

## Bank Scam Warning; Charlie Hall and Prices Paid by Growers



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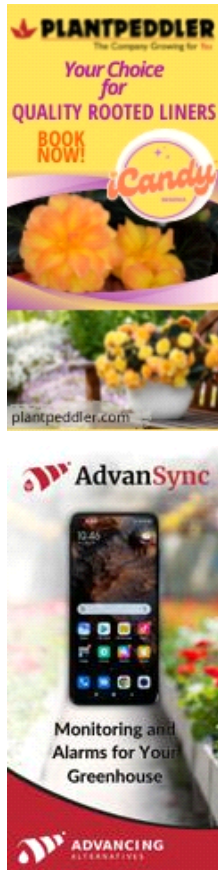
*News and Commentary from GrowerTalks Magazine*

### COMING UP THIS WEEK:

Watch for email bank scams!  
Charlie Hall on prices you pay  
Spring (so far) in WA  
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Philly Show goes outside in June  
A short CEA survey for you  
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Finally II ...



**Watch for bank scams via email!**



It has come to my attention this week that several companies in our industry have fallen victim to so-called email spoofing. Whether or not this has to do with certain geopolitical events taking place abroad is anyone's guess. Certainly, spring is our busiest time, and scam artists may know you and your staff will be harried and frantic and won't take the time to cautiously review the emails you receive. But what could be a worst time for a malicious computer attack than the height of spring?

Here's how this particular scam works:

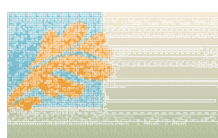
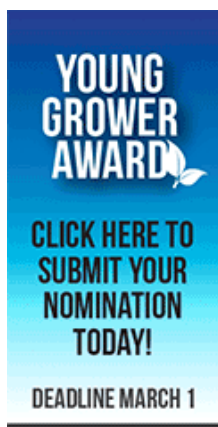
You receive a legit-looking email from a recognized industry supplier, informing you that their bank account information has recently changed, and that any future ACH payments or wires should be made with this new bank information.

Except ... the supplier's bank information HASN'T changed. Instead, the bank information is that of the spoofer, who was posing as the supplier. Unfortunately, by the time the payer (and the unknowing supplier) find out, the money transfer has happened too long ago to get the money back or the criminal has already closed the bank account.

What should you do when you or someone in your company receives such an email? First of all, be suspicious of any email asking for financial or personal information like this! Few if any companies would tell you about bank account changes via email; they would use old-fashioned snail mail instead, with official letterhead, company envelopes and a postmark from their city.

If you do receive an email like this, and it looks legit but you aren't sure, pick up the phone and call your supplier to ask if the banking change is real. And whatever you do, **DO NOT** use the phone number in the email because that may be fake as well. Instead, go to the supplier's website or your own address book and call the number you find there.

While watching out for this specific scam, beware that regular ransomware attacks have been on



the rise, too—I've heard of at least one notable industry company that got hit recently. In these cases, the bad guys lock your computer system and threaten to destroy all your files unless you pay a ransom—again, never a good thing, but especially bad in the middle of spring.

Computer threats like these are why you need to train your team to recognize spoofing and phishing schemes and remind them to be extra diligent. Plus, you need hack-proof backups! If you don't know where to get such training and systems, start with your IT/computer supplier. In the meantime, [HERE](#) is some basic info from the Cybersecurity Awareness Program at Texas Tech University.



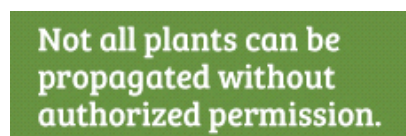
## Charlie Hall on the prices paid by growers

If you're wondering about how to price for 2022 (and many of you are, based on what we're reading in the online grower forums), you should check out the presentation by the inimitable Dr. Charlie Hall. The Chief Economist for AmericanHort presented details of his "Index of Prices Paid by Growers" data in [THIS](#) video.



One takeaway: The overall cost of producing nursery and greenhouse crops is almost 46% higher in 2021 than it was in 2007, with labor experiencing the largest increase (53.1% higher in 2021) among these inputs.

Also, the tracked expenses in 2021 increased about 9.6% over what they were in 2020. Based on market research across the industries and conversations with allied trade pundits associated with producing these inputs, a 5.3% increase in input costs is forecast for 2022. Meaning it's time to raise prices!







