

A supplement to

Greenhouse
MANAGEMENT

CRUISIN' CALIFORNIA SPRING TRIALS

Guiding you through the 2012 Spring Trials

By Laura R. Allen

A WEEKEND TRIAL

How Todd Swift successfully attended the trials for just a weekend

“Networking and relationships, and, of course, **new products are probably the most important things companies can do**, and Spring Trials can be a place to do that.”

Todd Swift, seedling plug manager, Swift Greenhouses

It wasn't too long ago when Todd Swift, seedling plug manager of Swift Greenhouses Inc. in Gilman, Iowa, never considered attending Spring Trials.

“We had heard of it, but we didn't know what it was,” Swift says.

But about six years ago, Goldsmith invited Swift Greenhouses out to the trials, and the company realized what it was missing out on.

“It was mostly annuals, which, you know, is still the majority, and the majority of our crops are perennials,” Swift says. “But you can get a lot of contacts, connections, and the companies have a lot of products. We learned that it was something we should be attending.”

The problem was that the company couldn't afford to leave the greenhouse for an entire week; not in March, when a lot of products and plugs are being shipped. So the company came up with a solution: Todd and his wife, Kristin, would attend the trials for just the weekend.

“Over the weekend is good because obviously we're not shipping a lot of product then, so it's the only time we could sneak away and afford to be away from the greenhouse that time of year,”

Swift says.

It proved to be a win-win situation. The Swifts were still able to attend the trials without missing out on business back home, and have continued visiting the trials for just the weekend.

Sound like something you'd be interested in? *Greenhouse Management* spoke with Swift about how to manage your own weekend trip to the trials.

Create a schedule

How do you schedule all those sites into one weekend? The answer is you can't.

“We do the north half one year, and the south half the other year,” Swift says. “So it takes two years basically. We don't see as much as you would the entire time, but it's a way to see something rather than nothing anyways.”

Working on a tight, short schedule also means there's no room for error, so Swift plans ahead to make sure he won't lose any precious time. If you're flying out, he recommends arriving early Friday morning, in case there are any travel problems, such as flight delays. Another benefit to arriving early is that Friday can be used to take care of the major-

“It’s more important than ever to introduce new products to the market, to differentiate ourselves, especially independent greenhouses like ourselves.”

— Todd Swift, seedling plug manager, Swift Greenhouses



ity of your driving. For example, this year Todd and his wife will fly into Los Angeles Friday morning then drive down to the Southern Trials. Then the rest of the weekend, as they attend the different sites, they’ll make their way back up the coast and end back in Los Angeles.

“So we usually fly in and fly out at the same place and do the driving all at once,” Swift says. “And you do most of your driving when you’re fresh, and it makes the end of your trip a little more manageable.”

But before you book your flights, make sure you know when the sites you’d like to attend are open, and try to schedule an appointment with them. Some of the sites don’t open until later.

“Definitely plan ahead,” Swift says. “It sounds simple, but it’s definitely important.”

Planning ahead also allows you to fully enjoy the reality of where you are. While the purpose of your trip will be strictly business, it doesn’t mean it can’t be an enjoyable experience as well. Swift says that if there’s time, he and his wife will try to squeeze in a side trip between visiting sites.

KEY POINTS:

- BY PLANNING AHEAD AND BEING PREPARED YOU CAN TAKE A LOT AWAY FROM ATTENDING THE TRIALS FOR JUST A WEEKEND
- THE TRIALS PRESENT AN OP-

“[California] isn’t exactly hard on the eyes,” Swift says. “Who wouldn’t want to go to California in the spring?”

Weigh the worth

In the end, is it really worth the hassle of trying to attend the trials for just the weekend? According to Swift it is.

“I think it’s more important than ever to introduce new products to the market, to differentiate ourselves, especially independent greenhouses like ourselves,” Swift says.

Swift recognizes the argument that you can find most of the information you need from the Internet and publications.

“I do that as well,” he says. “I read the magazines and the Internet articles that come out too, because if you go every other year, you do miss a lot of

products, or you can miss products. But you know when you go out you get that connection, you get a contact, and you usually get special treatment. You get half an hour or sometimes several hours of somebody’s time, so it’s just a much more personal experience and you get to see the crop instead of seeing a photo. You get to see it first-hand. So that would be the biggest thing – new varieties, which you can find in other places – but you get that special individual treatment.”

Swift also says that attending the trials has helped the greenhouse decide which new varieties it would like to produce.

“We make better choices of what’s out there,” he says. “Going forward, obviously in some of these difficult times ahead of people, networking and relationships, and, of course, new products are probably the most important things companies can do, and Spring Trials can be a place to do that. ... It’s a good way to meet people and form those relationships that are so important in this day and age. That’s probably the most important thing for surviving some of these down times we’re all experience right now.” GM

SURVIVING SPRING TRIALS

Nine tips to make your trip more enjoyable

Seventeen sites. More than 50 companies. And 407 miles between the furthest north and south locations. Now, squeeze all of that into seven days and it's only natural to find yourself running into some bumps in the road. Whether you're a seasoned attendee or a first-time visitor, we have nine tips that'll help you have a happy and successful trip.

1 Treat it like a road trip. Understand up front that you'll be living out of a suitcase, spending several hours in a car and will be on the go from dawn until dusk. Having realistic expectations about traveling the coast will help you understand what problems you may or may not run into. With that said...

2 Travel with someone you like. If possible, make sure the person/people who will be joining you are people you get along with. You'll be spending almost every waking hour of the day with them, so you'll want enjoyable company.

3 Bring a GPS. It doesn't matter how map-savvy you are, one wrong turn can lead to precious time lost and flaring tempers. Whether it's a Garmin, an iPhone, or it comes

with the rental car, make sure you have something that can take you directly from point A to point B.

4 Discuss driving time ahead. Make a plan of who will be driving and when. Some are able to drive for hours on end; for others, it's the exact opposite. Also understand what types of driving conditions everyone can handle, such as driving in the rain or at night. Someone who doesn't prefer to drive fast or handle high-traffic probably shouldn't be driving around the Los Angeles area.

