

Biobest to Acquire BioWorks; April 29-30; Congrats Dr. Margy!



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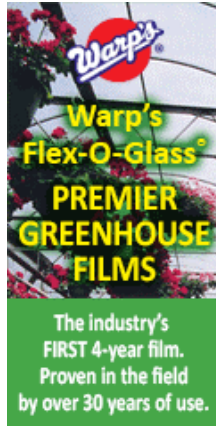
#### COMING UP THIS WEEK:

Biobest to acquire BioWorks  
How was April 29-30?  
- Where was it hot and not?  
- Your comments  
Metrolina's Open House  
Downtown Raleigh's Plant Week  
Tour a vertical farm  
Margery earns her Ph.D.

**NEW  
FOR  
2026**



**Biobest to Acquire BioWorks**



Belgium-based **Biobest Group**, the well-known global expert in biological control and pollination, has signed a non-binding letter of intent to acquire **BioWorks, Inc.**, a Victor, New York-based manufacturer and marketer of biopesticides, including RootShield, BotryStop and MilStop.

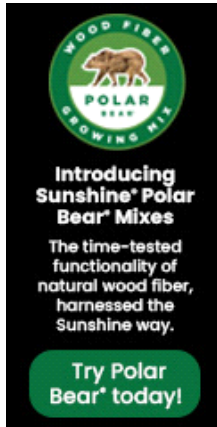
The proposed acquisition will accelerate Biobest's expansion into biopesticides using BioWorks' innovative portfolio of biopesticides for disease and insect control, as well as its product development, marketing and logistics expertise. In addition, the proposed deal would allow BioWorks to expand its range of biopesticide solutions for growers, enhancing the company's contribution to reduce industry reliance on synthetic pesticides.

"Biopesticide solutions are a global strategic priority for us and BioWorks has a strong range of products that growers demand," said Jean-Marc Vandoorne, Biobest's CEO. "Upon consummation of the proposed acquisition, BioWorks will continue to actively service the highly effective distribution channels it has developed over the past 30 years while adding new and unique biopesticides that will expand the range of biocontrol solutions available to growers."

He added that BioWorks will operate independent of Biobest's beneficial insect and pollination business and Biobest's North American subsidiaries.

BioWorks' headquarters will serve as the North American manufacturing and marketing hub for biopesticides for the entire organization. The Victor, New York, facility features more than 55,000 sq. ft. and combines office, manufacturing, research and development, and warehouse space serving all North America. BioWorks also has warehouse and shipping space in Las Vegas that enhances supply capabilities to growers and distributors in western regions of the United States.

"We are excited about our intended relationship with Biobest Group, and how it will be transformative for the solutions and support we offer to the market," said Bill Foster, CEO of BioWorks. "Our priority is to be one of the most important sustainable crop protection providers



across North America. Growers, channel partners and our employees will all benefit from our relationship with Biobest."

Biobest has local production and/or distribution subsidiaries in more than 22 countries, plus an extensive network of local specialized distributors in an additional 50 countries on six continents.

The transaction is subject to completing customary due diligence investigations, execution of a definitive purchase agreement and satisfaction of specified closing conditions, including board approval of each company and certain third-party approvals.

