

New Perennials from Virtual CAST, Getting By and Discovering your NICH





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**Violeta™ Purple XL
Lavender**

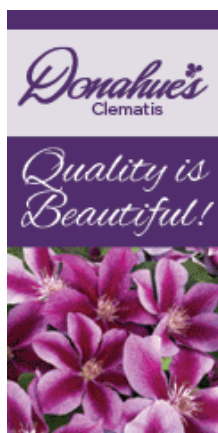
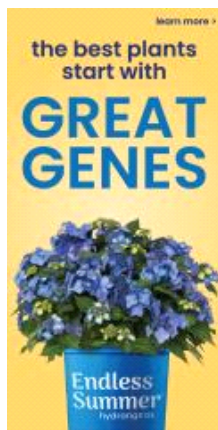
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News and commentary for the perennial market





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COMING UP THIS WEEK:

Hang in There
Virtual Huddle with Yours Truly
New Perennials from CAST
New from Green Fuse
More New Perennials
Discovering your NICH

Perennial PULSE

News and commentary on the global perennial plant market



Hang in There

I know the past few weeks has been very challenging and the weeks ahead will likely be even more difficult. We as a nation, a community, a business, a family and as individuals are truly experiencing many challenges unlike any we've previously experienced. I'm sure you've been inundated with COVID-19 headlines, so I'm not going to do that here. However, I'd like to encourage you to hang in there, as difficult times do pass.



Here's a pretty cool shirt I found online. It was offered by the non-profit organization [Let's Get By Together](#) and 100% of the money raised from shirt sales went toward COVID-19 testing, and related medical expenses and supplies. The campaign supposedly ended on April 3, 2020, but I was able to order a shirt after this date.

COVID-19 Industry Resources

If you'd like to see some resources with information on how our industry can navigate these difficult times, Ball Publishing has gathered numerous resources and put them on the [GrowerTalks](#) and [Green Profit](#) website. It contains best management practices, retail strategies and resources for supporting your business. I told you I wasn't going to overwhelm you with COVID-19 coverage in this newsletter, but you can choose to educate yourself by visiting these useful pages.



Virtual Huddle with Yours Truly

Before I move on, there's one more crisis-related announcement that could prove useful. I'm teaming up with BASF to hold a virtual huddle, or online roundtable, discussion titled, "Managing Perennial Crops during Shelter-in-Place" on Monday, April 20, 2020 at 11:00 a.m. Eastern.



Managing Perennial Crops during Shelter-in-Place

Join the conversation about what we can do in this new working environment.

Monday ~ April 20, 2020

8:00am (Pacific)
9:00am (Mountain)
10:00am (Central)
11:00am (East)

Host
Jen Browning, BASF Technical Service

Speaker
Paul Pilon, Perennial Solutions Consulting

This is a Q&A discussion and not your typical webinar presentation. I'll be having conversations about how to manage perennials and other crops during the shelter-in-place we're living in. Bring your questions on fertility, water management, PGRs, plant maintenance and more. I'll share my perspectives of what I'm seeing (more like hearing) in the industry and discuss what short- and long-term implications this crisis is having on the perennial industry.

A lot could change before the event (hopefully for the better), but I encourage you to attend and

bring your questions and comments. It'll be both fun and informative.

Click [here](#) to register.



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New Perennials from CAST

I was originally planning on sharing some of the perennial highlights from the California Spring Trials in this issue, but as you're likely aware or safely assumed, the event was cancelled. However, these new perennials will still be introduced and there are a lot of great plants I'd like to share with you.

Although nothing beats seeing them in person, I've been communicating with several companies and viewing their new perennials via Zoom, GoToMeeting or similar online platforms.



Before I get to some of these new perennials, rest assured my colleagues at Ball Publishing (AKA the Bobbleheads) and I are committed to bringing you lots of coverage and information on the great plants we all missed this year. To be sure you're getting all the info the Ball Publishing team has to offer, you'll want to follow them on social media:

Instagram: [@growertalksgreenprofit](#)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/springtrials/>

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/ball-publishing/>

Now it's time to see some great new perennials.

New from Green Fuse

My latest Spring Trials review was with Jim Devereux with [Green Fuse Botanicals](#). I was thoroughly impressed with their new introductions—over two dozen of them across 15 different genera. Here are a few of the standouts:

Hydrangea Mountain Series



Blue



Pink Picotee

Here's a plant with great potential. It's the Mountain series of hydrangea. There are four cultivars in the series: Blue, Pink, Shell Pink and Pink Picotee. I don't know what the parentage is, but from my understanding this is a new classification of hydrangea. These are special because, without cold and daylength requirements, the Mountain series can be easy programmed to bloom throughout the entire year. Hardy to Zone 5.

