


It's Time to Stop and Smell the Flowers and Go Find Those Nuggets



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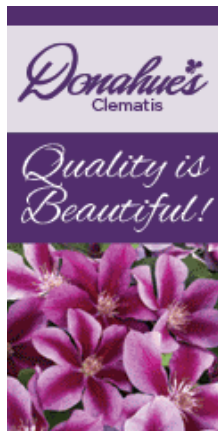
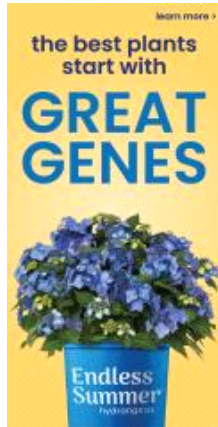
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*News and commentary for the perennial market*



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#### COMING UP THIS WEEK:

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# Perennial PULSE

News and commentary on the global perennial plant market



## Stop and Smell the Flowers

Penn State Extension is inviting you stop and smell the flower varieties at its annual Flower Trials Field Day. The event will occur from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on July 24, 2025 at Penn State's Southeast Agricultural Research and Extension Center in Manheim, Pennsylvania.





There will be close to 1,000 varieties of annuals and perennials from 30 companies from around the world on display. Attendees will have the opportunity to learn about:

- New varieties of annuals and perennials
- Cutting-edge information from breeders
- Disease management
- Pesticide safety

Pesticide credits are available for those who attend the sessions.

Besides seeing the trials, the field day will provide opportunities to network with industry representatives and connect with customers.

Registration is \$65 and includes morning refreshments and a buffet lunch. Please register by July 22, 2025. Walk-ins are always welcome. Visit the [Penn State Extension](#) website for event information and registration.



### Colorado Destination Days

Here’s another opportunity for you to stop and smell the flowers while checking out all the perennials on display at Colorado Destination Days. This is an exclusive, industry-only event where attendees can visit different horticulture locations near Denver, Colorado, from August 4-6, 2025. Join growers, suppliers and plant enthusiasts at various locations to observe and learn about exciting plant varieties and take advantage of the numerous networking opportunities.



Monday, August 4, 2025 4:00 to 7:00 p.m.	<a href="#">Denver Botanic Gardens</a> —Denver, Colorado Welcome Reception
Tuesday, August 5, 2025	<a href="#">Colorado State University Trial Gardens</a> Fort Collins, Colorado

9:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.	Trial Evaluations
Tuesday, August 5, 2025 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 pm	<a href="#">Gulley Greenhouses</a> —Fort Collins, Colorado Grower Introduction and Tour
Wednesday, August 6, 2025 3:00 to 5:00 p.m.	<a href="#">Denver Botanic Garden's Chatfield Farms</a> Littleton, Colorado  Self-guided Tour
Wednesday, August 6, 2025 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.	<a href="#">Blooma Farms /Rocky Mountain Liners</a> Arvada, Colorado  Grower Introduction

Click on the venue names above to view the details and to register for each event.



## CSU Flower Trials

While in town for Colorado Destination Days, you have the opportunity to participate in the 2025 CSU Flower Trials Industry Evaluation Day.

**When:** Tuesday August 5th, 2025 from 9:00 a.m. until 1:30 p.m.

**Where:** Colorado State University Trial Gardens—Fort Collins, Colorado



There are over 300 different perennials with over 100 new entries for 2025 in the 3-year Herbaceous Perennial Trials. Additionally, attendees can view the nearly 1,000 annual trial entries between in-ground and containers with hundreds of new varieties.

You're cordially invited to tour the gardens, participate in the evaluations, meet with other horticulture professionals and have a free lunch.

RSVP for the CSU Trials Event by July 29th 5:00 pm MDT using the following link: [CSU Flower Trials Industry Evaluation Day](#)

If you have any questions, please email Chad Miller, trial garden director at [ctmiller@colostate.edu](mailto:ctmiller@colostate.edu).



## It's Nugget Time

I've been sharing information in the past few newsletters on many of our industry's summer trade events (like the great venues listed above). Some of the best events are right around the corner and I want to help you prepare for them. If any of what you're about to read sounds familiar, it's because it is. I've shared some version of this information with you in the past. Rather than reinventing the wheel so to speak, I've decided to share this information with you again with a few modifications along the way.

### Gathering Nuggets

Rather than dreading trade events and thinking of them as necessary evils, I find them to be quite the opposite. Trade events are absolutely beneficial and filled with tons of opportunities if you're looking for them. If I come home with just one nugget (aka piece of useful information) from a trade event, it was well worth the time and cost to attend. I look at it this way: just one take-home message might enable me to fix a problem, improve a crop, prevent a loss, increase customer interest, become more efficient, cut my costs or improve my profits. Think about that for a moment ... just one actionable idea could have tremendous payback!