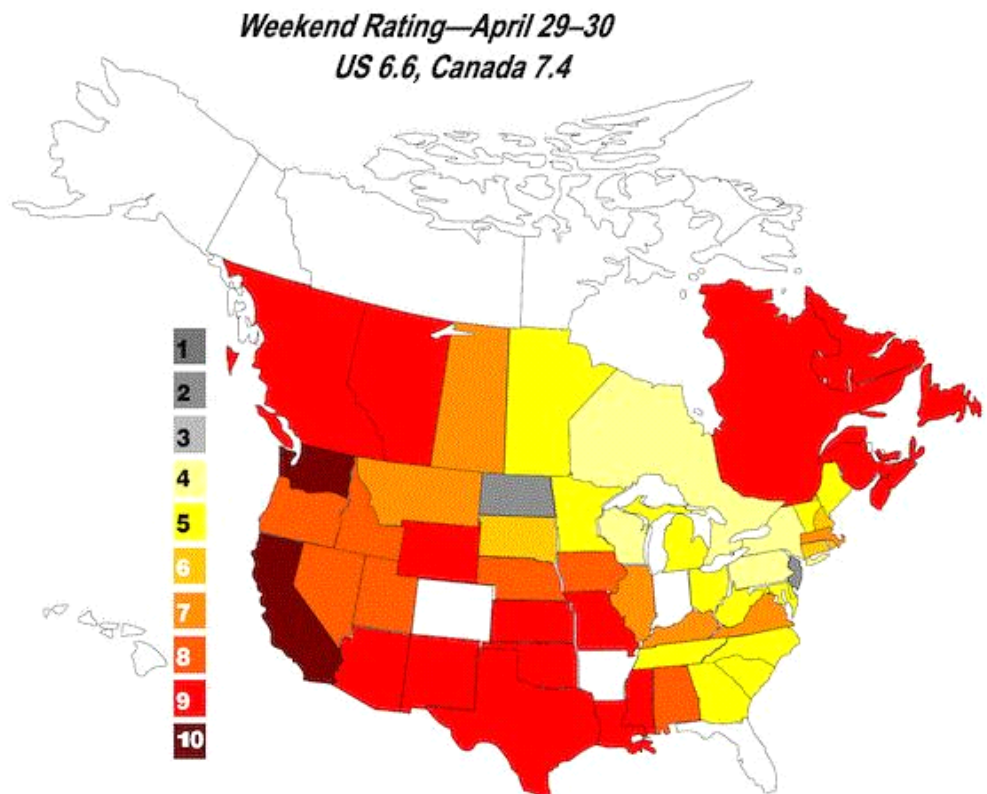
*Sun Parasol*  
FiredUp Coral



## How was April 29-30?

About the same in the U.S. as the previous week, and looking up for Canada, which scored nearly a full point higher than the previous week. But you knew that if you sent in a score for April 29-30. The final tally: **6.6 in the U.S.** and **7.4 in Canada**. That's a flip-flop of the nine-year average for the last weekend of April—7.3 in the U.S. and 6.2 in Canada.

Here's the map:



That's based on 120 scores from 44 states and seven provinces. You sent in thirteen 10s (11%) and two 1s.

Now, that 7.3 average for the U.S. over the past nine years might be a bit misleading when you consider that two pandemic years—2020 and 2021—scored 9.4 and 9.1, respectively. If I drop those anomalies out of the spreadsheet, the average drops to 6.8.

Canada benefits even more by the same exercise: If I drop 2020 (7.6) and 2021 (9.6), their average plummets to 5.6, putting this year's score nearly two percentage points higher!

Here's the historical data for this weekend:

	US	CAN
2023	6.5	7.2
2022	7.4	4.2
2021	9.1	9.6
2020	9.4	7.6
2019	6.9	5.1
2018	7.6	6.0
2017	6.3	5.6
2016	5.9	8.0
2015	5.9	4.3
2014	7.5	4.1

## Where was it hot and not?

Check out the map ... with the exception of the Atlantic provinces of Canada, which scored 9 (from just one submission), there's a clear line running diagonally across the country from the upper Midwest down to Florida that almost looks like a weather front. I didn't compare it to the weather maps for the week/weekend, but it wouldn't surprise me if the rain and cold were to the east of it all.

Here's how the eight regions I track fared:

West	9.0
Northwest	8.4
Mountain	7.8
South	6.9
Plains	6.5
Midwest	5.8
New England	5.8
East	4.4

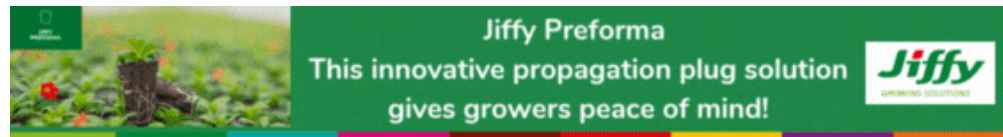
The Pacific Northwest, especially Washington and British Columbia, finally caught a break and the scores reflected it. A few of you rated it 10-plus. Washington scored 9.5, including three 10s. BC scored 8.7, including two 10s. Oregon was a bit more mixed at 7.8. California was superb at 9.8 (two 10s and a 9.5).

The upper Midwest took a beating. Wisconsin was 3.7 on the strength of just 3s and 4. Minnesota was 5.3 and that's even with an online seller rating his week a 9. In the east, New York was awful at 4.0; Pennsylvania was even worse at 3.7.

