

Which pollinator labels bring more money?

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### COMING UP THIS WEEK:

- "Bee-Friendly" Adds More Value
- Earlier Aphid Control
- Online Ed
- Outpost Report



## "Bee-Friendly" Adds More Value

What's in a name, or a label? Take note from a recent project out of Michigan State University that used a nationwide online survey to gauge how likely consumers were to purchase certain plants.

The biggest takeaway? The term bee-friendly had the greatest economic value to consumers.



And guess what? The least important factor influencing their likelihood of buying a plant was whether or not neonicotinoids were used. Why? Partly because 56.6% of respondents did not understand the term neonicotinoid. It was a term that did not play well into the value of a plant.

The researchers looked at three different scenarios, using indoor plants, outdoor plants and hanging baskets. With outdoor plants, "bee-friendly" and "use of beneficial insects" registered a higher value. Meanwhile, "neonicotinoid-free" and "traditional insect control" both detracted from

the dollar value of the plant.

Compared to traditional pest management, “bee-friendly” plants were worth:

- Indoor plant: \$1.01 more
- Outdoor plant: \$0.96 more
- Hanging basket: \$2.10 more

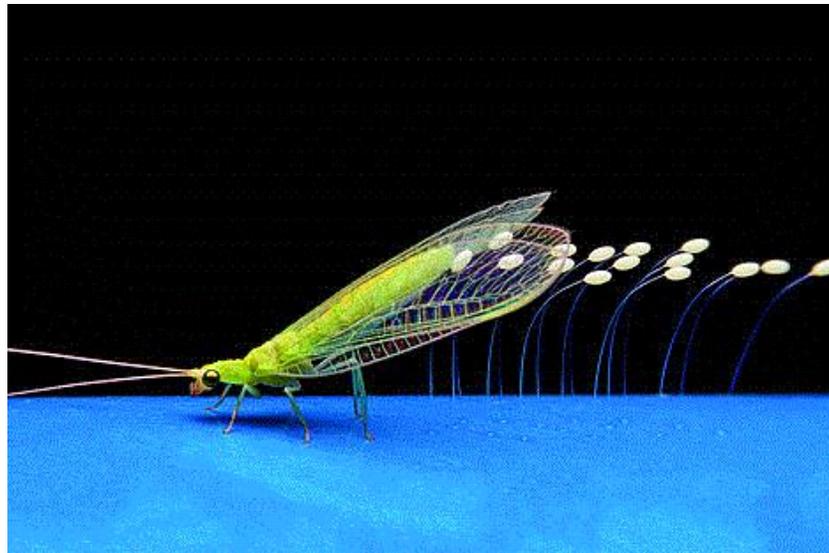
Now, here’s where I jump in and say, “but know your customers.” This study was a broad swath of consumers, and only 65% of them had purchased an annual flowering plant in the last 12 months. In the study, they found that those who’d purchased a plant in the last year valued “bee-friendly” up to five times more than those who hadn’t purchased a plant in the last year. Before you change everything, do your homework. For some of you, neonicotinoid-free could still be a crucial detail and standard for transparency.

You can read the full study, published in *HortScience*, [HERE](#). Authors Heidi Wollaeger, Kristin Getter and Bridget Behe get further into details on the plant and production knowledge of respondents, which in itself is pretty fascinating.



## Aphid Control With Chrysopa-E

Koppert Biological Systems just announced a new biocontrol product called Chrysopa-E, which brings you the egg stage of the lacewing *Chrysoperla carnea*. According to Koppert, this egg-stage product is both more effective and economical than the previously used larval stage.



It’s a natural predator of all types of aphids, mealy bugs and echinothrips. Koppert says this new solution allows growers to use more beneficials at a lower cost, while gaining better control of pests. It’s suitable for long-term preventative use, as well.

Learn more [HERE](#).



## Online Education with the University of Florida

I've always found the pursuit of additional learning brings a certain spark to a person. It's more than just knowledge; it's inspiration for your day-to-day. Here's one option that comes with award-winning accolades: the University of Florida IFAS Extension provides four-week, online greenhouse training courses in English and Spanish.

The first course of the year, Greenhouse 101, starts on May 31, 2021. And there are several others throughout the summer and fall ranging from introductory courses for those new to the industry to advanced courses for well-trained growers. Choose from nutrient management, costing and profitability, disease management, weed management and hydroponic vegetable production.

