

NATIONAL GARDEN BUREAU



ANNUAL REPORT
FOR 2024-2025



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page 2	- Table of Contents
Page 3	- President's Report
Page 4	- Cast Management
Page 5	- Treasurer's Reports
Page 6	- AAS Trials Program Committee Report
Page 7-13	- 2025 AAS Winners
Page 14	- AAS Combined Judges Program Committee Report
Page 15	- AAS Display Garden Program Committee Report
Page 16	- AAS Display Garden Design Challenge Winners
Page 17	- Non-Plant Promotions Program Committee Report
Page 18	- NGB Membership Program Committee Report
Page 19	- Year of the Program Committee Report
Page 20	- 2026 "Year of the" genera
Page 21	- Marketing Committee Report
Page 22	- New Websites
Page 23-24	- 2025 Green Thumb Award Winners
Page 25	- Breeder's Cup Winner
Page 26	- Therapeutic Garden Grant Recipients
Page 27	- 2024 Summer Summit
Page 28	- 2025 International Plant Trialing Conference
Page 29	- NGB Staff
Page 30	- NGB Board of Directors
Page 31	- NGB Program Committee VPs





PRESIDENT'S REPORT

As we reflect on the past year in the US horticulture market, we've seen a mix of challenges and opportunities. Despite economic pressures and unpredictable weather patterns, our industry has shown remarkable resilience. Consumer interest in gardening remains strong, with a continued focus on sustainable practices and plants with a purpose.

NGB has been at the forefront of these developments, driving initiatives that support both industry professionals and home gardeners. Our merger with AAS has proven to be a strategic success, streamlining operations and enhancing our ability to promote exceptional plant varieties.

One of our most significant achievements this year has been managing the registration and marketing for the California Spring Trials (CAST). This new responsibility has provided valuable insights and learning experiences, which we're eager to apply and build upon for the 2026 show.

Looking ahead, we're excited about the upcoming International Plant Trialing Conference in October. This event promises to be a hub of innovation and knowledge-sharing, bringing together experts from around the globe and across disciplines to discuss the latest trends and technologies in plant trial evaluation.

NGB continues to evolve and adapt to serve our members and the broader horticultural community better. We're committed to fostering growth, sustainability, and excellence in our industry as we move forward into another promising season. Read on to learn more about all our impactful activities....

Thank you for your continued support of NGB!

CAST MANAGEMENT

As part of our ongoing efforts to provide superior and worthwhile benefits to not only our members but the entire horticulture industry, we took over the management of the California Spring Trials (CAST) in 2025.

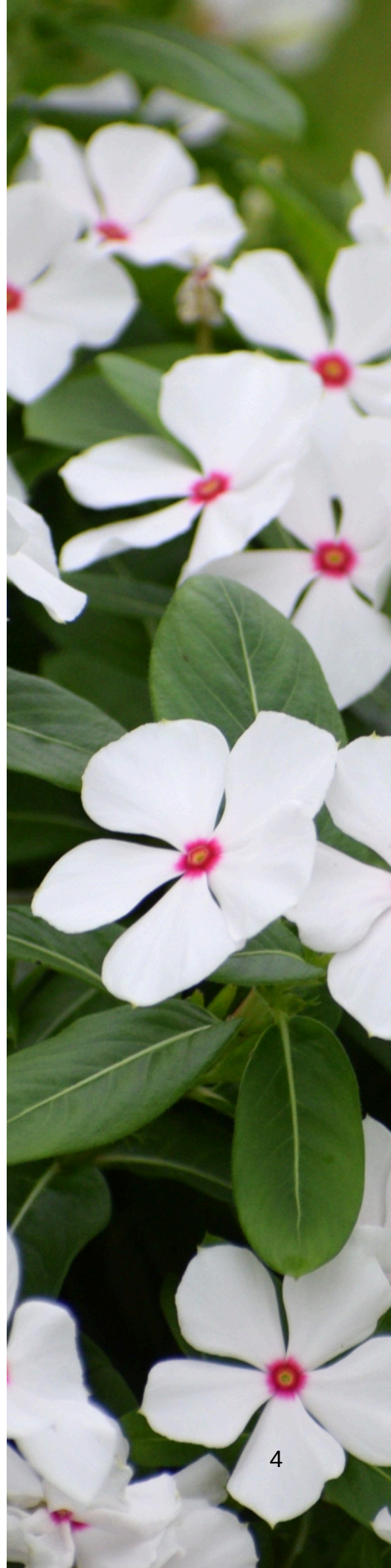
Our inaugural year managing CAST has been a journey of growth and learning. We are immensely grateful for the support, patience and feedback shown by our breeding partners as we navigated this new venture together.

