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# Exploring New Opportunities

*Jennifer Polanz*



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We have readers who run the gamut of the indoor growing spectrum—from large, multi-acre operations down to small, single-bay greenhouses or hoophouses, vertical farms or even indoor container production. We have lettuce growers, microgreens producers, tomato/cucumber/pepper growers and more.

That's what made pulling together a story on new varieties a challenge. Some of you are looking for a flavorful new tomato that will attract attention at a farmers market, while others are looking for that variety with higher yield and greater disease resistance for mass production, and some of you could care less about a new tomato.

There's also those of you who grow a wide swath of veggies and fruits looking for unique new opportunities to set yourselves apart and to bridge those seasonal gaps where you don't have as much to offer. I tried to keep all this in mind with my cover story on new options, which you can find on page 14.

I also asked our regular freelance writer David Kuack to tackle things to keep in mind when trialing new products. As you may well know, you can't just buy a new seed or transplant and plug it into your current system. You have to trial it at a smaller scale to better understand how it will work with what you have and how you may have to adjust to suit the plant's needs (or cut bait, as they say, if it doesn't work for you). You can find those considerations on page 20.

And, on page 34, you can find Dr. Gene Giacomelli's thoughts on growing new varieties, and how your expertise and the environment you provide can impact just how much of an opportunity they end up being. I also want to say congratulations to Gene on his retirement from the University of Arizona after decades of teaching and inspiring CEA students (who go on to influence our industry in positive ways).

The fun doesn't stop there, though! When it comes to the factors involved in growing both new and current varieties, one of them is CO<sub>2</sub>, and our Bossman Chris Beytes took a deep dive into the topic in our Technology section. You can read his exploration on page 12, including three options to consider.

Then turn to page 26 for the last in a four-part series on another major factor—lighting—to see what researchers at Michigan State University concluded about cooling and lighting at the end of production for leafy greens. I want to thank Roberto Lopez, Erik Runkle, Devin Brewer and Nathan Kelly for their work on this fascinating series.

Something you always have to consider when it comes to anything you grow in the greenhouse is pests and there's a new(ish) one surfacing: *Thrips parvispinus*, or pepper thrips. So far, researchers and industry experts haven't heard about infestations in vegetable greenhouses, but they have seen it in parts of the U.S. in ornamental greenhouses, and it's been known to damage outdoor crops of tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, eggplants and strawberries. That means it's important to know what to look for and scout regularly. Find out more on page 30.

Is there something you'd like to see us cover within these pages? My email inbox is always open to suggestions at [jpolanz@ballpublishing.com](mailto:jpolanz@ballpublishing.com). Please reach out and let me know!