## Spring (so far) in Washington

Spring can start early or late in Washington State (that's a hit song right there) because of the state's temperate climate. According to Kathy Wheaton of Kathy's Corner in Vashon, Washington, Spring 2022 has been, "Well, spring."

In answer to last week's "How goes spring so far" query, Kathy continued:

"The weather has been all over the place. And as goes the weather, so go the sales. One day its 60 degrees, next we can't get out of the 40s. Yesterday we had all the doors open, today all the furnaces are running.

"Sales are good, great even if you take into account the weather. We are down 7% for the season so far, which is about what we lost in January when we were closed for snow and weather issues."

Kathy's two big challenges? "Product is hard to get," she said. "And labor ... that is downright scary. There is no one out there who wants to work. No matter the \$\$\$. Despite all that, I am looking forward to a sold-out spring here in the Pacific Northwest."

Speaking of spring, watch for the first of many of my weekly inquiries about how your weekend sales were on a scale of 1 to 10, which starts with the first weekend of April.



## J. Berry Nursery partners with PlantHaven

If you've been intrigued by some of the blooming plants from [J. Berry Nursery](#), but haven't been able to access the genetics, take heart: their new partnership with [PlantHaven International](#) should expand their availability. J. Berry Nursery is not a young plant producer, so the relationship with PlantHaven ensures easy access to J. Berry genetics through PlantHaven's network of young plant producers.

The licensing agreement includes popular genetics like Black Diamond Crape Myrtles, Déjà Bloom Azaleas, Summer Spice Hardy Hibiscus, Emerald Empire Crape Myrtles and Season to Season Gardenias, among others.

"I'm extremely proud to have PlantHaven represent J. Berry genetics and brands to their customers," says Jim Berry, co-owner and founder of J. Berry Nursery "Their influence, reputation, and credibility within the nursery industry is stellar. Our cooperation will lead to many opportunities for consumers, growers, landscapers, and, of course, for those who seek the best as they do business."

The Hollywood Hibiscus brand will continue to be represented in-house by Jesse Hensen, Global Supply Chain Manager at J. Berry Nursery.

### Grow What Sells

The 2026 Proven Winners® new introductions and National Plants of the Year are the high-demand varieties that drive traffic and boost sales.



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## Philly Flower Show goes outside, in June, again

For the second time in its almost 200-year history, the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's **Philadelphia Flower Show** will be held outdoors, giving visitors the opportunity to experience the beautiful vistas and rolling landscape of Franklin Delano Roosevelt Park, a registered historical district designed by the Olmsted Brothers—sons of Frederick Law Olmsted, the designer of New York City's famed Central Park. Slated for June 11-19, the Flower Show will span 15 acres of the Park's footprint with breathtaking exhibits, family-friendly activities and gorgeous greenspace.

The decision to produce the 2022 Flower Show outdoors was made to accommodate the continuing uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic. FDR Park's spacious 15-acre footprint allows for social distancing and the associated health benefits of being outside.

This year's Show will offer several new experiences tailored to families, food lovers, plant enthusiasts and those that want to experience late spring's beauty in an outdoor setting.

"We are thrilled to be returning to FDR Park for the 2022 Philadelphia Flower Show," said Sam Lemheney, PHS Chief of Shows and Events. "This year, we have interpreted what it means to be 'In Full Bloom' both figuratively and literally. Guests will experience floral and garden exhibits at the peak of seasonal perfection crafted by award-winning designers while also learning how gardening can contribute to their lives. With new activities, family-friendly spaces and superb dining experiences, this year's Show will have something for everyone to enjoy."



## A short CEA survey and an info-delivery question

Every year, *Inside Grower* editor Jen Polanz sends out a short survey to gauge what veggie crops you're growing, what methods you're using and how much expansion you're doing, among other topics, and it's time yet again for her controlled-environment agriculture survey.

So if you're a greenhouse veggie grower, please give her just five minutes to give your answers, which help her shape editorial topics for the next year in her magazine and her newsletter.

Here's the link: [www.surveymonkey.com/r/CFR5BSH](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CFR5BSH)

Oh, there's something in it for you, too: If you leave your email at the end of the survey, you'll be entered into a drawing to win a shiny new 19th edition *Ball RedBook* Volume 1 (which has a chapter on CEA growing equipment and structures) and you can have it signed by yours truly, the editor of the volume and the author of the CEA chapter..

