

## Features

9/1/2021

### In-Person Buying

Jennifer Polanz

The initial entrance into the Columbus Convention Center in July was a bit surreal—after more than a year of Zoom calls, virtual events and distancing, people could mingle, chat and even hug. More importantly, though, people could do business face-to-face, which meant perusing the aisles, talking to vendors and finding new products for next year and beyond.

Before we get into all that, though, let's talk about the vibe and the themes of the show. The vibe was mostly upbeat, with vendors pleasantly surprised at the amount of traffic at the show and attendees with money to burn in their pockets.

The themes were somewhat less positive, between supply chain delays, shipping nightmares, and raw materials shortages and price increases to compensate for all three. Availability was hit or miss and the major takeaway is to order early on virtually everything to get what you want (or close to it) for next year.

Now, on to the products. Some of these also were picked by The Garden Center Group in its annual Retailers' Choice Awards and those are denoted with an asterisk\*.



#### Bailey Nurseries\*

We now have lots of hydrangeas that hold up in the cold, but what about in the heat? Bailey Nurseries took on that challenge and now have added Little Hottie *Hydrangea paniculata* to the First Editions lineup. It was bred to take the southern heat, but performs well up to Zone 4 and doesn't require trimming or pruning with its compact habit. It's loaded with blooms on strong stems and a well-branched habit. Those blooms start green and turn sparkling white as they age. [www.baileynurseries.com](http://www.baileynurseries.com)

#### Ball FloraPlant\*

Retailers called the new micro coleus Spitfire a show-stopper, with its vibrant pink and lime green coloring with

uniquely shaped leaves. Ball Landscape Business Manager Jeff Gibson says Spitfire is great for landscapers and retailers, as it plays well with others in containers. It holds its color well in full sun or shade, and is very late to flower, showing off that foliage. It's versatile in combos, monoculture containers and in landscape borders.

[www.ballfloraplant.com](http://www.ballfloraplant.com)

### Concept Plants\*

The Dwarf Fig, *Ficus carica* Fignomenal, made its behind-the-scenes debut two years ago at Cultivate'19, quite literally behind a curtain (it wasn't yet ready to be out in full view). Introduced by Lloyd Traven of Peace Tree Farm, the fig has an extremely dwarf and low-mounding habit (up to 3 ft. versus a typical 10 to 12 ft.), perfect for urban gardening and indoors. To say it produces a lot of fruit is an understatement—at The Garden Center Group Retailers' Choice Awards announcement, the fig shown had dozens of fruit and Lloyd (pictured here with The Group's Executive Director Danny Summers) noted that as soon as it starts growing leaves it starts throwing fruit.

[www.conceptplants.com](http://www.conceptplants.com)

### Mammoth Garden

The goal behind this brand-new line of products is to get consumers to be success from start to finish, according to Mammoth Garden Director of Marketing Stacy Cirasunda. That's why the line starts with Plant Me, a 50 deep plug kit featuring coco coir, sphagnum peat moss and coconut shell biochar. Then there's Grow Me, a fruit and bloom enhancer made from shelf-stable blended earthworm castings and fermented alfalfa filtrate to promote growth. And finally, Protect Me, a natural fungicide, miticide and insecticide made from thyme oil with a surfactant to prevent and eliminate pests and diseases. [www.mymammothgarden.com](http://www.mymammothgarden.com)



### MGK

MGK is the consumer-facing sister company to Mycorrhizal Applications, the manufacturer of several products containing mycorrhizae. MGK just came out with a rebranded pair of OMRI-listed garden products: PyGanic, a straight pyrethrin insecticide, and Azera, which contains pyrethrins and azadirachtin.

PyGanic, which features pyrethrins derived from daisy flowers, can be used on ornamentals, leafy vegetables, and fruit and nut trees. It's effective against a broad spectrum of pests, from aphids to whiteflies.

Azera includes pyrethrin and azadirachtin, which is derived from the seeds of the neem tree, and is effective against both hard-bodied and soft-bodied insects, including caterpillars, beetles and aphids among many others.

