GRIFFIN GAZETTE

Vol. 43 | Issue 3 | 2026



SMART BIRDING
STRONGER SALES

THE BEST TIME TO
SOLVE A CROP PROBLEM
is before you have one

Steer your cannabis crop
FROM THE ROOT UP

Bring your plants to life
WITH FOX FARM

GRIFFIN

GGS Pro



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VOL. 43 | ISSUE 3 | 2026

Welcome to the Griffin Gazette, delivering industry tips and insights from notable partners and experts.

In each issue, we bring you valuable knowledge, innovative strategies, and expert advice to help you stay ahead in your business. As a family-owned nationwide leader and distributor for more than 7 decades, Griffin Greenhouse Supplies offers resources, workshops, and training to help you build a thriving growing business with knowledge-sharing and caring.

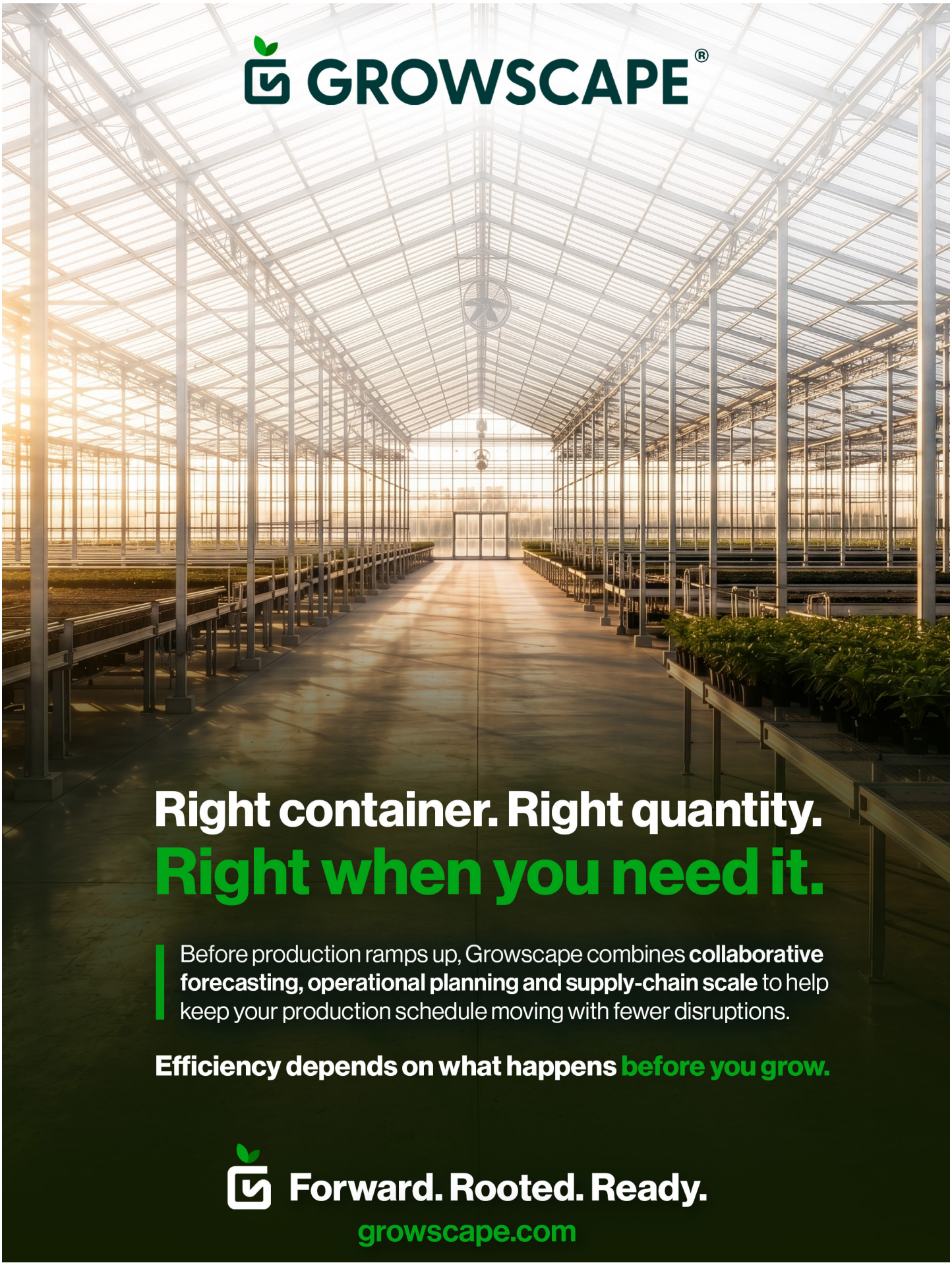
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TWO EXPOS, *One Industry:*

CELEBRATING THE 2026 EXPO SEASON





This summer, Griffin brought customers, vendors, and industry professionals together for two exciting events: Expo West in Reno, Nevada, August 26-27, and Expo East in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, on September 10. Both expos offered opportunities to discover new products, connect with industry partners, explore exclusive specials, and prepare for the seasons ahead.