As we look ahead to CAST 2026, we're excited to implement enhancements based on the insights gained this year such as:

- A streamlined registration system with additional functionality.
- Additional travel suggestions and details on the website.
- Increased marketing efforts.

Our primary goal remains to increase attendance and exposure for this crucial industry event, and we're committed to developing new promotions to achieve this. With the influx of new professionals in horticulture, we see an opportunity to introduce CAST to a fresh audience. Once experienced, CAST becomes an indispensable part of a horticulturist's professional calendar. It's not just an event; it's a unique platform for learning, networking, and engaging with industry experts while witnessing the latest in plant breeding and horticultural innovation firsthand.

As we continue to refine and expand our management of CAST, we look forward to even greater collaboration with our partners to ensure its continued success and relevance in the years to come.



TREASURER'S REPORT

As we reflect on the past year (2024-25), our intention was to gain more operational efficiency and cost-savings due to the merger between All-America Selections (AAS) and National Garden Bureau (NGB). The combined 2024 budget was conservative, with the overall budgeted income less than 2023 actual to ensure a smooth financial transition and anticipate an increase in (one-time) legal fees. A core focus was to cleanup the general ledger accounts and align the assumption level detail with the new VP/committee structure under the umbrella organization.

Per the 2024 Financials:

	2024 Budget	2024 Actual	To Budget
Total Revenue	\$475,733	\$509,010	+ \$33,277
Total Other Revenue	\$2,000	\$35,561	+ \$33,561
Total Expense	\$474,008	\$490,232	- \$16,224
Net	\$3,725	\$54,338	+ \$50,613

This was a strong year for NGB, surpassing the revenue budget mostly due to the post-COVID influx of AAS entries and winners. Despite going over budget on expense, the internal team exhibiting good fiscal responsibility and managed to net over \$50K!

Looking ahead, NGB budgeted an increase in revenue for 2025, and subsequently increase in spend. The increase in revenue is in part due to the management of several new events, including the 2025 California Spring Trials (CAST) and the International Plant Trialing Conference. We anticipate a 5% increase in our membership as a result. The increase in expense will be spent to put these large events on as well as continue to add value to our members. We anticipate dipping into our reserves (approx. \$60K) for a large capital project this year to build a new website for AAS and enhance and improve the existing NGB site.

Report prepared by Marissa Verdi, Harris Seeds/Garden Trends Inc,
Treasurer



AAS TRIALS PROGRAM COMMITTEE

Program Summary

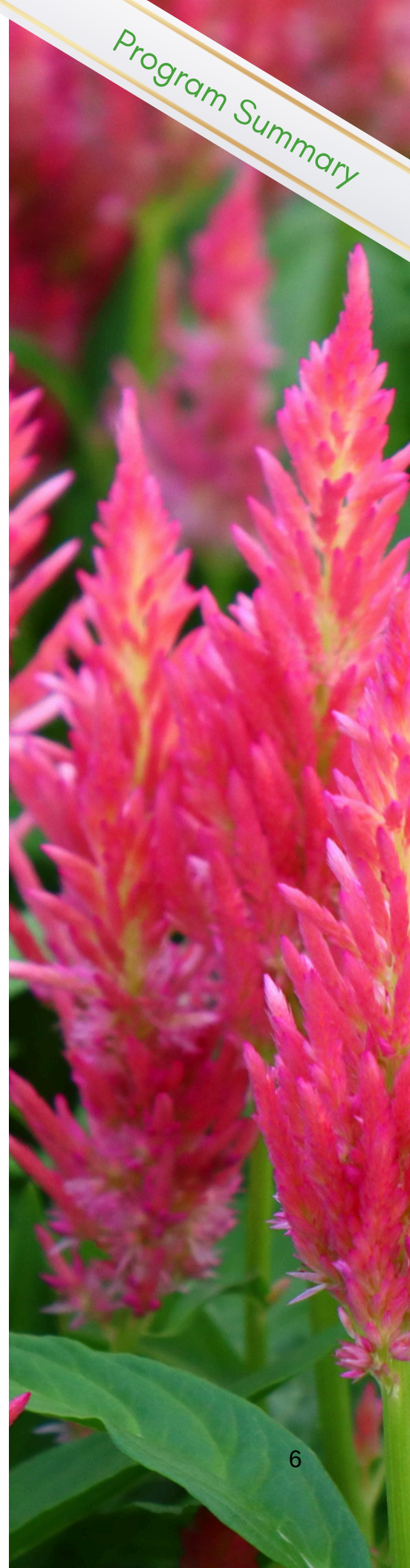
The All-America Selections Trials Program Committee has been hard at work creating our charter and building a solid foundation on which we can raise up future priorities.

