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The success story goes on:

## IPM ESSEN 2024 Shines on Its 40th Anniversary

Climate-resilient plants took center stage at the world's leading horticultural trade fair

The International Plant Fair IPM ESSEN continues to make history: Despite a nationwide rail strike, approximately 36,000 trade visitors attended the Essen Trade Fair from January 23 to 26, 2024, to explore innovations in the areas of plants, technology, floristry, and equipment presented by 1,403 exhibiting companies from 43 countries. The 40th edition of the world's leading horticultural trade fair was distinguished once again by the notably high quality of its professional audience. Significant interest was directed towards climate-resilient and biodiversity-promoting plants, as well as innovations for resource-efficient production. In comparison to the previous year, IPM ESSEN 2024 experienced an increase in the internationality of its audience.

"The green industry once again demonstrated its relevance to contemporary issues at the 40th IPM ESSEN. Horticulture is powerful and innovative, as we have seen and proven over these four days," reflects Eva Kähler-Theuerkauf, President of the State Association of Horticulture North Rhine-Westphalia and Chairwoman of the IPM Trade Fair Advisory Board.

The fact that IPM ESSEN is the leading platform for the international horticulture sector to plan for the upcoming season, place orders, or make investments is evident in the 71 percent high proportion of trade visitors with purchasing and procurement competencies within their own companies. In 2023, this figure stood at 66 percent. "This is precisely what makes a high-caliber trade fair. Despite the ongoing rail strike significantly restricting travel, the right visitors were on site," explains Oliver P. Kuhrt, CEO of Messe Essen.

## Sustainability Along the Entire Value Chain

Approximately 30 percent of visitors placed orders during the fair, while over 60 percent plan to make purchases based on the information obtained at IPM ESSEN. The list of buyers primarily featured new and innovative plant breeds. Currently trending are climate-resilient species that can withstand heavy rain and heat – a factor increasingly significant in both private gardens and urban green spaces. The guided



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tours focusing on climate-resistant trees and insect-friendly perennials attracted a large number of attendees.

Sustainability was also a recurring theme in the technology exhibition area. The Innovation Center for Horticultural Technology, for instance, provided information on peat substitutes and resource-efficient production. Automation processes have also seen an increase in horticulture, with the importance of artificial intelligence growing. At IPM ESSEN, innovations such as a watering robot and solutions for automated weed control were presented. The new special exhibition "Utility Vehicles" featured electric-powered mobile solutions for use in horticulture.

The IPM Discovery Center showcased how sustainable solutions, such as biodegradable materials for packaging and plant pots, can be integrated into the trade and how customers can be enthused about green products in the future. Sustainable floristry was also in focus at the FDF-World. The Professional Association of German Florists – Federal Association (FDF) provided inspiration in its creative area, demonstrating how trend topics can be translated into one's own business. The IPM Concept Store displayed products for meaningful assortment additions in the green retail sector.

## **IPM ESSEN 2024: Platform for Green Industry Awards**

Once again, IPM ESSEN served as the stage for numerous awards, where the industry annually honors its best. The kick-off on the first day of the fair was the Novelties Showcase by the Central Association of Horticulture (ZVG) for newly bred plants and new wild and growth forms. The winners included *Catharanthus roseus* 'Soirée® White' from MNP/Suntory (category Bed and Balcony Plants); *Pericallis cruentus* Mandala® Plus Magic Purple from Dümmer Orange (Spring Bloomers); *Zygopetalum* 'Oxygen Optimistic' (AK8) from Alpha Orchids Breeding (Blooming Indoor Plants); *Aloe vera* Medivera from Amigo Plant (Green Indoor Plant); *Helleborus hybrida* Frostkiss Vibey Velvet from AllPlant (Perennials); *Eutrema japonicum* 'Hana Utogi' from FitzGerald Nurseries Lt (Balcony Fruit/Vegetables); *Pyracantha coccinea* 'Orange Star' from Hooegeven Plants (Shrubs); and *Mangave* Mad about Mangave® 'Praying Hands' from Cactusmania di Manera Bruno in Ventimiglia, Italy (Special Prize). The Audience Award also went to Eclipse Bigleaf Hydrangea from First Editions by Bailey Nurseries International from Minnesota.

A premiere at IPM ESSEN was the Best Practice Award in collaboration with FDF for practical products in the floristry trade. In the Design and Trend category, the company LiveTrends Design Group Europe Ap received the award for the trend, "The Botanist." In the category of Technology and Tools in Floristic Practice, Newwen won with the Flowerbox. Baza Seeds Holland's Seed Advent Calendar emerged as the winner in the



Accessories and Gift Items category, and Wepot's clay amphora "Olla S" won in the Sustainability category. Capi Europe's flower pot received two awards, one in the categories of Indoor Decoration and "The Vessel."

The Show Your Colours Award, presented by BIZZ Communications and Messe Essen, honored the best storytelling for a plant. The award went to the garden rose Rosa Hybrid Plant'n'Relax from Roses Forever in Faaborg, Denmark. According to the jury, the climbing rose with a frame delivers exactly what its name promises: planting and relaxation.

The International Association of Horticultural Producers (AIPH) and FloraCulture International (FCI) awarded the International Grower of the Year Award to the best in ornamental plant production. This year, the coveted award went to the British wholesale nursery Greenwood Plants.

The series of awards concluded on the last day with the IPM Messe-Cup, where the North Rhine-Westphalia State Association of FDF and the North Rhine-Westphalia State Association of Horticulture honored the best floral arrangements. Lilli Kramer from Kramer Garten & Ambiente in Buchholz, Germany emerged as the winner in the combination competition.

## High Intentions for Return Visits

Overall, trade visitors evaluated the offerings of IPM ESSEN 2024 very positively, with 87 percent giving ratings of one to three. Ninety-one percent would recommend attending, and an equal percentage expressed the intention to visit IPM ESSEN again. Among the exhibiting companies, the percentage was also high at 87 percent. The next IPM ESSEN is scheduled to take place from January 28 to 31, 2025, at Messe Essen.

## Detailed Statistics

The approximately 36,000 visitors included registered trade visitors, national and international media representatives, as well as honored guests.

Further information: [www.ipm-essen.de](http://www.ipm-essen.de)