

#StayPlanted, both sides of the biz, new tropicals and what's your sign?



TROPICAL PLANT
INTERNATIONAL
EXPO **2027** FT. LAUDERDALE



News and Inspiration from the world of foliage and tropical plants

GROWERTALKS
MAGAZINE

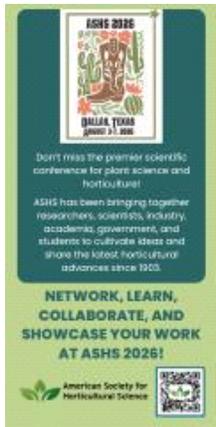
greenPROFIT
MAGAZINE

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 22, 2020

subscribe



Find an Expert
We know greenhouses!



TROPICAL TOPICS

COMING UP THIS WEEK:

- How's Business I?
- How's Business II?
- #StayPlanted
- Tropicals From Trials
- Houseplants for the Zodiac

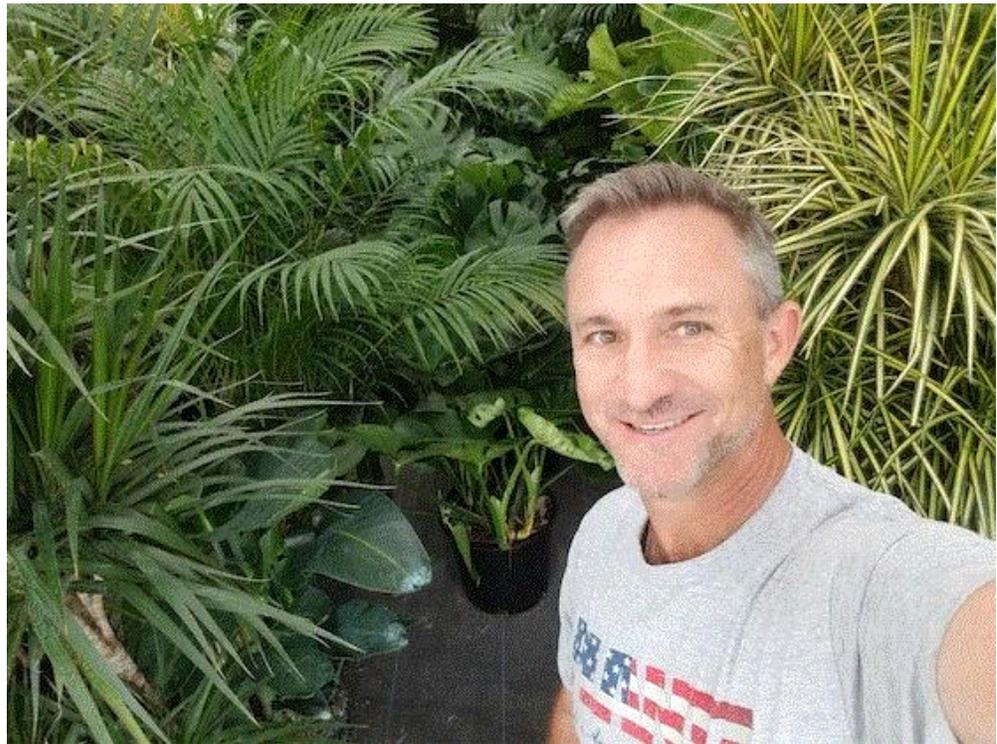


How's Business I?

How's the COVID-19 crisis impacting your business? It all depends on what your business is and what you sell.

Take Steve Sanford, for instance. Steve owns a Tampa, Florida-based interiorscaping business, Plantz, and demand for leasing and maintaining foliage for office buildings is way down, about 80%, he told me. But Steve's a good guy and doesn't want to see the plants suffer, nor his customers, of course. So for service customers who have suspended service, Steve sent care and watering instructions via email and made this [VIDEO](#) for them showing exactly what to do.

But then take Steve Sanford as another for instance—yes, the same Steve. He had started a side business two years ago ([plantz.us](#)) that sold houseplants online. According to [THIS ARTICLE](#), Steve was close to closing during the crisis until he noticed that the online plant sales were doing really well. Like, *super* well—volume is up 80% compared to last April, and sales are up 50%. And because he worked with FedEx to develop special packaging when the online business first got up and running, [Plantz.com](#) has become one of the country's largest suppliers of tropicals 5 ft. tall and taller.



In [ANOTHER ARTICLE](#), Steve attributes the interest in plants and his increased sales to Millennials. They've been the core group of houseplant consumers since this houseplant trend took off several years ago. Steve wrote, "With the local service-based business being down, we're pleased to see customers from all over the country interested in getting plants shipped to them from us—putting some green in their scene during quarantine." I like the way that rhymes! But you know what else I think is behind it?



My yoga teacher's live video classes feature plants as part of the scenery. And it's the same for many others!

My guess is that anyone who is routinely hosting video conference calls or is being filmed indoors is ordering plants to spiff up their backgrounds. Anyone who has taken an online yoga class, for example, has noticed that ficus and philodendrons now flourish behind the instructors.

