

Wednesday consumer webinar, Monrovia's houseplants and your pets, please



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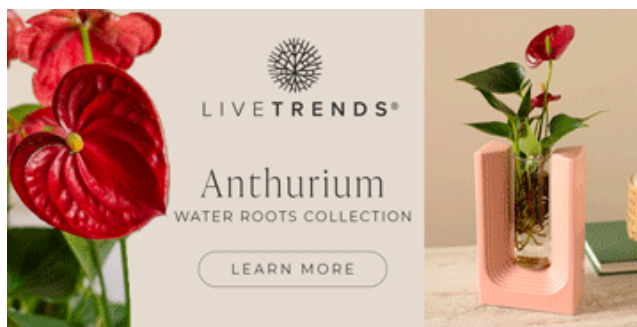
WE DO CUSTOM PIECES
A TREASURED ART FORM FROM THE PAST BECOMES AN HEIRLOOM FOR THE FUTURE
2024 - 2025 GLASS COLLECTION



Green Profit's
buzz!
Retail news from inside and outside the green industry

COMING UP THIS WEEK:

Wednesday Webinar Alert!
Let's Get Tropical
Monrovia's Houseplants
Crafting Drops
PHS's Trends for 2022
Tell Us About Your Turtle
AAS's Latest Winners
Finally ...

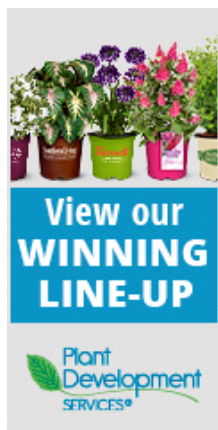


Wednesday Webinar Alert!

Before I dive into the rest of *Buzz* I need to tell you about a webinar happening TOMORROW (**Wednesday, December 8**). It's hosted by the Perennial Plant Association in conjunction with National Garden Bureau discussing "Connecting with Consumers."

The 12:00-1:30 p.m. Eastern webinar will have NGB's Diane Blazek and Gail Pabst diving into consumer trends and behavior, and connecting how these relate to gardening and the consumption of live goods. Diane and Gail have been researching and collecting data for this "who, what, when, where and why" look at consumer behavior since June! They'll reveal some really fascinating data and trends—30 of them!—from K-Pop to Boomer tech and a bunch of others that I personally can't wait to find out about.

Even if you can't make the live webinar, your registration will give you access to the archived version for six months and you'll receive a resource guide and handouts after the live presentation. Register [HERE](#) now!



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Let's Get Tropical

If you haven't registered for the upcoming Tropical Plant International Expo (TPIE) coming up in



Tampa, Florida, January 19-21, you should get on that, pronto (do so [HERE](#)). I have some compelling reasons for you (other than practically guaranteed nicer-than-where-you-live weather):



- FNGLA's COO Linda Adams tells me that registration numbers for retailers thus far (about a month into registration, so far) are off the charts. Your colleagues (and competitors) are in it to win it. Don't miss hearing the presentations and buying the products that'll give your business the edge in the houseplant and tropicals game.
- Spaces in the two January 18 Road Shows are selling out fast. As a reminder, those two tours are the **Production Tour** of nurseries in the Apopka/Mt. Dora region. This will be a completely new area of the state to showcase. The four stops include Agri-Starts, Deroose Plant & Exotic Plant, Amerigo Farms and LiveTrends Design Group. The **Design Road Show** is a walk/ride tour of downtown Tampa that will showcase triumphs and challenges of urban landscaping. From historic Tampa landscapes, to moss walls, to biophilic designs, you'll experience all Downtown Tampa has to offer.
- Speaking of Downtown Tampa, get a feel for the temporary TPIE home city by visiting the [Visit Tampa Bay page](#) on www.TPIE.org, a site specifically addressing the needs/wants/desires of folks coming to town for the show.

And one last thing: I'm taking that Tuesday (January 18) to visit a couple of Tampa-area retailers. Would that be you? I'd love to visit! Drop me a [NOTE](#) and let's chat about it.



Monrovia Moves Into Houseplants

This seems a fitting announcement after the info about TPIE. Monrovia is getting into the houseplant game with a collection of easy-for-consumers varieties available in larger plants that are meant to make an immediate impact in interior spaces. Life is short, and who has time for that 6-in. Spathiphyllum to fill that empty corner space anyway? Folks want big plants now, and this new line is meant to fill that need.



