



# Arkansas Re-leaf newsletter

For the Commercial Green Industry

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## Jim's Corner

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*University of Arkansas Turfgrass Field Day*

You don't have to look far to find great educational programs. Here are some highlights from programs I was able to attend recently.

### **University of Arkansas Turfgrass Field Day (August 1)**

Dr. Aaron Patton and the rest of the turf faculty deserve a round of applause for an exceptional Field Day. Topics covered included "Controlling crabgrass: what's new and what's old," "Selecting bermudagrass cultivars for traffic tolerance," "What is sulfonyleurea, and how do you use it," "Seeded zoysiagrass establishment" and much, much more. If you are in the landscape field, you should try

to attend the Field Day next year. To learn more about turf topics, visit <http://turf.uark.edu/>. To subscribe to Dr. Patton's electronic newsletter, go to <http://turf.uark.edu/subscribe.html>.

### **Southern Nursery Association Research Conference (August 8-9)**

The SNA Research Conference is in its 52nd year and is held in conjunction with the SNA Trade Show in Atlanta. For me, this is the best ornamentals conference in the nation. The two-day conference is packed with great information in a large number of brief talks (7 minutes maximum). Another unique aspect to this research conference is the requirement

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## Jim's Corner (cont.)

that each researcher include a section called "Significance to the Industry." What is even more amazing is the fact that the Proceedings since 1992 are available for FREE on-line at <http://www.sna.org/research/researchproceedings.shtml>. This year a staggering 176 papers were presented in 13 separate sections such as plant breeding, propagation, marketing and economics, weed control, plant pathology and container production. The Research Conference is free and open to anyone attending the SNA Trade Show. There is no way I can summarize all 176 papers, so I will pick two to highlight the conference. There were actually several papers discussing competing research programs at Auburn and Virginia Tech on developing container media from either pine chip residual or whole pine chips. Both university programs are racing to develop container media for greenhouse and container nursery applications from pine wood chips. These studies are typical of many others trying to find alternative

substrates to either peat moss or pine bark. So far the pine wood chip research looks encouraging. Does anyone have a free hammer mill in the state?

A different paper really caught my attention. For the past two years, I have been conducting container fertility trials at Cricket Hill Farm (Joel Stout, Conway). Each year we have observed an odd distortion in the leaves of crapemyrtle that is associated with certain treatments. Up to this point, we thought the problem was thrip feeding; however, a paper from Auburn highlighted this problem. Although Auburn has no idea what is causing this leaf malformation, they have given it a name, "rabbit tracks," and ruled out a list of possible causes including thrips, viruses, and Fe/Mn/P deficiency. It just emphasizes the value in attending these meetings in the knowledge gained and networking strengthened.

### Southern Plant Conference

The 10th Annual Southern Plant Conference, hosted by the Southern



*Liriodendron tulipifera* 'Fastigiatum'

Nursery Association, will be held in Mobile September 5-8. This intense conference is held only every other year. If you enjoy ornamental plants, this conference is a must. This conference features a "who's who" of plant materials. You can find out more or register at [www.sna.org](http://www.sna.org).

## What's Up?

### General

Dr. Mengmeng Gu at Mississippi State University found this awesome on-line publication for conversion tables and formulas for Horticulture. This 40-page booklet has it all. Check it out at <http://pubs.caes.uga.edu/caespubs/PDF/B931.pdf>.



Let's assume you want to look up whether a pesticide is still registered or not. Consult the pesticide database, <http://ppis.ceris.purdue.edu/>, or if you need current toxicity or regulatory information, <http://www.pesticideinfo.org/Index.html>.



### Department of Labor Offers Employment Law On-line Service

by Cozetta Jones, Graduate Assistant, UALR Lead Center

The Department of Labor offers an on-line service to help employers and workers answer questions about federal employment laws. This resource called elaws, or "employment laws assistance for workers and small businesses," has "advisors" that are interactive on-line tools that can assist workers and employers in understating their rights and responsibilities under federal labor laws. These advisors mimic the

interaction an individual might have with a Department of Labor representative. They ask questions and provide information that directs the individual to the appropriate resources and solutions. This site features many different advisors addressing topics such as wage and hour issues, workplace safety and health and employee benefits.

The FirstStep Employment Law Advisor is particularly beneficial to small business owners. Designed to help employers determine which laws apply to their specific business, the advisor provides information and resources on how to comply with these laws. The advisor asks a series of questions related to the

business operations including location, annual cash flows and number of employees. Based on the responses to these questions, the advisor will compile a list of employment laws that are likely to apply to the business as well as a list of links and resources that provide information on complying with these laws.

For more information on elaws and the FirstStep employment law advisor or to use this service, please go to [www.dol.gov/elaws](http://www.dol.gov/elaws).

Source: *Arkansas SBDC E-News - Biz Bytes* 8/6/2007.

For help keeping track of all of the necessary labor forms and rules related to **immigration compliance**, go to the source: <http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis/>.

## Retail

Check your shelves!

