

## Features

6/30/2025

## Fresh and Ready to Inspire

*Story & Photos by Chris Beytes, Bill Calkins & Jennifer Zurko*

Adding new varieties each year not only allows you to take advantage of the latest plant genetics but also freshens up your displays and generates excitement among your customers. Calling out the latest and greatest gives you cool social media content and even helps get your staff ready to talk up their favorite new plants! This year's spring trials assortment included a rainbow of trending colors, many new potential combination planter items and unique shapes and forms for all seasons—including season-extenders to add excitement and draw shoppers into the store during the shoulder seasons.



### **Impatiens Glimmer Strawberry Sparkler, Purple Stardust (Ball FloraPlant)**

When a breeder decides to drop a “mainstay” series, it’s news to report on. Fiesta Double Impatiens was a key member of the Ball FloraPlant assortment for years, but when Impatiens Downy Mildew (IDM) ravaged the *I. walleriana* market, they took a big hit. But with so many breeders in the Ball company, Beacon helped save the market for seed impatiens and now Ball FloraPlant has a vegetative double series called

Glimmer, launched two years ago, with the same high resistance to IDM. Fiesta is officially gone; Glimmer is here in its place. They added two colors for 2026, Purple Stardust and Strawberry Sparkler, bringing the series color count to 10.



### **Coleus Premium Sun Sweet Paprika (PanAmerican Seed)**

Part of the Premium Sun line, these seed coleus look just like their big, bold vegetative counterparts. Being from seed gives them benefits of year-round availability, storage and even a lower input cost. We don’t think you give up a thing, including performance in sun or shade. The line now has 11 colors.



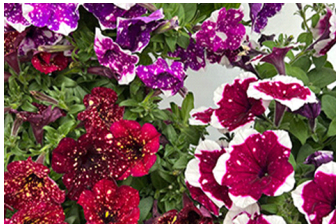
### **Dianthus DiaDeur Retail Program (Selecta One)**

Selecta unveiled a new retail program for its DiaDeur dianthus line, promoting fragrance and using perfume imagery. These tidy carnations are perfect as ornamentals in medium-sized pots and especially cute as fragrant gift plants, taking advantage of the new packaging and display pieces.



### **Bidens Bee, Spicy Electric White (Kientzler)**

When it comes to bidens, Kientzler continues to breed and improve for habit and flower size. For 2026, the German breeder will have three new ones to offer in the basket type called Bee. Bee Superstar and Bee Pink Buzz are color breakthroughs as magenta-pink bidens. Spicy Electric White, while technically an improvement, has huge yellow-and-white blooms that sure looked fresh and new!



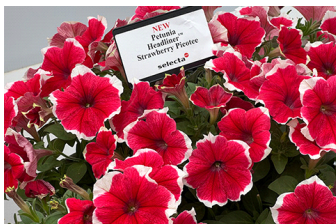
### **Petunia Main Stage; Headliner (Selecta One)**

The Main Stage Petunia series fits the Papa Bear role in Selecta's petunia range (the largest). The entire series has been upgraded to be as much as two to three weeks earlier than competitive series, meaning retail growers can have beautiful baskets early in the season. They can be timed like Headliners (Selecta's medium-vigor series). New colors for 2026 include Burgundy Sky, Magenta Glacier Sky, Merlot Glacier Sky and Light Blue Vein (not pictured).



### **Rudbeckia Tablemate Gold (Benary)**

Rudbeckia Tablemate Gold is genetically dwarf to stay down to maybe 8- or 10-in. tall. Use it as a gift plant and the recipient can enjoy many weeks of indoor blooming then plant it out in the garden. (Tech tip to you grower/retailers: Do NOT apply PGRs unless you want them to disappear into the soil.)



### **Petunia Slingshot Cherry Tartwheel; Jewel Radiant Ruby; Sureshot Light Blue (Ball FloraPlant)**

The BFP petunia lineup continues to expand, adding new colors in three key series. Slingshot, their mounding and trailing series for baskets, get a new bicolor red (pictured) called Cherry Tartwheel—a great name! The Jewel series of double petunias adds Radiant Ruby. And the SureShot series (medium, mounded and super-uniform) adds Light Blue.