The new collection features “dozens of varieties,” according to a press release on the topic. Available varieties hit the mark and include some of the more in-demand houseplants—Monstera, Ficus, Rubber Plant, Cheese Plant, Peperomia and Philodendron, to name a few. And yes, they are large items, with the smallest being at least 1-gal., and each pot containing three plants.

One last bit of very important information about Monrovia’s new houseplant collection: It’s available for IGCs *only* as of 2022—which isn’t all that far away. Interested? Contact your rep for more information.



Crafting Drops

Both houseplants and gardening have been big pandemic-driven activities, as has been crafting. That should make **news of crafting retailer Joann’s third-quarter revenue drop** of 14% year-over-year a bit concerning for the horticulture industry, causing us to ponder for a moment if the same is in store for us.

Joann has put a lot of money, time and effort into upgrading their stores and strengthening e-commerce over the last year to continue to appeal and cater to their 8 million new COVID-era customers (that’s 8 million new customers *just for themselves*, not the crafting industry overall). Still, Joann’s performance in the third quarter indicates that crafting interest was more of a flash-in-the-pan thing as kids and adults get back to their school and socializing lives.

The line from the article that struck me most was one from Blick CEO Robert Buchsbaum: “I’ll be curious as people start getting back to their regular lives and start spending their money in more

traditional ways [if crafting interest lasts]. \$500 of art supplies is a huge purchase. \$500 of going on a vacation is a very small purchase."

And thanks to all those travel points built up via airline credit card purchases over the last year and a half, the transportation costs to and from those vacations are essentially free. (Hello, Guatemala in March.)

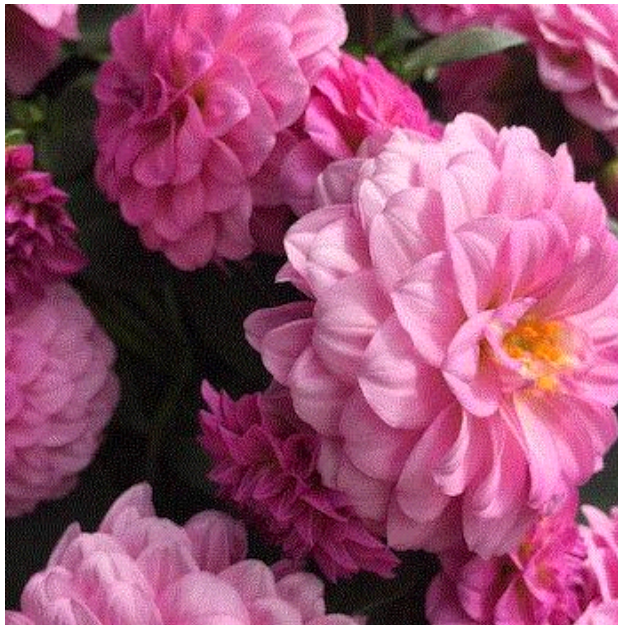


PHS's Six Garden Trends for 2022

It's mid-December, which means we are knee-deep in the trend-predicting and year-in-review time of year. The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society recently got into the trends-to-watch-for game with the release of its top six gardening trends for 2022. Trends help bring new inspiration and new interest to a space and a hobby, and meeting customers where the trends are taking them is an important way for you to stay relevant in their lives—and to keep money coming in for you.

Without further ado, PHS's six trends coming to a garden near you are:

1. Utilizing native and pollinator-friendly plants. This trend has been a slow but continuously growing trend since I've been writing *Buzz*. More and more people are understanding the importance of bees and pollen-loving insects not just in landscapes but in communities.
2. Turning lawns into gardens. It's better for the environment, provides more space for those pollinator plantings and requires less maintenance over a growing season.
3. Attend a plant swap. Meet new plants and new friends. My neighborhood has been having plant swaps for years, and it's a fun way to kick off the spring gardening season. Okay, so maybe you don't want folks to swap plants but to buy plants. Rethink what a plant swap might look like from a sales perspective—it's about creating community. Recreate that!
4. Try gravel, waterwise and xeriscape gardening. Inconsistent weather patterns and water restrictions make waterwise gardening a smart choice. Gravel gardening offers just one way to cut back on water and fertilizer use in the garden through eliminating the use of soil, while xeriscaping refers to landscaping and gardening in a way that reduces or eliminates the need for irrigation.
5. Grow your own fruit. You don't need a huge property to grow fruit anymore. Just one or two fruit trees (more if they are dwarfs) can produce hundreds of pieces of fruit. And it gives you an opportunity to grow something new.
6. Cut flowers. The boutique flower business is having a moment, thanks in large part to how well cut flowers come across via Instagram and the like. How are you participating in this boom? Could you plan a cut-your-own garden at your store? That would save your customers the risks associated with growing some finicky florals.