Most importantly, these events celebrated the people who make our industry thrive. We're grateful to everyone who joined us and helped make this year's expos memorable!

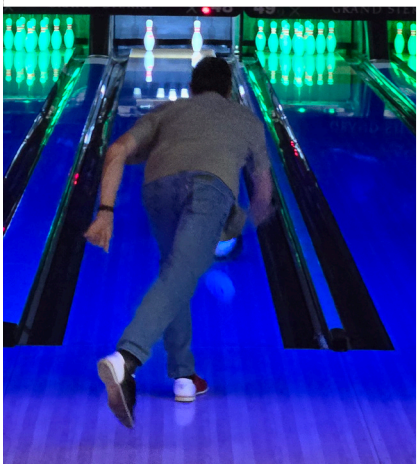
CONNECTING CUSTOMERS WITH NEW OPPORTUNITIES

Both expos featured a diverse lineup of exhibitors showcasing products for greenhouses, garden centers, and retail businesses, including grower supplies, plant care, pottery, outdoor décor, and more. New vendors brought fresh ideas and opportunities for customers to expand their assortments and discover new partnerships.

Profit Parkway was another highlight, offering high-volume purchasing opportunities, ready-to-merchandise displays, and show exclusive discounts. Combined with grower supply, retail, and plant specials, the expos help customers plan ahead, explore new products, and prepare for the spring season.

(Continued ▶)











EDUCATION, INSPIRATION, AND INDUSTRY EXPERTISE

Education remained an important part of the expo experience, with sessions offering practical ideas attendees could bring back to their businesses.

At Expo West, Rachel Reynolds of Birds Eye Merchandising shared merchandising strategies and offered personalized advice through “Ask Rachel.” Hannah Sadosky, Griffin Retail Education Manager, discussed using customer workshops to drive engagement and revenue. George Grant, Ph.D., lead of GGSPro, shared insights on maintaining plant quality in retail environments.

At Expo East, George returned with “Beyond the Jug: Maximizing Pesticide Performance,” exploring how water quality, chemical inventory, and spray coverage can affect crop protection results.

These sessions highlighted the value of sharing knowledge and finding new ways to strengthen businesses across our industry.

MAKING TIME TO CELEBRATE

Expo West also featured a customer appreciation evening at the Grand Sierra Resort, where attendees enjoyed dinner, drinks, bowling, yard games and more opportunities to connect beyond the expo floor. Building relationships is an important part of what makes these events special, and we appreciate every opportunity to bring our industry community together.