5 Share the tunes. When conversations lull and it's just you and the open road, turning on the radio or putting in your favorite album is often a good choice. Just make sure that the station/album you choose is okay with everyone, or that you're taking turns sharing the stereo. Also make sure what you're playing is okay with the driver. His or her focus on the road is more important than hearing your favorite song.

6 Pack smart. It sounds elementary, but take into consideration what you're putting in your suitcase. California weather is usually warm,



but don't forget to pack a light jacket. Comfortable shoes are a must since you'll be walking around sites all day. And with all the gorgeous new varieties on-site, don't forget your camera and backup memory cards and batteries.

7 Schedule appointments. Contact the companies you'd like to visit early on and schedule an appointment with them. You'll be guaranteed their undivided attention and won't have to worry about finding someone to meet with if you decide to just drop by.

8 Be flexible. Even though you schedule appointments and plot a course, things happen – appoint-

ments get backed up, traffic throws you off schedule, or you run into someone and a conversation goes too long. Whatever it may be, and whether it's in or out of your control, mentally prepare yourself to be flexible and just roll with it. Knowing in advance that not everything will go as planned will help keep you calm when it actually goes haywire.

9 Enjoy the view. Although driving across California may become monotonous after a few days, you're still traveling along the Pacific coast in early spring. When you're not on your feet meeting with people, relax and take in the gorgeous landscape. **GM**

By Laura R. Allen

CHECK OUT THE TRIALS

What's new, exciting and happening this year

Whether you're traveling north to south or south to north, here's a look at what you can expect at the various trial sites, broken down by Northern, Central and Southern trial sites.

NORTHERN TRIALS

ABZ Seeds

Joining the Spring Trials for its third year, ABZ Seeds will showcase its popular strawberries. This year its focus will be on the 'Toscana' and 'Gasana' varieties. The winner of the prestigious FleuroStar Award for 2011/2012, 'Toscana' has dark rose blossoms and produces conical, mid-size fruits throughout the summer with uniform germination. The 'Gasana' plant offers fast and even germination, and produces large, deep pink flowers and bi-conical, mid-size fruit.

Danziger 'Dan' Farms

Danziger will display its newest varieties at the Headstart Nursery in Gilroy. It will show new products for its novelties, such as the New Guinea Impatiens for the Sun Harmony series, and Harmony Radiance for

its Harmony series. There will also be petunias, impatiens and perennial crops, such as salvias, heucheras, and lavenders, to name a few.

Golden State Bulb Growers

Presenting three new colors for its compact callas, Golden State Bulb Growers will show Callaifornia Red, Carnival, and Callaifornia Sun at its display in Moss Landing. With the marketing, sales, and research and development teams on hand, visitors will be provided with plenty of information, and several technical demonstrations will be available. In helping take the guess-work out of growing callas, Golden State Bulb Growers also offers growers simple steps to follow in producing these flowers.

Keeping marketing concepts in mind, part of this year's display is designed as a garden retail center to give visitors an example of how to market the products.

Hem Genetics

Offering a multitude of introductions from seed for the 2012-2013 season, Hem Genetics will be showing a



ABZ Seeds - Fragaria Toscana



ABZ Seeds - Fragaria Toscana



OHP - Kontos container

selection of these new introductions. On display will be a natural dwarf geranium series called Geranium Nano. The series has seven colors and the same genetic compactness as the Petunia Limbo and Mambo. New colors include: Mambo red morn, a natural dwarf petunia; Twinny apple-blossom, a double-flowered snapdragon; Diana Pink and picotee mixture, Supra salmon and Chiba cherry picotee, all part of the dianthus series.

MasterTag

Teaming up with Sakata again, MasterTag will show examples of the best practices in packaging, using QR code content, as well as a merchandising display

of some important Sakata genetics. MasterTag has designed its display around specific genetics to demonstrate how its merchandising and messaging techniques can be applied in a real retail environment. MasterTag will be at the Sakata location in Salinas.

OHP

Presenting its results of its plants growth regulators on annuals and perennials, OHP will be displaying at American Takii in Salinas. Dave Barcel, senior technical manager for OHP, will again coordinate the display as he participates in his 17th Spring Trial. Attendees will also see how OHP's PGR Augeo works on no-pinch

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Pacific Plug & Liner

Several new releases for 2012 and 2013 will be available to view at Pacific Plug & Liner at its site in Watsonville. Helleborus 'Penny's Pink,' with its deep pink flowers, is a new addition to the Hellebore collection. The new Cosmic series of cottage style Dianthus brings variegated pink and red flowers. Begonia Sparkle, Salvia Heatwave and the new Dance series of Cordyline from New Zealand are just a few series that will be on display. And featuring more than 70 varieties of pot and perennial Dianthus, the comparison trials are back this year.

Pacific Plug & Liner will serve as the host site to seven other companies: Cohen, Isaacson Flowers, Jaldety, Hishtil, Schwartz Nursery, MPS and the Sunset Western Garden Collection.

Plant Source International

Plant Source International will join other production companies at the Speedling site for this year's Spring Trials. Attendees should swing by its display and see what Plant Source has in store for the upcoming season.

Sakata

Introducing three new colors to the Petchoa SuperCal line, Sakata will display several

completely new varieties at its site in Salinas. An addition to the line of SunPatiens is the SunPatiens Spreading Carmine Red. Sakata will also have several different types of comparison trials, displays of its Home Grown vegetables in retail and ground settings, retail marketing ideas and grower-focused technical displays. Selecta is also a host site to MasterTag, Smithers-Oasis and Western Pulp.

Schoneveld Breeding

They named it Mammoth for a reason. Schoneveld Breeding's new Cyclamen 'Mammoth' has a massive plant size, producing large flowers without losing its round shape. The Cyclamen

also has firm flower stems and blooms uniformly. Mammoth comes in eight colors and will be the main focus of Schoneveld Breeding's display.

