



Arkansas Re-leaf newsletter

For the Commercial Green Industry

Jim Robbins
Extension Specialist -
Ornamental
Horticulture

Jim's Corner

Dr. Ron Rainey and I will put on a **Specialty Cut Flower Workshop** on Tuesday, November 18, at the Extension headquarters in Little Rock. This workshop is being conducted in cooperation with the Department of Agriculture. We are very excited about the talented speakers (e.g., Pam and Frank Arnosky, Texas Specialty Cut Flowers) who will highlight this program. Both growers and buyers of different sizes will participate. Registration information at http://www.aragriculture.org/marketing/cut_flower_workshop.htm

Whether you are a grower, landscaper or retailer, you must make a point to visit the University of Tennessee Research and Education Center, Jackson, Tennessee (<http://westtennessee.tennessee.edu/>). A group of us met with Carol Reese and Jason Reeves for several hours in mid-August and walked away



University of Tennessee Research and Education Center, Jackson, Tennessee

with an extremely positive impression. Carol and Jason have put together exceptional trials and displays of bedding plants, herbaceous perennials and woody plants. Plants are extremely well labeled, and the grounds are open seven days a week and 365 days a year. If you make the trip, you may want to also visit Randolph's Greenhouses (<http://www.randolphsgreenhouses.com/index.html>) which is just a few minutes from the center. Call ahead since the greenhouse is not open to the public

year-round. The owner, Rita, is a noted author and speaker.

The primary reason for the trip was to evaluate the performance of bedding plants in late summer. Varieties that I noted as being very good included Petunia Super-tunia[®] Vista Bubblegum (Proven Winners: PW; taller than most other petunias), Petunia Surfinia[®] Patio Coral Pink (Suntory), Petunia Surfinia[®] Patio Hot Pink (Suntory), Capsicum annuum 'Calico' (Pan American Seed: PAS), Capsicum annuum

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in this issue

Jim's Corner	1
What's Up?	2
New Publications	3
Upcoming Events	4

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Jim's Corner (cont.)

'Purple Flash' (PAS), Capsicum annuum 'Explosive Ember' and Capsicum annuum 'Chilly Chili' (PAS). Other annuals that looked good included Petunia Super-tunia^R Raspberry Blast (PW), Penta 'Northern Lights Lavender' (Benary), Vinca Mediterranean White XP (PAS), Vinca Mediterranean Hot Rose XP (PAS), Vinca Mediterranean Red XP (PAS), Zinnia Zahara Yellow (PAS), Zinnia Zahara Scarlet (PAS), Lantana Bandana^R Cherry Sunrise (Syngenta) and Lantana camara Bandana^R Red 09 (Syngenta).

By the way, if you are trying to pick selections for next year and cannot visit these local trial sites, you can check results of some trials online. Several worthwhile sites include The University of Georgia, which gives running results for 2008 at <http://ugatrialhort.uga.edu/index.cfm/fuseaction/plants.main/index.htm>, and the UT, which lists their results (up to 2007) posted at http://utgardens.tennessee.edu/annual_trials.html.

I was sorry that I could not attend the University of Arkansas Turf and Ornamental Field Day in Fayetteville on August 6 as I needed to be at the Southern Nursery Association Research Conference in Atlanta. If you did not attend, Dr. Aaron Patton and the staff and faculty there did an exceptional job. This annual event continues to grow in numbers and quality. Later that same month I asked Aaron to summarize some of the exciting turf work being conducted in Fayetteville, and I was overwhelmed with some of the exciting work being conducted. Whether you are a landscape company, sod producer or in recreational turf, you need to plan to attend the field day in 2009.

As promised in the previous newsletter, Dr. Steve Vann has published a useful guide (FSA7564) comparing dogwood leaf spot and the new dogwood anthracnose diseases. The valuable resource can be viewed, printed on your own printer or



Hear Beth Eggers (Flower Farm on Wye Mountain) at the Specialty Cut Flower Workshop November 18.

purchased at the Extension web site: www.uaex.edu.

I hinted in the last newsletter that the Extension Service was being overwhelmed with inquiries this year about declining ornamental pears. We have been very aggressive in pursuing an answer, but so far we still have not identified the "smoking gun." Our attention still focuses on the roots, but we cannot confirm a phytoplasma or fungal cause for the problem.

What's Up?

General

Five Don'ts for Marketing in Tough Times

Timothy Lee, Associate Extension Specialist, UALR Lead Center

Steve McKee, president of McKee Wallwork Cleveland Advertising, an ad agency specializing in working with companies suffering from stale brands and stalled growth, recently offered advice in *BusinessWeek* on how to **market in tough times**.

Steve advises:

1. Be smart and thrifty, but don't panic. This, too, shall pass.
2. Marketing is muscle, not fat. Be careful about cutting it.
3. Don't lose focus by chasing business you wouldn't normally want.
4. Don't discount. Discounting your price discounts your product in the eyes of your customers.
5. Don't neglect the elephant in the room. Make sure your employees know you're on top of things and have a plan.