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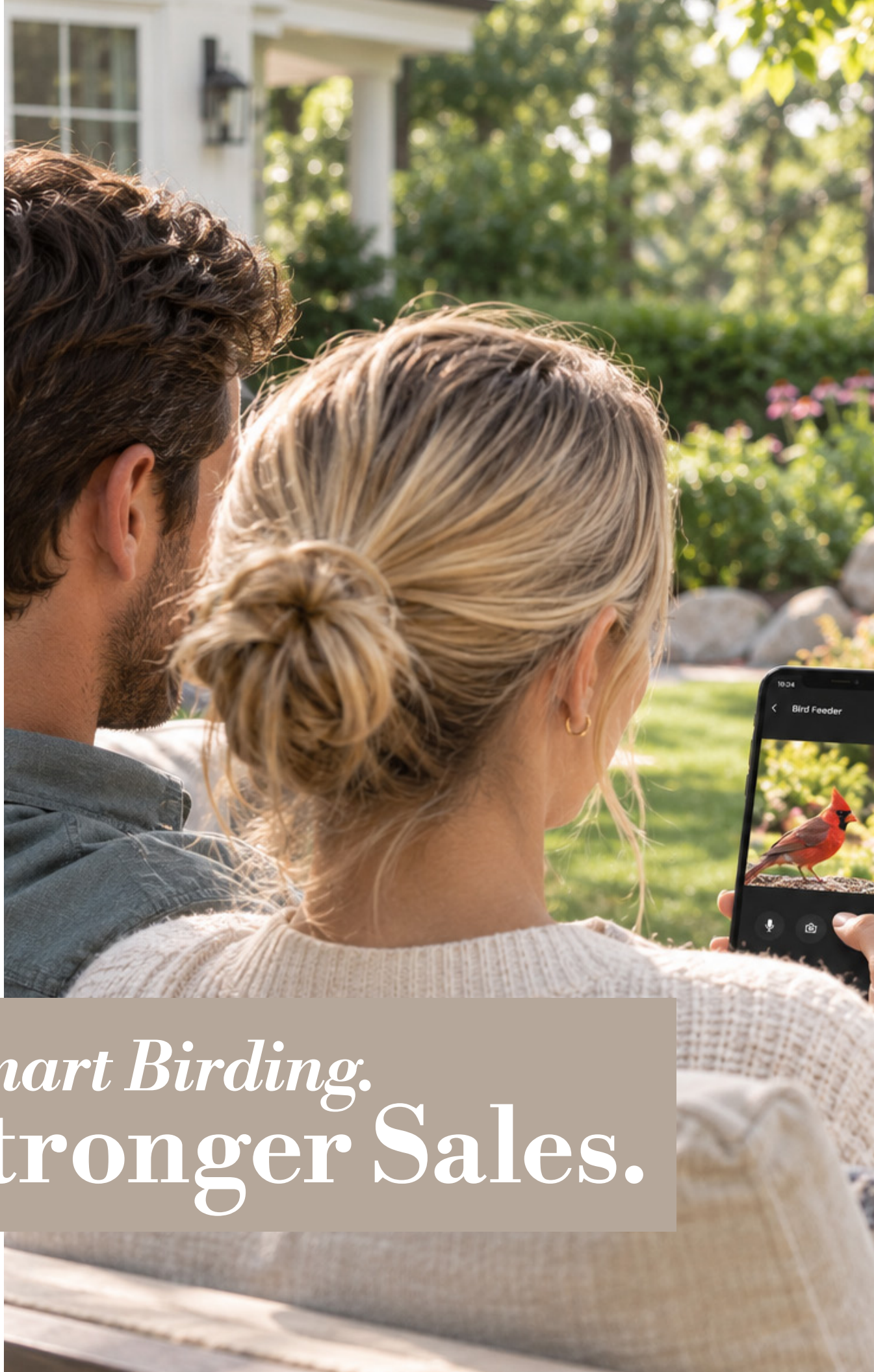
THANK YOU FOR BEING PART OF OUR SUCCESS

To our customers, exhibitors, speakers, and team members: thank you for making Expo West and Expo East possible! Your participation and enthusiasm bring these events to life, and we appreciate you choosing to spend your valuable time with us.

Whether you came to discover new products, connect with suppliers, take advantage of show specials, or gather ideas for the seasons ahead, we hope you left feeling inspired and ready for what's next.

The opportunities continue through our virtual expo at Griffins.com/expo, available through November 13, 2026.

Thank you for being part of the Griffin community. We look forward to continuing to grow together and welcoming you back to future expos!



Smart Birding.
Stronger Sales.



LOOKING FOR A WAY TO STAND OUT?

Explore these growing categories and watch sales soar.

By Hannah Sadosky -
Retail Education Manager

SMART CAMERA FEEDERS

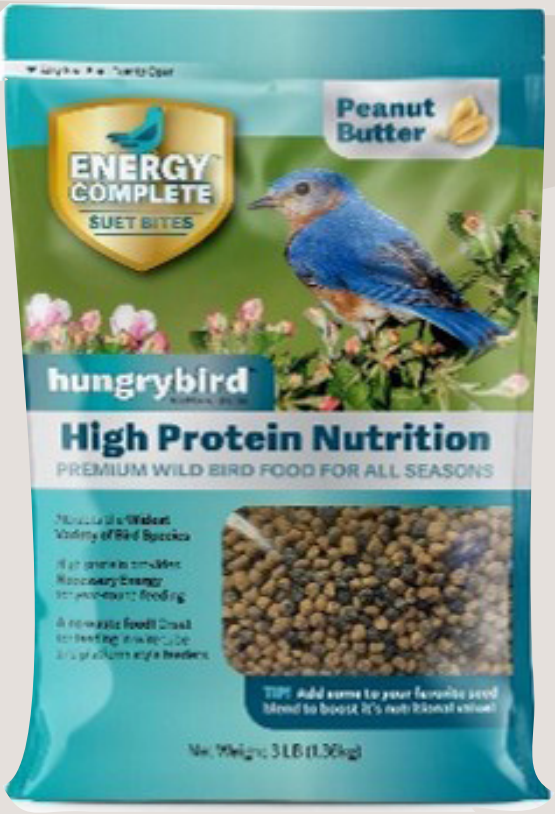
Smart bird feeders are turning birding from passive watching into ongoing customer engagement. This fast-growing category is outpacing traditional feeders—are you taking advantage of the opportunity? Backyard Nature Products and Birdfy both offer smart bird feeders. What is a smart bird feeder? It is a traditional bird feeder upgraded with a built-in camera, motion sensor, WiFi, and a mobile app. Customers receive motion-triggered videos of visiting birds, while AI-powered technology can quickly identify backyard species. Most models run on solar power or are rechargeable and feature weatherproof housing. They still hold seed like a standard feeder, and Birdfy even has one designed for hummingbird nectar. Backyard Nature Products features the Chirpful smart feeder. Smart bird feeders shift the wild-bird category from passive enjoyment to constant engagement. At garden centers, birding has often been a late-fall commodity: a customer buys black-oil sunflower seed and a feeder, then may not return until the next season. Smart feeders change that pattern by delivering species ID, live video, and phone notifications that keep customers engaged year-round. This ongoing connection is helping to drive repeat visits for seed, suet, and app-inspired refill sales through spring and summer. *(Continued ▶)*