From the storied history of AAS we already knew our two strongest objectives to be Responsibility for the overall success of the AAS trials and Generating quality entries and winners. Now we have a path to accomplishing these ambitions! By creating three areas of Focus: Crops, Winners, and Breeders, the Committee is able to set strategic tasks that will meaningfully contribute to continuously elevating the prestige of AAS Awards.

We expect to measure the success of these program goals through metrics of industry engagement, assessments of quality and value, and attention to budgeting. Aspects of baselining metrics, such as industry participation, have already begun this spring and will continue to be evaluated. As we roll into the entry, trialing, and awards cycle this summer through winter, we plan to review, refurbish, and rebuild criteria for entry and award acceptance. On an ongoing basis we will intentionally liaise with Combined Judges and Marketing Committees for opportunities in engagement and trial success.

We look forward to bringing the charter to life while contributing to a healthy and thriving organization – and industry!

Report prepared by Chelsey Lenczyk, Bejo Seeds, VP of the AAS Trials Program Committee



Regional Winners Ornamental

Nasturtium Baby Gold, Red and Yellow

From Takii Europe



Petunia

Dekko™ Maxx™ Pink

From Syngenta Flowers

Regional Winners

Edible



Basil
Piedmont

From Garden Genetics
and Seeds by Design



Tomato
Tonatico F1

From Bejo Seeds

National Winners

Edible



Cauliflower

Murasaki Fioretto 70 F1

From Tokita Seed

Kohlrabi

Konstance F1

From Bejo Seeds

Pepper

Pick-N-Pop Yellow F1

From Bayer Seminis



National Winners Edible



Squash

Green Lightning F1

Bred by Joseph Stern
Distributed by
PanAmerican Seed

Squash
Thriller F1

From Sakata Seed



National Winners Ornamental



Dianthus
Capitán™ Magnifica

From Selecta One

Celosia
Flamma Pink

From Sakata Ornamentals

Dahlia
Black Forest Ruby

From Takii Europe



National Winners Ornamental



Marigold
Mango Tango
From Ernst Benary

Petunia
Shake™ Raspberry F1
From Hem Genetics

Snapdragon
DoubleShot™ Yellow
Red Heart F1
From Hem Genetics



National Winners

Ornamental



Vinca

Sphere Polkadot

From Miyoshi & Co.

Zinnia

Crestar Mix

From Takii Europe

Zinnia

Zydeco Fire

From Syngenta Flowers



AAS COMBINED JUDGES PROGRAM COMMITTEE

The Mission of the combined judges program committee is to support AAS trials through judge education, mentorship and community.

The Purpose of this committee is to be responsible for the evaluation and execution of data collection for the AAS Trials, to be proactive with new judge training, to undertake best practices for methods and frequency of communication and to recruit new judges.

The group has set up a plan to be even more welcoming to all new judges and conducted a first year vs. second year survey to see what we could learn for future new judge training. Our spring Judge's Meeting was held in April.

We have outlined KPI's to report number of Judges by region and by trial type as well as number of trial sites. The team is also looking into ways to define "judging success" and what that looks like moving forward. With changes coming to the website this fall and more information readily accessible we look forward to a successful 2025 and 2026.

Report prepared by Denise Mullins, Smith Gardens
VP of the AAS Combined Judges Program Committee





AAS DISPLAY GARDENS

The Purpose of the AAS Display Gardens Committee is to support and motivate external AAS Display Gardens to engage with the public in a way that explains and demonstrates the AAS brand.

The Mission of the AAS Display Gardens Committee is to create and communicate unique ways our Display Gardens can achieve more recognition for AAS Winning varieties

The committee met several times in early 2025 to develop a comprehensive plan for the launch of the Display Gardens Stewards Club. Each participating garden will have access to a personalized login page on the AAS/NGB website, where they can complete the annual verification process, explore inspirational and educational articles, and track their progress to earn recognition and rewards for their efforts.

