

SCENES FROM THE TRIALS



CHECK OUT SOME OF THE TRENDS WE SAW ALONG THE CALIFORNIA COAST THIS SPRING.

By **Jasmina Radjevic**

Each spring, Team *GPN* roadtrips along the California coast to visit with the many breeders and suppliers exhibiting at the Spring Trials. It's sort of like floriculture's "fashion week." This is where the new varieties and big trends in the industry make their debut.

We know not everyone can make it to the Spring Trials each year, so we try our best to snap as many photos possible so we can share all the latest introductions with you. Here's a breakdown of some of the hot trends we came across during our week-long journey.

And stay tuned for the July issue of *GPN*, where we will highlight some of the new variety introductions from the 2012 Spring Trials.

Jasmina Radjevic is managing editor of *GPN*. She can be reached at 847.391.1004 or jradjevic@sgcmail.com



Plug Connection



Burpee Home Gardens



Greenheart Farms

The Power of Presentation

Sometimes, unfortunately, it just doesn't matter how great a product is on its own; it needs to be packaged appropriately to grab consumers' attention. Breeders who understand this concept are developing new ideas to gain appeal at the retail level.

Greenheart Farms is known for its vast rose production, and they created wonderful retail displays to showcase the new ways in which roses can be merchandised. Roses can be used for all holidays and seasons!

At the **Suntory** stop, we were introduced to a new bedding plant mandevilla: 'Sun Parasol Garden Crimson'. This naturally compact variety is bred to be produced in 4-inch pots. Growers can choose to use the Sun Parasol branded pot or tag.

A new exhibitor this year was **HGTV**, which debuted its Home Plant Collection. With 95 percent consumer brand awareness, shoppers will be drawn to these new products at garden centers. The launch currently features annuals, mixed containers and hanging baskets.

Burpee Home Gardens is adding more to its BOOST program of nutrient-high vegetables. Three new tomatoes are now available in the collection, including 'Tasti-Lee'. BOOST is supported at retail with free POP, extensive advertising and promotion and the Burpee Garden Coach.

Plug Connection continues to promote the Mighty 'Mato collection of grafted tomatoes. And now they will be joined by other grafted varieties, such as pepper and eggplant.



Suntory



HGTV

SPRING TRIALS 2012

New Novelties

Young consumers love to differentiate themselves from others. So when it comes to gardening, many of them are drawn to more novel varieties. We saw plenty of new novel introductions at the 2012 Spring Trials, so it's apparent breeders are also seeking ways to differentiate themselves from the competition.

Calibrachoa 'Superbells Lemon Slice' by **Proven Winners** has a totally unique color pattern. It has the same strong performance and disease resistance as the other Superbells varieties.

Westflowers had a new petunia collection on display called Crazytunia. Just as the name dictates, these flowers are wildly striking. Although Crazytunias are available in Canada and Europe, the company is still working on a U.S. release.

Hort Couture always has some of the most diverse introductions each year. One of the most eye-catching varieties we saw at its stop this year was primula 'Blue Zebra'.

Last year, **Fides Oro** had a soft launch of its Mystic Mums program, but this year it's in full effect. Of all the new introductions, this might be the most interesting. 'Eventide Coral' is a bicolor variety that boasts a deep coral center with light pink outer petals.



Fides Oro



Hort Couture



Proven Winners



Westflowers



Westflowers



Danziger



Skagit Gardens



Plant Haven



Green Fuse Botanicals



Florist Holland

Plenty of Perennials

In the past few years, I've noticed the perennial category growing in popularity among consumers. And after visiting with all the breeder companies at the 2012 California Spring Trials, it's obvious they're taking notice as well.

Breeders are getting creative with their perennial offerings, too — with new colors, new shapes, better performance, etc.

Green Fuse Botanicals introduced its new perennial program, First Light Perennials. Each variety in the collection is first-year flowering and requires little or no vernalization. The collection includes varieties like gaura, gaillardia, veronica and leucanthemum.

Taking coreopsis breeding to the next level, **Danziger** introduced 'Solanna Golden Sphere'. This variety has truly stable, double, ball-shaped blooms. At 14 inches tall, this dwarf coreopsis requires no PGRs.

Florist Holland had some new spider-type gerberas on display, which are part of their Garvinea line of perennial gerbera. These rich, lush, versatile plants are well-suited for gardens, patio containers and borders.

One feature at the **Plant Haven** stop that I always look forward to is their "sneak peeks" of new, experimental varieties that are still in the works. Here is leucanthemum 'Real Glory'. We'll wait and see if it makes the cut as an official introduction next year!

Another sneak peek at Spring Trials was the new Belarina primula at **Skagit Gardens**. These plants have tidy clumps of brightly colored flowers on top of bright green foliage.