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BIRDWATCHING, THE SMART WAY
hungrybird
ENERGY COMPLETE
SUET BITES
Mealworm Blend
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Blended Berry
Peanut Butter
High Protein Nutrition

Suet is the backyard equivalent of a power bar—high-energy fuel that brings in woodpeckers, chickadees, nuthatches, and many more species. Backyard Specialty Hungrybird Energy Complete Suet Bites are a no-waste, no-melt blend that packs fat and protein into every bite. Instead of handling suet bars, customers can toss suet bites in a tube or platform feeder, or stir them into seed when you want the mix to work harder. Plus, the Easy Seal bag makes the packaging simple to use and store. Suet bites also earn their spot on the shelf: a higher-value SKU that can take the place of plain commodity suet bars. Backyard Specialty Hungrybird Energy Complete Suet Bites give birds the energy they need to thrive. Standout pick: Mealworm Energy Complete™ High Protein Suet Bites. —loaded with premium ingredients, including real mealworms, and built for serious protein and fat.

Smart feeders get customers hooked on the show. Suet bites keep the cast well fed. Stock Chirpful and Birdfy with Hungrybird Energy Complete™ High Protein Suet Bites and the wild-bird section flips being a once-a-season stop and starts sending people back for seed, suet, and the next notification.

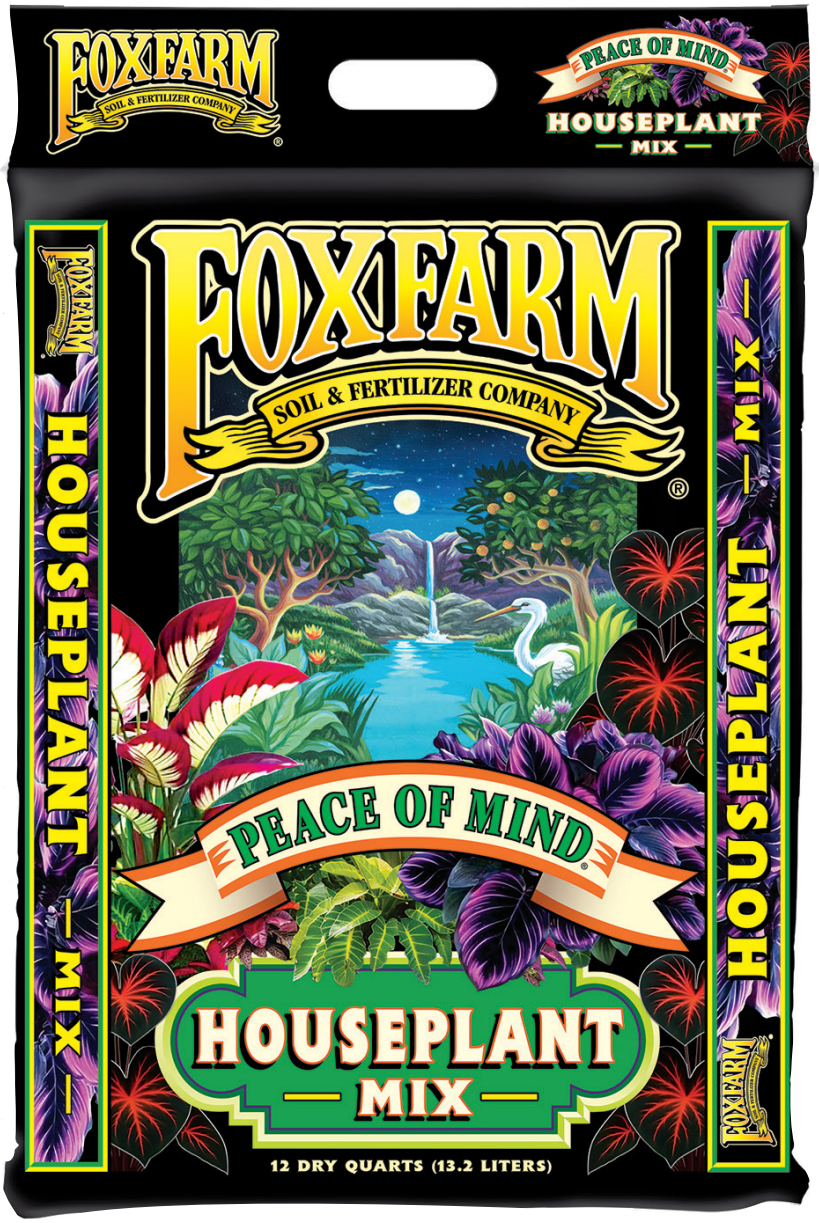






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Peace of Mind® Houseplant Mix is a complex blend of ingredients specially formulated to help plants achieve enhanced root efficiency and nutrient uptake.

Satisfy your plants' appetite by giving them the nutrition they deserve.


THE BEST TIME
TO SOLVE A
CROP PROBLEM
Is Before You Have One



By Tanner Bailey, GGSPro Technical Services Supervisor & George Grant, Ph.D., Business Manager – Crop Protection, Fertilizer, and Technical Services

There is a certain rhythm to greenhouse production. When the season is moving, it is moving. Crops need to be watered, sprayed, spaced, pinched, shipped, and replaced with the next crop coming right behind them. There are customers to take care of, employees to manage, orders to place, and usually at least one problem demanding immediate attention or "fire to put out". When everyone is busy keeping production moving, there is not always much time to stop and rethink a fertility program, evaluate a spray rotation, or figure out why a particular crop required more work than it should have. That is why some of the most valuable conversations we have with growers happen when things are a little quieter.