The committee has three additional meetings scheduled in 2025 to finalize the details of the Stewards Club and to plan and execute the Best Practices Webinar, which is scheduled for November.

Report prepared by Penny Merritt-Price, Young's Plant Farm, VP of the AAS Display Garden Program Committee



AAS DISPLAY GARDEN DESIGN CHALLENGE

In 2024, the AAS Display Gardens heartily embraced the theme of “Film a Tour” in a creative and informative fashion. Full videos are available at <https://all-americaselections.org/landscape-design-contest-winners/>

CATEGORY 3:

First Place: Deep Cut Gardens, Middletown, New Jersey

Second Place: Green Bay Botanical Garden, Green Bay, Wisconsin

CATEGORY 2:

First Place: Purdue Extension-Marion County Demonstration Garden, Indianapolis, Indiana

Second Place: Clark Botanic Garden, North Hempstead, New York

Third Place: Horticultural Art Society Demonstration Garden, Colorado Springs, Colorado

CATEGORY 1:

First Place (tie): Lee College Horticulture Program, Huntsville, Texas

First Place (tie): Mississippi State Univ-South Mississippi Branch Experiment Station, Poplarville, Mississippi

Second Place: Weston Garden Center, Weston, Missouri

Third Place: Penn State Butterfly Garden, Manheim, Pennsylvania

NON-PLANT PROMOTIONS

Committee Mission and Strategic Focus

The primary mission of this committee is to ensure that NGB serves as a vital marketing partner for its non-plant company members. Our goal is to help elevate and promote their products effectively to the gardening public, reinforcing the value of NGB as a collaborative industry resource.

To that end, we've been dedicated to enhancing the benefits offered to non-plant members. This includes strengthening the visibility and prestige of the Green Thumb Award and pinpointing opportunities where NGB can deliver a compelling and differentiated value proposition specifically for this group.

Membership Growth as a Strategic Imperative

We recognize the importance of expanding our membership base. A broader representation of non-plant companies will allow us to amplify our collective voice, increase influence, and ultimately enhance value for all members—both plant and non-plant alike.

Therefore, we have centered on identifying and vetting potential new non-plant members to support outreach and recruitment.

Looking Ahead

Our value proposition to prospective members is simple and compelling: Amplify your marketing reach with NGB.

Prepared by: Paula Douer, Crescent Garden
VP of NGB Non-Plant Promotions Committee





MEMBERSHIP & BENEFITS

Committee Mission and Purpose

The NGB Membership and Benefits Program Committee is dedicated to maximizing member retention by delivering exceptional benefits and enhancing the overall value of membership. The committee aims to drive membership upgrades through targeted communication that emphasizes the increasing value propositions available to members. Additionally, it works to attract new members by actively promoting the comprehensive benefits of joining. The main purpose of the committee is to ensure that NGB membership offers the best possible value for all members.

Next Steps

We have been actively collaborating with the Non-Plant Promotions Committee on ways to improve member benefits and increase membership overall. This includes the development of a potential NGB member list and plans for an upcoming membership drive. We have also worked on updating the NGB membership flyer to ensure that it reflects current benefits, messaging, and branding, making it a more effective promotional resource.

While increasing membership is a priority, ensuring the quality and professionalism of NGB Retail Members is equally important. We are working toward refining eligibility guidelines based on consistent criteria and professional recommendations.

Report prepared by Anneliese Valdes, CobraHead, VP of the NGB Membership and Member Benefits Program Committee

YEAR OF THE PROGRAM COMMITTEE

Each year, National Garden Bureau's "Year Of Program" promotes awareness, appreciation and understanding of six selected plant genera that are important in the horticulture industry. This year, in an effort to choose genera that are both important to industry members, and of interest to gardeners, our committee created new protocols that allow both industry members, and the general public to help decide future "Year Of" genera. The hope is that this will also continue to create excitement and interest around the program.

As a reminder, the 2026 selections (logos on page 20) are:

Annual: Impatiens

Edible: Hot Pepper

Perennial: Sedum

Bulb: Crocus

Shrub: Azalea

Houseplant: Ficus

Our committee welcomes suggestions from NGB members on ways we can promote and educate consumers on the "Year Of The" genera to make this program even more valuable to you.

