

## First Green Industry Trade Congress at IPM Summer Edition

Under the motto "Think, Say, Do – A look at our industry world of tomorrow", key topics such as peat substitutes, reusable transport packaging and marketing trends will be explained and perspectives highlighted in a moderated dialogue with industry experts. The trade congress, which will be held for the first time on 13 June 2022 in Essen, is being organized by the Landesverband Gartenbau NRW (NRW Horticultural Association), Landgard, Messe Essen and the Verband des Deutschen Blumen-, Groß- und Importhandels (BGI) (Association of the German Flower, Wholesale and Import Trade (BGI)). "The challenges facing our green sector are enormous. To continue to work on them and to discuss them together with different players is, in my opinion, a very good way to move us forward", says Eva Kähler-Theuerkauf, President of the Landesverband Gartenbau NRW (NRW Horticultural Association). "We are very pleased that the first Trade Congress is taking place at the IPM Summer Edition. Where, if not here, the meeting place of the green sector, can we discuss future topics and get focused information?", says Oliver P. Kuhrt, Managing Director of Messe Essen.

### *Demand for greenery has risen*

The German market for flowers and ornamental plants broke through the 10-billion-euro barrier for the first time in 2021. EU-wide, the industry was able to increase its sales. In the last two pandemic years, the focus clearly shifted to the home. One's own four walls, balcony or garden were creatively embellished with flowers and plants – despite higher sales prices, which, however, were offset by increased costs for wages, logistics, energy and pots in the companies. It is uncertain how the consumer will react to inflation and the effects of the war of aggression against Ukraine this year.

An analysis by Andreas Löbke, CO CONCEPT.

### *Peat substitute: a raw material with many question marks*

The switch to peat-free and peat-reduced substrates is a major challenge for commercial horticulture that requires a lot of new knowledge. Peat alternatives such as wood fibers, compost, rice husks, bark humus and residues from the coconut industry are now being used. The questions of what works for which crops, how sustainable the substitutes are and what the acceptance in the hobby sector looks like will be discussed. Taking part in the panel discussion will be Dr. Heide Naderer, Chairperson of NABU North Rhine-Westphalia, Andrew Gallik from the Versuchszentrum Gartenbau Straelen/Köln-Auweiler (Experimental Centre for Horticulture Straelen/Cologne-Auweiler), Christoph Schönges from floreco and Christian Balster from Balster Einheitserdewerk.

### *Reusable transport packaging: plastic reduction with a system*

Currently, the share of disposable trays in the plant trade is over 90 percent. Social and political developments as well as the increasing desire of companies in the sector to operate more sustainably require new sector solutions for transport and sales packaging. Current projects to establish new reusable systems will be examined with representatives of the trade and non-governmental organizations. Participants in the discussion will be Thomas Fischer from Deutsche Umwelthilfe, Dr. Jens Oldenburg from Stiftung Initiative Mehrweg, Johannes Kronenberg from Landgard Blumen & Pflanzen and Tobias Theuerkauf from toom Baumarkt.



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### *New products and trends*

More and more people are realizing that gardening increases their own well-being. In the last two pandemic years, this trend has become even stronger. Social developments have an impact on trend topics. New trends and products will be presented and how they can be effectively implemented at the point of sale. Participants in the panel discussion will be Anne Baltes-Schlüter from THE Plant Box, Klaus Wagener from BLOOM's, Romeo Sommers from the IPM Discovery Center and Iris Blotz, owner of the Gartencenter Dobirr-Blotz.

The trade congress will be chaired by industry expert Frank Teuber.

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