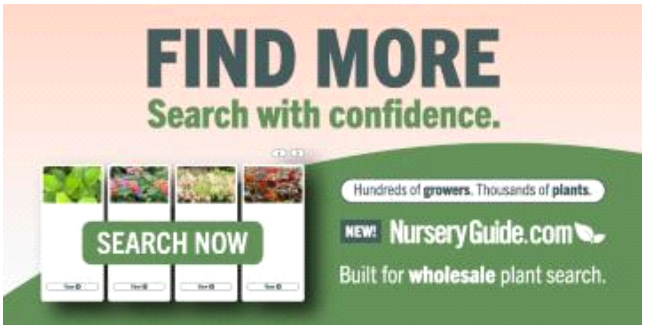
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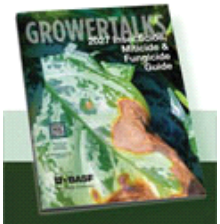
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TROPICAL TOPICS

COMING UP THIS WEEK:
Houseplant Purchasers Those Not Buying Houseplants
Plantmania
Ecuagenera
SYF's Year-End Fundraiser







More Data on Houseplant Purchasers

Last time, I told you about some top-level findings from the Floral Marketing Fund's "Houseplant Purchasing Report 2025." Thanks to a free webinar FMF offered last week with researchers Dr. Melinda Knuth of North Carolina State University and Dr. Hayk Khachatryan of the University of Florida, I have some more gems from the study.



In terms of those study respondents who have purchased plants:

- 53% were extremely interested in buying plants
- 75% have purchased plants online
- 96% own two plants or more (!)
- Containers: 35% of respondents consider the container to be more important than the plant; 35% consider the container and plant to be equally important; and 29% consider the plant to be more important. To me, this is BIG NEWS.
- Purchasing plants as gifts for self and as birthday gifts has been increasing over the three study years (2019, 2021 and 2025).

For the 10 categories of houseplants purchased in 2025, the top three were:

- Broadleaf foliage (54%)
- Flowering (53%)
- Indoor palms (47%)

The bottom three were:

- Cacti and bromeliads (tied at 31%)
- Ferns (28%)
- Air plants/tillandsias (18%)

These plant purchasers shopped at both garden centers and home improvement centers equally (28%) with online sites hot on their heels at 26%. And the reason they choose their particular shopping outlet was for quality reasons.

Another key piece here is that 73% of respondents purchased a plant after viewing social media content from a plant business. If you are wondering if your social media efforts are paying off, the answer is yes.



For Those Not Buying Houseplants

Continuing from above, we have some interesting data from the folks who are not buying houseplants, too.

- 47% *do* express interest in purchasing houseplants
- 72% had no plants, while about 28% owned at least one plant
- Roughly 20% didn't purchase plants because they had concerns about pet safety
- About 17% gave "I don't like seeing plants die" as a reason for not purchasing plants
- 23% said they were not interested in future purchases
- Only about 10% indicated that they had no interest in plants

You only have so many south-facing windows and appropriate lighting spots before you need to shell out some bucks for supplemental lighting and equipment, which could be a limiting factor for folks, so I get that.



As for the pet safety concern, this could be an in-store PSA campaign. We could even make it a

“holiday”—as in September is Plants and Pet Safety Month.

Melinda did mention that she believes the biggest missed opportunity in selling houseplants is talking more about how houseplants benefit people. “Something that we could really improve on as an industry is talking about in our messaging—in-store, online, social media—about how plants benefit consumers,” she said. “Show what positive things do these plants do for them.” Promoting the benefits of houseplants takes the purchase of houseplants from a luxury purchase to one that is a health and wellness purchase, especially in terms of mental wellness and happiness.

Whew, that’s a lot of great information. And the report has a ton more, too, if you have the time to read through it—which you can download and do HERE.

As a reminder, this report is the third installment in a several-years-long research study examining consumer purchasing habits before, during and after the pandemic, and was made possible through the support of co-sponsors Bell Nursery, Costa Farms, Metrolina Greenhouses, and the Demaree Family Floriculture Advancement Fund. The research for it was conducted by Drs. Knuth and Khachatryan as well as Drs. Charlie Hall and Marco Palma of Texas A&M University.



Plantmania Crossing the Country

Bossman Beytes wrote up a piece in his Acres Online *about a new-to-us traveling houseplant market. He wrote about it so well, I’ll let him take it from here.*

There’s another plant-geek event taking place around the country besides PlantCon—which I attended in Orlando last year and wrote about a few weeks ago regarding their upcoming Dallas and Atlanta events. It’s called Plantmania Expo and they just held one here in Orlando! Alas, I was out of town that weekend and missed it—drat!

Like PlantCon, Plantmania Expo describes itself as an “indoor, market-style expo with vendors from across the world selling common, rare and exotic houseplants.” From what I can tell, it launched in July 2025 in Daphne, Alabama, with a woman named Jeanie Baas of the plant store Plants Unlimited (also in Daphne) as the founder.



Plantmania Expo Orlando—it was a scene, man! Photo: Hailie Watley, Blue Moon Tropicals.