Speedling

Speedling will be exhibiting its commercial vegetable production and wholesale ornamental production. Attendees will be able to see vegetable transplants and ornamental plugs. Speedling will also be showing its unique, 11-week germanium program which they have developed over the past 25 years. The program is created to have every germanium color blossom uniformly, so when you receive your seeds, they will begin blooming in



Pacific Plug & Liner - Dianthus Cosmic (Pink Swirl)



Pacific Plug & Liner - Carex (EverColor)



Sakata - Spreading Carmine Red

four weeks.

The Speedling site is located in San Juan Bautista, and will play host to seven other production companies from all over the world that offer a wide array of products.

Syngenta

With seven new series launching at this year's Spring Trials, 2012 is a big introduction year for Syngenta's seed business. Syngenta will feature a new trailing pansy series called Wonderfall, which will be available in six colors. The pansy produces large flowers and has a free-flowering trailing habit, perfect for hanging baskets. A new impati-

ens series called Tumbler will also be introduced. The Tumbler presents a cost-effective option for growers, as its vigorous spreading habit results in fuller containers with fewer plants. The Tumbler will be available in eight colors.

Syngenta will also introduce a new variety to its line of milliflora petunias, called Picobella. The Picobella Cascade is a milliflora trailing petunia, offering the petite flower size with a more vigorous trailing habit.

Ten new vegetative mixes will be introduced to the Kwik Kombo lineup. Three new colors will be added to the Caliope hybrid germanium series

and Lanai verbena will have novelty colors added to its line.

The display will also be a little different from previous years. Syngenta will have a mix of retail-oriented and grower-oriented displays, as well as technical demonstrations.

Thompson & Morgan

The main focus of this year's display for the U.K. company Thompson & Morgan is first-year flowering perennials. This includes Alceas, Zinnias, Rudbeckias, Salvias, Laurentias and more.

Vista Farms

2012 will be Vista Farms' premier appearance for the Spring Trials at the Speedling site. It will display its rooted liners of different varieties of Bougainvilleas, Ixoras, Hibiscus and Tecoma Stanz. While it will not present any new varieties, visitors can expect to see more than 30 Bougainvillea varieties, some of which are exclusive to Vista Farms. The company is the exclusive Rijnplant Bougainvillea Vera propagator for North America, and will present varieties that are only available from Vista Farms. There will also be popular and unique varieties such as Barbara Karst, Juanita Hatten,

Flame and others. Visitors will be able to see how vigorous these varieties develop in a tropical climate.

Managing Partner Jerome J. O'Neill, who has more than 25 years of experience propagating Vista Farm's varieties, will be on-site to answer any questions and offer advice.

CENTRAL TRIALS

Athena Brazil

One of the largest suppliers in South America, Athena Brazil will make its first appearance at this year's Spring Trials. Once a part of GroLink, the company will display almost all of its new varieties from the 2012-2013 season, as well as a few from 2011-2012. The highlight of its display will be the new TerraVida program, a collection of 18 tropical vines. There will also be its new day-neutral plectranthus and trailing turnera, among other unique plants from its line of 300 varieties. Athena Brazil will be at GroLink's site in Oxnard.

Ball FloraPlant

Introduced in 2011, the Patchwork series has three new, distinctive colors: Cosmic Orange, Burgundy and Pink Ice.



Ball Seed - Pretty Grand Mix



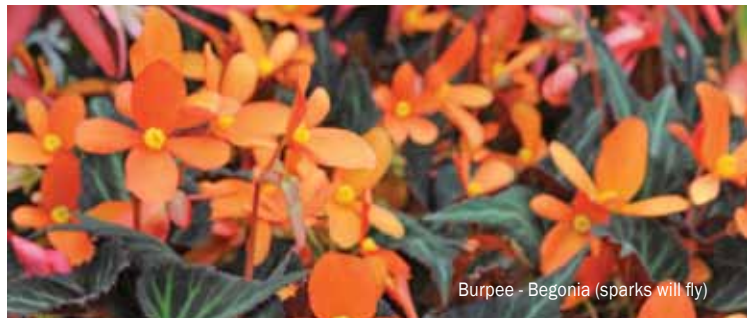
Syngenta - Wonderfall



Darwin Perennials - Echinacea



Originally a line of more pastel colors, the new additions offer deeper oranges and darker burgundies. The series blooms big and continually throughout the season. The unrooted cutting makes them easy to handle and are recommended for large-sized, premium hanging baskets.



Burpee - Begonia (sparks will fly)



Darwin Perennials - Echinacea

Ball Seed

Hand-selected by Ball Seed's Jan Patranella for its genetics and performance, the new Pretty series of petunias will be on display at Ball Seed

this year. Offering lots of saturated color, these seed-grown petunias are long-lasting and don't fall apart. The plant will mound like a typical petunia, but it will not split down the center. Suitable for cold-growing regimes, the petunias also use less PGRs and have a better branching habit, which has improved airflow for less

disease. All top-selling colors ship at the same time, due to the tight bloom window.

Burpee Home Gardens

Introducing six grafted tomatoes to its line of produce, the Bumper Crop collection by Burpee Home Gardens gives you the popular heirloom taste while still being disease resis-



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tant and producing a higher yield. The varieties are: 'Big Rainbow,' 'Black Krim,' 'Brandywine Pink,' 'Brandywine Red,' 'Mortgage Lifter,' and 'San Marzano.' Burpee Home Gardens will also display a full range of herbs and vegetables, and will present new introductions of its Boost! line, a collection of high-nutrition vegetables.

On the ornamental side, Burpee will showcase its new begonia, called 'Sparks Will Fly,' a blonde-leaved plant with tangerine-orange buds of flowers. The begonia is easy to grow, quick to finish and

performs well in full sun to partial shade.

Darwin Perennials

Adding onto the hot coral, salsa red and sandy yellow colors of the Echinacea Sombrero series is the Lemon Yellow, a rich, deep color that will blend in well with the other vibrant colors. The sombreros are drought-tolerant and easy to produce. Darwin will also introduce the Echinacea Double Scoop Cranberry to its line of double coneflowers. The double coneflowers have a high flower count and a long-lasting bloom time. Both

the Sombrero and the Double Scoop are floriferous, hardy and deer tolerant.

