

Front Lines

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Hort Couture and Ball Seed

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News coming out of Hort Couture is that Ball Seed will be the exclusive distributor of the Culinary Couture Seed lines beginning this fall. They cover the basics—like Pesto Basil, HealthSmart Peppers and the Mixology line of tomatoes—but they've got so many other unique offerings in cascading herbs, greens and even endive, if I recall correctly.

Over the years, I've been consistently impressed with the uniqueness of the varieties in the Culinary Couture line, believing them to be items that get foodies into the garden and keep them experimenting there year after year. With Ball Seed doing the distribution, these cool genetics may get some much-deserved further exposure to both growers and grower-retailers.

Ball Seed will also have exclusive rights to sell unrooted cuttings of Hort Couture's Avant Garde annuals, which includes the ever-popular Under the Sea Coleus, Glitterati Geraniums and Glamouflage Petunias. You can still find liners from other brokers, too. Production of those will be at Peace Tree Farm, Wenke Greenhouses, Wenke Sunbelt and Meadowlands Horticultural up in Vancouver.

Also important to note is that there's no longer a pot requirement for the program. And despite not being at the California Spring Trials, Hort Couture does indeed have new varieties for the 2019 season—more than 40 of them! You can find them and more in the new Hort Couture Buyers Guide. Pay particular attention to the line of edible flowers named Garnish. Edible flowers are all over Food Network, so you know these are on trend!

All varieties will be available on Ball Seed WebTrack and will ship from the Ball Horticultural Company facility in West Chicago, Illinois. **GP**