

Black Friday; a Cool Machine from Belgium; Allan's Latest Book



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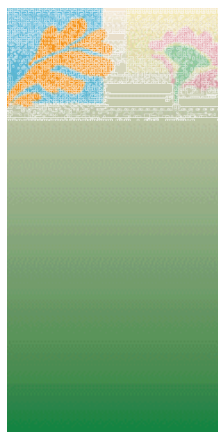


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COMING UP THIS WEEK:

No Black Friday poinsettias?
Little Prince & Peace Tree
Do videos sell plants?
2026 IGOTY finalists
A cool machine from Belgium
NC poinsettia trials
Decorate like the Bellagio
Finally ...



BEEDANCE BIDENS Catch the Buzz!



Are Black Friday poinsettias no more?

To be honest, I'd almost forgotten my annual tradition of digging up the major retailers' Black Friday fliers online until I was in my local Home Depot picking up some stain and spotted the Black Friday Deals flier at the Pro Desk (I'm not a pro, but I pretend).

Not a single \$1.99 poinsettia in sight! Heavy on power tools and appliances. One artificial tree on the cover (\$49.98, 6.5 ft., pre-lit ... who says the tariffs were going to make stuff too expensive?). Inside, two pages of décor, 100% of it artificial.

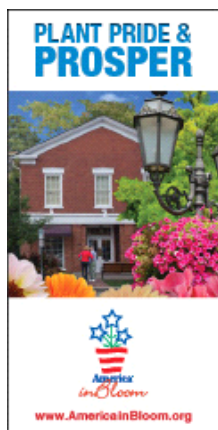
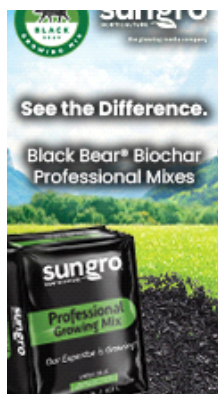
To find the other retailers' holiday deals, I went to [BlackFriday.com](https://www.blackfriday.com) where they post all the various fliers, sometimes before they're even in the stores.

Lowe's: Like Home Depot, pages 2-3 were loaded with artificial trees and décor, but not a single live poinsettia. Lowe's is asking \$60 for their pre-lit Christmas tree deal.

Walmart: Electronics, home and toys. No loss-leader poinsettias, not even an artificial tree!

Frustrated, I went outside my normal realm and tried BJ's Wholesale Club. Loads of television, computers, vacuums,





appliances, sofas, clothing, electric toothbrushes ... no poinsettias. The closest they get is a deal on Lego Botanicals (buy \$75 in Legos, get a \$10 BJ's gift card).

I am somehow sure that on Black Friday you will find racks of poinsettias at a nice price. But they don't seem to be using poinsettias as fishing bait. Seems folks are more likely to be drawn in by a \$99 drill or a 98-in. flat screen for under \$1,000.

Which again forces me to ask: What happened to tariffs ruining Christmas?

Now, somebody out there is growing poinsettias for Black Friday. Fill me in on what the deal is this year among the various players.

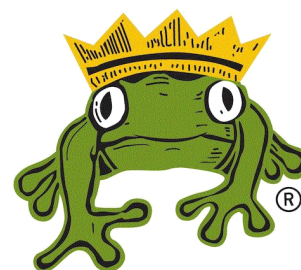


Little Prince, Peace Tree Farm partner in licensing agreement

You may not know it, but I collect frogs with crowns (froschkönig, they're called in Germany). Seriously. I've got dozens scattered around my office, home and garden. Which is why I have a soft spot for Little Prince of Oregon, because they use a froschkoönig as their mascot. And now that crowned frog has leapt from Oregon to a second home in Pennsylvania and Peace Tree Farms, owned by the equally iconic Lloyd Traven and his wife, Candy and son, Alex. Peace Tree has signed a brand licensing agreement to grow Little Prince's varieties of interesting ornamental plants, which includes Lords of the Fly (carnivorous plants), Fit for a King (rare and unusual plants) and Foot Prince (ground covers that tolerate foot traffic).

And what's in it for customers? The new licensing agreement improves nationwide delivery for customers, while also reducing shipping costs.

"We're thrilled that our crowned frog found a home away from home," says Mark Leichty, Director of Business Development for Little Prince of Oregon Nursery. "We chose Lloyd, Candy, and Alex Traven of Peace Tree Farm to nurture and grow our brand, because they hold the same high standards for innovation, high-quality production and service as we do."



