

Features

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Head-Turning, Show-Stopping Products

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Every year, we
(the editors)
walk the show

Cultivate'23

floor at Cultivate in Columbus, looking for something (or sometimes someone) to jump out at us so we can share it with all of you. This year was no exception and we—with the help of retailers in The Garden Center Group—found a variety of cool new products. For Bossman Beytes' video of our finds, shot and edited by our videographer Osvaldo Cuevas, [GO HERE](#).

M&M Wintergreens: Evergreen Toppers

M&M Wintergreens is warning of a shortage of spruce tops once again this season—and apparently illegally harvested spruce tops is a big deal (beware the peddler offering you spruce tops from their trunks!). M&M Wintergreens wants you to know that they've created a spruce top alternative using pine, cedar or a blending of two, which are ideal “thrillers” for larger winter pots. The container pictured is an extraordinary example of what can be done with cedar and pine tops.

They also celebrated the 10-year anniversary of the original porch pot kits by highlighting four kits available for either retailer use in creating custom pots or to sell to customers for them to build their own.

IDeL: Self-Watering Pots

In the cool pot category, the Mosaic pots from IDeL were a stop-me-in-the-aisle type product. It's a self-watering pot, with the inner pot having retractable handles for easier lifting of the inner pot up and out. They come in several (possibly six?) colors and sizes, and even in a square shape (the Quadro style). Very mod!

IC3D: 3D-printed pots

IC3D is a Columbus-based 3-D printing company that decided to produce their own line of 3-D-printed plastic flower pots. They offer numerous designs and colors, but the key is that they can do custom products for you! With 50 machines at their disposal, they can make any size, design and quantity you desire. This struck a chord with the judges for the Group's Retailers' Choice



Award, who gave it one of their 15 prizes.

leafjoy: Full-Size H2O Bowls

The H2O Minis line of small houseplants in water was such a big hit for leafjoy, Proven Winners' houseplant brand, that they're ramping up the line with a new, larger fishbowl-looking product featuring full-size plants. They'll come in an assortment of plants that were successful in the minis line, like calatheas, pothos and philodendron (pictured), among others, said Ben Wright of The Plant Company, which grows the lineup. Ben also said the houseplant products in general have been so popular, it's prompted them to add another 4.5 acres onto their already 5-acre growing operation in Stuarts Draft, Virginia.



Biostok: Gen Z Tropicals

This is an item we'd spotted as something to write about here even before the Retailers' Choice Awards were announced. Biostok's assortment of 2-in. tropicals are purposefully for the Gen Z market. This Gen Z Tropicals program has three different packages you can choose from: the BELEAF includes the easy-to-care-for basics; the BECOOL includes plants that are a step up for plant parents wanting to add some unique items; and BEBOLD includes harder-to-find rare and exotic varieties for experienced plant parents.

They have a total of about 120 to 150 varieties. All are in 2-in. pots and offer the end-user the opportunity to

watch their plant babies grow to full-on mature plants. Find which varieties are in the three categories and other info at biostok.com/collections/gen-z-plants.

We The Wild: Care Kits

This young company won a Retailers' Choice Award last year for its unique 100% organic, made-by-earthworms houseplant care products. This year they bring home the award for how they're bundling their products.

We The Wild has three new plant care kit assortments: Revive + Thrive Duo for house-plant vitality; Leaf Care Duo for lush, healthy and shiny leaves; and Houseplant Essentials for general, all-around plant care. They also have an Orchid Care Essential Kit, too.

Sustainable Village: Watering System

The Blumat Watering System from Sustainable Village uses a clay cone, which you insert into the soil near the plants' roots—whether that's in a pot, a raised bed or in the ground. The cone regulates how much water is released, depending on the soil's moisture level. Blumat offers solutions for everyone from consumer to professional level, indoors and outdoors. The two products that are perfect for retail sales are the Blumat Easy, a clay cone that comes with a plastic bottle adaptor, and the Blumat Classic, a clay cone fitted with a thin tube that siphons water from a jug.

Both are good ideas for folks on vacation or who just forget to check on their plants on a regular basis. Their



larger systems are suitable for raised beds, gardens and even smaller indoor growing operations.

PDSI/Plants Nouveau: Aspidistra Tokyo Skies

This Cast Iron plant (*Aspidistra elatior*) may have caught the attention of many of the judging retailers because it reminded them that their grandmothers had this plant at their homes. Why? Because it's as tough as cast iron. But this one is different, as you might be able to tell: It's wonderfully and intricately variegated, perhaps looking a bit like Tokyo at night with all the buildings lit up.

This is one of those delightful plants that serves as both a killer houseplant and a water-wise, evergreen plant for Zones 8 to 9. And it's manageable, too, topping out at 2- to 3-ft. tall and just 1- to 2-ft. wide.



Coast of Maine: Houseplant Mix

Here's a product so new the packaging wasn't even available for the show yet. The popular retail brand Coast of Maine introduced its Organic and Natural Indoor Houseplant Mix at the show, which includes a blend of coco coir, aged pine, peat moss and organic fertilizer. It'll be available in 8-qt. and 16-qt. options and should be available for ordering at all the distributor shows. Fun fact: Coast of Maine has two manufacturing facilities—one in Maine and the other in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. The houseplant mix will be made in PA.

Panacea: Eco-friendly products

Columbus, Ohio-based Panacea Products showed loads of consumer garden containers and décor, but most interesting to us were the four new eco-friendly products for '24. From top to bottom:

- Turned bamboo pots, which come in an 8-in. pot and a 12-in. hanging basket
- Recycled paper planters (which resemble papier mâché) in many interesting shapes and four colors
- Forest Stewardship Council-certified cedar planters
- Seagrass and reclaimed fabric baskets

Green Trade Horticulture/Plants Nouveau: Redemption

Colocasia Redemption is a head-turner. Rippled, shiny leaves emerge green and turn black. As they mature, a neon-pink blotch appears and grows larger, radiating outward as a bright pink starburst in the leaf's center. A relative of Pharaoh's Mask, this colocasia's 3- to 4-ft. height is riveting in garden beds, in containers and near water features.

The Magnolia Company: Wreaths

We couldn't walk by and ignore the gorgeous wreaths made of magnolia leaves displayed at The Magnolia Company booth. It was the first time the Barberville, Florida, company owned by Matt and Julie Roth exhibited at Cultivate (though they've been at TPIE for many years). They offer bulk bunches, along with bright, lacquer-painted wreaths in the Luxe line, and natural looks like the new Serenity Oasis (pictured below some from the Luxe line) and Woodland Wonder wreaths. All are real magnolia leaves that have been harvested and dried (apparently harvesting really ramps up in October and peaks in November). Matt modeled the box each wreath is packaged in for a high-



end retail item. GP

