

Essen, 27 January 2026

Ceremonial opening:

IPM ESSEN 2026 opens today at Messe Essen

Eight plant innovations honoured in six categories

With a ceremonial opening today, the International Plant Fair IPM ESSEN has started. North Rhine-Westphalia's Minister for Agriculture and Consumer Protection, Silke Gorißen, and ZVG President Eva Kähler-Theuerkauf welcomed exhibitors and trade visitors from around the world. A highlight of the opening was the presentation of the "IPM Novelties 2026". Until Friday, 30 January 2026, around 1,500 exhibitors from more than 40 countries will present their innovations in the areas of plants, technology, floristry and garden features at Messe Essen. Trade visitors from all relevant international markets are expected.

"Anyone walking through the world's leading trade fair IPM ESSEN these days, looking around, listening and joining the conversation, will see one thing above all: drive, a spirit of innovation and creativity," emphasized Silke Gorißen, Minister for Agriculture and Consumer Protection of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia, in her welcoming address.

"Horticulture is not only a strong economic sector – it enriches our lives and does us good. Horticulture contributes greatly to our food supply and to the greenery in our cities. Here in North Rhine-Westphalia, we are proud of our horticulture and we deliberately make its importance visible, for example through our garden shows. NRW is Germany's number one horticulture state and, in the years ahead, the federal state with the most garden shows nationwide. Beyond that, we will continue to advocate for good, future-proof framework conditions and, as the state government, work consistently to support horticulture – with targeted funding programmes, investment in research and innovation, and a strong voice for our businesses in Berlin and Brussels. Added to this is our commitment to greater planning certainty and the urgently needed reduction of bureaucracy."

IPM ESSEN as a driver of impetus for a competitive sector

Eva Kähler-Theuerkauf, President of the German Horticultural Association (ZVG), also highlighted the innovative strength and the importance of IPM ESSEN as the central meeting point for the industry. The entire value chain comes together here – and, according to Kähler-Theuerkauf, many businesses benefit from the impulses of the coming days throughout the year.



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For this strength to have a long-term impact, competition on a level playing field and reliable political framework conditions are needed, for example an enterprise-oriented energy policy, consistent reduction of bureaucracy and practical environmental regulations. At the same time, she warned against national special approaches and additional burdens – for instance regarding plant protection or peat reduction – that could jeopardise competitiveness, particularly in the European market.

“IPM ESSEN makes it clear that the sector is ready to take responsibility and to shape the future actively and sustainably. Let us get started together – over the next four days and beyond.”

IPM Novelty Showcase: award-winning innovations 2026

As part of the opening ceremony, the best new plant introductions were honoured in the IPM Novelty Showcase. The competition attracted 42 entries from 27 exhibitors. Eight new varieties were awarded in six categories. The Audience Award will be announced on 29 January 2026.

- **Spring flowering plant: Pericallis x hybrida Senetti® Blue Spoon** (Company Suntory Flowers Europe, Leimuiderbrug, the Netherlands) – Notable for its numerous blue, spoon-shaped ray florets and its compact, bushy habit; the yellow flower centre provides a clear contrast.
- **Bedding and balcony plant: Garden Gerbera Garvinea® Sweet Pastry** (Company HilverdaFlorist, De Kwakel, the Netherlands) – Trendy new colouring meets compact plants and continuous reblooming – suitable for beds, pots and containers as well as for picking your own bouquets.
- **Flowering houseplant: Tillandsia Camina®** (Company Anthura BV, Bleiswijk, the Netherlands) – Vigorous growth and a richly branched pink to violet inflorescence create a striking contrast to the dark green foliage.
- **Woody plant: Ficus carica Fignomenal ('PT-DF-14' PBR)** (Company Fitzgerald Nurseries Ltd., Kilkenny, Ireland) – Extremely dwarf and low-growing – ideal for urban gardening indoors and outdoors. As a fig, it combines ornamental appeal with enjoyment.
- **Woody plant: Rhododendron hybrid 'Grazeasy® Purple'** (Company Diderk Heinje Pflanzenhandelsgesellschaft mbH & Co. KG, Jeddloh, Germany) – Lush, intensely purple flowers (May to June) stand out clearly against the dark, narrow, elongated leaves; equally suitable for containers, hedges or as a specimen plant.
- **Woody plant: Cercis griffithii Blue Lagoon ('RAFMAR1' PBR)** (Company Kordes Jungpflanzen Handels GmbH, Bilsen, Germany) – Heart-shaped leaves in a rare blue-grey tone make this variety an eye-catcher; its early flowering also offers added value for pollinators.

- **Cut flower:** Clematis AMAZING®™ TOKYO ('Zo07201' PBR) (Company Marginpar B.V., Aalsmeer, the Netherlands) – Sturdy stems and an open flower form offer many floristic design options and ensure an attractive presentation in bouquets and arrangements.
- **Perennial:** Yucca 'French Flag' (Company Plantipp BV, IJsselstein, the Netherlands) – Drought-resistant and therefore ideal for Mediterranean gardens; also suitable as an architectural plant. Well prepared for climatic changes, its flowering from May to June is also pollinator-friendly.

All competition entries can be seen during the trade fair in the Novelty Showcase at the Horticulture Info Centre (Hall 4). In addition, trade fair visitors can vote on site for their favourite.