

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Retailers' Choice Awards™ at Cultivate'26

Columbus, OH, July 13, 2026 – Retailers' Choice Awards™ were presented to 13 exhibiting firms for 15 products at Cultivate'26 in Columbus, OH on July 13, 2026. The Garden Center Group's Danny Summers and Tim Quebedeaux led the search as Garden Retailers selected the best new products to bring excitement and noteworthy interest to their stores in the coming season. Following is a list of firms (presented A-Z) and the products receiving recognition:

EcoEase Lawn Alternative Seed Shakers

Botanical Interests

525 Burbank St., Unit 1, Broomfield, CO 80020

Tel: 800-486-2647

<https://www.botanicalinterests.com>

*These three new Lawn Alternatives provide upgrades to a greener, more sustainable lawn. They include (1) **EcoEase Microclover and Fescue Lawn Mix**, (2) **White Clover Alternative Lawn Seed Shaker**, and (3) **EcoEase Flowering Mix Alternative Lawn Seed Shaker**. These low-maintenance alternatives create a dense, foot-traffic-tolerant groundcover that requires little to no mowing. Thriving in poor soils and partial shade, it uses less water than traditional lawns and eliminates the need for fertilizers or herbicides. They enrich the soil with nitrogen, supports pollinators when blooming, and resists pet spotting, while the mix stays lush and green from early spring to first frost. Perfect for new lawns or overseeding, EcoEase is the eco-friendly way to a beautiful yard.*





Sofia® Cherry Laurel

Concept Plants

Brunel 2, 3401 LJ IJsselstein, The Netherlands

Tel: 844-367-7723

<https://www.conceptplants.com>

This new compact Cherry Laurel looks more like a holly or boxwood at first glance. It features narrow, serrated, glossy leaves, making it excellent for low hedging, topiary, containers, or as a small feature shrub in gardens. It's a hardy, low-maintenance plant, tolerant of both extreme cold (down to -25°C) and heat, with good disease resistance, requiring minimal pruning for shape.

Petunia Sweetunia Violet Vortex

Dummen Orange

250 S High St Ste 650, Columbus, OH 43215

Tel: 614-850-9551

<https://na.dummenorange.com>

This new addition to the Sweetunia Series caught our retailers' eyes for its unique combination of colors of violet and soft cream. Vortex is the right way to describe the combination for sure. It features a full habit with lots of brightly colored and uniquely patterned blooms. Medium upright habit and vigor; stands up to harsh conditions. Ideal for various container sizes and as filler in combination containers.





2nd Nature Organic Plant Food

Fertilizer Packaging Plus/OberlandAgriScience

820 Tek Dr., Crystal Lake IL 60014

Tel: 708-458-8615

<https://fertilizerpkg.com/>

This is a totally new way to look at organic fertilizer sources. It's plant food fertilizer, made from black soldier fly larvae frass – a natural co-product of insect farming. A unique source of Chitin – a compound found in insect shells that has been studied for its role in supporting soil and plant health. A source of organic matter and beneficial nutrients, 2nd Nature supports soil health, boosts plant vitality, and helps gardeners grow thriving gardens. Perfect for vegetables, fruit, potted plants, shrubs, and flowers. Produced by Oberlandagriscience in Canada, and packaged and distributed by Fertilizer Packaging Plus in the USA.

Lords of the Fly® - Carnivorous Butterwort

Little Prince of Oregon Nursery

15868 NE Eilers Rd, Aurora, OR 97002

Tel: 503-678-5687

Bugs Beware! Our retail judges loved what the Little Prince Team has created with the series name as well as plant selection. Here's just one we awarded... Pinguicula 'Guatemala' is a carnivorous Butterwort plant featuring rosettes of lime green ovate petals. Under strong lighting pink blushing will appear. A combination of the series name, the tags, and bright foliage colors makes these stop traffic!





Pittosporum Pot Belly

Monrovia Nursery Company

13455 SE Lafayette Hwy, Dayton, OR 97114
Tel: 800-666-0111

You have never seen a “pitt” like this before... short and polite! Our retailers loved the form of Pot Belly. It’s a tough evergreen that forms a tidy ball shape with minimal trimming.

Shiny green leaves have white undersides. It produces small, dark red, scented flowers from spring to early summer. While most all others are either much larger or variegated, Pot Belly’s politeness will position it where no other Pittosporum can go!

