

TPIE recap, markets, MANTS and getting behind butter crocks



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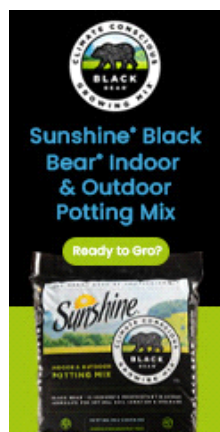
Summer Hanging Baskets Are Here!

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WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 25, 2023

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COMING UP THIS WEEK:

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Finally ...



TPIE Is a Can't-Miss Show

Irony, isn't it, that I write this Tropical Plants International Expo (TPIE) section of *buZZ* while looking out at a few inches of snow slowly melting outside. Oh, to be back in Tampa, Florida, where the breezes were warm, the skies sunny and the Tampa Convention Center filled with everything lush and tropical.

I came away from TPIE with loads of information to share—too much to share all at once, of course. I'll insert the information in my newsletters over the course of a few weeks. Today I'll focus on some award-winning products from the show.

But first this quick note about the show: The mood was upbeat, the show floor bustling and exhibitors who had new and in-demand products were kept steadily busy. I heard from FNGLA COO Linda Adams that the buyer-to-seller ratio at this year's show was 1:2, which is extraordinarily high compared to trade show standards.

As much as I have enjoyed Tampa these last two years, the 2024 edition of [TPIE](#) will be back in Ft. Lauderdale next January. I advise you to carve out time for it now.



Award-Winning Products

The Garden Center Group's annual Cool Product Awards at TPIE are chosen by a group of garden center folks who make their picks based on how they think they'd sell at their stores. They all walked the show and came to a group meeting with 70 different items! They narrowed the pack down to 15—nine are products and six are plants. You can check out the coverage of the plant winners in the most recent edition of my *Tropical Topics* newsletter, which you can find [HERE](#). But first, read up on these products and get them in your store before you can't get ahold of them. In alphabetical order, the award winners are:

Ceramic Succulents Wall Art from Chive. I've been enamored with Chive's products since I first spotted them at the Philadelphia Flower Show about 10 years ago. The assortment of colorful monochrome vases, bizzarro designs (An astronaut? A bonneted turtle? And all those dinosaurs!) and random tchotchkes pushes my "crave" buttons. But the products that won them a Cool Product Award are boxed sets of their ceramic succulents and flowers. They've sold them separately in the past—and still do—but they surmised there was a market in the folks that collect their growing line of different designs. Plus, as a box set, there's less dusting of the products when they are on your shelves for sale! They have at least four (and maybe eight) different collections based on size and colors. These ceramic pieces can be set on a table or hung on a wall as *objet d'art*. [Chive](#)



Custom Grow Tags from Elburg-Smit. You need a tag created for a brand that has a hedgehog as its logo. Elburg-Smit can do that. Need something shiny and glossy and 3D? They've got you. Something shaped like a flamingo? Piece of cake. Elburg-Smit can create the tags you need, no

matter or simple or complex. In fact, they welcome the challenge! The tags are produced in Holland and presented in North America by Qualitree. [Elburg-Smit](#)



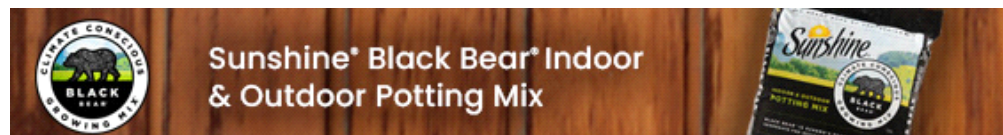
Plant Food and POP

Organic Liquid Plant Food from Flourish Plant. I wrote about this in the last edition of *buZZ* before it had received an award. I'll just give you the bullet points about it today: It's made from the waste of the commercial fishing industry; they add in peppermint oil to cut the fishy odor; it's packaged in small bottles to be more user-friendly for small-space living. They also sell it in small soy sauce-sized packets that can be used as samplers or testers—I actually love this idea.