The weeks and months that make up the shoulder seasons between production cycles provide an opportunity to look back at what worked, what did not, and reflect on what could be done differently before the next crop ever hits the bench or floor. Maybe disease pressure was higher than expected, a crop's height got away from you, a recurring nutritional issue never completely went away, or a pest was caught later than it should have been. Sometimes the crop turned out fine, but getting it there required more labor, pesticide applications, fertilizer adjustments, or expense than it should have. Those are all opportunities to make the next crop better.

That type of planning is also a good example of what Griffin means when we talk about supporting customers throughout the horticulture ecosystem. Griffin's role does not stop at supplying the products needed to grow a crop. Across the company, our resources support customers through design, construction, growing, sourcing, and selling. On the production side, the GGSPro Technical Services Team is one of the ways Griffin connects products, research, technical knowledge, and real-world growing experience with what is actually happening inside a grower's operation.

WHO IS GGSPRO AND HOW DOES IT WORK?

GGSPro is Griffin Greenhouse Supplies' five-member grower solutions team, bringing together more than 75 years of combined industry experience. The team supports professional growers across greenhouse, nursery, landscape, hydroponic, and controlled environment production and handles more than 13,000 technical calls and emails each year. Those conversations cover everything from insect and disease diagnostics to crop protection rotations, plant growth regulators, crop nutrition, biological control agents, water quality, substrates, sanitation, lighting, and general or specific production practices.

For Griffin customers, accessing the team is straightforward – get in contact with your Griffin sales representative to begin the conversation today. When a question comes in, our first step is usually gathering information, not immediately recommending a product. We look at the crop, stage of production, environment, inputs, and production history and review photos, tissue or substrate tests, irrigation water analyses, and other diagnostic information when available. From there, we work toward a prompt and practical recommendation and can continue working with the grower and Griffin representative as the recommendation is implemented and the crop responds. *(Continued ▶)*

A crop showing the quick onset of chlorosis (i.e., yellowing) is a simple example of why this communication process matters. It would be easy to see yellow plants and assume they need more fertilizer, but the real cause could involve root health, fertilizer concentration, substrate pH, irrigation water quality, or several underlying factors interacting at once. Those are the types of questions we work through before making a recommendation. This ensures we are not just sticking a Band-Aid on something and moving on; we are solving the root issue and helping prevent issues going forward.