Added Ketch de Kanter, founder and CEO of Little Prince, "By partnering the team at Peace Tree Farm with the Little Prince of Oregon brand, we're operating on both coasts of the U.S., providing our customers with more options to reduce their shipping costs and improve delivery time for their orders."

Said Lloyd of the deal, "We're delighted that the folks at Little Prince of Oregon Nursery entrust us with their brand. We're ready to welcome the frog prince to his east coast home and look forward to growing the gorgeous plants for which Little Prince is known."

And hey, Lloyd isn't the only one allowed in on the frog prince fun. Little Prince of Oregon is looking for additional growers in the U.S. and Canada. Interested? Contact Mark Leichty at 503-522-9678.

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Do videos help you sell more plants?

Benjamin Miller from grower/retailer Stutzman's Greenhouse in Kansas asked an interesting question on the Nursery and Greenhouse Production Facebook page earlier this month regarding the impact of social media video on plant sales. Here is his question:

For the last couple years, we've noticed the post-Covid pull back—4.5 in. have experienced consecutive 8% drops, and our large containers have required additional markdowns and multi-purchase discounts to move through.

The easy (lazy) excuse has been to blame it on the weather and timing of tariffs, but I'm curious if it's a tale of two cities dividing the grower/retailers who have leaned heavily into Shorts, Reels and TikTok maintaining sales with younger customers and those who are still relying heavily on traditional media being left behind, with an older ever shrinking customer base that's drying up.

For those of you who have experienced growth the last few years, how much energy have you been placing into TikTok? Has anyone experienced growth without it? Also, I'd be interested to hear from anyone who has placed a lot of energy in it that has also experienced the pullback.

There are 21 replies and comments. I skimmed them to see if there was any consensus one way or another. There was: Go for it!

Alas, nobody was able to actually quantify the effect of video on plant sales. But everyone encouraged Benjamin to make social media videos, and those who mentioned sales said they're up. Here are a few good comments:

Milly McGinnis-Novotny: "We are heavy on social (not TikTok), but (Facebook) Reels and Instagram prior (growing season) and during retail season. We have not seen a decline in sales in since Covid but we have been very diligent, and sometimes we blatantly ask our customers what they want and how they want it grown differently from year to year."

Rich Clark: "We're heavy on social. Not TikTok specifically, but it's in there. Instagram and Facebook seem to be getting it done. We're still going up every year. No pullback."

Jonathan Soukup: "Pick a platform, get your phone out, point it at your face and start talking about your plants. There are random people out there who don't know what they're talking about, making videos about gardening and growing. If you're running a nursery, you have the street cred because you're doing it already."

Donald Gerber: "I had a one-time consultation with a social media marketing person. What I took away was, consistency is better than quality, and people appreciate authenticity. You don't have to script it, leave the small mistakes in. You only get better with practice."

What do you think? Especially as a retailer? Should you be making video? And if so, is any social site better than another? Let me know [HERE](#).



Finalists announced for the 2026 IGOTY Awards

Ten ornamental horticulture growers from around the world have reached the finals for the AIPH International Grower of the Year (IGOTY) Awards 2026. And while I am no longer the bow-tied emcee proclaiming, “The envelope, please! ...” I am still glad to share the names of the lucky finalists who will be in the room during the IPM trade fair to see who takes home the big prizes.

They are:

Chengdu Yimei Horticultural Technology Development Co. (China)
Fitoralia (Spain)
Flores El Capiro S.A. (Colombia)
Herburg Roses Group (Netherlands)
Hillier Nurseries Ltd (UK)
Jiuquan Lanxiang Horticultural Seedling Co. (China)
Kisima Farm Ltd (Kenya)
Kwekerij Dirk Mermans (Belgium)
Longchi Mudan Industrial Co. (China)
Yunnan Holyflora Horticulture Co. (China)

(Now that I see the list, perhaps I’m okay with not being the emcee—I always mangled those Chinese company names!)

Nobody from the U.S.? Bummer! Past U.S. winners are Costa Farms and Metrolina Greenhouses.



Last year's winners.

Organized by the [International Association of Horticultural Producers](#) (AIPH) in collaboration with headline sponsor MPS, the IGOTY Awards celebrate innovation, sustainable practices and the outstanding expertise that drives excellence in the global horticultural industry.