Fides Oro

It's been a year since Fides North America announced its acquisition of Oro Farms, and 2012 will be the first time Fides Oro displays at the Spring Trials. Featuring a wide product range from popular breeders such as Cultivaris, Danziger, Floranova and more, visitors can expect to see new introductions for its SunPatiens, Petchoa SuperCal, Calibrachoa Noa series and several more. Fides Oro will also showcase its Mystic Mums, a brand new series that has a flexible mounding plant habit, long shelf life and is available in an assortment of unique colors. Fides Oro will be presenting ways of branding its products in store, to customers and even to consumers.

Flamingo Holland

Once again a wide assortment of Calla varieties will be on display at Flamingo Holland. The Calla material is from three different breeders and each is propagated through tissue

culture, resulting in stronger stems, a longer shelf life and vibrant colors.

You can also expect a larger display of Orientals this year, as Flamingo Holland has added more Pot Oriental varieties to its lineup. The Rose lily, an exclusive line of double flowering Orientals, will be on display as well. While the first varieties are sold in the market, the second generation is on its way, which will feature shorter pot types and newer colors.

Growers will find new and improved varieties of the Pot Asiatics, giving them more options than just the Lily Looks variety. The short pot Freesia, available in three varieties, is a new introduction, and the popular River series will be featured as well.

Florist Holland B.V.

While its products have been in attendance before, this will be Florist Holland B.V.'s first year attending Spring Trials. Hoping to expand its scope and presentation in America, Florist Holland will display at GroLink Plant Co.'s site in Oxnard. Visitors will be able to see the Garvinea Power Flower



Fides Oro - Mystic Mums (Mulec-Sunbeam)



Florist Holland B.V. - Garvinea

line, a series of gerberas that continue outdoor flowering from early spring until the first frost; Flori Line, a collection of potted gerberas known for its vibrant coloration, highly uniform habits and year-round availability; and Patio Gerberas, which offer large, voluminous flowers in color combinations that give a sunny-season vibe. A unique feature to the Patio Gerberas is that you can pick the flowers and put them in a vase for indoors.

The Garvinea line will show Catherine, a sturdy, wedding-white spider-flower variety with needle-like petals. Those looking for a plant to sell around Halloween and the barbecue season may want to check out Dark Fireball, with its flame-like colors. And a new addition to Patio Gerberas will be Patio Gerbera Olympic, offering deep red flowers.

Florist Holland will also showcase a sneak preview of a new series from seed called Sundayz, designed for use on terrace, veranda and patio. The slow-aging and sturdy double-flowered gerberas will soon be available in seven colors and a well-balanced mix.

In addition to its gerberas, Florist Holland will offer sales inspiration, customizable solutions and technical expertise.

Green Fuse Botanicals

With 27 new introductions, Green Fuse Botanicals will also present a brand new perennial line called First Light. The First Light line includes 13 perennials, is selected for mass market and is ideal for small containers. Green Fuse will also have presentations on lifestyle plants, which are ideal for shade, small gardens and indoor locations.

Greenheart Farms

The No.1 goal of Greenheart Farms is to educate its brokers and customers, and Spring Trials provides a great platform for this goal to be achieved. Visitors can learn production tips and tricks to growing roses from Bill DeVor, Greenheart Farms' fourth-generation rose grower. Attendees can also expect to see 2013 perennial and rose introductions from Conard-Pyle Co. and a new collection from Kordes Roses.

Roses can be sold every day of the year, and can fit into any holiday program, from grocery stores to retail garden centers. There will be new POP materials and marketing ideas on display to help inspire garden centers and retailers.

GroLink Plant Co. Inc.

The largest and most popular GroLink series, the Belgian Mums, will be showcased in 70 to 80 varieties. The mums have great flexibility and rounded shape, and GroLink offers a complete color selection of them for every season.

The best Belgian Mum varieties for summer shading will be presented in a new program called 'Black Stars,' as well as the new Red Elite program, which will present the best red Belgian Mum varieties for each season. Information on the new garden and mum netting, as well as recommendations on the best varieties for mixed color combinations, will be available at GroLink's display.

HGTV

Premiering at this year's Spring Trials, HGTV HOME Plant Collection will display at the Dümmer site in San Luis Obispo. Randy Hunter, CEO of Agricola Management



Green Fuse Botanicals - Petunia Blanket rose star

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HGTV - House plant



PanAmerican Seeds - Pansy spring mix



PlantHaven - Coral Reef



Selecta - Dianthus - Everlast

Group, the exclusive licensee for the plant collection, will be coordinating the display. HGTV will showcase its entire 2012 collection, as well as new annual selections from its 2013 collection. HGTV will display a new chalcidra, pansy and a groundcover rose.

There will also be a small presentation showcasing products from other parts of the HGTV brand, such as paint, bedding, flooring and more.

“[Attendees] really should come by and see what’s unique and different about the program we offer over other programs and the power of how we connect to the consumer,” Hunter says. “They need to stop by so they can experience the power of the HGTV brand first-hand.”

Hort Couture

Located at Plug Connection’s site in Oxnard, Hort Couture

will present 17 new varieties for its third Spring Trials, including the first variegated petunia, three new ‘Under the Sea’ Coleus varieties and a new color in Lobularia. It will also feature its FleuroStar winner, Primula ‘Blue Zebra’ to the U.S. and Canadian markets.

PanAmerican Seeds

Presenting a new compact and controlled version of the popular and top-selling Serena Angelonia, PanAmerican now offers the Serenita. Geared toward the Southern Market where the Angeloni can get a little out-of-hand in the landscape, it requires less use of PGRs and doesn’t require pinching. It is also highly resistant to deer and rabbits, and has low water needs.

PanAmerican will also present the Spring Matrix pansy. The Matrix has been

a top-selling series, producing very large flowers and timed to bloom uniformly. The Spring edition has special genetics that will allow growers to plant pansies in the fall for the spring, so the pansies will be ready for retail. All the colors from the same sowing will ship at the same time.

