

# Shifting Away From One-dimensional Landscapes? Classic Blue Perennials and More





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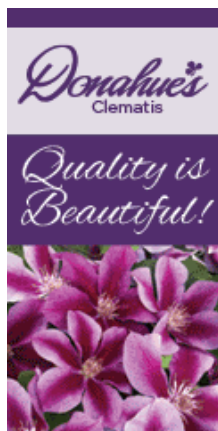
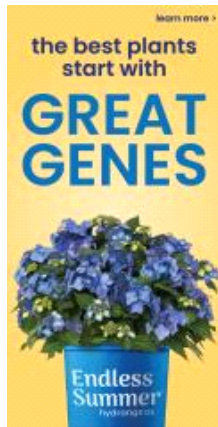
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# Perennial PULSE

News and commentary on the global perennial plant market

## COMING UP THIS WEEK:

Shifting From One-dimensional Landscapes  
The Year of Classic Blue  
2020 Pantone Perennials  
Introducing GardenChoice JC on Pollinators

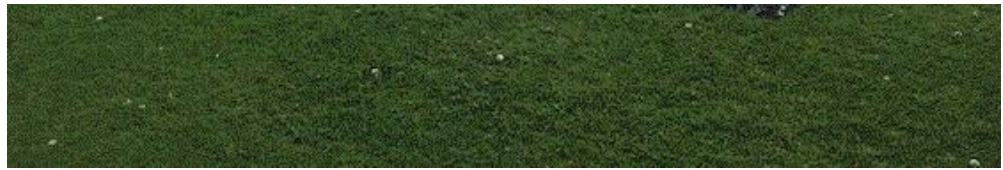


## A Shift from One-Dimensional Landscapes

I have a special treat for you. Angela Treadwell-Palmer from [Plants Nouveau](#) drafted an exclusive article for *Perennial Pulse* about recent rumblings she's heard that may shift what types of perennials will be in demand in the future. Check out what Angela's been hearing:

Having a degree in Landscape Design, I've always had a bit of a different perspective on introducing new plants. For years, I've been commenting and been quite worried about the future of gardens. For 18 inches in height does not a good garden make. A good garden is composed with plants of differing heights, textures and colors. As an industry, we have been keeping up with the textures and colors, but we have gotten ourselves into quite a predicament when it comes to height.





#### Royal Botanic Gardens—Kew, United Kingdom

Breeders have been working on making garden plants shorter and more compact for years. It seems it isn't a worthy introduction without the words "shorter," "more compact" or "dwarf" in the description. This is a bit disturbing to true gardeners and designers. What will gardens look like in 2030 if every stinking plant is less than 3-ft. tall? How will we screen out our neighbors with the newest, disease-resistant, ice-tolerant evergreen if it is only 18-in. wide and 4-ft. tall? How will we block ugly views or make a true focal point statement in a long view?

These are all questions I have been chewing on for the last 10 years, and honestly, it all started with elevated shipping costs and the thought that consumers were living in smaller places with smaller outdoor spaces.

If you have been longing for taller, more architectural, more elegant new plants, your (and my) wishes may soon be granted by... are you ready for this? ... chain store consumers!

That's right!

I've heard through the industry grapevine that the very audience breeders have been trying to please for the past 15+ years is speaking out against one-dimensional gardening. They actually want plants in different sizes.

Can I get a woot-woot! Can I get a hallelujah? Or an it's about dang time?

Of course, consumers are moving more and more into urban areas and people are still downsizing, but those of us living on average-sized properties can breathe a sigh of relief knowing that maybe, just maybe, breeders (and growers) will listen to their customers and allow plants to be introduced and sold that grow more than 3-ft. tall.

Sadly, we also hear that shipping these tall(er) plants is still the problem. It costs more to ship taller plants because less fit on the rack. That has been the complaint of growers and buyers for years. How can we solve this and bring dimension back to our gardens? Perhaps we need to charge more for the taller plants? It's surely something we can chat about on the winter trade show circuit, right?

But for now, small wins are good and this one will eventually be a win-win for future gardens and that makes me smile.

Angela, thank you for sharing this with us. I'm curious what our subscribers think. If you have any thoughts or comments on this topic, please send them to me at [ppilon@perennialsolutions.com](mailto:ppilon@perennialsolutions.com).



## The Year of Classic Blue

The Pantone Color Institute, who's become a color authority with identifying trendy colors consumers will crave each year, recently announced Classic Blue (19-4052) as Pantone's 2020



Color of the Year.