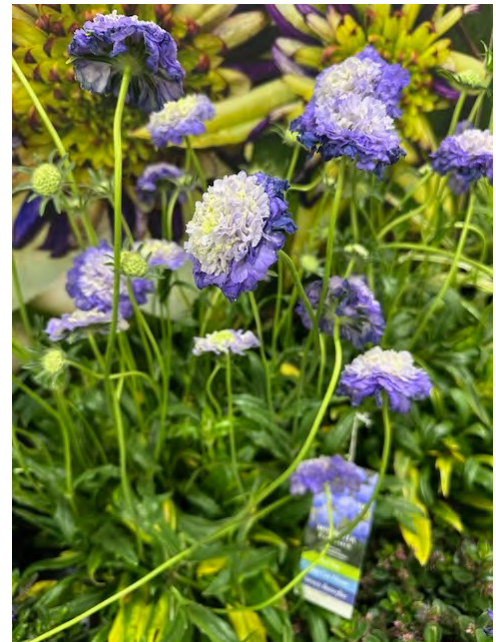
Pincushion Skyrocket Scabiosa

Monrovia Nursery Company

13455 SE Lafayette Hwy, Dayton, OR 97114
Tel: 800-666-0111

*This Scabiosa is a showstopper with beautiful, big, soft violet, large **double blooms** floating above a tidy mound of green foliage on long stems.*

Younger blooms show a pretty creamy-white center that slowly turn to all blue as the bloom progresses. The strong stems makes this an exceptional cut flower producer.





African Marigold Lanna Lace

PanAmerican Seed

622 Town Rd, West Chicago, IL 60185

Tel: 630-231-1400

<https://www.panamseed.com/>

Lanna Lace features white double blooms that shake off water for a fresh look throughout Summer! Add it to your lineup for a full colour range of vibrant African marigolds that last! Dwarf white marigold has fully double flowers that shed water well and avoid turning brown for a longer period. Well-suited to garden beds and mixed containers.

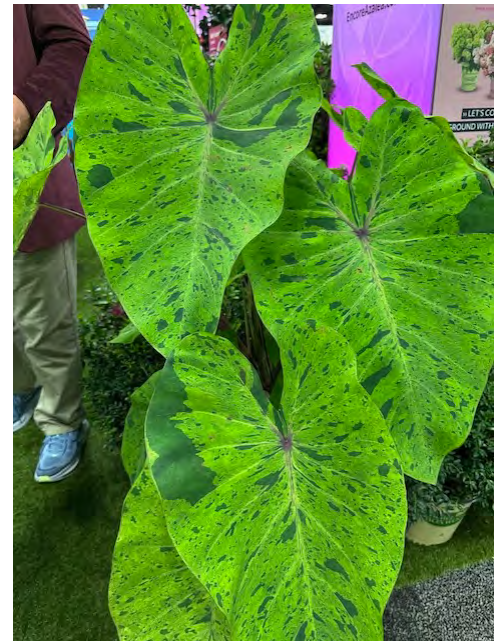
Colocasia Royal Hawaiian® Mai Tai
Plant Development Services, Inc (PDSI)

173225 County Rd 68, Loxley, AL 36551

Tel: 251-964-6778

<https://plantdevelopment.com/>

Medium clump-forming Colocasia with unique velvet camouflage foliage in zesty lemon and green on white and black candy cane stems. PDSI said Mai Tai continuously maintains its character (variegated colors and patterns) through continued growth. Excellent for premium containers, borders and mass plantings in full sun to part shade.





Carex Lunar Falls

Plant Development Services, Inc (PDSI)

173225 County Rd 68, Loxley, AL 36551

Tel: 251-964-6778

<https://plantdevelopment.com/>

This new Carex features more vaiegation than others making it even more bright... where's the batteries? Its reported to be fast-growing, a cool-season sedge with arching, nearly white blades marked by a narrow green midrib. Forms 18–24 in. evergreen fountains that spill from containers, edges and walls. Performs in sun to part shade with average moisture and good drainage.

Sweet Caroline Bewitched After Midnight II

Proven Winners®

1600 E. Lincoln Hwy Ste F, Dekalb, IL 60115

Tel: 815-895-1872

Building on the award-winning line of Sweet Caroline Bewitched sweet potato vines, the dramatic purple-black coloring of Sweet Caroline Bewitched After Midnight II is as impressive in the South as it is in cooler climates. Even in the most extreme heat, which causes many dark-leaved plants to bleach out or turn green, this improved selection shows just a hint of olive-purple. In most climates, the foliage is deep purple-black all season.

Like others in the series, Sweet Caroline Bewitched After Midnight II also has the characteristic pointed leaf shape and weaves beautifully among companion plants in container recipes. Rather than being strictly trailing like traditional sweet potato vines, this variety has a more mounded shape.





