



Essen, January 28, 2020

World's Leading Fair for Horticulture:

Federal Agriculture Minister Klöckner Festively Opened the IPM ESSEN 2020

Praise for the Innovative Power of the Green Sector and New Plant Breeds

The 38th IPM ESSEN has been opened: At Messe Essen, around 300 guests, including representatives from the economic and political fields, followed the festive Opening Ceremony which flew the flag of the partner country France. In her opening speech, Julia Klöckner, Federal Minister of Agriculture and Food, announced the continuation of the federal program for raising energy efficiency from which horticulture will profit, too. In addition to her, the speakers also included France's Consul General, Dr. Olivia Berkeley-Christmann, and the North Rhine-Westphalia Agriculture Minister, Ursula Heinen-Esser. Moreover, the first day of the fair was characterized by innovative plant breeds. An expert jury honored innovations in six categories.

"Horticulture here in Germany exhibits a high degree of innovation and the businesses find and occupy niches in this way. And they answer questions about the future. For example, when it is a matter of more resource or climate protection. This includes environmentally friendly packaging or substrates in which the peat proportion is being minimized ever further. Concepts for energy-saving greenhouses are being developed, too - because the sector is very energy-intensive. As a ministry, we are providing support with regard to these adjustments, know about the competitive situation and want to create the best possible framework conditions. Thus, we will continue our federal program for raising energy efficiency and have planned for Euro 156 million by 2023. Moreover, we are promoting in a targeted way the changeover to renewable energies as well as research projects relating to non-chemical plant protection, digitalization and peat substitution. Because the basis for further innovations is knowledge. Horticulture is a central constituent of the German agricultural sector. We want to keep it like that," according to the Federal Minister, Julia Klöckner.



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 Veröffentlichung kostenfrei –
 Beleg erbeten
 Publication free of charge –
 Copy requested



Still until Friday, January 31, 2020, more than 1,500 exhibitors from 46 countries are presenting their innovative products and services for everything to do with plants, flowers, technology and floristry at Messe Essen. Climate change and sustainable actions are the subjects setting the tone in the green sector, too. The items on display include environmentally friendly packaging and labels, insect-friendly flowers, air-refreshing green plants and climate-tolerant trees.

Innovation Showcase Displays Best Plant Novelties

For the 13th time already, innovative plants were distinguished within the framework of the Innovation Showcase. From a total of 60 submissions from 36 exhibitors, the expert commission chose the winners after the assessment in the evening before the fair. In the "Bedding and Balcony Plants" category, a peanut was distinguished for the first time, i.e. *Arachis hypogaea* Just Peanuts® Justmore® from Lubera AG from Switzerland. The cultivation is easy and up to 80 peanut pods can be harvested in one summer. The *Rhododendron simsii* Magisnow Winter Beauty® from Hortibreed NV Hortinno from Belgium received the "IPM Innovation 2020" mark of distinction as the best "Flowering House Plant". It has an unusual blossom which develops from a green-and-white bud ball into a spider blossom over a period of four weeks.

In the "Woody Plants" category, the expert commission decided in favor of the rhododendron hybrid HAPPYdendron 'Pushy Purple' from INKAHRO GmbH from Bad Zwischenahn in Germany. This rhododendron is characterized by its special three-colored blossom: purple with a white-and-yellow center. This year, the jury has honored the *Agapanthus* 'Poppin Purple' from Plantipp BV as the best perennial. This agapanthus has very intensive purple blossoms and it also tolerates both high and low temperatures. The particularly bee-friendly *erysimum* hybrid 'Winter Charme' from Kientzler Jungpflanzen from Gensingen in Germany made the running in the "Spring-Flowering Plants" category. The fragrant early-flowering plant already lures insects into the garden very early in the year and offers them food. The *Fragaria x ananassa* Duch F1 Summer Breeze Snow from ABZ-Seeds from the Netherlands convinced the jury in the "Tub Plants" category. As a delicious and low-maintenance snack fruit for patios and balconies, this strawberry is optimally suitable for city gardening.

Further information at www.ipm-essen.de