Also bred by PanAmerican is the new edition of ‘Cool Wave Pansy’ from the consumer-facing brand ‘Wave.’ Wave’s separate display will also feature the Wave Medleys, for growers to make their own special mixes of Wave petunias. Brand new Shock Wave petunias will be coming out and attendees can learn how to get certified as a Wave expert.

PlantHaven

Expect a sea of color when stopping by PlantHaven’s display at the GroLink site

in Oxnard. From Diascias to Dianthus, to Abutilons, to Dahlias and more, PlantHaven will also include 13 varieties for its mixed containers at Spring Trials.

Selecta First Class

They call it Everlast for a reason. Selecta’s new ‘Everlast Garden Dianthus’ will be the primary focus of this year’s display. With the hardiness of a perennial, the dianthus will continue to flower, blooming in short and long days. The Zone 4, cold-hardy plant is ideally suited for extremely low temperatures, but can also withstand the heat.

In addition to the dianthus, Selecta will also focus on the Trixi combos and the technology that has been able to produce its bold new colors. Selecta will be in Santa Paula and will have both indoor and outdoor displays.

Skagit Gardens

Displaying this year at the Hidden Oaks Clubhouse in Santa Barbara, Skagit Gardens will present two brand new varieties: the *Campanula* ‘Ringsabell Indigo Blue’ and ‘Ringsabell Mulberry Rose,’ and the *Primula* ‘Kennedy Irish’ series.

The bellflowers, as they’re commonly known, present a perky, scalloped edge, and unlike many of its type have a compact, clumping habit. Blooming from May through July, the flowers grow to 6 inches in foliage and 15 inches in flower. These perennials are a classic for beds or containers.

The Kennedy Irish series offers the Drumcliff, a large, white flower that contains a hint of lavender, and the Innisfree, a red flower with a yellow eye. Their foliage is a dark, bronzy purple, and currently the darkest on the market. These primroses have been bred for 35 years and acquired their name when the first one was introduced on the 50th Anniversary of John F. Kennedy’s Presidential inauguration. The series grows 5 inches in height and spreads 5 inches, blooming from March through May.

SOUTHERN TRIALS

Benary

A worldwide leader in Begonias, Ernst Benary of America will again partner with Plug Connection and Suntory at Plug Connection’s facility in Vista. In addition to new varieties and other products, Benary will be featuring regional performance information, grower

testimonials, state-of-the-art research collected from real-world growing conditions, insights into its world-class seed technology and solutions for the grower, retailer and landscaper. Benary will also present its new mobile-device-compatible website.

Benary will display two new begonias: boliviensis ‘Santa Cruz Sunset,’ the first *Begonia boliviensis* from seed, and tuberhybrida ‘Nonstop Red.’ It will also have the new PIANO *Primula* Rose Bicolor and Pansy Inspire Lemon with Blotch.

Cultivaris

Managing more than 1,000 varieties, Cultivaris will be displaying separately from Plug Connection at its site in this year’s Spring Trials. Cultivaris will showcase new colors for its hybrid series of drakensberg daisies that are more vigorous and disease resistant. It will also feature a couple new salvias, which it believes have the potential to reinvigorate the genus. Cultivaris is also eager to show its new nemesias and lavender.

Ecke Ranch

The “Celebration of Color” is what the folks at Ecke Ranch are calling their display for this year’s Spring Trials. The focus will be on the different varieties Ecke Ranch offers and using them. The first section of the trial area will be designed as the front of a house as well as different backyards. The display will show what plants to use for full sun, full shade and more, including new plants that will work well in a landscape setting. Ecke Ranch will present

more than 35 new introductions and three new series: Petchoa SuperCal, Portulaca and Rococo, a New Guinea Impatien.

After receiving input from growers and retailers for more involvement in POP sales, Ecke Ranch has recently launched a new site for online purchases, where both containers and plants can be ordered. Visitors will see more of this involvement, as a mock-up garden center will be on display as well as integration of digital displays. There will also be an opportunity for participants to win an iPad, Nook and other prizes based off of in-

formation provided on Ecke’s website.

Plug Connections

Plug Connections will again serve as a host site, and will also feature its independent trials. For this year’s vegetative trial, Plug Connections will display the results of the compact *Chalibrachoa*, which was grown in standard growing conditions (short days) as well as a daily extension.

Plug Connection will also show new grafted tomatoes to its Mighty ‘Mato line, increasing from 16 varieties to 34. It will also show its six new grafted peppers and three grafted eggplants.





Suntory - Summer Double

Suntory Flowers

In addition to several new varieties, Suntory will have professionally made videos to offer fresh content for its websites and mobile sites, as well as being accessible on YouTube, with the purpose of

helping growers and retailers sell more plants. Some videos will be brochure videos, with the intention of focusing on the benefits and attributes of Suntory's varieties, while others will focus on garden performance and providing planting

advice for consumers.

Attendees can also expect to see a new series of early flowering double petunias called Surfinia Summer Double petunias, which offer excellent heat and rain tolerance. The first bedding

plant mandevilla, 'Sun Parasol Garden Crimson,' is bred for 4-inch production and landscape use. An entire new crop for Suntory is the Sunrosa roses, a series of compact, floriferous landscape roses. With a compact habit, more flowers and unique colors is the Crackling Fire bolivien-sis begonias. The Princettia euphorbias are a premium blooming potted plant that are positioned for sales in October and November, as well as Valentine's Day, Easter and Mother's Day. And then there is Surdaisy brachyscomes, a showy, large-flowered line.

Suntory's display will be located at the Plug Connection site in Vista. **GM**

UNMATCHED

- QUALITY
- PERFORMANCE
- CONSISTENCY
- VERSATILITY
- VALUE



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By Laura R. Allen

INTERNATIONAL INTERESTS

Why companies from all over the world are attending California Spring Trials

Three years ago, ABZ Seeds, a gourmet strawberry seed distributor in the Netherlands, decided it wanted to expand its name and present its products to a wider audience. Although its seeds were already being sold in North America for a few years, they were being distributed through different companies and under different names. Desiring a more significant coverage of its varieties in North America, the company headed out to California and made its first appearance at the 2010 Spring Trials.

