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Nursery & LANDSCAPE INSIDER

News and Commentary for the landscape and nursery market

COMING UP THIS WEEK:

IPPS Demos in TX
ASHS in Dallas
The Landscape Show
Plug & Cutting Conference



Heliopsis 'Forged in Fire'
New to Proven Winners Perennials
for 2026-2027!



Pre-Trip to Establish IPPS Demos

The last few weeks have been ... very Texas to say the least. I've been on two different trips to the Lone Star State since my last newsletter and thought I would share some of my travels.

I was asked to participate in the IPPS Scientist Stations for the upcoming IPPS Southern Region IPPS meeting in Houston. This is a new venture for IPPS programs where research scientists will be stationed on our regularly scheduled tours and share insight or demo new research along the way. It's a fun way to jam even more into the trips without pushing the already lengthy IPPS tours—seriously, some of the tours I've been on have been 13-hour days! All fun, though.





For my Scientist Station, I wanted to highlight the potential of using fibers in nursery growing media. I don't want to give away the results just yet, but spoiler alert: It works great! I thought I would set up a demonstration ahead of time and, lucky for me, the rest of the team thought that would be a good idea, as well. So I met my colleagues Drs. Amy Fulcher (University of Texas), Anthony LeBude (North Carolina State University) and Chris Marble (University of Florida) just outside of Houston Everde Nursery in Glen Flora, Texas.



We were treated to a fantastic pre-tour of the facility and had a great opportunity to see some plant management in action. After that we all set up various demonstrations for our upcoming talks in our respective areas. Unfortunately, I won't be able to make the IPPS trip this year, so it was great to have a chance to visit. My graduate student Martha Vilchez will be filling in for me at the Scientist Station this fall and she's going to be great!



It was a short-and-sweet trip, but along the way I got to hit up a local barbecue restaurant on my brother's recommendation. Typically, I wouldn't write about my food exploration on my journeys, but when you get a chance to visit a Michelin star BBQ restaurant, it's definitely something to talk about. Now, I must state that I am 100% a swine man, but the brisket from Corkscrew BBQ in Houston has me rethinking my life philosophies. The Texas beef brisket was incredible.



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TexASHS

With my Houston trip in the rearview, I was already getting ready for my next trip to Texas. Just a week after returning I was back en route, this time with my sights set on Dallas, for the annual American Society for Horticultural Sciences (ASHS) conference. I don't typically talk about ASHS in my newsletter, but it's a conference I go to every year. I'll try and keep this relevant to the nursery and landscape industry (although I'm sure many of you think I'm stretching this definition). ASHS is an academic society focused on all horticulture—we blend ornamental horticulture with fruit and vegetable production. It's really a fun place for us academics to get together and talk cross-commodity about our research and extension ideas.



It's also a great place to bring students to give them an opportunity to present their research to their peers and get valuable insight from others. My students Megan and Martha went and had great presentations. (Speaking of that, I would like to congratulate Martha Vilchez for her presentation on "Stabilizing sugarcane bagasse fibers for use as a growing media component." She won first place in the student oral competition—a well-deserved win after all the hard work and effort she put into the project!)

Of course, ASHS is not only for academics; many industry researchers also join us and, in fact, I heard this meeting was one of the most well attended by the industry. It's a great meeting to see

what the academics are up to and also a great opportunity to scout out the next generation of students being trained across all of horticulture. It's definitely worth the trip if you're looking to stay connected with your university research pals.

I also presented some research and attended several other talks. And I was invited to a couple other fun events—I had a chance to share impacts from our national Soilless Substrate Science project and was invited to join a panel discussion helping young faculty building their funding portfolio and write better grants (not sure how they found me).

All in all, it was a great time and always great seeing my friends. That being said, I, of course have to mention my continued exploration into Texas BBQ. Since I'd recently visited a Michelin star BBQ restaurant in Houston, I had to try the local 2 Michelin star BBQ restaurant Cattleack Barbeque. I was like a tumbleweed in the wild Texas wind—I got blown away again! I don't want to downplay the rest of the conference, but if you go to Dallas and don't eat there, you've messed up.



Looking forward to next year's conference in San Diego, California.