As for next weekend—the first weekend of May—Abe Van Wingerden of Metrolina Greenhouses reminded me that last year that was Mother's Day, so you'll be up against potentially strong PY sales data.

Said Abe, "It's like moving Christmas by a week. That means this week will be slow on the scan sales vs. last year, especially this upcoming weekend, but we should get it back the following week."





## Your comments

As always, the scores—an “amalgamation of opinion” as hortistician Charlie Hall puts it—let us compare year to year, but it’s your comments from where the rubber meets the road that are most informative and interesting.

**Washington (10+).** “I would have scored this a 12 or 15 on the scale, but I’m too much of a rule-follower, so I’ll stick with 10+. We had our biggest April Saturday EVER, and I give all the credit to the first days of sunshine and 75F weather all year falling on a Friday and Saturday. As has been said many times in these reports, in this business it’s all about the weather, and we certainly felt it last weekend!” —*David Vos, Vander Giessen Nursery*

**British Columbia, Canada (10+).** “Sun and heat makes big difference. Almost COVID-like sales.”—*John Derrick, Elk Lake Garden Centre*

**California (10).** “Three weeks in a row of 10 can’t make up for March, but it sure helps!”—*Dave Vincent, Cal Color Growers*

**Washington (9.8).** “Perfect weather here in the Pacific Northwest made for an outstanding weekend! We also had a taco truck on site, though, so you never know if everyone is just showing up for tacos.”—*Tom Van Wingerden, Van Wingerden Greenhouses*

**Oregon (9.5).** “Good weather at last. The La Niña effect is finally breaking up. My business is controlled by the Pacific Ocean.”—*Ellen Egan, Egan Gardens*

**British Columbia (9).** “The heat arrived. We haven’t caught up to last year’s YTD sales, but we are a heck of a lot closer than we were last week.”—*Pamela Pilling, Canadian Tire*

**Oregon (9).** “Finally.”—*Ed Blatter, Cornell Farm*

**Missouri (9).** “It has begun. FINALLY! Still down 6% from last year, but it was much worse than that before this week/weekend. The difference: Weather. Onward!”—*Beth Weidner, Weeds Greenhouse & Gardens*

**Ohio (9).** “It was pretty darn good. You betcha!”—*Chris Baker, Baker’s Acres*

**Alberta, Canada (8).** “Sales are up compared to last year. Nice weather, consumers not showing as much hesitance as we expected. We are hoping the price of travel will make people stay home and garden instead.”—*Deborah Sirman, Greenland Garden Centre*

**Ontario, Canada (8).** “The weather was not great, but despite that our open house was amazing! Very busy! People are in the mood.”—*Anita Van Adrichem, Westland Greenhouses*

**Virginia (6).** “A rainy, windy, and cool weekend was not good for business.”—*Gary Garner III, Gary’s Garden Center*

**Minnesota (5).** “First real action since Thanksgiving Weekend, but half the revenue of the same weekend last year. Just plain cold for this time of year.”—*Derek Lynde, Lynde Greenhouse & Nursery*

**Wisconsin (4).** “At least Saturday was decent; Sunday was a washout. Expecting much better results next weekend as the forecast looks great.”—*Chris Williams, K&W Greenery*

*Rudbeckia 'Treasure Trove'*  
New to Proven Winners  
Perennials for 2025-2026!



## Metrolina's Summer Trials Open House

I mentioned Abe of Metrolina above—if you've always wanted to see the place (one of the largest single-site greenhouse operations in the world), your chance is Thursday, June 8, when Metrolina will hold its annual Trial Gardens Open House. The day-long event will include a walk-through and breeder presentation. Plus, you'll be able to see thousands of annuals and perennials in their big 3-acre trial garden.



Metrolina's 2022 Open House. Photo from their Facebook page.

Metrolina's annual open house is part of the Southern Garden Tour, which includes stops at [Young's Plant Farm](#) in Auburn, Alabama, on June 6, and the [University of Georgia](#) in Athens, Georgia, on June 7. So pack an overnight bag and make an event of it!

Metrolina's Trial Gardens will evaluate more than 2,000 items, including:

- 1,900-plus annuals
- 449 perennials
- 383 second-year perennials
- 150 hanging baskets
- 100-plus planters

As a bonus, a second-year heuchera trial will be the subject of Metrolina's perennial genus trial and the R&D team will be evaluating several varieties of portulaca in the gardens for an annual focus.

