

Cover Story

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Hot Winter Finds

Green Profit Editors

The winter trade shows are always a great time to connect with vendors, check out what's new and get a handle on the coming year. This year was no different, with MANTS seeing the highest number of attendees in a decade and TPIE hosting more than 6,500 visitors, as well. Check out what we found at MANTS, TPIE and AmericasMart. Also, we could only fit a few products here, but you can see more at our [Green Profit Facebook page](#).

AmericasMart

By Jennifer Polanz

I mentioned in my upfront column in February that there were some very clear trends in terms of themes at AmericasMart. Farmhouse is still very much in, with neutral colors staying popular. I saw a lot of warm, dark-colored accent walls showcasing neutral-colored products. Also, green walls of all types were still popular, as were mermaids, unicorns and llamas. New this year are sloths and flamingos. I talked to a few vendors who are still very much concerned about tariffs on Chinese-made goods, so that's something to continue to watch. At press time, trade talks were chilly and the tariff deadline had been pushed to March 1. If those go into effect, the price impact will most likely get passed to the retailer (and end consumer). And now, for the products ...



A “True” Cup of Tea

I'm not a huge tea drinker, mainly because it tastes rather watered-down to me. So when True Honey Teas founder Chris Savage stopped me in the gourmet foods aisle to try a sample, I was skeptical. But tasting the lavender lemonade tea converted me—it was strong (but not overpowering) and flavorful. True Honey Teas are made in Virginia and include dried honey granules in the tea bags. Flavors include the previously mentioned Lavender Lemonade, English Breakfast (also available in decaf), Peppermint, Green Tea and Chai. He offers the teas in

pouches of 24 tea bags and in gift “bee boxes” of four tea bags. For retailers, pouches come six in a case and bee boxes 12 in a case. www.truehoneyteas.com

Smells Like Christmas

I smelled the Bedrock Tree Farm booth in the temporaries before I saw it. It truly smelled like Christmas with its Fir Needle candles, soaps and other products. Husband-and-wife team Tom and Angie Geary are the owners of the Wakefield, Rhode Island, tree farm that produces the aromatic fir-scented blends. Tom, a former lobsterman turned tree farmer, says the products are now in more than 1,300 stores. The newest addition is this 32 oz., triple cotton wick vase candle sold with a gift box. The 100% non-GMO soy candle will burn for about 150 hours.

www.bedrockcandle.com

Soothing Poison Ivy

It's every gardener's enemy: poison ivy. Or worse, poison sumac or poison oak. But SallyeAnder now has a soap for you. “If you have it, or if you think you'll have it, this will soothe poison ivy, sumac and oak,” says Birgit Larson, manager at SallyeAnder. Handmade in Beacon, New York, the soap includes oatmeal, pink clay, balsam and amyris essential oils, among other ingredients. It can remove the oils of the plant if washed within 15 minutes. It also can be grated up into a bath to soak for relief. Other new additions to the company's line of all-natural soaps include honey beeswax and Lily of the Valley. www.SallyeAnder.com/wholesale

Indoor Essentials

Esschert Design debuted new versions of its popular terrarium series with telescoping planting tools at AmericasMart. The newest additions to the series are wide mouth and open facing terrariums, according to National Sales Manager Rebecca Rutter. “It's a quickly growing category,” she notes. “We did a soft introduction in July and then distribution shows in September. We saw huge increases with those.” The line includes small, medium, large and extra-large terrariums, all of which include basic instructions and a video link to more instructions.

www.esschertdesign.com

Buckets of Fun

These cutout galvanized metal buckets from Steel Heart can have a wide variety of uses, which makes them great for any time of year. Some are holiday-themed while others are more general. All told, there are 28 different designs, which are cut out of the buckets right at the factory in Harvard, Illinois, according to co-owner Gretchen Peczkowski. “We can custom cut the buckets with certain quantities, too,” she noted, adding there's a set-up fee for that.

www.steelheartltd.com

MANTS

By Matthew Chappell

As was said earlier, MANTS saw its highest attendance in a decade, with more than 11,600 registrants (including exhibitors) coming from 48 states and 16 countries. Next year the show celebrates its 50th anniversary. Here's what was new at this year's event.



New Generation of Boxwood

There was quite a buzz at the Saunders Brothers, Inc. booth this year as they unveiled NewGen Boxwood. Touted as both boxwood blight and boxwood leaf miner tolerant, it represents a substantial leap forward. I had lunch with Sonya Lepper-Westervelt and Paul Westervelt from Saunders Brothers and also learned that a goal was to not only have tolerance to these two pests, but have tolerance in something that looks like English boxwood.