Two years later, Adri Gillissen, owner and director of AGIA-ornamentals, says that ABZ Seeds has seen a significant increase in its business since its involvement in Spring Trials. Growers are more aware of the product, and even Walmart and Lowe's have started selling the seeds, producing a much wider recognition in North America.

Florist Holland B.V., a gerbera breeding company well-known in Europe, also located in the Netherlands, is hoping to find similar results. This year's Spring Trials will be its premier appearance. Like ABZ Seeds, its products are already being sold in North America, but the brand name isn't as widely recognized.

"There's a great market [in North America], and we just want to make sure that our products will be visible there, and we think we have a lot

to offer. And that's why we've chosen to participate," says Martine van Went, marketing communication coordinator for Florist Holland.

Visibility is one thing that the Spring Trials seems to guarantee. With more than 50 companies presented, the event draws in people from all over

up big displays and decorations for Christmas and Halloween seems to be a bigger trend over here. Because of this, Florist Holland will emphasize its seasonal sales to our market, with its Halloween, Jack Frost and Cupido mixes. While the concept isn't as popular in Europe, it is quickly starting

different taste and mentality than either Europe or North America. And it's interesting to see people – the different behavior of people in different areas throughout the world, and also within a country or within a continent you'll see differences. I mean, people in New York have a different taste and mentality than they do in Florida or in California."

But perhaps it is easier to market toward North America, because while there are differences in taste throughout the country, those differences are not as drastic as the ones seen throughout Europe.

"A Walmart concept or Lowe's concept is basically the same whether you're on the East Coast, or the West Coast, or in the Southeast, and I wouldn't know any chain or box store like Walmart or Lowe's that would have the same attitude all over Europe. No way," Gillissen says. "Maybe in that respect it's a little easier to have a large market, like the North American market, being a little bit more in line between the East and West than it is within Europe."

No matter how easy or difficult it might be, companies from across the globe are trekking to California in hopes of making an impression on North American growers and consumers. Visit their displays and discover what these international markets have to offer. GM

“There’s a great market [in North America], and we just want to make sure that **our products will be visible there**, that’s why we’ve chosen to participate.”

— Martine van Went, marketing communication coordinator, Florist Holland B.V.

the globe. Gillissen says that he sees more people from Asia, Australia and South America at Spring Trials compared to the European Pack Trials. Companies from those continents are also making their way to the U.S. Athena Brazil and several Israeli companies will also participate in the trials for the first time.

But it takes more than just appearing at the Spring Trials to really make an impact. Just as North America is different from all of the other continents, marketing concepts aimed at the North American audience differ as well.

Take the holidays for example. van Went says that setting

to catch on. Likewise, Florist Holland will also introduce the Power Flower, a Garvinea that has continuous flowering from early spring until the first frost, which was well-received in the European market when it launched earlier this year.

ABZ Seeds also recognizes the differences between the markets in different continents. America has lived up to its “The bigger the better” reputation in regard to the size of strawberries and the size of the flowers. But that isn't necessarily a bad thing.

“... It's about how [the markets] give opportunities,” says Gillissen. “[For example], Japan has a totally

COMPANY DIRECTORY

Brand new varieties. A sea of colors. Fresh marketing concepts. Presentations, demonstrations and expert advice. California Spring Trials 2012 is here. Use our directory to help you make the most of it.

ABZ Seeds

Region: Northern Trials
Dates: *March 24-30*
Location: Speedling, 2640 San Juan Highway, San Juan Bautista, CA 95045
Contact: Adri Gillissen, (31) 622-740-196, info@abz-strawberry.nl, www.abz-strawberry.nl

America in Bloom

Region: Southern Trials
Dates: *March 24-30*
Location: Plug Connection, 2627 Ramona Drive, Vista, CA 92084
Contact: Lisa Finnegan, (760) 631-0992, lisa@plugconnection.com, www.americainbloom.org

American Takii

Region: Northern Trials
Dates: *March 24-30*
Location: American Takii, 301 Natividad Road, Salinas, CA 93906
Contact: Julia Paul, (831) 443-4901, jpaul@takii.com, www.takii.com

Athena Brazil

Region: Central Trials
Dates: *March 25-29*
Location: GroLink Plant Co. Inc., 4107 West Gonzales Road, Oxnard, CA 93036
Contact: Paul Gaydos, (941) 750-8885, Paul@athenabrazil.com, www.athenabrazil.com

Ball FloraPlant

Region: *Central Trials*
Dates: *March 24-29*
Location: Ball Horticultural Co., 335 South Briggs Road, Santa Paula, CA 93060
Contact: Mary Long, (630) 588-3187, mlong@panamseed.com, www.ballfloraplant.com

Ball Horticultural Co.

Region: *Central Trials*
Dates: *March 24-29*
Location: Ball Horticultural Co., 335 South Briggs Road, Santa Paula, CA 93060
Contact: Mary Long, (630) 588-3187, mlong@panamseed.com, www.ballhort.com

Ball Ornamentals

Region: *Central Trials*
Dates: *March 24-29*

Location: Ball Horticultural Co., 335 South Briggs Road, Santa Paula, CA 93060
Contact: Mary Long, (630) 588-3187, mlong@panamseed.com, www.ballornamentals.com

Benary

Region: Southern Trials
Dates: *March 24-30*
Location: Plug Connection, 2627 Ramona Drive, Vista, CA 92084
Contact: Lisa Finnegan, (760) 631-0992, lisa@plugconnection.com, www.benary.com

Cohen Propagation Nurseries

Region: *Northern Trials*
Dates: *March 24-30*
Location: Pacific Plug & Liner, 750 Casserly Road, Watsonville, CA 95076
Contact: Erin Dumler, (831) 768-6330, packtrials@ppandl.net, www.cohennur.co.il

Cultivaris

Region: Southern Trials
Dates: *March 24-30*
Location: Plug Connection, 2627 Ramona Drive, Vista, CA 92084
Contact: Lisa Finnegan, (760) 631-0992, lisa@plugconnection.com, www.cultivaris.com

Danziger "Dan" Flower Farm

Region: Northern Trials
Dates: *March 24-29*
Location: Headstart Nursery, 4860 Monterey Road, Gilroy, CA 95020
Contact: Sharon Israel, (408) 842-3030, Sharon@danziger.co.il, www.danziger.co.il

Darwin Perennials

Region: *Central Trials*
Dates: *March 24-29*
Location: Ball Horticultural Co., 335 South Briggs Road, Santa Paula, CA 93060
Contact: Mary Long, (630) 588-3187, mlong@panamseed.com, www.darwinplants.com

Dümmen USA Inc.