Water quality provides another prime example of where an offseason, in-depth discussion can transfer your approach to growing and perhaps relieve some seasonal production headaches. A horticultural water analysis can tell us much more than what is coming out of the hose. Alkalinity, for instance, can have a significant impact on growing media pH and nutrient availability and may influence fertilizer selection or whether acid injection should be considered. Growers have access to more information than ever before through water analyses, tissue and substrate testing, university research, product labels, manufacturer trials, and their own production records. The challenge is often not getting the information; it is figuring out what it means and what to do with it. A large part of GGSPro's role is helping connect those dots and turn that information into decisions that make sense in commercial production.

BUILD THE PROGRAM BEFORE YOU NEED IT & BUILD IT TO LAST

Troubleshooting active crop problems will always be an important part of what we do, but there is even more value when GGSPro is brought into the conversation before production gets busy. Crop protection is a good example. Rather than waiting until aphids, mites, thrips, *Botrytis*, *Pythium*, powdery mildew, or another problem is established, growers can work with their Griffin representative and GGSPro ahead of the season to identify likely pest and disease challenges and develop a program around them. That might mean reviewing modes of action and building rotations for resistance management, identifying conventional and softer chemistry options, determining where biological control agents (BCAs) fit, checking pesticide compatibility with beneficials, developing sanitation protocols, or making sure key products are available before they are needed.

Biological controls especially benefit from planning ahead. A successful BCA program is much easier to develop before pest pressure is already established. Working ahead gives us time to consider the target pests, release rates and intervals, scouting strategy, compatible conventional products, and how the program fits the grower's production system. It also gives you time to ask questions and for us to educate. The goal is to build a program around the way that operation actually grows plants rather than trying to force a standard program into every greenhouse. The same approach applies to fertility, water management, and PGRs. Before planting, we can evaluate irrigation water, alkalinity, fertilizer selection, substrate choice, and target pH and determine whether adjustments should be made. PGR programs can be evaluated around the crop, variety, container size, production environment, and target finish rather than waiting until excessive growth has already occurred.

Sometimes the best solution is not another product at all. It may be changing an application interval, improving scouting, adjusting irrigation practices, modifying a fertilizer program, improving spray coverage, changing how an application is made, or finding a way to reduce unnecessary labor. This is where the relationship between the grower, Griffin sales representative, and GGSPro becomes especially valuable. Your Griffin representative understands your operation, purchasing needs, production cycles, and many of the challenges you encounter throughout the year. GGSPro adds another layer of technical experience and resources to that relationship. Together, we can connect a technical recommendation with product availability, timing, logistics, and the realities of implementing it in commercial production.

(Continued ▶)



"The challenge is often not getting the information; it is figuring out what it means and what to do with it."

PLAN NOW FOR THE NEXT CROP & PLAN WITH GRIFFIN

Not every greenhouse has a true off-season, but most operations have periods when there is a little more room to evaluate what happened during the previous production cycle. Use that time to pull out your spray records, water tests, fertility programs, scouting records, and production notes. Look at where you experienced the most shrink, additional labor, repeated pesticide or PGR applications, nutritional problems, or recurring insect and disease pressure. Identify a few areas where you would like the next crop to perform better and use those as the starting point for a conversation.

The resulting plan does not need to become a three-inch binder that nobody opens again, it may come in the form of small changes that lead to noticeable wins. Moreover, make impactful decisions while there is time to think them through and make sure the necessary products and resources are available before the greenhouse is full and the clock is ticking. That is ultimately what GGSPro is here to provide: practical, research-based technical support that helps growers make better production decisions with confidence. By connecting those resources with your Griffin sales representative and the broader capabilities available through Griffin, we can help growers resolve problems faster, improve crop quality, reduce shrink, use inputs more efficiently, and make better decisions for the operation as a whole.





Before your next major production cycle, sit down with your local Griffin sales representative and review the areas that created the most challenges last season. Ask your rep to bring GGSPro into the conversation. Whether the opportunity is crop protection, fertility, water quality, BCAs, PGRs, sanitation, operational efficiency, specific crop culture, or another production challenge, let's work through it together and put the right plan, products, and resources in place before you need them. The value of being a part of the Griffin Family goes far beyond simply having access to products. It is having the product expertise, technical guidance, ongoing education, and real-world experience at your fingertips that helps build and sustain lifelong partnerships.