[Flourish Plant](#)



Plant Sleeves and POP from Hendriks Greenhouses. The Hendriks' creative team worked with the concepts of happiness and familiarity to create pot covers, sleeves, wraps, picks and tags. Examples are covers and tags with smiley faces and "Happy" on them, pot covers that show the space available for eco-friendly marketing messages and a take on Bloomingdale's "Big Brown Bag" concept. These plant sleeves and peripheral marketing materials from Hendriks are solely for their customers; however there's nothing stopping you from getting inspired by these marketing materials to create your own. [Hendriks Greenhouses](#)



Soil and Super Tillandsias

Organic Peatless Potting Soil from Rosy Soil. They've taken out the peat and added in 30% biochar that is derived from pine in order to reduce density and increase aeration. Rosy also has a dose of mycorrhizae to up the soil microbiome. Started in spring of 2022, they have just one

mix blend currently but will have a cactus and succulent blend debuting in just a few months. Oh, and they also have a merchandising kit available for retailers. [Rosy Soil](#)



And last for today are the **Macrame Hanging Tillandsia from Russell's Bromeliads**. Who doesn't know Russell's as a purveyor of the highest quality tillandsias and bromeliads? But did you know they have a large selection of accessories that help you create an eye-catching display? The multi-level display using macrame really caught the judges eyes. Sure, one hanging tillandsia is nice, but let's encourage customers to buy more by creating a "Wow!" display.

[Russell's Bromeliads](#)



For the Plant Geeks

I'm putting the remaining three Cool Product winners on hold because I can tell some of you plant geeks are trippin' for some tropicals. The winners of TPIE's Favorite New Flowering Plant and Favorite New Foliage Plant as voted by show attendees are:

Anthurium Tricolor from **Aroid Greenhouses** won in the flowering category.



I'm loving that bronze- and peachy-toned variegation. And its size!

***Philodendron billietiae* Variegated**, also from Aroid Greenhouses, won in the foliage category.



Walking and Shopping the Market

Colleague Jen Polanz visited AmericasMart last week. She shared a few items that you shouldn't overlook.

If you've ever been to Atlanta Market at AmericasMart, you know you can pretty much find whatever you want (also some of what you need) in those three giant buildings. To wit: a massive brown bear dressed for the holidays (Design Toscano never disappoints).



As I talked with exhibitors, they were mostly happy with the traffic and very happy with the business they had seen throughout the event. I visited on the last Sunday, so typically a much slower day than the weekdays. It was the last day of the temporaries, and there were some real gems there that stood out. I'll touch on just a few here and the rest you can find in the March issue of *Green Profit*.

A couple of things to note about the market before I jump into new products. There were more than 50 new showrooms dedicated to casual and outdoor furniture in anticipation of hosting the International Casual Furnishings Association (ICFA) Casual Market Atlanta July 10-13. The show takes the place of the one that usually runs in Chicago. I headed down to those floors, and some companies were already moved in while others were in the process. Some of those moves freed up some space up in The Gardens (Building 2, Floors 9 & 10), which is on tap for a renovation. The timeline for that is still TBD.

And while the owners of the market continue to add new incentives and attractions to come to market, at least one vendor told me the traffic in The Gardens has slowed over the years, which is partially due to the pandemic, and may also be attributed to green industry distributor shows gaining more retail vendors. Care to weigh in? [Email me](#) and let me know what you think! Also,

let me know if you saw something cool at market to share with the class.

Meandering the Temps

Continued from above

Mixed in with the usual wild coastal décor companies (think giant shark wall art), I found some cool products this year in the temporaries. Here are a few of them:

Macrame hangers continue to be popular, and the company [Jodora](#) hand-makes all their offerings from their location in Atlanta. I spoke to CEO Tara Spivey, who said the natural colors continue to sell, but she's seeing an increase in popularity of the more colorful threads with beading for the hanging planters. They have lots of colors to choose from, and they can customize the look if the retailer wants something specific.



