

# HANGING BASKET TAGS —

Can you see the problem?



Merchandising hanging baskets has always been difficult, but some new tagging systems make it easy.

**By Carrie Burns**

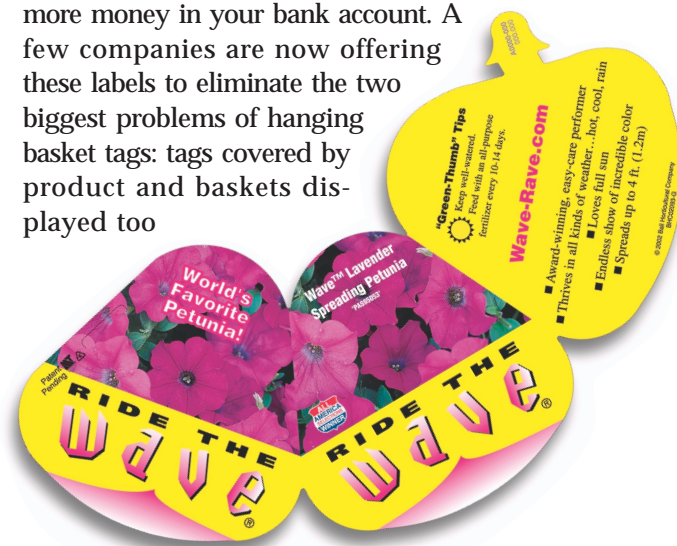
reaching over their head to pull down a basket and searching through that bundle of foliage.

Years ago, due to the small market of hanging baskets, unavailable tags was a major problem that growers could not do anything about; now, however, there are no excuses. With the growing popularity of hanging baskets, new developments in tags have arisen that promise easier shopping for consumers, more sales at retail and more money in your bank account. A few companies are now offering these labels to eliminate the two biggest problems of hanging basket tags: tags covered by product and baskets displayed too

Isn't it frustrating when you go to the store, and what you want is on the top shelf, which is nearly impossible to reach? You finally retrieve the product, and it turns out not to be what you wanted in the first place. You have to stretch to put it back and pull down another one. If you could've seen it better, this might not have happened. Now look at your hanging baskets. Can you read the tags while the baskets are hanging above your head, like they're most often displayed to the consumer?

As we all know, hanging baskets can not only grow money in your pockets, they also grow large, trailing runners, often covering up traditional-type tags in the basket. Is it really that big of a problem to find the tag? Well, the world is full of lazy people. Consumers don't want to go through the trouble of standing on their tiptoes,

Left: MasterTag's Premium Hanging Label (left) and John Henry's Custom Hang-N-Tag (right); Right: MasterTag's Hanging Basket Collar





high. ▶

### ELIMINATING OBSTRUCTED VIEWS

Along with the growing trend of hanging baskets is the trend of fuller baskets. Consumers love big, full

baskets, which make it almost impossible to see traditional tags, therefore requiring them to pull tags out of the basket, potentially causing irate customers and loss of tags.

“Those bacopas or trailing petunias can obstruct consumers’

views of tags, especially the tags you stick. The plant can easily just grow up over and cover them,” says Gerry Giorgio, creative director with MasterTag, Montague, Mich. “The tags we’ve created are highly visible.”

**Collar Tags.** New for 2003, MasterTag’s Hanging Basket Collars provide information for consumers without hiding under mounds of product. Since it is placed around the wires, close to the hanger, it is clearly visible away from the product. Though it doesn’t solve the problem of not being able to see it when displayed high up in the garden center, the collar has more space than other tags with three large sides, allowing more information to the consumer both on the front and back. “It’s always a challenge to put information onto a label just because of the amount of space you have, but the collar gives us the opportunity to provide more information to the consumer,” says Giorgio.

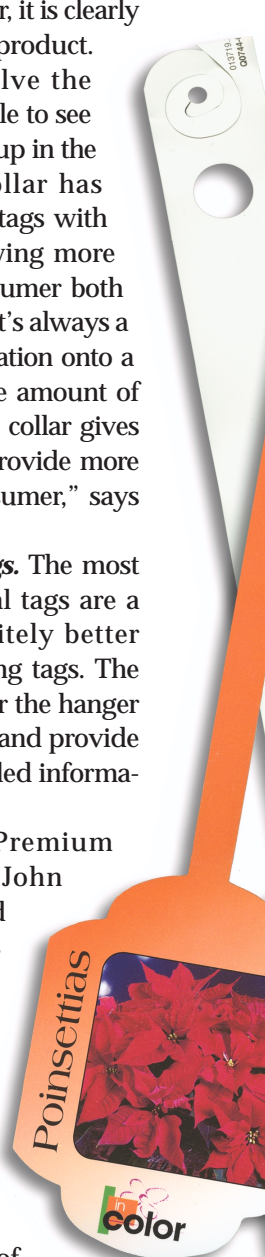
**Traditional hang tags.** The most popular and traditional tags are a good choice — definitely better than the original sticking tags. The tags are also placed near the hanger away from the product and provide the consumer with needed information.

MasterTag’s Premium Hanging Labels and John Henry’s Inventory and Custom Hang-N-Tags measure 2 x 4½ inches. They hang down below the hanger and are then kept away from the foliage.

Mercurius’ labels in its Hanging Label Collection are printed on 50 micron, tear-proof material and come with a drilled hole and threaded elastic tie to apply over the hanger. The tags offer a different shape than the others, making them more distinguishable. The collection consists of three sizes of labels: the Swingstick, Major and Major Plus.

### ELIMINATING THE HEIGHT PROBLEM

Maybe the best invention in tags, danglers allow consumers to see what is in the basket when it is displayed above eye level. “The issue with baskets is that they’re always





merchandise at seven or eight feet, so when you consider a consumer-friendly merchandising effort, they're not," says Mac Faulkner, general manager of the Grower and Floral Division at John Henry, Lansing, Mich. "But, they

simply must be up there. Hanging baskets are a challenge to be merchandised, and that's what tags are about — merchandising the product. So the notion of a dangler or oversized, strong tag is about communicating to the customer in a way that is friendly or appealing." These new tags allow consumers to walk down the garden center aisles and see what's in the baskets hanging eight feet up without having to pull them down.

John Henry's danglers, both in the Trait Tag collection and as custom-made tags, hang over the edge and away from the product, allowing better visibility from below. They are stuck into the media just like traditional tags but are around 13 inches long, so they dangle down past the basket.

MasterTag's dangler, only one year old and about 14 inches long, can be inserted into the basket at the time of production before or while the basket is filled with media. It's still large enough to dangle over the edge of the pot along with the plant, and remains visible closer lower to the consumer

level.

## CUSTOMIZING YOUR TAGS

"Custom tags is where the action is," says Faulkner. All three companies will customize tags for you, equipped with your company name, logo or whatever else desired on them. No matter what shape your tags are, customizing them is always a good idea. If done correct-

*Top: Mercurius' hanging label major;  
Bottom: John Henry's custom-made tag  
and MasterTag's danglers.*

ly, tags can help foster a loyal relationship between the consumer and the grower or retailer, and danglers can provide easily viewed information as well as the grower or retailer's logo right at eye level. So make sure your logo, company name,

Web site, a beautiful image of the product and consumer-friendly care instructions are provided on the tag, and consumers will look for your product year after year.

*Carrie Burns is associate editor for*



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