How Was Mother's Day? Plus Ball's New Partner and Syngenta's New Varieties



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TUESDAY, MAY 21, 2019

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COMING UP THIS WEEK:

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First, my apologies for the delay









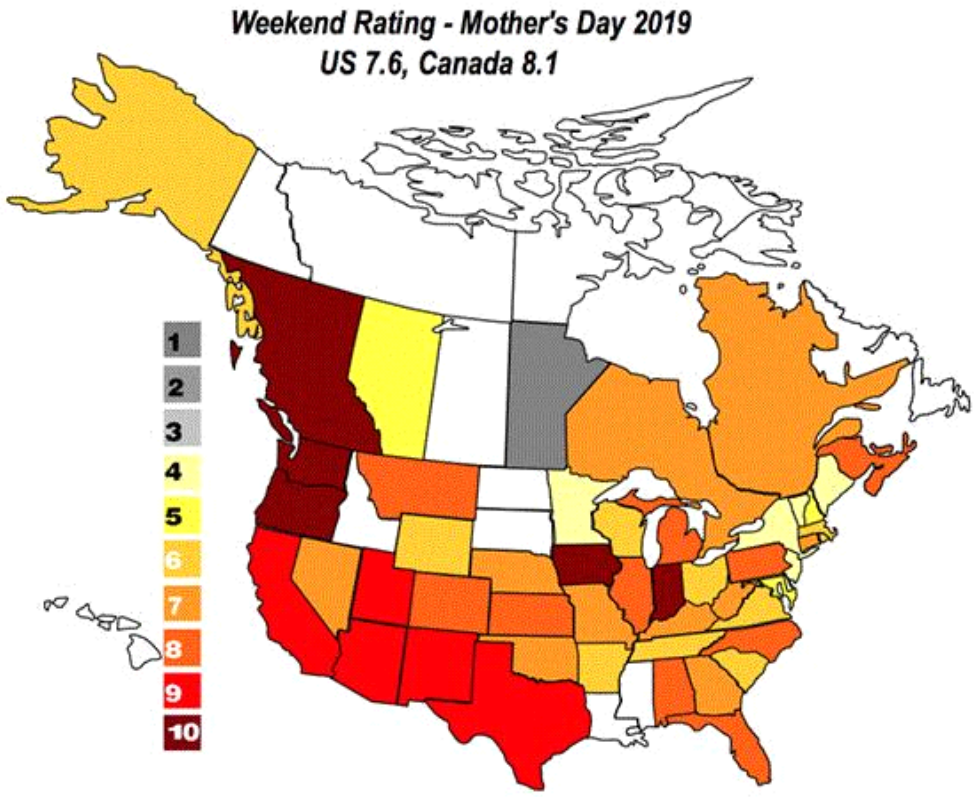
Seeing how Mother's Day is a big spring plant sales occasion, I am sure you are curious how it went. I wanted to get the data out last week, but I found myself on the road and unable to access my email system. Plus, I had loads more responses than normal, meaning it took me longer to insert and analyze the data, for the more accurate report. So I figured it was better I take my time and get it right the first time.

So how was Mother's Day?

“Record-breaking” was a common refrain among a good number of you when it comes to Mother’s Day Weekend 2019. That in spite of the fact that in many spots is was just a one-day weekend, with a stellar Saturday and a wash-out Sunday (although a fantastic Friday helped make up for it.

The final tally: **7.6 in the U.S. and 8.2 in Canada**. That’s based on 208 scores from 49 states (only Hawaii was absent) and seven provinces.

Here’s the map:

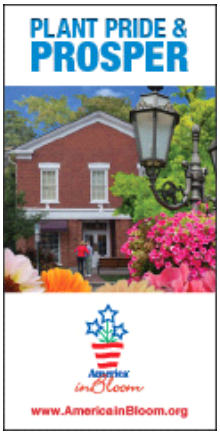


We had three phenomenal regions: Northwest (9.8), Mountains (9.7) and West (9.3). Ten states or provinces had scores of all 9s and 10s. Washington State had six 10s … and one 8, which spoiled the perfection. Idaho had three scores, all 10. Montana did, too. Utah had two scores, both 10s. California scored three 10s and a 9. All told, you sent in 54 10s (26% of all scores).

Conversely, the South (6.7), East (6.7), Plains (6.9) and New England (7.1) came in below average. The Midwest (7.6) was dead on average. However, these regions all had a mixed bag of high and low scores. Take Illinois, for instance: It offered up nine scores, ranging from 1.5 to 9,







for an average of 6.2. Texas ranged from 3 to 10 (average 6.2), Virginia from 4 to 10 (average 6.6), Michigan from 5 to 9 (average 8.1), Ohio and Pennsylvania from 6 to 10 (8.0 and 7.5, respectively), Ontario from 3 to 10 (average of 6.8).

About the only places folks all agreed it was only an okay weekend were Missouri, with scores ranging from 3 to 6 (5.0 average), and Manitoba, with a pair of 6s. Everyplace else, no matter how bad most of the scores were, somebody scored the weekend a 9 or 10.

