



Horticultural
Development
Company

Grower summary

HNS 172

The British Heather Growers'
Association garden at the Royal
Horticultural Society Show at
Hampton Court Palace in July
2009

Final Report 2009

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The results and conclusions in this report may be based on an investigation conducted over one year. Therefore, care must be taken with the interpretation of the results.

Use of pesticides

Only officially approved pesticides may be used in the UK. Approvals are normally granted only in relation to individual products and for specified uses. It is an offence to use non-approved products or to use approved products in a manner that does not comply with the statutory conditions of use, except where the crop or situation is the subject of an off-label extension of use.

Before using all pesticides check the approval status and conditions of use.

Read the label before use: use pesticides safely.

Further information

If you would like a copy of the full report, please email the HDC office (hdc@hdc.org.uk), quoting your HDC number, alternatively contact the HDC at the address below.

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Headline

BHGA's Garden Success: Silver Gilt medal and 60,000 Visitors

Background and expected deliverables

Heathers sales have been steadily declining over recent years. Following the promotion of National Heather Week, and the commissioning of Marketing Report from Business Link, a decision was taken to market Heathers to the public at the infamous Hampton Court Palace Flower Show. The immediate aim was present a garden to raise the profile of Heathers and to secure a Medal. The longer-term aim was to attempt to reverse the decline in Heather sales, aiming for an initial boost of 10% in 2010.

Summary of the project and main conclusions

A professionally designed small garden was developed for exhibition at the Hampton Court Palace Garden Flower Show in July 2009. Entitled *Back to Front*, the garden aimed to improve the popularity of heathers and promote these versatile yet undervalued plants.

The garden aimed to convey the following messages:

Major message

'Plant Heathers'

This was tackled through dispelling the misconception that heathers are "difficult to grow" because of a need for acid soil. Winter varieties, which grow in most ordinary soils, were highlighted, and summer varieties, planted in an acid growing media in tubs, troughs and containers, were showcased.

Other messages

'Use Heathers for Hedging, as Topiary, and in vertical walling'

'Use Heathers to benefit butterflies, bees and other insects'

These messages were demonstrated in the design of the Garden, which showed Heathers growing with other attractive plants.

Figure 1 shows the design of the *Back to Front* garden and plant list.

Figure 1: The design of the *Back to Front* garden and plant list.

Heathers

Calluna vulgaris 'Anne's Goldzwerg'
Calluna vulgaris 'Forest Fire'
Calluna vulgaris 'Foxii Nana'
Calluna vulgaris 'Silver Fox'
Calluna vulgaris 'Tib'
Calluna vulgaris 'White Lawn'
Daboecia cantabrica 'Amelie'
Daboecia cantabrica 'White Blum'
Daboecia x scotica 'Silverwells'
Erica carnea 'Foxhollow'
Erica cinerea
Erica x darleyensis 'Eva Gold'
Erica x darleyensis 'J.W. Porter'
Erica x darleyensis 'Moonshine'
Erica x darleyensis 'Silberschmelze'
Erica x darleyensis 'White Perfection'

Heathers

Erica erigena 'Brian Proudley'
Erica erigena 'Superba'
Erica erigena 'Thing Nee'
Erica erigena 'W.T. Rackliff'
Erica platycodon subsp. *maderincola*
Erica tetralix 'Alba Mollis'
Erica vagans 'Keira'

Herbaceous Plants

Agapanthus 'Blue Dot'
Agapanthus 'Streamline'
Agapanthus 'Torbay'
Echinops bannaticus 'Taplow Blue'
Echinacea purpurea 'White Swan'
Foeniculum vulgare 'Purpurea'
Verbena bonariensis
Heuchera KEY LIME PIE 'Tnheu042'
Heuchera CREME BRULEE 'Tnheu041'

Trees

Acer cappadocicum 'Aurea'
Taxus baccata

Climbers

Lonicera japonica 'Mint Crisp'
Clematis 'Black Prince'

Grasses

Miscanthus sinensis 'Morning Light'
Pennisetum setaceum rubrum
Stipa gigantea
Stipa tenuissima

Ferns

Asplenium scolopendrium
Dryopteris filix-mas
Matteuccia struthiopteris

Bulbs

Allium sphaerocephalon

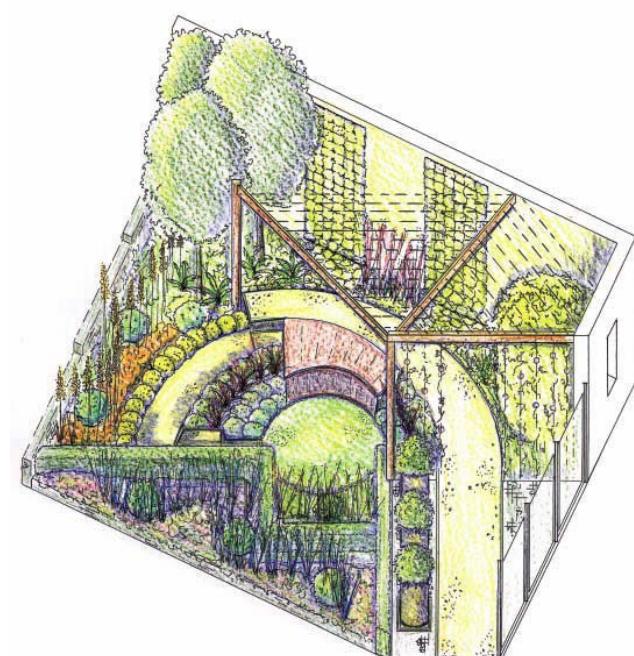


Figure 2. A photograph of the *Back to Front* garden at the 2009 Hampton Court Palace Garden Show.



Main Conclusion

Some 60,000 persons, mainly from the higher (AB and C1) income groups, were attracted to the Garden, which received many compliments and was awarded a Silver Gilt medal.

These factors, together with the media publicity, will have boosted the image of Heathers considerably, and act as the first steps in reversing the decline in sales.

Financial benefits

These will become evident, as the reversal of the decline in sales takes place.