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Last Call for The Landscape Show

Next week, I'll be packing my bags again, but this time I won't have too far to go. I'm heading about two hours south to Orlando, Florida, to attend the Landscape Show, one of the nation's premier green industry shows and the best for landscape contractors (if I do say so myself!),

This show gets its name and reputation from the fact that it truly caters to the landscape industry. I don't know of any other show of this magnitude that's 100% dedicated to landscapers and puts so much effort in bringing landscape-dedicated, cutting-edge educational sessions to

attendees. That being said, if you're a grower or allied supplier, you can come, too—they still let us production folks in!

I'll be there visiting with people and checking out all the new and exciting items we have to look forward to in the upcoming year. Plus, have you seen the educational lineup? There are so many exciting sessions—I don't know how I'll get any work done! One of the most exciting new additions to the show is the Irrigation Education Track. This was a direct response to your needs and something that was regularly requested. We all need to find ways to improve our efficiency and proper irrigation management is one of the easiest ways to excel. Irrigation is just the tip of the iceberg. There are talks in Design and Building, Maintenance, Growth and Technology, and Management—training for just about every aspect of the job.

Here are a few sessions I picked out that seem exciting, but don't just take my word for it. Check out the full Educational Lineup to find what fits for you:

Irrigation

- [Water Safety Challenges of an Irrigation System](#)
- [Control the Water. Control the Profit. How Leadership + Smart Tech Are Rewriting Irrigation Success](#)
- [Let's Evaluate and Make Improvements to Your Irrigation System \(Irrigation Repair Playbook\)](#)

Design | Build

- [Designing with Turf: Choosing the Right Turf for Every Landscape](#)

Growth | Technology

- [Leading Through the AI Noise: What Actually Matters for Growth](#)

Maintenance

- [Don't Let Back Pain Sideline Your Workforce: Smart Strategies to Prevent Back Pain on the Job](#)

Management

- [The Antifragile Approach to Legacy Transfer](#)
- [Take Control of Your Business Once and for All](#)

Hope to see you there!



Plug & Cutting Conference: A Major Offering for Spanish Speakers

Every plant we grow, sell, transplant and manage was started as a plug or liner. Well, maybe not every plant, but you get the idea. It's often overlooked, but young plant production is one of the most foundational aspects of our industry.

[The Plug & Cutting Conference](#) is dedicated to supporting young plant producers and propagators. This year, the show will be held September 14-16 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and it looks like several great opportunities for attendees. The Experiential Production tour looks particularly exciting. Starting off at Lucas Greenhouses in New Jersey, then heading back to PA to visit North Creek Nurseries, Star Roses & Plants and finishing the day off at the legendary Longwood Gardens. I'm sad that I'll miss this one.

They're also building a great deal of programming for Spanish-speaking audiences. I was talking with good friend Raul Cabrera about this show at ASHS. Raul is a nursery specialist with Rutgers, located at a research station in southern New Jersey, just outside of Philadelphia. He's going to be giving several educational sessions in Spanish and he'll also be joining a bus on the Experiential Production Tour as a Spanish-speaking bus captain, helping translate any information.

Spanish speakers attending the conference can rest assured they'll get all the content and should consider the tour. What a great idea! And it doesn't stop there. They're hosting a new trade show tour for Spanish-speaking attendees for the first time. The "Recorrido por la Expo" (or "Tour of the Expo") will offer a guided tour of the show, allowing Spanish speakers to learn about the exhibitors, ask questions and discover new products, services and resources.

If you want to join the Recorrido por la Expo, you need to reserve your spot [HERE](#). I would highly encourage you to bring Spanish-speaking employees to make meaningful connections and empower them to bring back knowledge.

Think big,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jeb Fields". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Jeb Fields

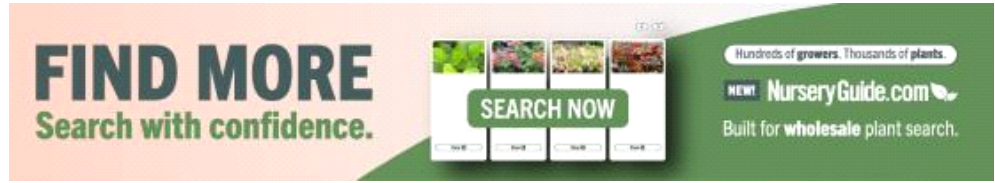
Editor-at-Large

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