### EPA fines retailer for selling cancelled pesticide

Perfect Expressions, a garden store in Ely, Nevada, was fined \$14,000 by U.S. EPA for allegedly **selling cancelled insecticides**. The store was offering Green Light Dursban Granules, Ortho Dursban Lawn Insect Spray and Ortho Dursban. The pesticides contain the active ingredient chlorpyrifos, which has been cancelled by EPA for nearly all home uses because children may be harmed from exposure.

Source: *Greenbeam* 08/02/07.



Sad to think, but what was voted the #1 Best Idea (*GrowerTalks* August 2007) from the 2007 Pack Trials was a small sign inserted into retail display plants that simply said: "New Variety." Even the simplest of ideas prove valuable as sales tools.



Ball Publishing has an excellent book that can help you create beautiful containers. The color book is kind of like plant-by-numbers. *Absolutely Beautiful Containers* is available at <http://www.ballbookshelf.com/> for \$25. (ISBN 978-1-883052-46-1)



The July 1 issue of *American Nurseryman* had an exceptional article titled "2007 Spring Sales Roundup." The lengthy article had specific sales reports from different regions of the U.S. in addition to some graphic presentations of results from the Garden Writers Association Foundation survey. For purchase location, the survey indicates consumers are more likely to visit local garden centers (47%) than mass merchants (44%) in 2007, which is a reversal of the trend over the past few years. As in previous years, the primary (50%) reason for selecting a source for plant material is "best quality," with the second reason being "best price" (28%) and the third reason being "trained and educated sales staff" (19%). Consumers consider "ease of care" and "color" over "price" when making purchasing decisions in the spring. More than a quarter of consumers are more inclined to purchase organic or natural products when it comes to fertilizer, garden fruit or vegetables and potting soil. The reason for gardening has stayed fairly constant. About one-third of consumers garden for a "better home environment," another one-third "to increase curb appeal and property value," and the remaining third garden for "better mental health, nutrition or fitness."

## Landscape

If you need detailed information about different types of wood preservatives, this is your source: <http://www.fpl.fs.fed.us/documnts/fplgtr/fplgtr122.pdf>.

**NEW!**

**New Publications**  
(read/download at [www.uaex.edu](http://www.uaex.edu)):

Hypoxylon Canker of Hardwood Shade Trees,  
**FSA7557**  
Liming Your Lawn, **FSA6134**  
Fertilizing Your Lawn,  
**FSA2114**



I have investigated several reports of "sour" **hardwood** mulch again this year. Remember to train employees to monitor hardwood mulch that has an unusual odor (e.g., ammonia smell). The harmful vapors will easily burn annuals and the lower foliage on herbaceous perennials. "Sour" mulch occurs when it is piled too high and the pile goes anaerobic. You can easily avoid this problem by keeping the pile low or by turning the larger piles frequently. The damage from "sour" mulch is visible within the first 24 hours after being spread in a landscape.

## Greenhouse/Nursery Growers

Renewable energy is on the lips of everyone, but how do you know what is best for your greenhouse? Here are a few websites that may help: <http://www.dsireusa.org/> features a database of state incentives for renewable energy and <http://www.uwex.edu/energy/greenhouses.html> is geared specifically for greenhouses and covers heat loss, heating systems, space use and more.

### Errata:

For pesticide label information, the correct URL is <http://www.cdms.net/LabelsMsds/LMDefault.aspx>.



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## Upcoming Events

**September 6-8:** SNA Southern Plant Conference, Mobile, AL. Contact <http://www.sna.org/conferences/SPC2007/spc.shtml>

**September 19-20:** Ark. Certified Nursery and Landscape Professional (ACNLP) review and test. Botanic Garden of the Ozarks, Fayetteville. Contact <http://argia.org/argia2/home2.shtml>


**October 5-6:** Middle Tennessee Nursery Association (MTNA) Horticultural Trade Show, McMinnville Civic Center, McMinnville, TN. Contact <http://www.mtna.com>

**October 6-9:** ASLA Annual Meeting & EXPO!, San Francisco, CA. Contact American Society of Landscape Architects, <http://www.asla.org/nonmembers/meetings.html>

**October 28-31:** Southern Region of North America International Plant Propagators' Society, Inc. (IPPS) 32nd Annual Meeting. Chattanooga Marriott Hotel at the Convention Center, Chattanooga, TN. Contact Dr. David L. Morgan, e-mail, [DavidLMorgan@sbcglobal.net](mailto:DavidLMorgan@sbcglobal.net); url, <http://www.ipps.org/southernna/>

**January 6-8:** The Western Nursery Show, Overland Park, KS. Contact <http://www.wnla.org/>

**January 23-24:** Ark. Turfgrass Assoc. & Ark. Green Industry Assoc. Conf. & Trade Show, Hot Springs. Contact [AGIA a.org/argia2/home2.shtml](http://AGIA.a.org/argia2/home2.shtml) or ATA (<http://www.arkansas-turf.org/>)

  
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