SPRING TRIALS 2012

The Veggie Trend Continues

Over the past several years, we've seen the edibles category boom and continue to grow. More growers are beginning to add vegetables and herbs to their production as consumer demand picks up.

Although some may have thought that the edibles trend was just going to be a passing fad, it's not going anywhere!

Ecke Ranch is new to the edibles market, launching a new line this year at Spring Trials. This new program is still in its infancy so more products and an official catalog are yet to come.

At the Ball stop, we're used to seeing all the Burpee edibles. But this year, **PanAmerican Seed** showed off new vegetable varieties as well. Here's tomato 'Topsy Tom', which was bred specifically to be used in these upside-down planters.

The folks at **Syngenta** did a terrific job with their retail-ready displays, including this eye-catching veggie display. Although Syngenta isn't new to the edibles market, the company is now offering its vegetable varieties through its flower channel.

One trend that I did notice within the edibles category is snack-sized fruits. Who wouldn't love to quickly walk outside to their garden and grab a bite? At **Floranova**, they introduced this mini sweet pepper 'Bellina', and at **Sakata** we saw this fun mini canteloupe 'Lilliput'.



Floranova



Sakata



Syngenta



PanAmerican Seed



Ecke Ranch

 **AXXE**[®]
BROAD SPECTRUM HERBICIDE

New AXXE Broad Spectrum Herbicide offers an excellent burn down of grasses and weeds within hours of application. AXXE is easy on the environment but provides powerful and effective control.

- Works within 24 Hours
- No Restrictions on Use
- Biodegrades Quickly
- NOP Compliant & OMRI Listed

TOUGH ON WEEDS > EASY ON THE ENVIRONMENT

////////// FOR CONTROL ON ANNUAL AND PERENNIAL WEEDS



BiSafe Systems^{L.L.C.}

1.888.273.3088 (toll-free) • www.biosafesystems.com

Copyright 2012 BioSafe Systems LLC. Always read and follow label directions. 2.12

SPRING TRIALS 2012

Plant Performance

It's no secret growers, retailers and consumers alike want varieties that are going to work for them. And if they don't, they won't be back to buy them. So breeders are hard at work making sure their varieties are going to perform from the grower all the way to the consumer.

American Takii's big introduction this year was the Trilogy series of petunias. These petunias will spread 30 to 36 inches and grow 15 inches tall. In packs, they are much more compact, but when grown they have that same mounding habit as other petunias.

Great Balls of Fire is a new series of ivy geraniums bred by **Dümmen**. They exhibit all the favorable

characteristics of ivy geraniums, but, they are highly heat tolerant. They have strong foliage and excellent branching.

Benary tried something new this year and presented its varieties by application and region. Obviously, certain plants do well in certain regions. So to make the growers decisions much easier, they created displays that showcased their varieties in the appropriate setting.

At the Ball stop, we couldn't help but notice the beautiful landscape filled with colorful dianthus, which had taken quite the beating after heavy rainfall. But they still showed brilliantly! **Selecta's** new Everlast dianthus has the flower power of an annual but the hardiness of a perennial, and they ship in full color.



Selecta



American Takii



Benary



Dümmen

Energy costs going through the roof?

Eliminate high heating bills with Solexx™

Highest Insulation Rating
Reduces heat loss and saves money.

Flexible and Durable
Installs easily over peaks and corners.



With its 2.5 R-Value* Solexx™ flexible, twin-wall covering outperforms all other greenhouse coverings while providing highly diffuse light—best for exceptional plant growth!

Visit our website or call us today for a **FREE Energy Analysis** to see how much money you'll save by switching to Solexx™ Greenhouse Covering.

1-877-234-1595

www.FarmWholesaleAg.com

Farm Wholesale Ag

A division of Adaptive Plastics, Inc.
Makers of Solexx™

*R-Value for 5mm Solexx. 3.5mm Solexx has R-Value of 2.1.



Write in 762

SOUTHWEST AGRI-PLASTICS, INC.

DURA-BENCH[®] ultra

PLASTIC GREENHOUSE BENCHTOP

commercial & retail applications

SIZE: 24" x 48" Nominal (60.96 cm x 121.92 cm)
WEIGHT: 4.5 LBS (2.04 kg)

- ROT PROOF
- RUST PROOF
- LONG LASTING
- LESS EXPENSIVE
- EASIER CLEANING
- NO ROUGH EDGES
- INCREASED AIRFLOW
- NO SPLINTERS
- UV PROTECTED
- EASY TO INSTALL
- ATTACHES TO BOTH WOOD & METAL FRAMES

16400 Midway Road Dallas, TX 75001 Ph. 972.735.8866
P.O. Box 700008 Dallas, TX 75370-0008 Fx. 972.735.8896

1.800.288.9748 SWAPINC.COM

MADE IN U.S.A.

Write in 763