Looking at the plant itself, the foliage does look a lot like English boxwood (much more than other hybrids on the market), but my plant geekiness also tells me it's a hybrid. Nonetheless, Paul also shared that it was tested by planting it over and over again adjacent to infected (with boxwood blight) or infested (with leaf miner) plants and subsequently observing plants over long periods of time, with no infection or infestations observed. I should note that they conducted these trials far away from the nursery ... no way Tom Saunders would let infected plants near the nursery. If you're interested in getting your hands on this plant, you'll want to contact Overdevest Nurseries (New Jersey), Prides Corner Farms (Connecticut), Saunders Brothers (Virginia) or Willoway Nurseries (Ohio).

Getting a Lift

Want an easy method of lifting and moving pavers? If so, here's your ticket. You'll be the envy of your contractor buddies. The product, of course, is the Airlift from Pave Tech. The principle is simple: a backpack vac connects to a handle with a suction plate that creates a seal with the stone. Voilà—pick it up with your shoulders; easy as eating cake. There are five suction plate sizes depending on stone size, from a 5-in. round to a 10 x 10-in. square.

www.pavetech.com

A Helpful Reminder

Talk about clever: The new Bloomin' Easy tag offers buyers the ability to either scan a QR code (on the back of the tag) or visit their website, select the plant they purchased and then receive care reminders tailored to their specific location. And, of course, your computer or cell phone always knows your location these days, so when you retire to San Diego, it'll know and update you on what needs to be done and when. Reminders include expected bloom time, water needs, when and how to prune, sun/shade requirements, fertilizer needs, etc. I personally like this because the number one thing that turns people off when it comes to horticulture is failure. So if we can help consumers succeed, they'll keep on gardening, and we can keep on working. Bloomineasyplants.com

By Ellen C. Wells

The Tropical Plant International Expo is considered one of the best horticultural trade shows on the circuit, even if it wasn't held in warm-and-toasty Florida in January. Why? Because of the amount of high-quality plants, cool products and inspiration that retail attendees can take back to their stores and make their own.

This year's 6,488 attendees were treated to some new items that could make a big splash in your own store. Here are a few items that caught our eye.



Taking Flight

The Bird Planter from Polar Business Solutions just may have been the cutest non-plant item at the show. Co-creators Donald Murray and Shibu Varughese are friends and co-workers (one's a nurse, the other a physical therapist) who decided to combine their efforts and make something colorful to go in the garden.

The bird planter, which took about two years to get off the ground, is designed it to be sturdy and non-collapsing. It's easy to package and easy to assemble. Retailers can sell the kits on a kiosk stand or sell them already potted and ready to hang. There are two parrot body colors (lime green and red), with some other items in the works.

Since we reported on this in the *buZZ!* e-newsletter, Donald and Shibu have had lots of interest in the bird planter. BirdPlanter.com

Light It Up

Here's the "Oh my goodness, what a great idea!" item from the show: the LED Terrarium from Flori-Design. The terrarium lights up under the cloche, giving it a low and attractive glow. The plants are contained in a shallow plastic dish and you can fit quite a few of them in there to make a nice arrangement. A genuinely cool product, it even won a Cool New Products Award from The Garden Center Group's team of floor-scouring retailers. Display these terrariums in a box so customers can really see the lights! Flori-Design.com

Glazed and Patina-ed

Kew Pottery from Botanical Collections are beautifully crafted containers in a range of sizes that all have the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew logo on them. Everything about these glazed pots speaks to the elegance and authenticity of a true English garden. What I really like about this collections is that 7% of each purchase is donated back to Kew to help fund the important work that they do at one of the most respected botanical gardens in the world.

How could they top that collection? Botanical Collections' line of Moss Patina Pots is also a winning collection. Once these pots are out of the kiln, they're fired with a blowtorch to create that dark patina. They're also inoculated with moss spores that will eventually grow on the pot. Owner Kelly Goggin said these Moss Patina Pots are popular with Millennials. That means you should stock up! BotanicalCollections.com



A Dramatic Dracaena

The winner of the Favorite New Foliage Plant award as voted by show attendees was White Aspen Dracaena from Costa Farms. It hits all the check boxes for a houseplant superstar: dramatic leaf structure, variegation, bold colors, a large size and Insta-worthy appeal. Costa says White Aspen maintains its crisp, clean look at retail. Be prepared for customer inquiries!

[CostaFarms.com](https://www.CostaFarms.com)

Some Subtle Striping

Winning the Most Unusual Single Plant Specimen award as determined by the TPIE judges was the new anthurium called Livium from Anthura. It's unusual in its degree of highlighted venation; that is, its veins look like they've been painted several hues lighter—almost white—than the rest of the reddish spadix. Livium also won the Favorite New Flowering Plant award, which is voted on by the TPIE attendees. Winner, winner. [Anthura.nl](https://www.Anthura.nl) **GP**