

GROWERTALKS

GT in Brief

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MANTS Moving to Online

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Due to COVID-19 concerns, ongoing restrictions on large indoor gatherings, and unforeseen unavailability at the Baltimore Convention Center, The Mid-Atlantic Nursery Trade Show (MANTS) announced in early August that the 2021 show, initially scheduled for January 6-8, is unable to take place as an in-person event. MANTS organizers are, instead, working to provide an online platform where exhibitors and attendees can conduct business.

Organizers said in a press release that they'd been optimistic about the possibility of continuing the 50-year tradition of MANTS in January 2021, but recently confirmed that the Baltimore Convention Center isn't available for the scheduled dates due to its ongoing role as a State of Maryland field hospital. The Baltimore Convention Center has served as a 250-bed COVID-19 field hospital since April and will continue to serve in that capacity through the end of December. When factoring in additional time required to break down the field hospital and sanitize, it's impractical to assume proper access to the building even if the state should change its restrictions on large-scale indoor gatherings.

"The health and safety of our exhibitors and attendees is our primary focus," MANTS Executive Vice President Vanessa Finney said in a statement. "We've exhausted all other alternative dates for an in-person show, and while we are disappointed that we can't meet in person, we are committed to keeping commerce within our industry alive and healthy. MANTS' continued support of our show sponsors, the State Nursery and Landscape Associations of Maryland, Virginia and West Virginia is critical despite the pandemic."

Additional details on MANTS 2021 plans will be shared in the weeks to come. **GT**