All courses are online; you can view the course material and pre-recorded videos any time of the day and then have access to an interactive discussion board with PhD professors.

So ready your lifelong-learning self (or encourage a colleague), and learn more at <http://hort.ifas.ufl.edu/training/>.

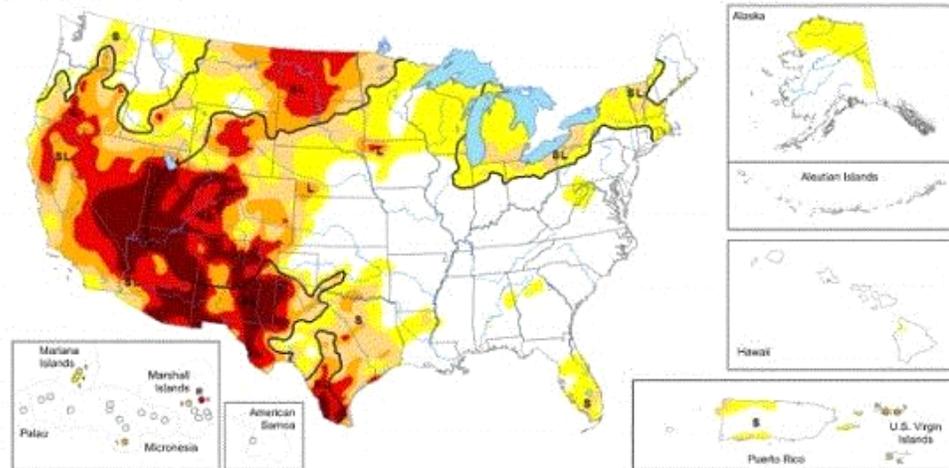


## Outpost Report: Snow > Fire

Many times in April, we do a controlled burn on much of the landscape around our house. So when I tell you that it snowed several inches in Montana yesterday, you might be surprised that it was accompanied by a sigh of relief. Last week, after six fire starts in seven days, they closed open burning in our area. We're a little parched (yellow on that map) and still waiting for a greenup, but many places are in significant drought. Last week, North Dakota and Wisconsin declared states of emergency due to wildfires and wildfire risk.

Map released: April 8, 2021

Data valid: April 6, 2021



United States and Puerto Rico Author(s):  
*Deborah Bathke, National Drought Mitigation Center*

U.S. Affiliated Pacific Islands and Virgin Islands Author(s):  
*Brad Rippey, U.S. Department of Agriculture*

The data cutoff for Drought Monitor maps is each Tuesday at 8 a.m. EDT. The maps, which are based on analysis of the data, are released each Thursday at 8:30 a.m. Eastern Time.

### Intensity and Impacts

None	D3 (Extreme Drought)	~ - Delineates dominant impacts
D0 (Abnormally Dry)	D4 (Exceptional Drought)	S - Short-term, typically less than 6 months (agriculture, grasslands)
D1 (Moderate Drought)	No Data	L - Long-term, typically more than 6 months (hydrology, ecology)
D2 (Severe Drought)		SL - Short- and long-term impacts

I live with a fire scientist, who is quick to point out that drought maps and snowpack/precipitation are just part of the equation. Everyone rings the alarm bell (rightly so) on drought. But you can also experience a soaking wet spring and early summer and it will still only takes a few weeks of no precipitation to set the scene for some epic fires (in part thanks to all the zippy plant growth in the wet season that increased the fuel load).

The main point here is that fire season is off to an early start, and there's some significant drought out there. And it might affect your business.

Two thoughts:

1) Provide solutions: suggest the right plants for the problems at hand.

FIRE PREVENTION  
TIP FOR THE DAY

STONE  
PATHS  
SLOW  
FIRES



#PlantsDoThat

**NICH**  
NATIONAL INITIATIVE FOR CONSUMER HORTICULTURE

2) Don't forget that last year the National Initiative for Consumer Horticulture (NICH) put together some helpful [fact sheets](#) and [infographics](#) on firewise landscaping through their #PlantsDoThat campaign. Use them! This is the perfect time of year for consumers to make their landscape more resilient to fire. Many states also offer additional firewise resources that are easy to dig up online.

*Until next time,*

*Jennifer*

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