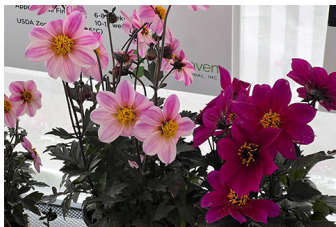
### **Petunia Crazytunia (Westhoff)**

Westhoff introduced four new Crazytunias for 2026 that all live up to the “crazy” moniker. Our favorite is Yello, a super-strong yellow with a faint hint of green. It joins the descriptively named Blackberry Syrup, Bananarama and Ink Blot.



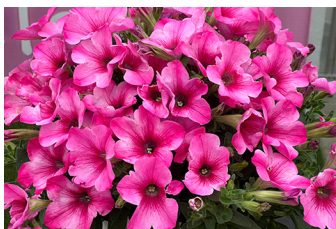
### **Hydrangea Game Changer Pink Burst, Freely Blue (Green Fuse)**

Game Changer hydrangeas are the result of top-secret interspecific breeding, and the “game-changing” story is that they can be produced without vernalization and are daylength neutral. For some of the same reasons first-year flowering perennials have taken off in recent years, these hydrangeas are poised to change the game for many retail growers who’ve traditionally forced (or avoided) traditional pre-finished dormant hydrangeas. With a pinch at six weeks, a nice “pre-finished” hydrangea is ready in as little as eight or 14 weeks, depending how large you want them, and can be easily bumped up into larger pots. New for 2026 are Pink Burst (with *H. macrophylla*-like flowers) and Freely Blue (a lacecap-style flower).



### **Dahlia Mystic Wizard (PlantHaven)**

Mystic Wizard’s stunning magenta blooms against dark foliage really jumped out at us. And when we heard some of the best West Coast IGCs are already looking at this variety for fall sales alongside their garden mums, we weren’t surprised.



### **Petunia Pink Cloud (Westhoff)**

This new stand-alone petunia named Pink Cloud is a really beautiful two-toned, soft pink petunia with huge blooms. We were told it cycles into bloom about twice as quickly as other petunias, so it’s always in flower, with no bare spots.



### **Catharanthus Soiree Flamenco (Suntory)**

Suntory’s popular Soiree collection gets three new ones: Strawberry Picotee, Electric Salmon Eye and Plum Velvet. All the Flamencos feature ruffled flowers.





### **Calibrachoa Rainbow Dragon Berry (Dümmen Orange)**

A new calibrachoa in Dümmen's Rainbow (trailing) series is Dragon Berry, with blooms that are pink to purple and sort of multicolored with different shades depending on the temperature.



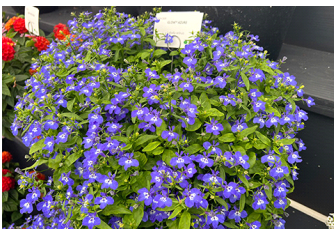
### **Coleus Terrascape (Kientzler)**

The most impactful plants in the Kientzler display had to be Terrascape Coleus—big and bold! Their upright collection gets three new colors: Midnight Majesty, Pink Ribbons and Royal Delight. And the mounding/trailing collection gets the interestingly named All That Lava.



### **Calibrachoa Unique Sangria Fizz (Kientzler)**

A red calibrachoa with a peachy rim and yellow throat, Sangria Fizz is part of the Unique series of mounding type calibrachoa.



### **Lobelia Glow Azure (Danziger)**

The newest vivid-blue lobelia in Danziger's (now) four-color Glow series of mounded basket types is Azure. It's positioned as a heat-tolerant season-extender. We were told it blends perfectly with lantana for the summer, and even with scaevola in early-season baskets and combos.



### **Petunia Tumbelina Compact Nicola (Cohen)**

Tumbelina Compact Nicola is considered a double petunia, but has more of a semi-double flower form, with bicolor purple-and-white blooms. It's striking and the plant habit is excellent compared to many other doubles.



### **Salvia Berry Blast (Jaldety)**

A *Salvia guaranitica*, Berry Blast has berry-colored blooms (obviously) and a relatively compact habit for the species.



### **Begonia Groovy Salmon Bicolor (Benary)**

Groovy Salmon Bicolor is the first two-tone color (pink and white) in Benary's *Begonia boliviensis* types.



### **Hydrangeas in Hanging Basket (ThinkPlants)**

The plant marketing group called ThinkPlants showed dozens of hydrangeas (including a rust-flowered one for which they were soliciting opinions and name ideas; we suggested Cherry Cola). But most interesting were the hydrangeas in hanging baskets from supplier Creekside Nursery, with lysimachia cascading and softening the pots. A pretty concept with retail potential, we think. **GP**