Images: 1. Indicator Mum Genetics Iron Deficiency | 2. Bioline, Sachet Use in Spring Production, BCA
3. Mealybug, Heavy Infestation, Insect | 4. Cornell LI GG 2026 Event



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Success is in the bag

STEER YOUR CANNABIS CROP *from the Root Up*

By Tanner Bailey, GGSPro Technical Services Supervisor;
George Grant, Ph.D., GGSPro Technical Services Manager

The strategy of "crop steering" gets plenty of attention in controlled-environment cannabis production. There is much grower discussion about irrigation timing, dry back percentages, frequency vs. volume, starting and leachate water electrical conductivity (EC), lighting intensity and regime, vapor-pressure deficit (VPD), and whether the crop needs more vegetative or generative push. All of those factors matter, but the ability to crop steer reliably begins before the first irrigation event is scheduled. It starts with the substrate. The growing media determines how much water the root zone can hold, how quickly it drains, how much oxygen remains available, and how rapidly conditions change between irrigation events. Irrigation may be the steering wheel, but the substrate determines how responsive the crop will be to input or cultural changes and allows growers to impart these changes with more confidence and control.

WHAT ARE WE TRYING TO STEER?

Crop steering uses irrigation and environmental adjustments to influence plant growth. A vegetative strategy generally supports leaf, stem, and root development. A generative strategy encourages the plant to shift more energy toward flower development and maturation. Irrigation is one of the primary tools used to create these responses. Frequent irrigation events with smaller volumes, along with smaller/shorter dry backs, generally support optimized vegetative growth. In contrast, fewer irrigation events with larger dry backs, accompanied by large volumes (i.e., to container capacity) when feeding, can create a stronger generative response.

The challenge is applying these concepts across an entire commercial facility. Container volume, plant size, root development, substrate structure, emitter output, lighting, temperature, humidity, and of course, strain variation in vigor/feed requirements all affect the result. It's a balancing act, so try to find ways to increase flexibility without compromising the end product. Choosing a growing medium that provides this balance is what growers seek and hold onto once they have found it. A 20% dry back in one substrate may not create the same root-zone conditions as a 20% dry back in another. Growers cannot build a successful crop-steering program around percentages alone. They must first understand how their chosen substrate holds, distributes, and releases water.




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PRO-MIX
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EXPANDS TO 1 gal | 3.7 L



GRODAN PROVIDES A HIGHLY RESPONSIVE ROOT ZONE

Grodan stone wool has become a familiar crop-steering tool in commercial cannabis and CEA crop production because of its uniform structure and predictable response to irrigation. Grodan offers a connected system of plugs, blocks, and slabs that allows growers with varying production strategies to maintain consistency from propagation through flower.

The Grodan Gro-Block Improved Hugo is a 6-by-6-by-6-inch block designed for larger plants and longer production cycles. Its size provides a substantial moisture buffer while still allowing growers to manage water content, EC, and dry back with precision. The Hugo block can be used as the final production container, eliminating another transplant step. A rooted plug or smaller Grodan block can be transplanted into the Hugo, allowing the plant to continue developing in a consistent media environment and minimizing transplant shock. Given the chemical properties of stone wool, manipulating ECs with your starting feed and leaching percentage allows growers to pivot quickly based on the crop response and stage of production.

Stone wool gives growers a high level of control, but that control requires active management. The block should be fully and evenly hydrated before transplanting. Irrigation frequency and shot size must then be adjusted as roots establish and plant demand increases. Because the block responds quickly to irrigation changes, growers can use it to guide the crop through different production stages (e.g., veg, early flower, late flower, flush). Frequent irrigation with smaller dry backs can support early vegetative development. As plants enter flower, irrigation timing and overnight dry back can be adjusted to create a more generative response. The goal is not to dry the block as much as possible. It is to create repeatable changes in moisture content and EC without causing damaging stress, root damage, or uneven rewetting.

PRO-MIX CX OFFERS A COIR-BASED OPTION

Premier Tech's PRO-MIX CX provides another substrate option for cannabis growers interested in crop steering with coconut coir. Better yet, it comes in a convenient grow bag. It is a 100% coir media made from a blend of coir fiber and coir pith. This provides medium-high water-holding capacity with high air porosity, allowing the bags to retain moisture while maintaining air space for root development. Growers will find that using a 100% coir product provides flexibility for irrigation-based crop steering and is a familiar choice for many operations. This formulation allows for low-volume, frequent fertigation to maintain active vegetative growth as well as stronger dry backs accompanied by watering to container capacity to encourage a generative response.

This high-quality coir substrate provides a low initial EC, giving growers control over the fertility program from the beginning. Likewise, PRO-MIX CX does not contain a starter fertilizer or calcium-magnesium buffer. The initial hydration and fertility program must account for this so that plants receive the needed nutrients soon after transplanting. PRO-MIX CX is available in compressed, prefilled grow bags ranging from 1 to 5 gallons. Each bag includes a planting hole, dripper openings, and drainage points. Growers can place the bags in the production area, hydrate them, install the emitters, and transplant directly into the expanded coir. We covered the valuable labor-saving features of using this

product in an earlier Griffin article on PRO-MIX CX Grow Bags. Eliminating pot filling, loose media handling, and container cleaning can save considerable time in a large facility while also preventing uniformity issues that come from hand filling containers.

