



Arkansas Re-leaf newsletter

For the Commercial Green Industry

Jim Robbins
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Ornamental
Horticulture

Jim's Corner

First of all, I need to apologize to my colleague and friend, Ples Spradley (Extension pesticide assessment specialist). Somehow I missed giving him full credit for his lengthy article on Worker Protection Standards (WPS) in the last newsletter. As all of you know, Ples does an exceptional job educating all of us on pesticide safety issues in Arkansas. THANKS, Ples.

Where to start? I just returned from the **Mid-South Greenhouse Growers Conference** in Raymond, Mississippi, and my head is spinning with great information for the industry. It was great to see Rebecca and James Cosby (**Cosby's Greenhouse & GC, Crossett**) there. Most of the presentations on the second day focused on new plant varieties from suppliers such as S&G Flowers, Jackson & Perkins, Pan American Seed, EuroAmerican Propagators, Ball Flora Plant and Bodger Seed. Later in the day we had the opportunity to view the MSU Trial gardens in Crystal Springs. WOW! I believe it is correct to say that this trial location is our best shot at viewing all the new annual selections if you can't travel to Pac Trials in California.

To be fair, I will try to give a snippet from each company.

Pan American Seed (PAS) (Terry Howe): Looking for alternative options for winter landscape color besides pansies, PAS has a series called Pansy Pals™ (http://www.panamseed.com/product_story.aspx?storyID=9). The list includes Dianthus, *Diascia*, *Erysimum*, *Linaria*, *Nemesia* and snapdragon. If landscapers (exterior or **interior**) are looking for a foliage-type bedding plant, take a



Spanish for the Green Industry
Pocket Reference Guide (see page 2)

look at *Porphyrocoma pohliana* Maracas 'Brazilian Fireworks' (Purple Shrimp Plant). Terry educated us on the differences between Wave™ and Easy Wave™ series. Easy Wave™ plants are short day, and their plant habit is tighter or less spreading. Wave™ plants are long day, and we all know about plant habit. I think everyone is familiar with the Fiber Optic Grass (*Isolepis cernua*). This plant, which can be grown from seed, would be great for a florist pot crop or interiorscape. It is a sedge, so it loves water (great for that overzealous homeowner that drowns plants). I assume all greenhouse growers have their Product Information Guide (PIG). Tons of valuable information.

By the way, I assume we all know by now that **Donnie and Kathy Clayton** 'retired' from Ball Seed in January, and our new rep for Arkansas is Sabrina Childs (schildsb@ballseed.com). My sincere THANKS to Donnie and Kathy for their support and kindness over the years.

Jackson & Perkins (Dave Shanklin): Dave presented an interesting history of budded roses. Did you know that process

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Plant Profile

Still on the Mid-South Conference kick. I was getting ready to leave the conference, and Jane Keeler of the broker Raymond Perry Co. (877-282-1531) was packing up her booth. This **hidden ginger** caught my eye. While it is listed as a cold hardiness zone 8, maybe we should try it in zone 7. For sure, it would be a great plant for **interiorscaping** (looks a lot like a variegated *Dieffenbachia picta*; dumbcane) or for **summer landscape color** instead of Bengal Tiger canna.

Need something to get excited about, check out <http://arboretum.sfasu.edu/gaylilies/curcuma/index.htm>.



Cucurma 'Emperor'

Jim's Corner (cont.)

dates back to 1867? Dr. Huey was the first rootstock. Due to phasing out of methyl bromide fumigation, Dave suggests that even hybrid tea roses will eventually be on their own roots. No doubt shrub roses are gaining in popularity. J&P indicates that in 2005, 20 percent of rose sales were shrub roses, and they predict that number will be 50 percent by 2013. Last year alone, 6.5 million KnockOut™ roses were sold.

Bodger Seed – <http://www.bodger.com/> (Jason Riley): For combination containers/baskets, the Sweet Caroline™ series of sweet potato (*Ipomoea*) looks like a great option. 'Bewitched,' which will be added to the series in 2007, has a unique leaf shape. Leaves are more heart-shaped in the Sweet Hearts™ series. All of these should be more manageable in 4" pots versus non-patented sweet potato vine. Another great combination item that caught my eye is 'Sabre' phormium. For the Christmas season, you MUST check out Reindeer Paws (Anigozanthos) (<http://www.bodger.com/botanical.php?id=3>). Jason indicates it will fit easily into a traditional poinsettia program, won't require any PGRs and can be grown in close spacing. Now that I have you interested, I need to tell you that it is unlikely you can get liners this fall it is so popular.