Leucanthemum Carpet Angel



Carpet Angel is the only groundcover shasta daisy in the world. With no vernalization or daylength requirements, Carpet Angel blooms continuously. Imagine the flower power it would bring to your perennial borders (or in your customer's). With its compact size, superior basal branching, fully double flowers and continuous flower power, Carpet Angel is a must-have for retail and wholesale growers. Hardy to Zone 5.

Rudbeckia Dakota Gold



Here's a new variety many growers have been waiting for. Rudbeckia Dakota Gold is the first **fully hardy perennial** *Rudbeckia hirta* cultivar on the planet. Just how cold hardy is it? It's hardy to Zone 5. That's pretty impressive. Like most First Light Perennials from Green Fuse, Dakota Gold is dayneutral and can be marketed any time—spring, summer or fall.

More New Perennials from Green Fuse

Dianthus Constant Beauty Crush Series



Pink



Burgundy

Check out these beautiful bicolored dianthus. There are five colorful cultivars in the Constant Beauty Crush series. Two of them, Constant Beauty Crush Pink (left) and Constant Beauty Crush Burgundy (right) are shown above. Without cold and daylength requirements, these cultivars can be easily grown and marketed any time of the year. Hardy to Zone 4.

Silene Carol Jean Rose



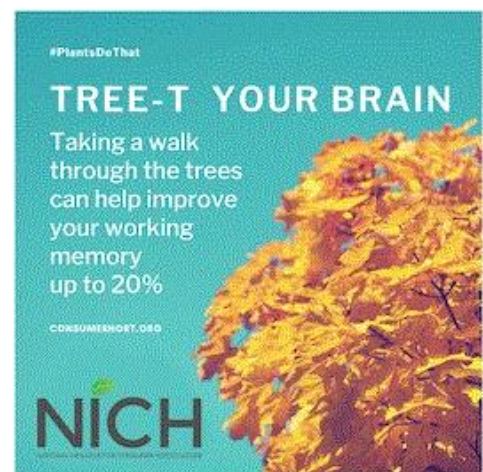
Here's a great new plant I'm sure you'll love. Carol Jean Rose is one of three new cultivars in the Carol Jean series (the others are Pink and White). They're dayneutral and bloom throughout the entire summer. The flowers somewhat resemble those of *Phlox subulata* and actually come into bloom about the time the *subulatas* finish. They like warm temperatures and even tolerate high humidity. Give this new silene a try. Hardy to Zone 5.

Discovering Your NICH

How many times have you heard the key to happiness and success is to discover your niche? There's a lot of truth in this endeavor, but I'd like to take this time to introduce you to a NICH you may not be aware of. I've actually mentioned this NICH in the past, but I thought now would be a good time to reintroduce you to it.

NICH, AKA National Initiative for Consumer Horticulture, is a coalition representing the entirety of consumer horticulture. Their mission is "growing a healthy world through the art, science and business of plants, gardens and landscapes." Their goal is to grow the future of consumer horticulture and aim to increase the percentage of U.S. households participating in consumer horticulture to 90% by 2025.

NICH has created a number of infographics highlighting many useful statistics and interesting fun facts. Here's just a sampling of facts from the #PlantsDoThat infographics:



- Plants help people relax, increase creativity and boost energy
- Plants in the workplace reduce employee sick time by 14%
- Horticulture creates 2 million jobs across a diverse area of businesses
- The return on investment for landscape upgrades is 109%
- Street trees in cities and suburbs help to reduce the ambient temperatures by as much as

5.5F

For more facts on how plants contribute to our environment, society and welfare, check out these informational sheets from NICH:

[#PlantsDoThat For Soil Health!](#)

[#PlantsDoThat For Water!](#)

[#PlantsDoThat For Pollinators!](#)

[#PlantsDoThat For Cities and Suburbs!](#)

[#PlantsDoThat To Reduce Wildfire Risk!](#)

[#PlantsDoThat Horticulture: The Art, Science & Business of Plants](#)

NICH is not only supporting and promoting horticulture at the consumer level, they're working on identifying ways to increase our industry's access to federal, state and other sources of critical funding to help shape our ability to grow and strengthen horticulture.

I'm glad I was able to help you discover horticulture's NICH and am hopeful you'll find ways of using their endeavors to promote horticulture. Heck, maybe you'd even like to become a [NICH member](#) and help to connect people and plants.

Thanks for reading this edition of *Perennial Pulse*. My email is ppilon@ballpublishing.com if you have any comments or suggestions.

I'd like to leave you with this inspirational quote from Sun Tsu:

"In the midst of chaos, there is always opportunity."

Sun Tsu wasn't referring to capitalistic opportunities, but the opportunity to look inward, reflect on what truly matters and connect ourselves and our loved ones on a **deeper level**.

Take care and stay safe,

Paul Pilon

Editor-at-Large
Perennial Pulse

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