There are awards for excellence in four categories: Finished Plants & Trees, Young Plants, Cut Flowers & Bulbs, and Sustainability. From among these categories, only one winner will be crowned the “AIPH International Grower of the Year 2026” and receive the “Gold Rose”—the industry’s most coveted prize.

Winners of the 2026 IGOTY Awards will be announced during a ceremony on Tuesday, January 27, at IPM Essen in Germany. Sponsors include Headline Sponsor MPS, Host Partner IPM Essen, Category Sponsors Chrysal and GLOBALG.A.P., Support Sponsor MyPlant&Garden,

Flower Sponsors Floritec and VitroPlus, Founding Partner *FloraCulture International* (sister publication to *GrowerTalks*!) and Media Partners FloralDaily and Thursd.



Check out this cool Belgian machine!

Speaking of Reels, I have been seeing more and more greenhouse videos on Facebook—I guess the more I watch, the more the algorithm finds for me. And I'm okay with that when it delivers up these tools from Belgian mechanization builder [Degramec](#).

I've known of the company for years from the big European trade shows. But as I should know, there are machines that make it to the trade show floor and others that are only in the greenhouses.



An example is this “Compact,” which I believe is a more compact version of their Terra Spacer, a self-driving mobile pot-spacing robot. I've never seen it before!

It works like a forklift plant spacer, except it is equipped with a large buffer belt that is filled by a forklift. The Terra Spacer automatically sets out and spaces pots; and what's cool is how it can set out a row of side-by-side pots, then nudge every other one backwards a few inches to stagger them. Slick! And the spacing forks shift from side to side to fill a greenhouse bay while the machine drives down the center.

Watch the [VIDEO](#) to see it in action in a Danish greenhouse.

And watch their other [REELS](#) for more cool machines.



North Carolina is poinsettia trial central!

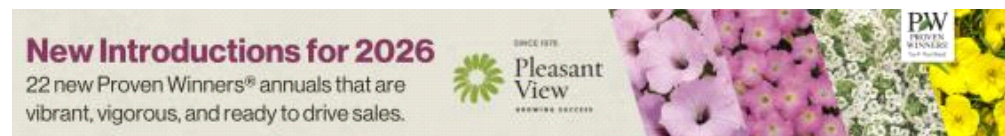
One state with two big poinsettia trials just two hours apart? That's not fair! But that's what North Carolina has going on with trials at [Mitchell's Nursery and Greenhouse](#) in King, and [Homewood Nursery](#) in Raleigh, an easy drive up or down I-40 from each other.

I'll talk about the latter first, as it's making a return this year after some time off from formal trialing. If you recall, they were once part of the National Poinsettia Trials conducted by Purdue, NC State and the University of Florida that ended in 2020, I believe. But now Homewood is back, with a grower's open house on Thursday, November 20 from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. They'll feature all the key varieties from Selecta, Dümme Orange, Beekenkamp, Lazzari, Rhinehart and Graff Breeding. And you'll see how Homewood merchandises them in a retail setting! Al Newsom from Ball Seed says he helped organize it; and while they got a bit of a late start, they lined up all the new varieties and some numbered experimentals, too.



Judy Mitchell explains poinsettias to a local TV personality.

Mitchell's trial officially opens November 28, but seeing how they mention Homewood's trial in their press information, I assume you can stop in early to check it out. They'll have 77 varieties (12,000 plants) in their new (last year) 9,200 sq. ft. greenhouse. You'll see both new and classic varieties from Suntory, Syngenta, Express Seed, Beekenkamp, Selecta, Dümme Orange and Lazzari. Like Homewood, it's a retail setting, so you get to see the plants the way consumers do.



Decorate for the holidays like the Bellagio

Want to add a little Las Vegas bling to your own holiday season décor? Then attend the [Seasonal Style](#) webinar on Wednesday, November 19, featuring Lea Jonic, the conservatory project manager of the Bellagio in Las Vegas. Lea will be speaking with Monrovia's Chief Marketing Officer and Trend Spotter Katie Tamony and New Plants Manager Georgia Clay.



Last year: 8,000 poinsettias, a 45-ft. tree, 7 elves and 5 polar bears.

"If you've visited the Bellagio, you know their garden displays are magical," says Katie. "We can't wait for Lea to give us a behind-the-scenes look at how the gardens come together and share tips for making our own holiday designs spectacular."