It's definitely heartening to see.

How's Business II?

I just received an email from the folks at the Central Florida Extension Centers. They would like those of you in Florida to take a survey to answer that question posed above—how's business going? Here's the [SURVEY LINK](#).

The information you provide will help assess the larger impact of COVID-19 to the agriculture and aquaculture industries, the email states. This information will be vital to informing decisions made by policymakers and establishing a roadmap for moving forward. Essentially, your help can get us out of this mess by providing folks with real-time information.



#StayPlanted

Interiorscapers are taking a hit as office buildings and commercial accounts have closed temporarily. That means there's a lot of product on benches not moving anywhere. Kingston White of Morning Dew Tropical Plants emailed me last week to tell me about a nationwide movement a lot of tropical growers and suppliers are getting involved with to distribute excess plant inventory. It's called #StayPlanted, and folks along the supply chain are being encouraged to give plants away rather than dump them. "The idea is to draw attention to the benefits of plants, give plants away to lift spirits and to help ease the stress as we all quarantine," Kingston wrote.

The #StayPlanted initiative officially kicked off Monday with a press release that is intended to be shared with local news media and social media applications. The goal is to generate nationwide awareness of how wonderful and beneficial plants can be inside—whether at home or in the office. They hope that giving away plants and driving home the benefits of interior plants will encourage people to consider future purchases even when we're not confined to our homes.

The beginning of the press release reads:

(Your City)(State Abbreviation)—To help advance CDC messaging for shelter in place and social distancing guidelines, a coalition of interior plantscapers recently launched a #StayPlanted initiative.

#StayPlanted encourages solidarity for shelter in place and social distancing directives by encouraging individuals to place plants in windows, and share pictures on social media of how having greenery has been beneficial during quarantine.

"Most people love their indoor plants for how they look, but many don't realize the huge health benefits that come from access to plants and greenery," said Mike Senneff, president of Green Plants for Green Buildings and Founder and CEO of Natura, a company dedicated to enhancing the built environment with green spaces.



They've made an editable version of the press release available for download, which you can find [HERE](#). Fill in your town, state and etc. and start spreading the news. There's a large social media component involved with the campaign, too, including:

- Taking photos of plants in windows with a light and posting on your social media platform
- Encouraging your followers to take photos of plants inside their home and post with #stayplanted
- Using hashtag #stayplanted in all your postings

And let us know how it goes.



New Tropicals From Spring Trials

I thought my mention of the heder Tropical Blizzard from PlantHaven would be the only Virtual Spring Trials tropical-related introduction I'd make this year. I then got on a Zoom meeting with the folks from Proven Winners and realized I was wrong.

Proven Winners has two new colocasia intros for 20-21, both being brought up to the big leagues from the Proven Selections collection. The first is Coffee Cups, thusly named due to its cup-shaped leaves and mocha highlights on its olive-green leaves. Use it as a thriller in big combos—

it gets 36-60 in. in height and spread.



The second is Heart of the Jungle colocasia. It's similar in habit to Coffee Cups but with non-cupped, heart-shaped dark green leaves and black stems.



And an update on their Heart to Heart caladium program, which was new last year. They have the same 20 varieties that they offered last year and will include some new ones next year, and they are still painting and de-eying the tubers. The update is they now have a Caladium of the Year item as part of their National Plant of the Year program. It's similar to how they have an Annual of the Year, etc. so one caladium gets some extra marketing love each year.



Matching Houseplants to the Zodiac

It's a thing, apparently, matching the right houseplant to square with a person's zodiac sign. At least it's a thing from the folks at FarawayFurniture.com, who, I'm sure for some marketing gimmick, came up with the concept. "Houseplants are a wonderful thing," Faraway's press release states, "They can bring life to your living space and improve your physical and mental health ... But if we are to join the houseplant hysteria, we need to know where to start."

Let's see what my zodiac sign matches up with:

THE BEST HOUSEPLANTS TO BUY BASED ON YOUR ZODIAC SIGN!



Pisces' houseplant is jade! "Pisces is a water sign that reflects constant division between fantasy and reality. Step forth South African native, the Jade Plant. Dormant if they don't get enough water and generous in growth when rehydrated, the Jade Plant echoes the divisive nature of the Pisces sign."

And as I do with all of my horoscopes, I scratch my head and wonder what it all means.

And don't forget about Ball Publishing's COVID-19 Resource Page that colleague Jen Zurko updates on the regular. You can find it at www.growertalks.com/covid-19. Meanwhile, suggestions, comments, questions or news to share? Just drop me a line at ewells@ballpublishing.com.

Ellen Wells
Editor-at-Large
Green Profit

This edition of Tropical Topics was sent to 25,015 loyal readers!

If you're interested in advertising on Tropical Topics, contact **Kim Brown ASAP!**

Subscribe to
GROWERTALKS | **greenPROFIT**