Compared to last year, Mother's Day 2019 was disappointing. The 2018 score was 8.8 in the U.S. and 9.5 in Canada, coming off a really horrible April. The previous year, 2017, was more similar, at 7.8 and 8.3. The year before that, 2016, was better, at 8.3/8.4.

A few comments from FB

Jim Monroe of Hort Couture was kind enough to post a request for scores on the Facebook IGC Talk group on my behalf, and that brought in dozens more results that I'd normally get. These comments come straight from there. Thanks to all!

Elizabeth Elliott - Himmel's Landscape and Garden Center in Pasadena, Maryland had a 10+ weekend. Saturday was my biggest sale day ever, and even though Sunday was rainy, we still had lots of visitors. Bestsellers were combo hanging baskets and planters, tropicals, roses and new handmade pottery with succulents and air plants.

Cory Kashuba - Corky's Garden Path in Northeastern Pennsylvania had a 10 weekend. Saturday was also our busiest day in our history. I second what Elizabeth said about Sunday, rainy but great traffic. The customers are all enthusiastic and ready to spend!

Keri Luster - 10, 10, 10! Best weekend ever in Denver.

Dennis Fix - FarWest Garden Center, Boise, Idaho. Record days Friday Saturday and Sunday. Great weather, great staff, great customers. 10+ for the week.

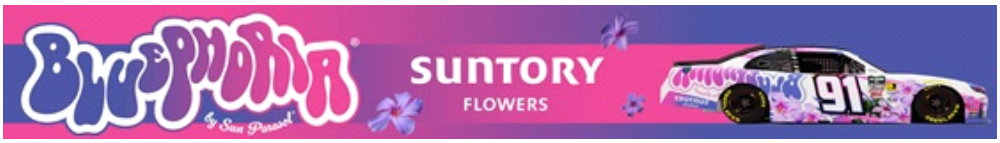
David Mischler - Williamsville (Buffalo), New York. A solid 10, great weather all day Saturday. Made 520 flower deliveries Saturday. Walk-ins great all day. Sold many hanging baskets.

Cathy Oulton - Halifax, Nova Scotia. 7—Cold and cloudy, down 18% from last year. Better than I expected, but we are having a very slow start. It will be hard to make up the missed sales.

Craig Rothgeb - 7 in Northeast Indiana. 50F with some rain. We need sun and ground to dry up!

Lisa Higby LeFevre - Northern Illinois 9. Weekend up over year prior despite crap weather, power outage and parkas.

Next time: The big Canadian Victoria Day three-day weekend!



Speaking of Hort Couture …

Jim Monroe tells me that, while they may not have had an exhibit at Spring Trials this year, they've still been busy sourcing interesting new varieties for the line, most notably for the Under The Sea coleus collection, which this year celebrates its 10th anniversary. The goal is more color and more variety.

New colors include Barracuda, Black Coral, Clownfish, Electric Eel, Fancy Koi, Fire Coral, Fishnet Gold, Fishnet Red, Gold Guppy, Lemon Coral, Pink Tuna, Red Snapper and Seaweed

Red.



Barracuda



Fancy Koi



Gold Guppy



Electric Eel

Nothing fishy about these colorful cultivars ... except the names!



Ball partners with AGA Agro for Southeast Asia

Ball Horticultural Company (for full disclosure, the parent of my division, Ball Publishing … but you already knew that) is expanding its presence in Southern Asia (home to some 2.4 billion people, they say) by partnering with AGA Agro, a breeder, producer and distributor of garland marigolds, as well as a distributor of ornamental and cut flower seeds and plugs. Ball wouldn't disclose the nature of the partnership other than to say they had bought a percentage of the

company. Founded in 2013, AGA Agro is headquartered in Chiang Mai, Thailand, and operates breeding, seed production, seed distribution, plug production and flower trialing locations.

The partnership will provide AGA access to the vast floriculture offerings of Ball and will lead to the expansion of its product assortment, including entry into new product categories such as indoor flowering plants and vegetative flower varieties.



Flower trials at AGA Agro.

In addition, the partnership will result in rapid development of new garland marigold genetics for the region by combining AGA's existing breeding with Ball's ability to apply advanced breeding technology to the category.

What are garland marigolds? In some countries of the region they're grown specifically to string together into garlands, to be used for cultural celebrations and decoration; some grow them as potted plants; and some use the flowers as offerings.

Soraya Jaranyanon, founder and managing director of AGA, will remain a major shareholder and managing director; her management team will also stay in place. "My team is the best at what they do," she said. "By partnering with Ball, we will be able to fulfill our goal of becoming the leading supplier of a diverse range of floriculture plant products across the region."