[www.jetfreshflowers.com](http://www.jetfreshflowers.com)

According to Pantone, Classic Blue "brings a sense of peace and tranquility to the human spirit, offering refuge. Aiding concentration and bringing laser like clarity, Classic Blue re-centers our thoughts. Classic Blue is elegant in its simplicity. The 2020 Color of the Year is a calm, yet confident, shade that evokes a sense of connection and honest communication" (largely why I decided to pass this information along).

As with previous Pantone Color of the Year selections, expect Classic Blue to transcend across many facets of our lives. You'll likely see Classic Blue being widely used in fashion, interior design, outdoor living products and even in landscape plants.

Click [here](#) to learn more about Pantone's 2020 Color of the Year, Classic Blue.

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## 2020 Pantone Perennials

Being a color with a calming effect, Classic Blue may not be the most exciting choice, but this doesn't mean we can't make money selling lots of blue furniture and blue flowering plants. It is what it is; let's find ways of making money with this upcoming trend.

How cool would it be to have your perennials match garden furniture? There are numerous perennials with blue flowers that can be marketed in conjunction with other Pantone Color of the Year products. Here are a few examples:



**Aquilegia Kirigami Deep Blue and White**



***Campanula carpatica* Rapido Blue**



**Delphinium Diamonds Blue**



**Salvia Salvatore Blue**





**Veronica Vernique Dark Blue**



**Viola Admire Dark Blue**

The varieties above are just a few examples that came to mind. There are several cultivars of other perennials, such as aconitum, agapanthus, anemone, aster, centaurea, eryngium, gentian, iris, lithodora, platycodon and pulmonaria that have blue flowers and are worthy 2020 Pantone candidates. These and several other perennials could be used to resemble or compliment the Pantone Color Institute's 2020 Color of the Year, Classic Blue.

## Introducing GardenChoice

# GardenChoice™

Four leading horticultural companies recently formed an alliance called GardenChoice to provide exceptional genetics and service to every level of the horticultural marketplace. The collaborators of GardenChoice are:

**GardenGenetics**—An independent plant breeding company responsible for many of the top-performing annuals, perennials and shrubs in U.S. garden centers

**Botanical Trading Company**—An independent “box store grower specialist” representing bulbs and herbaceous perennials from some of the world's best plant breeders

**Pioneer Gardens**—An independent grower of bareroot and herbaceous perennial liners

**Eason Horticultural Resources (EHR)**—An independent, full-service broker

These companies conceived the idea of GardenChoice over coffee during the 2015 California Spring Trials. Each business had needs that the other companies could meet and by working together

they could more effectively improve the products and services they deliver to their customers. After a few years of ironing out the details and logistics, GardenChoice was born and is poised to serve every level of the horticultural marketplace.

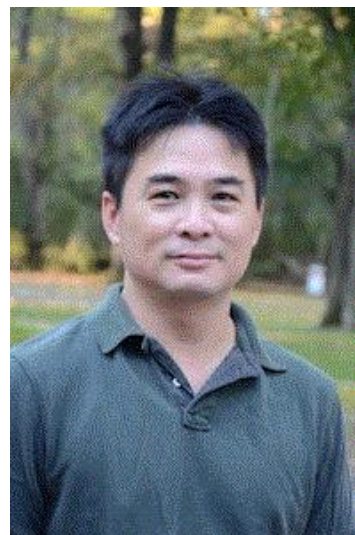
Click [here](#) to learn more about GardenChoice.

## JC on Pollinators

The relationship among consumers, growers, pollinators, flowering plants and systemic insecticides is a mess! It's been a while since I covered this topic, but I thought I'd let you know of an upcoming American Floral Endowment (AFE) webinar by fellow Ball Publishing Editor-At-Large JC Chong. JC puts together a great e-newsletter called *PestTalks* (if you're not familiar with JC's newsletter, click [here](#) to check it out). JC's day job is Professor and Extension Specialist of Turf and Ornamentals Entomology at Clemson University.

On Thursday, January 16, 2020, JC will be presenting "Untangling the Relationship Among Pollinators, Flowering Plants and Systemic Insecticides" at 2:30 p.m. EST. He'll be providing an update of current research from USDA-SCRI and AFE-funded projects aimed at developing approaches to protect pollinators in environmental horticulture. Not only will he be discussing research findings, but JC will provide practical approaches that can be used by growers to protect pollinators. There will also be a Q & A session at the end of the webinar.

Click [here](#) to register.



Thanks for reading this edition of *Perennial Pulse*. Enjoy the holiday season!

My email is [ppilon@ballpublishing.com](mailto:ppilon@ballpublishing.com).

Take care,

**Paul Pilon**  
Editor-at-Large

Perennial Pulse

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