Region: Central Trials
Dates: *March 25-29*
Location: Dümmen USA Inc. at Edna Valley Vineyard, 2585 Biddle Ranch Road, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

Contact: Diane Surette, (630) 212-1276, d.surette@dummenusa.com, www.dummenusa.com

Fides Oro Inc.

Region: Central Trials
Dates: *March 24-29*
Location: Fides Oro Inc., 15245 Telegraph Road, Santa Paula, CA 93060
Contact: Amy Lyons, (805) 525-7125, a.lyons@fides-oro.com, www.fides-oro.com

Flamingo Holland

Region: Central Trials
Dates: *March 24-29*
Location: Fides Oro, Inc., 15245 Telegraph Road, Santa Paula, CA 93060
Contact: Kelly Adcox, (760) 734-1033, kelly@flamingoholland.com, www.flamingoholland.com

Floranova

Region: *Central Trials*
Dates: *March 24-29*
Location: Floranova, 222 North A Street, Lompoc, CA 93436
Contact: Ashley Ransbottom, (574) 594-9284, aransbottom@floranova.com, www.floranova.co.uk

Florensis

Region: *Northern Trials*
Dates: *March 24-30*
Location: Speedling, 2640 San Juan Highway, San Juan Bautista, CA 95045
Contact: Leo Hoogendoorn, (31) 622-934-021, leo.hoogendoorn@florensis.com, www.florensis.com

Florist Holland B.V.

Region: Central Trials
Dates: *March 25-29*
Location: GroLink Plant Co., 4107 West Gonzales Road, Oxnard, CA 93036
Contact: Martine van Went, (31) 651-759-479, martineW@gerbera.com, www.floristholland.nl

Golden State Bulb Growers

Region: Northern Trials
Dates: *March 24-30*
Location: Golden State Bulb Growers, 1260 Highway 1 Moss Landing, CA 95039
Contact: Angela Woolem, (831) 728-0500 ext. 254, angela-woolem@goldenstatebulb.com, www.goldenstatebulb.com

woolem@goldenstatebulb.com, www.goldenstatebulb.com

Greenex USA Inc.

Region: Northern Trials
Dates: *March 24-30*
Location: Speedling, 2640 San Juan Highway, San Juan Bautista, CA 95045
Contact: Jecki Moshav, (831) 623-7800, jecki@greenex.com, www.greenex.com

Green Fuse Botanicals

Region: Central Trials
Dates: *March 25-29*
Location: GroLink Plant Co. Inc., 4107 West Gonzales Road, Oxnard, CA 93036
Contact: Lorena Castro-Craven, (310) 458-3580, lcc@green-fuse.com, register online at www.green-fuse.com

Greenheart Farms

Region: *Central Trials*
Dates: *March 25-28 (other days by appointment only)*
Location: Greenheart Farms, 902 Zenon Way, Arroyo Grande, CA 93420
Contact: Layci Gragnani, (805) 481-2234 ext. 462, info@greenheartfarms.com, www.greenheartfarms.com

GroLink Plant Co. Inc.

Region: Central Trials
Dates: *March 25-29*
Location: GroLink Plant Co. Inc., 4107 West Gonzales Road, Oxnard, CA 93036
Contact: Mia Martinez, (800) 451-6319, Mia@grolink.com, www.grolink.com

Headstart Nursery

Region: Northern Trials
Dates: *March 24-29*
Location: Headstart Nursery, 4860 Monterey Road, Gilroy, CA 95020
Contact: Melissa Campilli, (408) 842-3030 ext. 28, mcampill@headstartnursery.com, www.headstartnursery.com

Hem Genetics

Region: Northern Trials
Dates: *March 24-30*
Location: Speedling, 2640 San Juan Highway, San Juan Bautista,

CA 95045
Contact: Rudy Westenberg, (813) 645-3221, r.westenberg@hemgenetics.com, www.hemgenetics.com

HGTV HOME Plant Collection

Region: Central Trials
Dates: March 25-29
Location: Dümmer USA Inc. at Edna Valley Vineyard, 2585 Biddle Ranch Road, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401
Contact: Randy Hunter, (615) 457-0000, rhunter@agricolamanagement.com, www.agricolamanagement.com

Hishtil Nurseries

Region: Northern Trials
Dates: March 24-30
Location: Pacific Plug & Liner, 750 Casserly Road, Watsonville, CA 95076
Contact: Erin Dummler, (831) 768-6330, packtrials@ppandl.net, www.hishtil.com

Hort Couture

Region: Central Trials
Dates: March 25-29
Location: GroLink Plant Co. Inc., 4107 West Gonzales Road, Oxnard, CA 93036
Contact: Jim Monroe, (866) 955-HORT, jim@hortcoutureplants.com, www.hortcoutureplants.com

Isaacson Flowers

Region: Northern Trials
Dates: March 24-30
Location: Pacific Plug & Liner, 750 Casserly Road, Watsonville, CA 95076
Contact: Erin Dummler, (831) 768-6330, packtrials@ppandl.net, www.isaacson-flowers.com

Jaldety

Region: Northern Trials
Dates: March 24-30
Location: Pacific Plug & Liner, 750 Casserly Road, Watsonville, CA 95076
Contact: Erin Dummler, (831) 768-6330, packtrials@ppandl.net, www.jaldety.com