Interested? You can [RSVP HERE](#).



## Downtown Raleigh Plant Week

Here's an idea you might start up in your own town: A plant week! That's what's taking place in Raleigh, North Carolina, May 8-13, courtesy of the Downtown Raleigh Alliance and a plant shop called [Urban Pothos](#). I learned about the inaugural event from Raleigh resident and former Ball Publishing editor Debbie Hamrick.

Here's how Urban Pothos describes Plant Week:

*We are so, so, so excited to announce the first ever Downtown Raleigh Plant Week (May 8-13) presented by @downtownraleighalliance and Urban Pothos. Yep, we figured if restaurants and sandwiches get their own week then so should plants. So plant mamas, daddies and monsters ... be sure to check out the schedule and make plans to attend as many fun, planty events as you can! And be sure to tag all your photos, videos and stories from the week with #DTRPlantWeek for a chance to win a rare plant. (We'll let you know what that plant is in a couple weeks.)*



Of course, to hold a Plant Week, you have to dream up events, and Urban Pothos has partnered with a local eatery and some other plant stores. Here's their list:

Monday: Plant People Meet-Up at Bigfoot Taphouse  
 Tuesday: Garden & Gather Terrarium Workshop, Bigfoot Taphouse  
 Wednesday: Paint a Pot, Copperline Plant Co.  
 Thursday: Propagation Workshop, Logan's Garden Shop  
 Thursday: Air Plant Terrariums, The Zen Succulent  
 Friday-Saturday: Halfway to Halloween Sale, Urban Pothos  
 Saturday: Plant & Flower Market, Hartwell





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### Tour a vertical farm—even while horizontal!

Are you curious to see the inner workings of a vertical farm, but don't want to travel to do so? Then stretch out on your sofa with your favorite beverage, fire up your laptop and take a “walk inside” a vertical farm with a virtual tour of the [Philips GrowWise Center](#) in Eindhoven, Netherlands. You'll see the world of vertical farming up close and experience how basil, lettuce, strawberries and tomatoes can be grown indoors. The virtual tour is Friday, May 12. There are two tour times: 10:00 a.m. or 5:30 p.m. EDT.



The Philips GrowWise Center was developed in 2015 to establish the perfect blueprint for city farming production. GrowWise stands for a smarter, more sustainable way of growing vegetables for urban populations.

If you're interested, use this link to register and choose your preferred time: <https://lnkd.in/djQMav5J>.



### Congrats to Dr. Margy!

We can now call her Dr. Margery Daughtrey without her having to sheepishly correct us because the plant industry's beloved and long-running plant pathologist has officially finished all requirements to receive a Ph.D. from Cornell University. On April 26, Margery passed the final defense examination of her research dissertation and became a doctor!



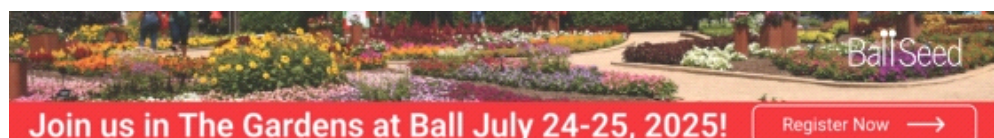
As the official press release states, "Most people who know Margery probably assume that she already has a Ph.D. because of her vast knowledge about ornamental plant diseases and her excellent diagnostic abilities."

That is absolutely true. I mean, consider her career: She joined Cornell University's Long Island Horticultural Research & Extension Center (LIHREC) in Riverhead, New York, way back in 1978 (that was the year I started college). In her 45-year career there, she's been the Center's most prolific writer, publishing more than 1,000 technical publications, books, book chapters, refereed journal articles, Internet publications and extension publications. She speaks a bit, too, having given thousands of talks throughout New York, across the U.S. and around the world.



Said Dr. Mark Bridgen, Professor and Director of Cornell's LIHREC, of Margy's accomplishment, "Most of our Ph.D. students are in their late 20s and early 30s and are expected to prove their worthiness in the future. However, in Margery Daughtrey's case, she has already spent 45 years conducting research, publishing books and excelling as an extension agent before beginning her Ph.D. program. This Ph.D. is recognizing a career of excellence and acknowledging her accomplishments."





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

See you next time,

*Chi*

**Chris Beytes**

Editor

*GrowerTalks and Green Profit*

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