Report prepared by Josh Kirschenbaum, Ball Seed,
VP of the NGB Year of the Program Committee



2026 YEAR OF PLANTS



MARKETING COMMITTEE

Committee Mission and Strategic Focus

The Marketing Committee is dedicated to elevating the visibility of all AAS and NGB programs. Our mission is to craft compelling communications that highlight the quality and innovation behind the products and varieties our members submit to these programs. We achieve this through a strategic mix of digital and direct marketing tactics, including website features, social media content, blog articles, e-newsletters, targeted outreach and educational webinars. Each channel is leveraged to drive engagement and support our members' success in the global gardening community.

Marketing Effort Optimization

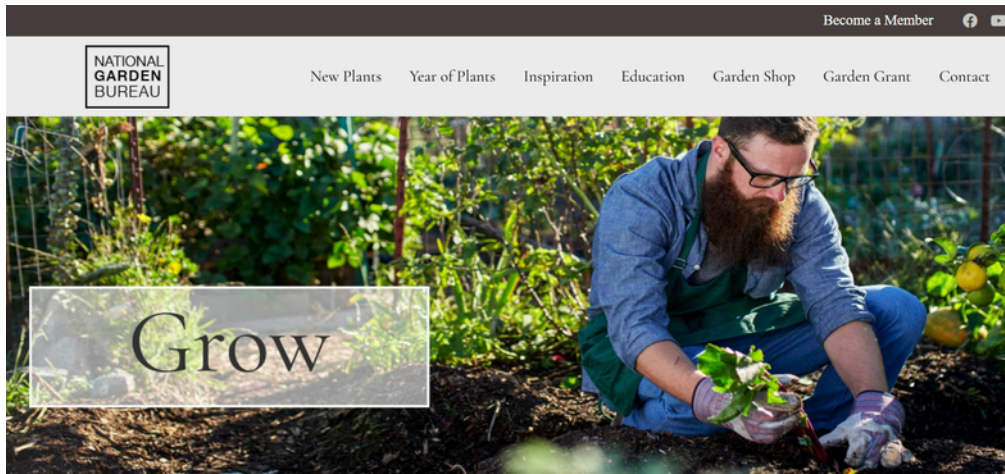
This year, the committee prioritized refining and optimizing our marketing strategies to increase the reach and impact of efforts on behalf of our members. Strong content planning paired with the optimization of existing channels helped us continue to amplify the visibility of AAS Winners and member innovations.

Key Accomplishments Include:

- 1.2 million views on NGB YouTube channel & 980,000 views on AAS YouTube channel.
- 2.6 million emails sent to gardening community
- 18 Ask the Expert Webinars
- NGB website relaunch (see details below!)

Prepared by: Alisha Burns, Johnny's Selected Seeds
VP of NGB Marketing Committee

NEW WEBSITES



In May, we relaunched the NGB website with some slight adjustments and improvements. Some of the key improvements are:

- More mobile friendly
- Overall one-column design with ads mid-page
- Better design of pages such as Member Blogs, Books, Garden Products, Garden Tours, etc.
- Updated video pages for easier viewing of our hundreds of YouTube videos



This fall, we are launching a completely new custom-designed site for AAS! Many features will be backend improvements to help with speed, mobile-friendliness and overall appeal. After last year's merger, we decided to design the AAS website to more closely coordinate with the NGB site, with slight color differences to match the AAS logo and make it its own.

A huge improvement will be each individual Winner's "Buy Now" button and how it's populated to direct sales to NGB's retail members.

2025 GREEN THUMB AWARDS



Winners in the People's Choice

category:

L: Calibrachoa LIA Abstract

Lemon Cherry

R: Hydrangea FlowerFull Smooth



L: Philodendron Prismacolor

Orange you Gorgeous

R: Broccoli Purple Magic



L: Butterfly Bush Little Rockstars

Red

R: Crescent Circular Positive

TruDrop Flex Self-Watering

Planters & Inserts



2025 GREEN THUMB AWARDS



Winners in the Professional's Choice category:



L: Cosmos She Shells Red
R: Basil Everleaf Lemon



L: Hellebore JWLS Endless
R: Euonymus FIRE BALL SEEDLESS



L: Philodendron PrismaColor Orange you
Gorgeous
R: Crescent Circular Positive TruDrop Flex
Self-Watering Planters & Inserts



If you produce or sell one of
these Green Thumb Award
winners, please use the logos
and #GreenThumb24
#GreenThumbAward in your
promotions!