Ball Flora Plant – <http://www.ballfloraplant.com/> (Jim Kennedy): Jim did a great job of talking about plants that can "**feel the heat**," which are plants we need to use in Arkansas. The list included Angelonia, Fanfare™ spreading impatiens, 'Mystic Spires Blue' salvia, Blazin' Rose Iresine, the Lucky™ and Landmark™ series of lantana, Perilla magilla 'Vanilla' (say that fast three times!), Fantasia™ zonal geraniums, Aztec™ series verbena, Rio™ series purslane and Plectranthus 'Mona Lavender' (a Mississippi Medallion winner).

EuroAmerican Propagators – Doug Parkinson: Several weeks ago, Stan Brown (**Blossomberry Nursery, Clarksville**) was trying to get my attention with

Euphorbia 'Diamond Frost.' Doug showed this same plant as a skirt under red poinsettia. All I can say is WOW!!!. I had the seen Cleome 'Linda Armstrong' and was impressed, but EAP has Senorita Rosalita™ which looks impressive also.

I participated in a panel workshop on **energy conservation for greenhouses**. Rick Jones of St. Joseph Heating Solutions (<http://www.stjosephky.com/>) discussed a hot water heater that can burn many different alternative fuels including corn, wood pellets, cotton gin trash and other materials. He already has one system installed at a greenhouse in Paragould that I need to check into.

I was thrilled to see that Mississippi Nursery and Landscape Association was selling at a pass-through cost the *Spanish for the Green Industry Pocket Reference Guide* (www.mnla.biz/images/OrderForms/Products_OrderForm.pdf), which is only \$10 plus S/H. I had to chuckle; the first phrase that I stumbled on was "don't walk on the edge of the pavers." The booklet has phrases for landscapers, nurseries, greenhouses and general business phrases.

Need proof that hydrangeas are a hot plant? Eighteen months ago a small group of individuals in Memphis started the Mid-South Hydrangea Society. I think they already have over 200 members. I was lucky enough to attend one of their meetings in Memphis on April 10 with Joel Stout (**Cricket Hill Farm, Conway**). Dr. Michael Dirr was their keynote speaker. They had over 450 attendees, and at least 20 percent were from Arkansas! If you are interested in joining, you can contact them at hydrangea@midsouth.rr.com or 901-452-4667.

If you have not heard, Burpee Holding Company closed the Heronswood Nursery site in Kingston, Washington, in early June. This is one of many articles telling the tale: <http://www.philly.com/mld/inquirer/business/14796460.htm>.

What's Up?

General

If you have been interested in using **palms in your landscapes**, check out the Southeastern Palm Society (<http://www.sepalms.org/>). They have an outstanding section on hardy palms (http://www.sepalms.org/SPS_Hardy_Palms.htm). That tip was courtesy of Gary Hollar: <http://www.garysnursery.com/>. You may also wish to check out the North Carolina Palm Society: <http://www.ncpalm.homestead.com/Index.html>.



Be Careful With the Use of Independent Contractors

by Glyn Finley, Business Consultant, UAF SBDC

Businesses may treat some workers as independent contractors, since there are no payroll taxes and no withholding or reporting. However, this may lead to IRS problems, which has guidelines for whether someone is an employee or an independent contractor. The test has three main areas: behavioral control, financial control and relationships.

Behavioral control addresses who directs and controls the worker. If workers are told when, where or how, what tools and equipment to use, who is allowed to assist them or where supplies and services must be purchased, they are most likely employees. The provision of training on required procedures and methods also indicates employee status.

Financial control refers to the business aspects of the work. Independent contractors may have a significant investment in their work, are not reimbursed for expenses and have an opportunity for profit or loss with a job.

Relationships also matter. Workers receiving paid benefits are likely employees, while the absence of benefits could be inconclusive. Businesses should use a written contract with independent contractors to spell out the intentions of the parties. If other areas

do not provide a clear answer as to status, a written contract could be the deciding factor.

The employee vs. independent contractor issue can jeopardize a business. If a worker wonders whether he is an employee or an independent contractor, he has a right to ask the Internal Revenue Service for a review.

