



## Earth Day (April 22)

## Arbor Day (April 24)

These are two excellent opportunities to highlight your business through special events and promotions. What do you have planned?



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## Biological Crop Protection

Using Biologicals for insect and disease control has been the topic at the last two Commercial Flower Growers of Wisconsin meetings.

Utilizing beneficial insects in the greenhouse was the presentation at the March meeting. A representative of Biobest of Canada spoke on the use of biologicals as a part of your pest management program.

For more information link to their website, [www.biobest.be/home/3](http://www.biobest.be/home/3) or contact your BFG representative.

Disease control with BioWorks Products was the April topic. Lots of helpful information can be found at their website, [www.bioworksinc.com](http://www.bioworksinc.com).

## Value of Home Gardening

This was just posted in Dr. Charlie Hall's "[Making Cents of Green Industry Economics](#)" Blog.

Findings from the National Gardening Association's (NGA) new survey, *The Impact of Home and Community Gardening in America*, confirm that food gardening in the U.S. is on the rise. Seven million more households plan to grow their own fruits, vegetables, herbs, or berries in 2009 than in 2008 — a 19 percent increase in participation. This anticipated increase is nearly double the 10 percent growth in vegetable gardening from 2007 to 2008 and reflects the number of new food gardeners emerging this year.

More Americans are recognizing the benefits of growing their own produce, including improved quality, taste, and cost savings. In 2008, gardeners spent a total of \$2.5 billion to purchase seeds, plants, fertilizer, tools, and other gardening supplies to grow their own food. According to NGA estimates, on average a well-maintained food garden yields a \$500 return when considering a typical gardener's investment and the market price of produce.

To read the complete report [click here](#).



## Garden Center Certification

**Proven Winners** recently developed a comprehensive training program for North American independent garden centers: Formerly known as the Certified Garden Center program, the newly relaunched iGarden Certification Program offers important information on what garden center shoppers are looking for and how to provide the best possible customer service.

The training program, which is free to independent garden centers, is available in an online or hard-copy video format and includes information on what motivates customers to buy and what marketing, service and merchandising strategies are most effective in reaching them.

The program's three training modules include plant selling, merchandising and customer service techniques. Once employees have viewed the video training modules, they must pass an online test to achieve certified status.

For more information [link here](#).

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## The Nose Knows

Smell is a powerful sense and can trigger memories and emotions in customers. In fact, medical studies have found that smelling a scent while learning and again during sleep may help a person remember information. But what does this mean for retailers? By understanding the power of scents and smell, retailers can evoke certain emotions in consumers.

Retailers long have experimented with scents in stores. This past holiday season, Sony Electronics complemented a chocolate-themed marketing campaign with an accompanying chocolate-peppermint scent inside and outside of its mall-based stores.

Luckily for garden retailers, the smell of flowers is pleasant to many consumers. Consider grouping fragrant varieties together to create strong (but not too strong) scent centers to draw customers deeper into a store.

It's important to note that while consumers respond well to good scents, they also respond negatively to unpleasant smells.

Garden retailers should do their best to keep smells from fertilizers, chemicals and other heavily scented products from becoming too strong.

Source: GreenProfit Magazine

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## Free Publicity for Garden Centers

Selecta has created a new website for its Mini-Famous calibrachos, and is offering garden centers free positioning on it.

The website for the MiniFamous Club, [www.minifamousclub.com](http://www.minifamousclub.com), will soon feature a "Find a Retailer" section designed to be consumers' main resource for finding garden centers selling varieties in the MiniFamous series.

To get a free listing, garden centers can go to [www.minifamousclub.com](http://www.minifamousclub.com) and click "Add Your Business" in the upper right corner. There is a form to complete and submit.

The MiniFamous calibrachos have received attention recently in Better Homes & Gardens, as well as other consumer publications. The series is defined by its uniform growth habit, brilliant colors, strong root system and early flowering, as well as excellent summer performance. The most recent addition to the series is MiniFamous Double, the world's first double-flowering calibrachoa.

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