BREEDER'S CUP 2024

The All-America Selections Breeders Cup was established in 2004 to recognize a plant breeder who dramatically influenced horticulture by breeding new cultivars that brought significant improvements to those classes.

All-America Selections is very proud to announce that the 2024 Breeder's Cup Award recipient is Mitch Hanes, retired breeder from Syngenta Flowers.

Mitch spent over four decades at Syngenta Flowers, formerly Goldsmith Seeds, where he played a pivotal role in breeding a variety of innovative flower cultivars.



His contributions to the field of horticulture include the development of interspecific geraniums, such as the Calliope, Caliente, and Mojo series. Notably, Calliope Medium Dark Red is a 2017 All-America Selections Winner.

The AAS Judges, a group of experienced horticulturists, honored Mitch with the Breeders' Cup Award at a special meeting. Todd Perkins, a fellow breeder from Syngenta Flowers, presented a tribute to Mitch's career, highlighting his exceptional achievements and dedication to the industry.

THERAPEUTIC GARDEN GRANT RECIPIENTS 2024

The five winning therapeutic gardens are:

City Green Inc, Clifton, New Jersey
(top right, winner of a \$3,000 grant)



Hope Grows Healing Garden, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
(right, second photo, winner of a \$1,500 grant)



Winners of \$1,000 grants:
Frelinghuysen Arboretum Hort Therapy, Morristown, New
Jersey (right, third photo)



Gospel Inc. Healing Haven, Lakeland, Florida
(lower right)

Wayside House Healing Garden, Delray Beach, Florida
(below)



SUMMER SUMMIT 2024

For the first time ever, the Summer Summit visited the great state of Alabama, home to Auburn University, Young's Plant Farm (AAS Trial site), Bonnie Plants (NGB Member) and Botanic garden center.

It was the first time we tried a shortened one-day event and as we heard often, it's about quality, not quantity. Traveling to the southeast attracted 17 first-timers to our event!

There is no doubt we were treated to the famous Southern hospitality and the four stops on our tour should be on every horticulturist's bucket list.



PLANT TRIALING CONFERENCE 2025

The International Plant Trialing Conference brings together industry leaders from growers to breeders to academics to discuss and brainstorm ways to improve trial procedures and results.

Attention AAS Judges: THIS IS OUR SUMMER SUMMIT FOR 2025!

Attendees will learn how to improve their trials, bringing this research and development tool to the forefront of their operation for better return on investment.

Location:

Embassy Suites Minneapolis Airport

7901 34th Ave S

Bloomington, MN 55425

October 13-15, 2025



Brought to you by All-America Selections

For more:

<https://all-americaselections.org/aas-meetings-events/>

NGB TEAM



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:
Diane Blazek



MARKETING/SOCIAL MEDIA/MEMBERSHIP:
Gail Pabst



FINANCIAL/SURVEYS:
Pat Racey



AAS TRIALS/AAS DISPLAY GARDENS:
Jenny Boxell



EVENTS/MEMBERSHIP/ADMIN/SPECIAL PROJECTS:
Nancy Ketchmark

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Penny Merritt-Price, Young's Plant Farm

Denise Mullins, Smith Gardens

Josh Kirschenbaum, PanAmerican Seed

Paula Douer, Crescent Garden

Anneliese Valdes, CobraHead LLC

Alisha Burns, Johnny's Selected Seeds



NGB PROGRAM COMMITTEES



AAS TRIALS
VP: Chelsey Lenczyk



AAS JUDGES
VP: Denise Mullins



AAS DISPLAY GARDENS
VP: Penny Merritt-Price



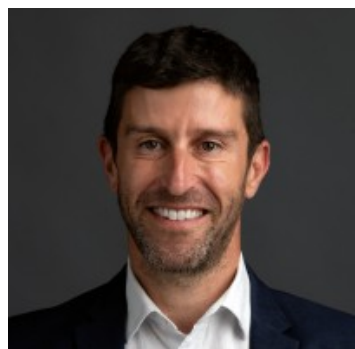
MARKETING
VP: Alisha Burns



MEMBERSHIP/MEMBER DUES
VP: Anneliese Valdes



NON-PLANT PROMOTIONS
VP: Paula Douer



YEAR OF THE
VP: Josh Kirschenbaum