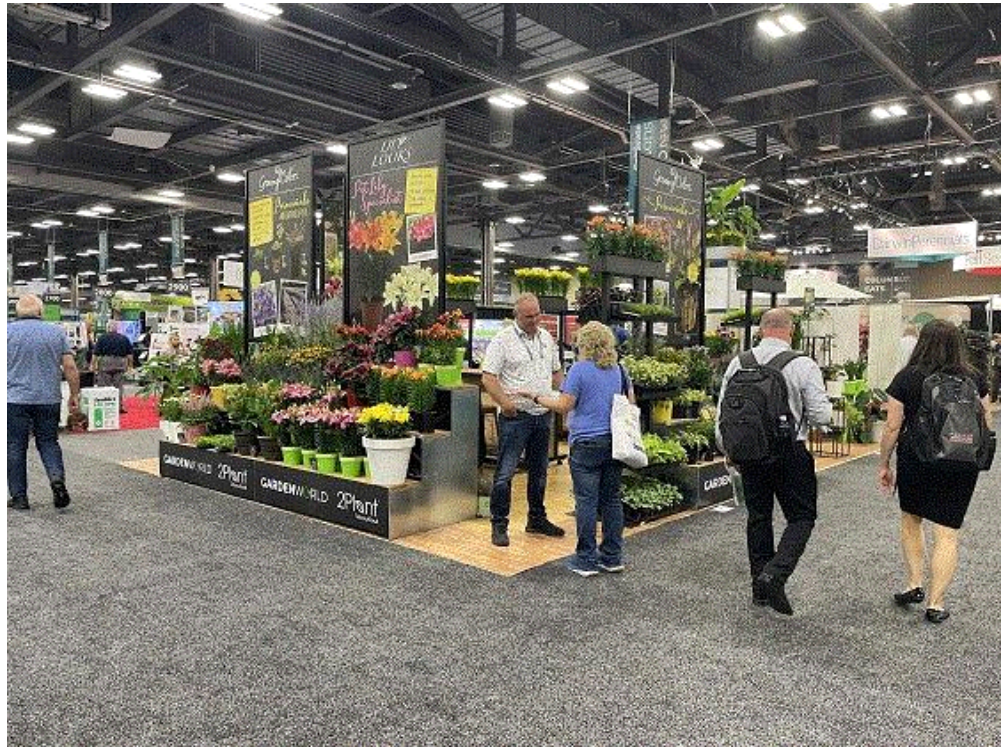
**Aim to gather as many nuggets of useful information as possible from each trade event you attend.**

However, even though a single idea would more than pay for the event, I don't stop there. My aim is to bring home numerous nuggets or ideas I can implement either immediately or over time to improve the crops and/or the business. The more nuggets the better; 6-piece, 10-piece or family size—I aim to get as much out of these events as possible. Unfortunately, gathering nuggets doesn't just happen on its own. You have to get out there with an open mind, some ambition and a solid plan.



## Maximizing Trade Events

Trade shows are excellent opportunities to learn, network and to get motivated for the upcoming growing and sales seasons. Greenhouse and nursery professionals attend trade events for a variety of reasons. Whether you're looking for new plants or equipment, hoping to gain marketing ideas, learning new production techniques at the educational sessions, or networking with customers or industry peers, there's only a finite amount of time to maximize your experience at each of these events.



Garderworld/Growing Colors booth at Cultivate'24.

I've found it beneficial to have a game plan before stepping foot into the venue. First, decide what it is you want to achieve. Your goals could be finding out how to correct past production issues, discovering the next hot new perennial, how to improve your retail presence or many other possibilities.

Try to get your hands on the events directory or map of the trade show floor and start planning and prioritizing. Determine which educational events you're going to attend; somehow prioritize them using a simple system, such as "must see" or "would like to attend." I recommend taking the same approach with the trade show exhibitors—determine who you "have to visit" and whom you'd "like to visit."

You'll quickly learn that there will be time conflicts that keep you from doing everything you would like to do. If you're by yourself, you'll have to put some thought into how to maximize your time. If you're attending with coworkers, divide and conquer. Hit the priority sessions or exhibitors first. Once you've accomplished that list, move on to the secondary priorities. If you complete both of your priority lists, then feel free to walk through the trade show or attend more educational sessions at your leisure.

## Trade Show Pointers



These tips have served me well over the years when walking trade show floors.

- Schedule some of your “must see” meetings in advance. Don’t leave it to chance that the individual(s) you need to see will be available when you arrive at their booth.
- Many trade events have apps that are useful in helping you to know when things are happening and how to find them. They often include trade show maps and planners to help you manage your time at the event. Download it!
- Some of the trade events are really large, so bring comfortable shoes.
- Only pick up or accept literature that you need and intend to use. Picking up every piece of literature isn’t necessary and can be heavy to lug around for hours. I’ve had good intentions so many times when collecting information. However, more often than not, I find the literature sitting in trade show bags many months and even years later. Be selective in what you choose to take with you and make a point of using it.
- Don’t be intimidated or afraid of approaching the salespeople working the booths at the trade show. Introduce yourself, and when someone approaches you, compliment their booth or their product(s). Then ask specific questions, such as “How does your product work?” or “What’s new?”
- Bring lots of business cards and take them everywhere you go. You can meet an important contact anywhere—the elevator, in educational sessions, the hotel, in restaurants and at the bar. You never know, so be prepared.
- If you don’t already have a contact person with the company you have an interest in, be sure to get a business card. It’s not enough to only give someone your contact information.
- Follow up. About a week after the trade show, follow up with the companies you intend to work with. Following up is key to successfully maximizing your new contacts. And remember: In this day and age, relationships are everything!

Approach these events with both a solid plan of what you intend to get out of the show and an open mind. In most cases, you’ll discover useful nuggets in places you never expected to find them.

My email is [paul@opelgrowers.com](mailto:paul@opelgrowers.com) if you have any comments, article suggestions or if you'd just like to say hello.

Best regards,



**Paul Pilon**

Editor-at-Large—*Perennial Pulse*

Director of Growing—Opel Growers

**This email was received by you and 34,206 other fine subscribers!**

If you're interested in advertising in Perennial Pulse, contact **Kim Brown** ASAP and she'll hook you up.



The banner features a pink background. On the left is a logo for 'FARWEST PORTLAND 2025' with a green outline of Oregon. In the center, the text 'THE BIGGEST GREENEST TRADE SHOW IN THE WEST' is displayed in white and green. On the right, it says 'AUGUST 20-22' and includes a blue 'REGISTER' button.