[www.mgk.com](http://www.mgk.com)

### Pacific Home and Garden\*

The pottery company debuted a new series of warm, old-world style Tuscan hand-thrown pottery in various shapes and sizes. Pacific Home and Garden Owner Kevin Xu (pictured with Abraham Silva) says the line is inspired by old villas in Italy and it's taken nearly 10 years to perfect the coloration of the pots. Danny noted retailers were excited about the prospects of this line selling well in their stores. The company has warehouses in both California and

Georgia for easy shipping. [www.pacifichomeandgarden.com](http://www.pacifichomeandgarden.com)

## Panacea

Now in its 54th year, Panacea has come out with a new line of Modern Farmhouse Home & Garden products, including hanging containers, baskets, caddies, trellises and more. In talking with Dwayne Williams, VP of Marketing and Product Development, he noted the shabby chic look is fading and a cleaner, fresher look is emerging. The Modern Farmhouse collection features matte black powder-coated finishes and simple, yet elegant, details for a more polished look. Pictured: The Modern Farmhouse Wire Bushel Basket and Oval Wire Bushel Basket with All-Weather Bistro Print Liners. [www.panaceaproducts.com](http://www.panaceaproducts.com)



## Pride Garden Products

This menagerie stopped me in my tracks at the Pride Garden Products booth all lined up on the end cap. They aren't a new concept, as Pride had introduced the 4-in. line before, but the larger animals in the 6-in. and 8-in. lineup are new. Those sizes mean they hold those size grower pots. They consist of a sturdy wire frame with a coco fiber outer layer, and now there are many animal types available, from dog, frog, elephant, duck, giraffe, pig, turtle and more. [www.pridegardenproducts.com](http://www.pridegardenproducts.com)

## Proven Winners\*

Want pollinators? Look no further than Salvia Unplugged Pink, a new addition to the Unplugged Series from Proven Winners. The brand started with more compact, controlled breeding with Rockin' Fuchsia Salvia and Unplugged Pink takes it down even more, according to Director of Sales Dave Konsoer. Its height and width top out between 12 to 20 in. and loads up on the blooms. Great for containers and landscapes, Unplugged Pink does well in both full sun and partial shade. [www.provenwinners.com](http://www.provenwinners.com)



## Sprout Planter

This creative idea is a click-in-place small planter for any area with a railing. Creator Jordon Marshall, who comes from outside the industry, realized a need when looking for something to block the bright LED lights shining on to the patio of his 26th floor Minneapolis apartment. In true entrepreneur fashion, he went to work, coming up with a hinge system that allows you to put the back of the planter through the railing and then snap it open to stay put. It helps that

all railings in the last 30 years have spaces between 3.5- and 4-in. wide in accordance with U.S. Building Codes.

The planters are UV-protected polypropylene with silicone mounts that hold up in extreme heat and cold. Jordon also has a custom-fit liner made from a non-woven poly blend that breaks down to plant in, so plants can easily go in and out of the planters. [SproutPlanter.com](https://www.sproutplanter.com)

### **Succulents Unlimited BV\***

Get in line to snatch up the new *Peperomia caperata* Brasilia from Succulents Unlimited, a brand-new series from Europe making its way to the U.S. for the first time. The plant has gray-purple leaves on its upper surface and red on the lower surface, and a fuller habit, allowing it to fill out larger pot sizes. It features yellow-white flower spikes and a compact habit. The goal is for Brasilia to be available for retail in later 2022 with production taking place in Florida. [www.succulentsunlimited.com](https://www.succulentsunlimited.com)

### **Willoway Nurseries\***

President Tom Demaline called Thuja x Junior Giant arborvitae “game changing” at a much more compact version of Green Giant. Where Green Giant tops out close to 40 ft., Junior Giant comes in between 15 to 20 ft. and isn’t as wide. However, it’s just as long-lived as its predecessor. It’s part of the Syn-RG Hand-Picked For You program, which means it’s been trialed at independent grower locations across the U.S. and Canada, and evaluated for performance by experts. [www.willowaynurseries.com](https://www.willowaynurseries.com) **GP**