Syngenta licenses Lazzeri poinsettias …

Is it ever too early to start thinking about poinsettias? Maybe. But still, that won't stop me from telling you that, starting with the 2020 season, Syngenta Flowers will be selling poinsettias from Italian breeder Lazzeri Societa Agricola in the U.S. and Canada. Lazzeri has 15 years of poinsettia breeding experience. Their middle-European breeding is characterized by "easy cultivation for the producers and … excellent post-sales for the end consumers," they say.

The press release didn't offer any hint about how many of the 30 or so Lazzeri varieties Syngenta plans on carrying, but it did include a photo of two: Alaska White and Serena Red.



Look for the Lazzeri varieties on display this fall at all key poinsettia trials across the U.S. and Canada.

… and Royal Van Zanten pot mums

Just as I was headed to press, I got a second news release from Syngenta with a second crop they'll be licensing in the U.S. and Canada: pot mums from Dutch breeder Royal Van Zanten. The Royal Van Zanten varieties will join Syngenta's broad range of existing Yoder genetics.

All Syngenta Flowers and Royal Van Zanten varieties will be available through Syngenta's current broker network and supplied from their newly renovated onshore production farm in Alva, Florida.

"This new partnership will leverage the product knowledge and services from both companies to give growers a full package of genetics and technical growing support," stated the release.

You'll be able to check out the full range during Cultivate'19 in Ohio this July.



Complete this survey and maybe save neonics

I know you're busy, but you've got information that could be helpful to AmericanHort and the Horticultural Research Institute (HRI). They are seeking to better understand how growers use the following neonicotinoid insecticides:

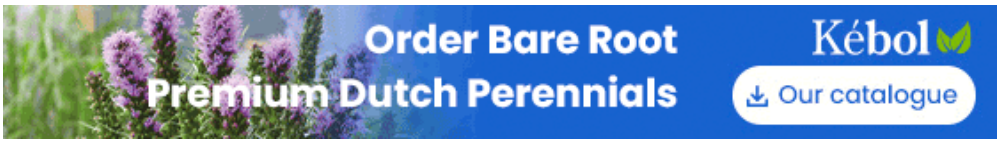
- Clothianidin (Arena)
- Dinotefuran (Safari)
- Imidacloprid (Merit, Marathon, others)
- Thiamethoxam (Meridian, Flagship)

Why are they asking for your help? Because they anticipate that the EPA will announce

proposed registration changes to these four products in the near future, and your answers will help them represent you and your needs.

The short (less than two-minute) survey is completely anonymous. Find it HERE.

Thanks in advance for your help!



World Ornamental Horticulture Summit Slated for Beijing

The International Association of Horticultural Producers (AIPH) announced that the World Horticultural Summit 2019 will take place September 11-13, 2019, in Beijing, China.

The Summit is the first event of its kind to be held in China—a country where the horticulture sector has grown substantially in the last few decades and is home to one of the largest and fastest-growing consumer markets. Focusing on trade and cooperation with China, the event will address specific topics, such as plant breeding and plant breeder rights, and aims to help attendees develop an understanding of the Chinese market, the impacts of emerging producers and future consumer demand.

The program features prominent industry leaders, including Biense Visser, CEO of Dummen Orange; Edgar Kreigar, Secretary General of CIOPORA (the non-profit that represents ornamental and fruit breeders); and Marco van Zieverden, CEO of Dutch Flower Group. The Summit also includes a series of professional visits to further knowledge exchange and understanding between the Chinese horticulture industry and international delegates representing the ornamentals industry around the world. Plus, attendees will get to visit Expo 2019 Beijing, the big international horticultural expo.

Visit www.aiph.org for more.



IPPS 2019 Western Conference

Ten days after you get back from the Beijing Summit, you can zip out to Santa Cruz, California, for the International Plant Propagators Society Western Conference, September 24-28, where I bet the air will be a whole lot more breathable. The tour stops sound fascinationg, as well, with stops at a cannabis facility, Driscoll's Strawberry Breeder, quite a few of the local growers,

several flower breeders and more. Presentation topics run the gamut, from native plants to solar greenhouses.

Learn more HERE.

Finally ...

Last week, while in Miami, I paid a visit to a nursery called The Jungle, owned by Sandy and Robin Stein. Sandy got into the business in the ’80s, got out of the business after Hurricane Andrew in 1992, then got back into the business about five years later. One of his side interests (and for a while his career) is Jungian therapy. He got a masters in mental health counseling and practiced in community mental health before re-opening his nursery.

Knowing this, and thinking the answer might be interesting, I asked Sandy if he’d ever given thought to the psyche of the average greenhouse or nursery owner.

He smiled, and thought for a bit, then said most growers (himself included) tend to be “entrepreneurs and tortured souls.”

“You mean they enjoy the suffering?” I speculated.

“It’s kind of like golf,” he answered. “You can’t stop playing it, but you suck at it. That one good shot is like that one good crop or one good year.”

I had to laugh at that comparison, especially knowing how many folks in this business enjoy golf—no matter their skill level.









See you next time,



Chris Beytes
Editor
GrowerTalks and *Green Profit*

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