Sun Parasol Giant Powder Pink Mandevilla

Suntory Flowers/Sun-Fire Nurseries

4-17-5 Shiba, Minato-ku, Tokyo, 108-0014 Japan

Tel: 440-522-1447

<https://suntoryflowers.com>

While our judges have awarded several Sun Parasol introductions in recent years, none have been as large stature as Giant Powder Pink! Sun Parasol Giant varieties produce large flowers that span up to 5 inches. Natural climbers, these beauties are stunning when trained to a trellis or obelisk in patio pots. The flowering season is slightly later than that of the Original group. The Giant varieties are the most heat-tolerant and highly disease-resistant.

Coffee Shop Lavender Latte Dahlia

Syngenta Flowers, LLC

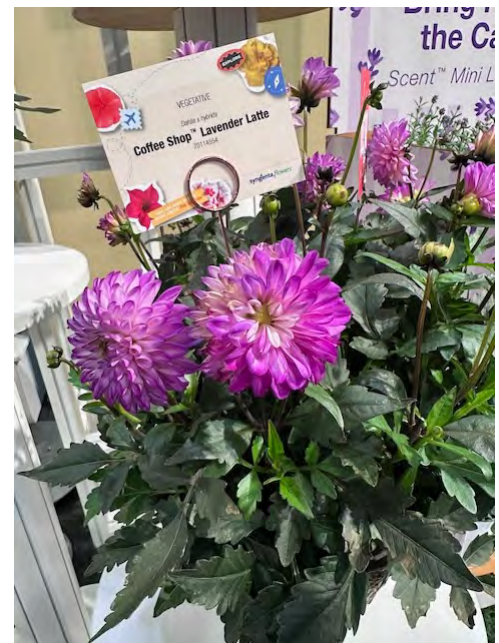
2280 Hecker Pass Hwy, Gilroy, CA 95020

Tel: 408-310-1257

<https://www.syngentaflowers.com>

This new Dahlia features dark foliage that creates dramatic contrast in borders while complementing the rich, fully double blooms that hold their shape throughout the season.

Strong garden performance with excellent powdery mildew resistance helps plants to look fresh and healthy from summer through fall frost. Perfect for patio pots, cutting gardens and landscape beds, these robust plants deliver continuous waves of café-inspired colors on strong stems above the striking dark foliage.





Elegance Pansies Antionette & Twilight Collections

Tagawa Greenhouse

17999 Weld County Rd, Brighton, CO 80603

Tel: 401-536-4471

<https://www.tagawagreenhouse.com/pansies/>

Tagawa showed us two new collections of Pansies featuring ruffled blooms, displaying an enchanting palette of pastel colors that range from soft whites and delicate pinks to sunny yellows and gentle purples.

Breeder Isao Sato, who was onsite during the award presentation, and who's journey with Tagawa Greenhouses began in the 1980s when he came to Colorado for an internship, an experience that sparked a lifelong passion for pansy breeding. Returning to Japan, he spent decades dedicated to perfecting the art of breeding, channeling his expertise and vision into creating truly distinctive pansy

varieties. The results are these collections—an offering he chose to share with Tagawa, honoring the deep connection formed during his early years here. For both Mr. Sato and Tagawa, the Antoinette collection represents a remarkable full circle—a testament to collaboration, dedication, and the shared pursuit of beauty in the garden.

Heuchera Fyre Wing series

Terra Nova Nurseries

17450 SW 200 St, Canby, OR 97013

Tel: 503-263-3150

<https://www.terravanurseries.com>

Terra Nova is known for bringing really new looks to plants and they have done it again. The new Heuchera Fyre Wing Series is an amazing group of new Heucheras with never seen before colors plus **deeply cut, lacy foliage**. This new series features **seven colors**, each with imaginative names and matching fun dragon characters! Just take a look at the main webpage link above to see them all.



So, that's it for the 15 Retailers' Choice Awards for Cultivate'26. We hope this is good for you. Remember, as you work upcoming Trade Shows or Plant Trials... there are so many new plants that can create excitement in your Garden Center!

A special **thank you** to all Retailers participating in the Retailers' Choice Awards™ selection process. The awards at Cultivate'26 was a joint presentation by AmericanHort/Cultivate'26 and The Garden Center Group.

The Garden Center Group focuses on business solutions designed to help Garden Centers increase sales, improve operations, and retain more profit. With a support team of leading industry professionals offering business management, financial, marketing, HR services and more, The Group offers retailers innovative resources to maximize their potential to succeed. For information about The Garden Center Group and the services it provides, visit www.thegardencentergroup.com or call Danny Summers at 678.909.7770.

American Horticulture Association (AmericanHort) is the national association for the green industry. Its mission is to "unite, promote, and advance the industry through advocacy, collaboration, connectivity, education, market development, and research." For more information about AmericanHort or Cultivate'26 visit www.americanhort.org or call AmericanHort at 614.487.1117

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Photos available upon request