My friend Justin Hancock from Costa Farms made the four-hour trip from Homestead to Orlando for the event, and having seen my recent comments about PlantCon's lack of success in Florida perhaps being due to all the plant outlets in the state, felt compelled to weigh in thusly:

"Your quote about Florida being so flush with nurseries and garden centers didn't come to pass a couple of weekends ago when an event called Plantmania was in Orlando! Costa Farms attended as a first-time sponsor and I have to say we were blown away—attendance was double what the organizers planned and enthusiasm with consumers was through the roof. A lot of folks I've talked to in the industry haven't heard of this one, but it was totally worth spending a glorious weekend (I'd almost forgotten what it was like to be outside when the temperature was below 75F!) in a windowless metal building talking to plant enthusiasts."

So, Justin thought the show was awesome. But did I know anyone in Central Florida who exhibited? Then I remembered Hailie Whatley, founder of Blue Moon Tropicals in Eustis, a cool producer of all sorts of fun and unusual houseplants who exhibits at a half a dozen or more plant and garden shows a year. In fact, I recalled her mentioning Plantmania to me some time back. So I shot her an email.

Good thing I did—turns out she's the reason there IS a Plantmania Orlando! She'd been working with the show organizers for nearly a year and was the presenting sponsor of this inaugural event.

Replied Hailie, "Plantmania approached me to do their Raleigh show and I responded with, 'Let me know when you book Orlando,' and that's where the talks began."

Hailie said she first told them why she felt PlantCon didn't succeed in Florida, touching on the inappropriate venue, inadequate marketing and high cost for vendors and attendees. She suggested the more budget-friendly Central Florida Fairgrounds as a venue.

"I think a few things really aligned for this show's success outside of affordability (free parking was a huge draw) and one of those was a time of year nestled in between the competition of spring shows and the tight wallets of the holidays," she continued. "They adamantly avoided influencer and content creator involvement for promotion—a strategy opposite of PlantCon—and it was interesting to see the results of that. It was reported that over 7,000 attendees supported the

show that weekend and we had our best weekend ever because of it. The biggest complaint I heard was too many people in a small building and our booth never slowed down because of it. At the end of the show, I was proud to see that fellow vendors had an exhausted but pleased look on their faces, and their tables were bare."



As you can see, Plantmania Expo's 2027 tour schedule lists a dozen of the two-day markets in as many states: California, Arkansas, North Carolina, Missouri, New Jersey, Texas, Pennsylvania, Washington, D.C., Colorado, Tennessee, Virginia and back to Orlando next December.

If you're near one, check it out and maybe even participate. And then let me know what you think it means for the houseplant market.

Thanks for the report, Chris! Why no love for the New England states? We appreciate houseplants!

Have you attended Plantmania Expo? If you have, drop me a note about it HERE.



Ecuagenera

This one is for those of you who may be new to the houseplant retail biz, or are retailers but want to expand your houseplant supply network. Or for those of you who have never heard of Ecuagenera USA, the Apopka, Florida-based U.S. operation of the larger Ecuagenera, an Ecuadorian orchid and tropical-plant grower specializing in rare and unusual plants.

Yes, they do direct-to-consumer sales—in fact, they exhibited at the aforementioned Plantmania Expo in Orlando. But they are also inviting you to consider them as your wholesale supplier of some hard-to-find orchids, aroids, anthuriums, philodendrons and so many other genera.



How do you become a wholesale partner? Send along your resale certificate or business license along with your business name and contact info to marketing@ecuageneraus.com. So, what kind of stuff do they offer? Here's a LIST of their "fresh imports" as of last week. But obviously that list is ever-changing. And that's why I'm wary of including a link to the price list they also provide. My suggestion? Call or text (941-960-6950) and speak to a human or drop a note to that email address listed above.

SYF's Year-End Fundraiser

Seed Your Future recently launched its 2026 year-end fundraising campaign, "From Classroom to Career: Grow the Next Generation," with a goal of raising $50,000 by Dec. 31. The initiative, also known as "50K to Grow 50K," aims to help at least 50,000 young people discover career opportunities in horticulture by providing educators with free career exploration resources.

And you can help! A donation of just $8.50 can help equip one teacher with Seed Your Future's Seed to STEM lessons and career resources, introducing students to opportunities in plant science, technology, design, business, production and sustainability. But $8.50 is an awkward number to write a check for, isn't it? A larger contribution can support multiple teachers and provide classroom tools, career exploration materials, educator training and other outreach efforts.



“Students can’t pursue careers they don’t know exist,” says Jazmin Albarran, executive director of Seed Your Future. “By helping educators bring horticulture into the classroom, we can open students’ eyes to opportunities that combine their interests with meaningful work. Every contribution helps us reach more teachers, introduce more students to the power of plants, and build a stronger future for our industry.”

Since its founding in 2014, Seed Your Future has developed 156 horticulture career profiles, more than 50 high school lessons, 30 classroom resources, a Plant Power Career Quiz, and internship and scholarship opportunities. Its Green Career Week also connects industry professionals directly with students.

Individuals, companies and industry partners can contribute through personal donations, corporate gifts or matching opportunities. Donations made by December 31 count toward the campaign goal and are tax-deductible as allowed by law.

Make your contribution on GiveButter.com today and help support a student who may one day work for you!

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



Ellen Wells
Senior Editor
Green Profit

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