Not far from Jodora's booth I stumbled on these lovely boxed and individual cards and folding guides from [Earth, Sky + Water](#). Heather Carver pointed out many new introductions (pictured here), all of which are made in New England. They carry more than 1,000 individual greeting cards and 250+ boxed cards, all illustrated by well-known naturalists. Their No. 1 seller is a honey bee, with a cardinal card as No. 2. Each of the cards are packaged individually to keep the elements out (a necessity in a garden center!).



Just outside the temporaries were more garden-focused booths, and I stopped into the [Allsop](#) one to admire the Tyvek hanging solar lanterns. During the quick tour of new products there, we came upon the LightKeeper Lantern series of portable rechargeable lanterns in three sizes. These can be used indoors or out, and are hand-blown. The lantern with the wood handle is called Drifter Lantern.



Watch the March issue of *Green Profit* for lots more where this came from!

Thanks for your travel report, JP!

Matthew at MANTS

I haven't attended **MANTS** in a number of years, likely because colleague and *Nursey & Landscape Insider* editor Matthew Chappell is in his element there, kickin' the tires of all the new stuff, as it were.

Matthew always puts together a great synopsis of MANTS. In his **NEWSLETTER** he actually does kick some tires (the Snow Mate Plow), as well as smells some roses, washes off poison ivy, wigs out on some new mangaves, drills some holes and flips out over a non-flippy delphinium.

I heard from a number of industry contacts that MANTS was at its pre-pandemic excitement levels. That's a great indication for how we're perceiving the coming year to be. The official release from the MANTS organizers provided a few numbers regarding how many were there and why:

- 11,300 people registered for MANTS
 - 3,499 non-exhibiting/buying companies were at the show
 - 84.5% identified as influencers on purchasing decisions if not the final decision maker.
- That is, attendees came ready to buy.

Another indication that MANTS was a success is the fact that more than half of the exhibitors renewed for 2024 before leaving for Baltimore. If you spotted anything at MANTS that you're excited about, drop me a line about it at ewells@ballpublishing.com.

Ohio Bans Callery Pears

I'm not sure if other states have pulled the trigger on banning Callery pear trees, but I did just get a press release from the University of Cincinnati that Ohio has banned their sale. The once-popular ornamental trees have revealed themselves to be invasive and destructive to native plants in wild areas all across the country. A similar ban begins in South Carolina in 2024.

Saplings of the ornamental Callery pear have been turning up in the understory layer of forests and in clearings, and once established, their long and strong taproots make it nearly impossible to remove them. And because they produce so many fruits per tree, their progeny is falling very far from the tree, thanks to birds and other fruit-eating critters.



The horticulture trade in Ohio was given five years beginning in 2018 to prepare for the ban. William Kyle Natorp of Natorp's in Cincinnati, was quoted in the release as saying that many property owners have been well aware of the issue and have already replaced their pear trees. "Customer demand disappeared when it was realized that this plant was an invasive issue," he said. "Our nursery stopped producing these trees. I think most nurseries did the same."

How is your state dealing with the Callery pear situation? Are you taking measures on your own even if your state hasn't committed to a ban? Drop me a note with your state's status [HERE](#).

Finally ...

I'm gifting you this *New York Times* [ARTICLE](#) titled "Predictions for Life in 2023." These are predictions from the paper's Styles editors, so go into the piece with that in mind. "Vibes" is out, "soft"—in clothing, décor and demeanor—is in. Fake facts and fashion, pet rats, dad clothing and going caffeine-free are all trends I am *not* getting behind. Talking to strangers, countertop butter crocks and "normie" teens (is that a nod to "Wednesday"?) are trends I believe in 100%. And those sandals? I may have a pair in my closet.

You have comments about these trends, and I'm listening. Drop me a note about it at ewells@ballpublishing.com.

Questions, comments, suggestions? Drop me a line if you'd like at ewells@ballpublishing.com.



Ellen Wells
Senior Editor
Green Profit

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