

GROWERTALKS

GT in Brief

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At the Global Produce & Floral Show

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Supermarket produce, and floral suppliers and buyers were excited to gather in Orlando in October for the first annual Global Produce & Floral Show, hosted by the International Fresh Produce Association (IFPA), the first live supermarket industry event since before the pandemic.

IFPA is the new (as of January 1) organization formed by the members of the United Fresh Produce Association and the Produce Marketing Association, who dissolved those groups in order to create a new, unified—and, hopefully, more authoritative—organization. We were told the event attracted more than 18,000 attendees from 40 countries.

The trade show was massive, with 1,136 exhibitors, including 136 in the Floral category, which is mainly cut flowers, but includes a good sprinkling of potted plants and foliage.

A small sample of what we saw includes:

1. The author with IFPA Floral Director Becky Roberts, who's retiring at the end of 2022. Becky has 25 years in the supermarket floral industry, 24 of that with PMA and the last year with IFPA. Said Becky, "It's been a very, very, very fun journey with this segment. I've enjoyed every minute of it."
2. Ball Horticultural Company's Central/South American division Ball SB showed off their cut flower offerings, including Dianthus Punky Ball, a vigorous non-blooming dianthus that's darker green than Green Ball; and Limonium Skylight, the first true odorless hybrid limonium on the market, in a soft purple color that's in high demand.
3. Known-You Seed makes their packet seed stand out by touting "non-GMO and untreated seed," promoting some All-America Selections winners and—our favorite part—putting beautiful art featuring cute baby animals on the packets. We told company president Sean Hsu that gardeners generally want to keep cute little animals OUT of their garden. So why this choice of art? "We want to balance nature," he said, meaning "Grow enough for the critters to share."
4. Nature Fresh Farms of Leamington, Ontario, is touting the first organic greenhouse-grown strawberries in North America. The fruit are coming from a recent 45-acre expansion of their Delta, Ohio, range. By next year, Nature Fresh expects 45% of its production to be organic.
5. Village Farms shows the diversity of greenhouse-grown tomatoes. They offer six different cherries in four different packages, plus Romas, TOVs (tomatoes on the vine), beefsteaks and baby beefs, among others. **GT**