Kieft Pro Seeds

Region: Central Trials
Dates: March 24-29
Location: Ball Horticultural Co., 335 South Briggs Road, Santa Paula, CA 93060
Contact: Mary Long, (630) 588-3187, mlong@panamseed.com, www.kieftseeds.com

MasterTag

Region: Northern Trials
Dates: March 24-29
Location: Sakata, 103 Boronda

Road, Salinas, CA 93907
Contact: Dori Leutzinger, (231) 894-1774, dleutzinger@mastertag.com, www.mastertag.com

OHP

Region: Northern Trials
Dates: March 24-30
Location: American Takii, 301 Natividad Road, Salinas, CA 93906
Contact: Dave Barcel, (262) 392-3004 dbarcel@ohp.com, www.ohp.com

Pacific Plug & Liner

Region: Northern Trials
Dates: March 24-30
Location: Pacific Plug & Liner, 750 Casserly Road, Watsonville, CA 95076
Contact: Erin Dummler, (831) 768-6330, packtrials@ppandl.net, www.ppandl.com

PanAmerican Seed

Region: Central Trials
Dates: March 24-29
Location: Ball Horticultural Co., 335 South Briggs Road, Santa Paula, CA 93060
Contact: Mary Long, (630) 588-3187, mlong@panamseed.com, www.panamseed.com

Paul Ecke Ranch

Region: Southern Trials
Dates: March 24-30
Location: 800 Ecke Ranch Road, Encinitas, CA 92024
Contact: Cheryl Ann Cryslar, (760) 944-4032, ccryslar@eckeranch.com, www.eckeranch.com

Plant Source International Inc.

Region: Northern Trials
Dates: March 24-30
Location: Speedling, 2640 San Juan Highway, San Juan Bautista, CA 95045
Contact: Alan Zaeske, (517) 381-8708, azaeske@sbcglobal.net, www.plantsourceintl.com

PlantHaven

Region: Central Trials
Dates: March 25-29
Location: GroLink Plant Co. Inc., 4107 West Gonzales Road, Oxnard, CA 93036
Contact: Denise Frey, (805) 569-9179, denise.frey@planthaven.com, www.planthaven.com

Plug Connection

Region: Southern Trials
Dates: March 24-30
Location: Plug Connection, 2627 Ramona Drive, Vista, CA 92084
Contact: Lisa Finnegan, (760) 631-0992, lisa@plugconnection.

com, www.plugconnection.com

Proven Winners

Region: Southern Trials
Dates: March 24-29
Location: 32149 Aquaduct Road, Bonsall, CA 92003
Contact: Kerry Meyer, (573) 477-9420, kerry@provenwinners.com, www.provenwinners.com

Sakata

Region: Northern Trials
Dates: March 24-29
Location: Sakata, 103 Boronda Road, Salinas, CA 93907
Contact: Elaina Ross, (408) 782-5382, eross@sakata.com, www.sakata.com

Schoneveld Breeding

Region: Northern Trials
Dates: March 24-30
Location: Speedling, 2640 San Juan Highway, San Juan Bautista, CA 95045
Contact: Tamara Janssen, (831) 623-7800, sales@schoneveld.nl, www.schoneveld.nl

Schwartz Nursery

Region: Northern Trials
Dates: March 24-30
Location: Pacific Plug & Liner, 750 Casserly Road, Watsonville, CA 95076
Contact: Erin Dummler, (831) 768-6330, packtrials@ppandl.net, www.schwartznursery.com

Selecta First Class

Region: Central Trials
Dates: March 24-29
Location: Ball Horticultural Co., 335 South Briggs Road, Santa Paula, CA 93060
Contact: Mary Long, (630) 588-3187, mlong@panamseed.com, www.selecta.com

Skagit Gardens

Region: Central Trials
Dates: March 25-27, by appointment only
Location: Hidden Oaks Clubhouse, 4760 Calle Camarada, Santa Barbara, CA 93110
Contact: Barb Young, (360) 424-6144 ext. 4302, byoung@skagitgardens.com, www.skagitgardens.com

Smithers-Oasis

Region: Northern Trials
Dates: March 24-29
Location: Sakata, 103 Boronda Road, Salinas, CA 93907
Contact: Elaina Ross, (408) 782-5382, eross@sakata.com, www.oasisfloral.com

Speedling Inc.

Region: Northern Trials
Dates: March 24-30
Location: Speedling, 2640 San Juan Highway, San Juan Bautista, CA 95045
Contact: Kathy Enders, (630) 391-2832, kenders@speedling.com, www.speedling.com

Suntory Flowers

Region: Southern Trials
Dates: March 24-30
Location: Plug Connection, 2627 Ramona Drive, Vista, CA 92084
Contact: Lisa Finnegan, (760) 631-0992, lisa@plugconnection.com, www.suntorycollection.com

Syngenta

Region: Northern Trials
Dates: March 24-29, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Location: Syngenta, 2280 Hecker Pass Road, Gilroy, CA 95020
Contact: (888) 662-2670, spring.trials@syngenta.com, www.syngenta.com

Thompson & Morgan

Region: Northern Trials
Dates: March 24-30
Location: Speedling, 2640 San Juan Highway, San Juan Bautista, CA 95045
Contact: Andrew Spencer, (831) 623-7800, aspencer@thompsonmorgan.com, www.thompsonmorgan.com

Vista Farms

Region: Northern Trials
Dates: March 24-30
Location: Speedling, 2640 San Juan Highway, San Juan Bautista, CA 95045
Contact: (787) 837-5909, sales@vistafarms.net, www.vistafarms.com

Western Pulp

Region: Northern Trials
Dates: March 24-29
Location: Sakata, 103 Boronda Road, Salinas, CA 93907
Contact: Elaina Ross, (408) 782-5382, eross@sakata.com, www.westernpulp.com

Westhoff

Region: Central Trials
Dates: March 25-29
Location: GroLink Plant Co. Inc., 4107 West Gonzales Road, Oxnard, CA 93036
Contact: Mia Martinez, (800) 451-6319, Mia@grolink.com, www.westhoff.com GM