

# FEELING LIKE A WINNER

I've spent years in this industry, working with and writing about plants, and now I am delighted to be the new managing editor of GPN.

Plants have been a part of my life since the beginning. My grandparents had a vegetable garden on the top of a hill in their backyard, with beautiful flowers cascading down, ending in purple pansies at the base. My parents spent much of their free time in our backyard in Connecticut, tending to our family veggie garden and the rose bushes that edged it. I have so many fond memories of wandering through looking for the best picks of green beans, peas, and cucumbers to eat right there, and literally smelling the roses, before running off to play again. I try to continue this tradition with my own family, always having something edible growing in the backyard for them to snack on while enjoying the outdoors.

It was really no surprise when I decided to pursue a degree in plant pathology, encompassing my interest in microbiology and love of plants. While attending the University of Florida, I was glad to have the opportunity to work in the plant pathology department, where I gained knowledge of greenhouse growing and plant breeding programs, and what happens behind the scenes of the agricultural industry. I spent the next decade after graduation in a plant tissue culture laboratory, learning how to manipulate PGRs to clone woody plants, edibles and landscape varieties. I enjoyed the R&D process of figuring out what new crops required to successfully propagate well in vitro, and the challenges some brought; sometimes taking years to get to the finish line.

Writing was a pursuit that I've had an interest in since college but didn't find my break until years into my professional career as lab manager. Encouraged to read agricultural publications to stay up to date with the industry news, I found a tiny ad for freelance work and went after it. Now, I'm using my experiences to enhance the GPN brand and give our readers and market what they need to succeed as the new managing editor.

I'm excited to be a part of the Great American Media Services team and to get to know our GPN readers. I look forward to learning more about what's new in greenhouse products and being able to share it all with you.

These days, I love to walk through big box retailers and my local nurseries looking out for the latest releases and award-winning varieties to hit the market. So, if you see me out there squealing about the fresh color pops or new breeder offerings, stop and say hi or send a wave my way. Until then, you can enjoy photos and details of the recent Winners' Circle selections (page 24). These varieties have earned big acknowledgements from different industry associations due to outstanding performance, resilience and — what brings the biggest smile to my face — bold colors.



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