

Breaking Down  
The List

One in four of our Top 100 growers report using additional greenhouse space this year. Find out who the biggest movers and shakers are.

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**C**OLOR Spot Nurseries (No. 1) and Kurt Weiss Greenhouses (No. 2) maintain their respective positions on our latest Top 100 Growers list with a staggering 26.4 million combined square feet of environmentally controlled greenhouse space. That's virtually as many square feet as the bottom 30 greenhouse operations on our Top 100 Growers list combined.

Although Color Spot and Kurt Weiss report no change in production space for 2011, 28 growers on our 2010 list report increases in production space.

### The Big Get Bigger

Of the 28 growers reporting additions this year, Ivy Acres' 1.8 million square foot addition is by far the largest. At press time,

President Dave Foltz reports Ivy Acres (No. 19) was on the verge of acquiring a considerable amount of greenhouse space from Conard-Pyle in Pennsylvania, putting Ivy Acres in a position to more than double its existing space. Foltz sheds more light on Ivy Acres' addition on page 36.

Hermann Engelmann Greenhouses (No. 18) also reports a considerable addition of 500,000 square feet. Paul Ecke Ranch (No. 4), **Altman Plants (No. 7)** and Riverview Flower Farm (No. 67) all report additions of at least 381,000 square feet.

Other growers reporting additions of at least 240,000 square feet include: Mid-American Growers (No. 20), Stacy's Greenhouses (No. 63), Aris Horticulture (No. 10), Henry Mast Greenhouses/Masterpiece Flower Company (No. 56) and Green Circle Growers (No. 12).

### A Few Get Smaller

But while 28 businesses report operat-

ing under more space this year, nine report decreases that range from just a few thousand square feet to nearly one million square feet. Speedling (No. 15), which is a large producer of vegetable transplants in addition to floriculture crops, reports the most significant reduction in space dedicated to floriculture crops this year. Ranked 10th a year ago, Speedling now reports using about 3.8 million square feet of greenhouse space for floriculture crops.

Two other considerable reductions are those of Burgett Geothermal Greenhouses and Polk Nursery. Burgett Geothermal, a New Mexico-based operation, has appeared on the Top 100 list for years. Dale Burgett, however, says the operation is currently not in production and that he'll probably sell his business to an entrepreneur. The reason Burgett Geothermal is not in operation is a strange one, for sure.

"The federal government was charging me a royalty for the (heat) in the water," Burgett says. "My water belonged to the state of New Mexico. All they could do was claim the heat. They called the heat a mineral. I've been fighting them really hard. It took \$2 million to fight the thing and go through all the courts. What I eventually did was I got the law changed in Washington (D.C)."

Polk Nursery, meanwhile, auctioned its real estate in Florida last year and liquidated its inventory in March. So while Polk, Burgett Geothermal and Silver Terrace Nurseries drift off the list, Armstrong Growers (No. 70) returns, South Central Growers (No. 92t) makes an appearance and Parks Brothers Farm (No. 100) finally cracks the Top 100.

Nurserymen's Exchange (No. 24t) and B and H Flowers (No. 54) report substantial reductions, as well. Nurserymen's indicates it's operating under 600,000 fewer square feet than one year ago, and B and H is right behind with 579,000 fewer square feet. **GG**

### Largest Reported Additions In Square Feet\*



1,772,250  
Ivy Acres



500,000  
Hermann  
Engelmann  
Greenhouses



391,289  
Paul Ecke Ranch/  
Ecke Geraniums



381,855  
Altman  
Plants



381,696  
Riverview  
Flower Farm

### Largest Reported Reductions In Square Feet\*



979,312  
Speedling Inc.



900,000  
Burgett  
Geothermal  
Greenhouses



794,220  
Costa Farms



750,300  
Polk Nursery



600,000  
Nurserymen's  
Exchange

\*Lists based on growers who appeared on the 2010 Top 100 list.



# The List

| 2011 Rank | 2010 Rank | Operation Name<br>Location                   | 2011 Sq Ft (% Offshore)<br>2010 Sq Ft (% Offshore) |
|-----------|-----------|--|--|
| 1         | 1         | Color Spot Nurseries<br>California           | 14,274,000<br>14,274,000                           |
| 2         | 2         | Kurt Weiss Greenhouses<br>New York           | 12,146,020<br>12,146,020                           |
| 3         | 3         | Costa Farms<br>Florida                       | 6,317,102 (9%)<br>7,111,322 (8%)                   |
| 4         | 5         | Paul Ecke Ranch/Ecke Geraniums<br>California | 5,805,180 (79%)<br>5,413,891 (78%)                 |
| 5         | 6         | Metrolina Greenhouses<br>North Carolina      | 5,600,000<br>5,400,000                             |
| 6         | 4         | Rocket Farms<br>California                   | 5,500,000<br>5,500,000                             |
| 7         | 7         | Altman Plants<br>California                  | 5,402,350<br>5,020,495                             |
| 8         | 8         | Color Star Growers<br>Colorado               | 5,000,000*<br>5,000,000*                           |
| 9         | 9         | Hines Nurseries<br>California                | 4,834,000<br>4,834,000                             |
| 10        | 13        | Aris Horticulture<br>Ohio                    | 4,352,080 (40%)<br>4,028,429 (49%)                 |
| 11        | 11        | Bell Nursery<br>Maryland                     | 4,212,480*<br>4,212,480                            |
| 12        | 14        | Green Circle Growers<br>Ohio                 | 4,160,400<br>3,920,400                             |
| 13        | 12        | The Sun Valley Group<br>California           | 4,000,000<br>4,100,000*                            |
| 14        | 15        | Delray Plants<br>Florida                     | 3,868,116<br>3,868,116                             |
| 15        | 10        | Speedling<br>Florida                         | 3,807,688 (21%)<br>4,787,000 (29%)                 |
| 16        | 16        | Milgro Nursery<br>Utah                       | 3,500,000<br>3,500,000                             |
| 17        | 17        | Matsui Nursery<br>California                 | 3,438,000<br>3,328,000                             |
| 18        | 22        | Hermann Engelmann Greenhouses<br>Florida     | 3,300,000<br>2,800,000                             |
| 19        | 49t       | Ivy Acres<br>New York                        | 3,253,290<br>1,481,040                             |
| 20        | 21        | Mid-American Growers<br>Illinois             | 3,200,000<br>2,831,400                             |
| 21        | 18t       | Kerry's Bromeliads<br>Florida                | 3,100,000*<br>3,100,000                            |
| 22        | 20        | Woodburn Nursery & Azaleas<br>Oregon         | 2,850,000<br>2,850,000                             |
| 23        | 23        | Dallas Johnson Greenhouses<br>Iowa           | 2,700,000<br>2,700,000                             |

\* = estimate NR = not ranked



## More Online

For more Top 100 Growers coverage, including additional insights growers shared in our annual survey, visit [GreenhouseGrower.com/May2011](http://GreenhouseGrower.com/May2011).

### #4

Spotlight On:  
**Paul Ecke Ranch**



Paul Ecke III

Percentage of production space under permanent environmentally controlled structure devoted to each crop: 80% stock plants, 20% plugs and propagation material

Best way to describe Ecke Ranch's role in contract growing: Contracts other growers to produce material for it

Percentage of crops sold that are produced by other operations through contract growing: 10 to 20 percent

Primary reasons Ecke Ranch contracts other growers to produce crops: "This is a space issue, and we have decided to use the capital infrastructure and expertise developed from multiyear production expertise. In addition, this is a good way to reach regional product distribution." – Steve Rinehart, COO