Your thoughts on PHS's trends? Trends of your own predicting? Drop me a note about them at ewells@ballpublishing.com.

Tell Us About Your Turtle

Here's an oldy-but-goodie trend: Pets in the garden center. More often than not while touring garden centers, I see the wandering cat, the lazy lab or a loose chicken on pest patrol. They are customer favorites, and are also good company when the store is slow.



Say hello to my Sammie

Colleague Jen Polanz will be featuring these unsung IGC employees in the *Green Profit* Pets on the Payroll series all throughout 2022 that'll showcase one pet each month and what they bring to your business. It'll be a fun way for folks to talk about the benefits (and possible drawbacks) of

having pets in the garden center.

Sing the praises of your Siamese. Rave about your rooster. Drop the dope on your doodle. Email JP about your loved one at jpolanz@ballpublishing.com.

AAS's Latest Winners

If you love your customers, then you are always on the lookout for good-looking *and* great-performing new varieties to offer them. Good thing that you have always trusted All-America Selections to do that trialing and evaluating work for you. AAS has just selected its latest round of AAS Winners for 2022. All seven (three flowers and four veggies) are outstanding, of course. But one of those winners (to be revealed below) is more outstanding than the others, winning a National Gold Medal, AAS's highest-possible honor.

I'll list each variety below, and if you'd like the variety's full description, simply click on its name to be taken to its description page. Let's begin with the veggies:

Pepper Dragonfly F1, Bejo Seeds (National Winner)



Tomato Purple Zebra F1, Frogslap Farm (National Winner)



Tomato Pink Delicious F1, Bayer Seminis (Regional Winner)



Tomato Sunset Torch F1, Frog Leap Farm (Regional Winner)



And here are the ornamental/flower winners:

Begonia Viking Explorer Rose on Green, Sakata Seed (National Gold Medal Winner!)



Sunflower Concert Bell F1, Tohoku Seed Co. (National Winner)



Torenia Vertigo Deep Blue F1, AmeriSeed International (Regional Winner)



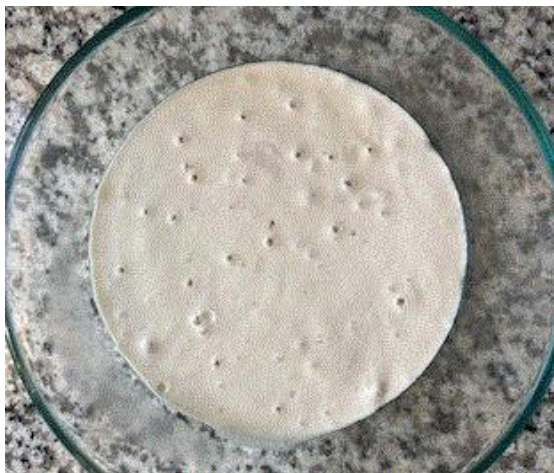
All photos courtesy of AAS.

And as always, AAS Winners are trialed throughout North America by professional, independent, volunteer judges who grow new, never-before-sold entries next to comparisons that are considered best-in-class. You can find more information, download POP materials and explore the many decades of previous AAS Winners at www.all-americanselections.org.

Finally ...

This has absolutely nothing to do with horticulture or plants but everything to do with culinary science, and I'm hoping that someone among you could give me some advice.

The sourdough starter I've been keeping since April 2020 is, well, not faring so well lately. It's gone and lost its vim and vigor.



Okay, so I became a bit lax in its regular feeding, I admit it. But up until a month or two ago it was bubbly and happy even after being left alone for four or five days. I've been on a regular daily feeding regimen for a week now, and it's not looking much better. Does anyone have a foolproof rescue plan for starters? Would love some! Share your wisdom with me at ewells@ballpublishing.com. And thanks!

Questions, comments, suggestions? Drop me a line if you'd like at ewells@ballpublishing.com.

Ellen Wells
Senior Editor
Green Profit

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