For more information, go to <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p1779.pdf>.

Source: Arkansas SBDC E-News, 3/27/2006



Common Financial Errors Small Businesses Make

by Herb Lawrence, Center Director, ASU SBDC

Getting a new small business off the ground is hard enough without adding simple financial mistakes in the mix. Here is a list of common mistakes new small business owners often make.

- Taking on/keeping overly expensive debt. Watch those credit cards! If they are out of hand, talk to your bank loan officer.
- Not having sufficient cash reserves. Develop a cash "cushion" for your business. You should have access to enough cash to keep operating even when unexpected events occur that may temporarily curtail revenues.
- Not having "key-man" life insurance. If you are temporarily disabled, can you still pay your bills?
- Being underinsured for potential risks. Do you have insurance for potential liabilities such as lawsuits?
- Most common mistake – not putting enough aside for their own retirement. Sole proprietors need to put something aside each month.

Finding help to avoid simple financial mistakes is easy. Talk to your accountant or meet with an Arkansas Small Business Development Center consultant, and plan to attend an ASBDC seminar in your area on

financial management. For more information about the ASBDC services and workshops go to asbdc.uafr.edu.

Source: Arkansas SBDC E-News Biz-bites, 4/24/2006



Retail

Would you agree? **Retail tree, shrub sales fall in 2005.**

Bruce Butterfield, National Gardening Association's research director, noticed a troubling trend in 2005, according to the organization's annual survey. "I'm thinking the green-goods category had a tougher time [in 2005] – particularly trees and shrubs," he said. "That almost accounted for all the decline from 2004 to 2005. Planting of bigger plant material took a fairly big hit." Households purchasing flowering trees and shrubs fell from 12.3 million in 2004 to 9.1 million in 2005. Evergreen or leafy shrubs were sold to 6.4 million households in 2005, down from 9.8 million in 2004.

Source: Greenbeam (www.greenbeam.com) May 5, 2006



Landscape

Landscape humor from **Marty Davis Landscape, Magnolia**: "After a recent visit to a chiropractor for back adjustment, I logged the visit in my accounting ledger as 'equipment repair.'" *(Continued on page 4)*



New/Updated Publications
(read/download at www.uaex.edu):

New:

FSA6125, Hedge and Screen Alternatives for Arkansas, http://www.uaex.edu/Other_Areas/publications/PDF/FSA-6125.pdf



Arkansas Re-leaf

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Upcoming Events

- July 8-11:** OFA Short Course. Columbus, Ohio. Contact <http://www.ofa.org/>
- July 26-27:** Southwest Greenhouse Grower's Conference. Tyler, Texas, <http://www.txnla.org/education/index.html#swggc>
- July 29-August 2:** International Society for Arboriculture. Minneapolis Convention Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota. Contact Jessica Marx, 888.472.8733; e-mail, jmarx@isa-arbor.com; <http://www.isa-arbor.com/conference.asp>
- August 10-12:** SNA2006 – Southern Nursery Association Trade Show. Georgia World Congress Center, Atlanta, Georgia. Contact SNA; 770.953.3311; <http://www.sna.org>
- August 24-26:** The Farwest Show. Portland, Oregon Convention Center. Contact: Aimee Schendel, Oregon Association of Nurserymen, <http://www.farwestshow.com>
- September 14-15:** Arkansas Certified Nursery and Landscape Professional (ACNLP) **Review and Test**. Cooperative Extension Headquarters, Little Rock. Contact AGIA at www.argia.org or 501-225-0029
- October 7-11:** Southern Region International Plant Propagators' Society (SR-IPPS), Charlotte, North Carolina. Contact <http://www.ipps.org/SouthernNA/programs.html>

What's Up? *(cont. from page 3)*

I was trying to get correct nomenclature for some azalea photographs I took this spring and found the Azalea Society of America website: <http://www.azaleas.org/index.html>. If you don't have a copy of Fred Galle's book on azaleas, this would be a good quick reference.



Greenhouse/Nursery Growers

Janet Benson of **Green Thumbs in Forrest City** passed this on to me. She wanted to remind greenhouse growers that *Greenhouse Grower* magazine has an excellent on-line resource with helpful tools: http://www.greenhousegrower.com/grower_tools/index.html.

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