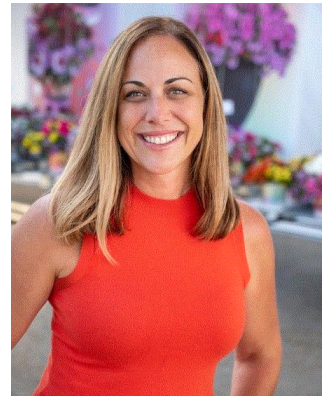
If you have another minute, Jen is also looking for thoughts on how CEA growers like to get their information. Do you prefer print or digital delivery? Podcasts, webinars or videos? Please drop her a line at [jpolanz@ballpublishing.com](mailto:jpolanz@ballpublishing.com) to let her know!



## New head of marketing and retail for Dümme Orange

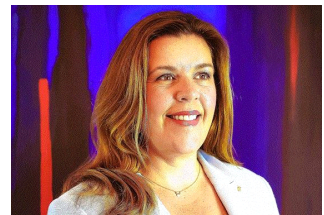
Congrats to my friend Marta Maria Garcia, who's been promoted to head of marketing and retail for **Dümmen Orange North America**. She'll oversee both departments effective April 1. She joined Dümmen last year as Retail Director.

Marta came to our industry from Bacardi, where she was a brand manager for eight years. But then she got lured away from the adult beverage world to try her hand in flowers at Costa Farms where she was marketing director for 10 years. After that, she did stints at Designer Cut Flowers and Nature's Way Farms before joining Dümmen.



## Syngenta gets new marketing head, too

Must be a new emphasis on marketing at the big breeding companies, as Syngenta Flowers also has a new global head of marketing. She's Emily Mason, and she brings more than 20 years of experience from the horticulture industry, having worked for Color Spot Nurseries and Dümmen Orange in various roles, including finished production, product management and supply chain. She calls herself a "lifer" in the industry—a third-generation horticulturist. She joins Syngenta in May and will be based out of Downers Grove, Illinois.



Says the press release: "This strategic hire supports the company's focus on growth and innovation in recent years and a new 15-year strategic roadmap to further help growers be successful today and in the future."

## Finally I ...

I just learned that Dr. Bridget Behe of Michigan State University records a weekly podcast, "Marketing Munchies," which is geared towards green industry businesses. In her podcast, she highlights the latest in horticulture marketing and consumer research. And also the savvy new growers-slash-newsletter editors, namely my newest newsletter editor - Lindsay Daschner of the fresh-cut flower newsletter **Bloom Beat** (and owner of Forget Me Not Farms in Michigan). Congrats for the honor of the appearance, Lindsay!



Each episode of Marketing Munchies is less than 15 minutes in length, very straightforward and is loaded with valuable information to help you level up your business ("level up" is a term I learned from Lindsay—it means "improve").

Check it out and subscribe [HERE](#).

## Finally II ...

You want to see some pretty garden and flower, and wildlife photos, maybe as inspiration as we



head into spring? Then check out the [Facebook page](#) of Brambleberry Cottage, which showcases "beautiful Traditional Home & Garden Decor, Tablescapes, Birds, Flowers & Recipes."

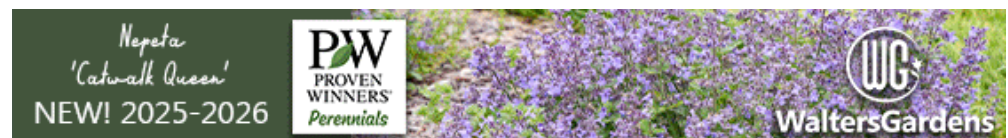


I'm not alone in enjoying these images: it's got nearly a million followers and over a million likes.

### Finally III ...

This is the week Jen Zurko, Bill Calkins, new video producer Osvaldo Cuevas and I travel the coast of California for the California Spring Trials (CAST) and report on our findings in our daily *Acres of buZZ* newsletter. Watch for it in your inbox every morning for the next five days.

California, here we come!



Feel free to email me at [beytes@growertalks.com](mailto:beytes@growertalks.com) if you have ideas, comments or questions. Beefs, even ... especially if barbecued!

See you next time!



**Chris Beytes**

Editor

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