MATCH THE SUBSTRATE TO THE FACILITY

Grodan Hugo Blocks and PRO-MIX CX Grow Bags can both support precise cannabis production, but they do not respond to irrigation in exactly the same way. Stone wool provides a uniform and highly responsive platform for growers who want tight control over water content, pH, and EC. Coir provides a familiar organic fiber with strong water retention, drainage, and some nutritional buffering characteristics. Container size and substrate volume will also influence how quickly either system dries. These factors should coincide with your overall production cycle schedule and plant spacing design. The “best choice” depends on the facility, irrigation equipment, plant density, production schedule, labor availability, and the grower’s preferred steering strategy.

Whichever substrate is selected, verify emitter output before building the irrigation schedule. Determine the fully hydrated weight to help determine maximum volumetric water content (i.e., water holding capacity) for your specific product/container size, monitor runoff EC and pH, and record how quickly the root zone dries during each stage of production. A newly transplanted plant cannot be irrigated like a fully rooted plant in peak flower. Crop steering aside, irrigation quantity and rate will change as the roots, canopy/flower biomass, lighting demand, and daily water use increase.

CONSISTENCY COMES BEFORE COMPLEXITY

Crop steering does not need to begin with a complicated irrigation recipe. Start with a uniform substrate, dependable emitters, protocols that generate accurate measurements, and comprehensive production records. Once those basics are repeatable, sensors and automation can make the program more precise. Technology is valuable, but it cannot correct an inconsistent root zone or inconsistent practices. Whether the crop is grown in Grodan Hugo Blocks or PRO-MIX CX Grow Bags, the same principle applies. Successful crop steering starts below the canopy and before a plant is ever planted. Once the right tools or inputs are in place, build a consistent root zone first, then use irrigation, nutrition, lighting, and climate to guide the crop where you want it to go.



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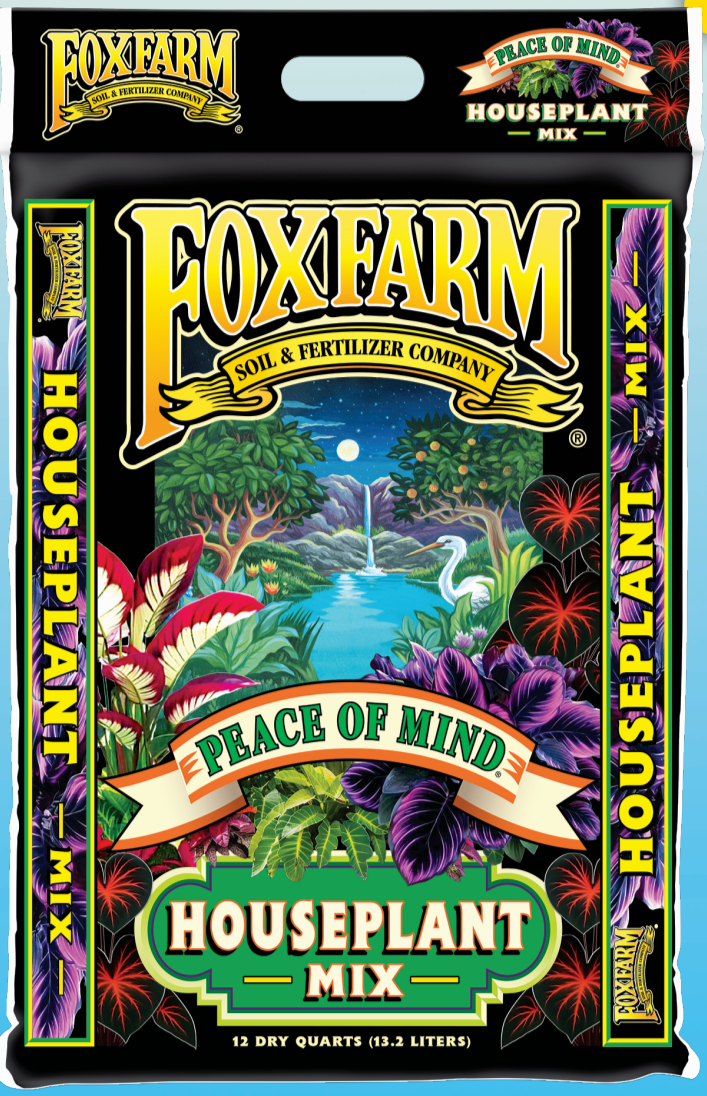
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