

DOJ Suspends Farmworker Protection, Monrovia HQ Move & Conferences



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COMING UP THIS WEEK:

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Charles Verdy
Owner, Gourma
Saint-Norbert, Québec

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AERGC Annual Meeting

The Association of Education & Research Greenhouse Curators (AERGC) continues to serve as a vital network for greenhouse professionals working outside the commercial sector. Whether you're managing research facilities, botanical collections or teaching greenhouses, AERGC provides a collaborative space to share practical advice, innovative solutions and lessons learned. The group brings together a diverse community of curators, managers and technicians who often work in complex, architecturally unique or purpose-built greenhouses supporting science and education.

From troubleshooting climate control systems in century-old buildings to cultivating rare plant collections that require specialized care, AERGC members exchange insights that are hard to find anywhere else. The association's active listserv, annual meetings and regional events allow members to connect over shared challenges and spark ideas that improve greenhouse operations across the country.



This year, AERGC will host its annual meeting at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln from August 4–7. The event will feature a tour of the stunning Lauritzen Gardens/Zoo in Omaha, as well as guided visits to cutting-edge campus greenhouses and research facilities. A highlight of the meeting is the plant swap, where attendees bring and exchange interesting or unusual specimens from their collections.

Whether you're a long-time member or curious about joining, this conference is a fantastic opportunity to meet peers, explore new greenhouse designs and practices, and bring home both plants and inspiration.

Visit AERGC's [website to register for the conference](#) or learn more about becoming a member of this supportive and knowledge-rich community.



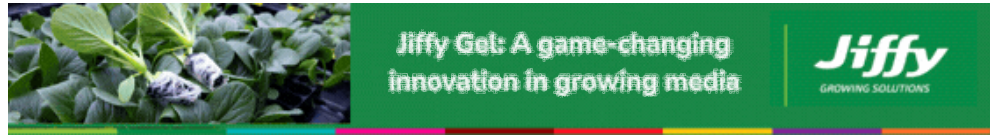
Bachman's Celebrates 140 Years

Bachman's, a Minnesota horticultural institution, recently celebrated its 140th anniversary. Founded in 1885 as a small floral operation, the business has remained family owned and is now led by the fifth generation of the Bachman family. Today, Bachman's includes six garden centers, floral departments in grocery stores, indoor and outdoor landscaping services, 7 acres of greenhouse space, and a 670-acre growing farm.

To mark the milestone, Bachman's hosted a lively two-day celebration featuring a live TV broadcast, live music and community partners like the Minnesota Zoo. CEO Susan Bachman West described the event as both a heartfelt thank you to the community and an energizing moment for the future of the family business.



Photo Credit: Bachman's.



DOL Suspends 2024 Farmworker Protection Rule Enforcement

The Department of Labor (DOL) has announced it will no longer enforce the 2024 Farmworker Protection Rule, a set of regulations introduced under the Biden Administration intended to strengthen protections for agricultural workers. The rule aimed to address issues such as the right to organize, improved worker safety, updated wage standards and greater transparency in employment practices. However, its implementation has been stalled due to ongoing legal challenges, including lawsuits filed by AmericanHort and a coalition of co-plaintiffs.

AmericanHort and its partners have raised concerns about the rule's potential to impose burdensome requirements on growers, particularly those using the H-2A program. This pause in enforcement may offer temporary relief for agricultural employers while reinforcing the need for policies that protect workers without jeopardizing the viability of farming operations.

To learn more about [the lawsuit](#), as well as the [H-2A enforcement guide](#), follow the highlighted links.



Monrovia Names Oregon Nursery Location as Headquarters

After nearly a century of growth and innovation, Monrovia has officially moved its headquarters from California to the scenic town of Dayton, Oregon. The company's new 750-acre facility will serve as a central hub for cutting-edge plant trials, breeding work and horticultural technology development. This move represents a significant and forward-thinking shift, they said, positioning Monrovia to take full advantage of the Willamette Valley's diverse and favorable growing conditions.

The Oregon climate provides ideal conditions for testing a wide range of plant performance criteria, particularly for cold-hardy varieties that are increasingly in demand. Known nationwide for its high-quality woody shrubs, Monrovia will now be able to expand trials on popular selections like rhododendrons, hydrangeas and roses in a region well suited to their growth.

While the new headquarters marks an exciting new chapter, Monrovia will continue to operate large-scale nurseries in California and Georgia. These geographically diverse locations allow the company to test plants across a wide range of climates, from hot and dry to warm and humid, ensuring stronger, more adaptable plants for landscapes across the country.

As Monrovia approaches its 100th anniversary, the company said this strategic relocation underscores the company's long-standing commitment to horticultural excellence, regional adaptability, and providing home gardeners and retailers with plants that thrive in real-world conditions.



FCC Capital Announces \$2 Billion Investment Into Ag and Food Innovation

Farm Credit Canada (FCC) has announced a major investment of \$2 billion CAD into agricultural technology by 2030. This funding will support a broad spectrum of initiatives—from advanced devices and smart instrumentation to research and new methodologies aimed at improving productivity, sustainability and innovation across Canada's food and agriculture sectors.

Already a recognized hub for North American greenhouse production, Canada is well-positioned to benefit from this influx of capital. The investment will help fuel both early stage ag-tech startups and the expansion of more established companies, supporting growth from pre-seed through late stage funding.

FCC has acknowledged that Canadian ag-tech investment has fallen behind that of global peers, including the European Union, Japan and the United States. This strategic funding push aims to close that gap and reinforce Canada's role as a leader in controlled environment agriculture and agricultural innovation. Over the next five years, the initiative could significantly enhance the country's competitive edge in sustainable food production.

To read the announcement, follow [this link](#).

Aquaponics Association Annual Conference

Without a doubt, aquaponics remains one of my favorite ways to grow plants. That might be because I've always had a soft spot for aquariums and hydroponic systems, but it's more than that. As decoupled system designs gain traction and our understanding of microorganisms and biostimulants deepens, I truly believe aquaponics has a strong future in sustainable agriculture.

From September 15-17, the Aquaponic Association will host its annual conference in College Park, Maryland. The event brings together growers, educators, researchers and innovators from across the country. Attendees can expect vendor exhibitions, hands-on educational sessions, networking opportunities, awards and facility tours.

Personally, I'm especially excited about this year's lineup. Some of my favorite people in the field will be presenting, including Dr. Michael Timmons, a member of my Ph.D. committee and a long-time leader in aquaculture systems. Also attending is the team from The Aquaponic Source, who were instrumental in supplying and getting my greenhouse system up and running.

If you're curious about aquaponics or looking to take your knowledge to the next level, I highly recommend checking out [the conference and full schedule](#). It's a great chance to learn, connect and get inspired by the latest developments in this ever-evolving field.



Aquaaponic koi at Colorado State University's Metro Ag Research Center.

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