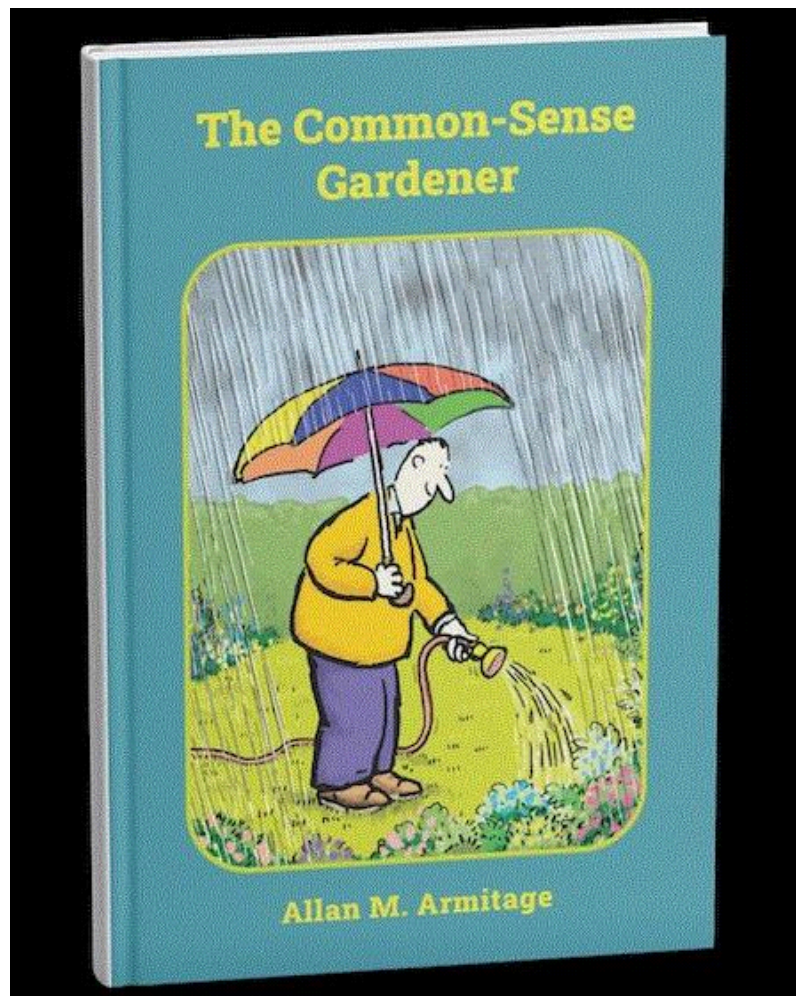
The discussion will showcase design tips for holiday décor, creative containers and long-lasting winter beauty. You must register to receive the link for the live webinar. Sign up here to reserve your spot.

Click [HERE](#) to register.

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



Finally ...



Looking for a Christmas gift for the horticulturist in your life? Well, for growers, there's the venerable [Ball RedBook](#), currently in its 19th edition! But for gardeners, our good friend Dr. Allan Armitage has published a new book (his 10th!) titled "[The Common-Sense Gardener](#)." And judging from the cover illustration, it's going to be an entertaining read!

Here's the opening:

We have met often. We have met in classes, on field trips, on walkabouts in various gardens, and online. We have shared our enjoyment of gardening, as well as our frustrations.

Over time, I have noticed that gardeners are not really like other people. Not only do we put up with gardening in the rain, drought, cold, heat and late frosts, we look forward to doing it again next year. If I asked you to make a banner about your experience in the garden, it could well read, "Wait Until Next Year" or "You Should have Been Here Last Week!" Gardeners are not normal.

And the more I wander around with gardeners, I realize we are a bit like a cult—we are true believers. Gardeners believe the garden will be better next year, we believe that the weather will be finer, and we actually still believe the photos in catalogs. It is not that we are naïve, we simply can't help ourselves. Gardeners have more optimism under one dirty fingernail than most people have in their entire bodies; we should all be so blessed.

All true!

"The Common-Sense Gardener" is only being offered in a limited run right now, between November 15 and December 15. If you get an early copy, Allan will autograph it!

Not all plants can be propagated without authorized permission.



Feel free to email me at beytes@growertalks.com if you have ideas, comments or questions.

See you next time!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Chi'.

Chris Beytes

Editor-in-Chief

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