Read the full article:

http://www.businessweek.com/smallbiz/content/jul2008/sb20080711_023930.htm.

Source: *Arkansas SBDC E-News* 8/6/2008



NASE Releases Study on Micro-Employer Health Coverage

Laura Fine, Assistant
State Director

The National Association for the Self-Employed has recently completed a comprehensive survey of its members on the topic of **health insurance** coverage. The demographics of the responders indicate that all responders have an ownership interest in their business and 46.6% of responders had only one employee, the business owner. 28.4% had a total of two employees, 8.5% had a total three employees, 5.8% had four employees, 3.8% had five employees, 2.2% had six employees and the remaining 5% had between seven and ten employees. About two-thirds (67%) of respondents said they have personal health insurance coverage purchased through their business or on an individual basis, a notable increase from the 54.9% who reported the same in 2005.

Source: *Arkansas SBDC E-News*
8/6/2008



Retail

In response to the increasing interest by the public in more environmentally friendly options, Purdue has released an excellent fact sheet, *Using Organic Fungicides* (<http://www.ces.purdue.edu/extmedia/BP/BP-69-W.pdf>), and our own Dr. Steve Vann has just released an excellent fact sheet, *Alternative Plant Disease Management Practices for the Home Garden* (FSA7562: http://www.uaex.edu/Other_Areas/publications/PDF/FSA-7562.pdf).



Landscape

Dr. Hannah Mathers had an excellent article in the July issue of *Nursery Management and Production (NM Pro)* on the subject of **glyphosate damage on trees**. Hannah has been banging the drum for several years about the potential damage to trees, especially from newer formulations of glyphosate with surfactants that increase penetration into green tissue. Glyphosate applied improperly, or in too high a dosage, is causing a phenomenon known as split bark. The article would be good reading for landscapers or field nursery growers who may be applying glyphosate near tree trunks.

It is kind of too late for this year, but the August issue of GM Pro had an excellent review of **mini Poinsettias** including a table of cultivars.



Greenhouse/Nursery Growers

I am sad to report that the **Emerald Ash Borer (EAB)** was found on July 23 in the Lake Wappapello area of Missouri. That is about 30 miles north of the northeast corner of Arkansas. The discovery of this highly destructive pest at a campground is a strong indication that it probably arrived in firewood. Missouri is the ninth state to have a confirmed EAB infestation. The pest was first found in Michigan in 2002. Since that time, seven other states (Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Maryland, Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Virginia) have

confirmed infestations. Missouri is the farthest south and west of any other known EAB infestation. Since no ash trees in North America are known to be resistant to the pest, infestations are devastating to these tree species. State and federal agencies are aggressively dealing with this serious insect pest.



The value of attending meetings: While attending the SNA Research Conference in Atlanta, I learned that BASF has introduced two **new herbicides** for landscape and field-grown nursery use. Tower™ is a liquid herbicide containing dimethenamid-P which, for those of us in ornamentals, is a new chemical class, chloroacetamide (Group 15). Freehand™ is a granular preemergent herbicide for the ornamental grower and landscape manager that contains dimethenamid-P and pendimethalin. This is exciting news since it is rare to get new chemistry in our ornamentals market. My colleague Mark Halcomb reported in his *Nursery Notes* newsletter (8/20/08) that “a BASF rep told me that all formulations of Pendulum (2G, WDG, EC) will no longer be offered for sale. A new safer formulation called AquaCap will be available.”

NEW!

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

Anthraxose Diseases of
Dogwoods,
Vann/Smith/Carson,
FSA7564

Alternative Plant Disease
Management Practices for
the Home Garden, Vann,
FSA7562



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Upcoming Events

Sept. 28 – Oct. 1: Plug and Cutting Conference, Rosen Plaza, Orlando. Contact <http://ofaconferences.org/>.

Oct. 19-22: Southern Region International Plant Propagators Society, Charlottesville, VA. Contact http://southern.ipps.org/home/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=3&Itemid=4.

Nov. 5: Oklahoma State University Greenhouse IPM Workshop, Stillwater, OK. Contact Dr. Mike Schnelle, mike.schnelle@okstate.edu.


Nov. 7-8: Growertalks Sustainability Conference, Frisco, TX. Contact mmazza@ballpublishing.com.

Nov. 18: UofA Specialty Cut Flower Workshop, Little Rock. Contact http://www.aragriculture.org/marketing/cut_flower_workshop.htm.

Dec. 4: UofA Turf and Landscape Maintenance Workshop, Paragould. Contact Dr. Aaron Patton, ajpatton@uark.edu.

Jan. 4-6, 2009: Western Trade Show, Overland Park, KS. Contact <http://www.wnla.org/>.

Jan. 21-22, 2009: Arkansas Green Industry Association (AGIA)/Arkansas Turfgrass Association (ATA) Trade Show and Conference, Hot Springs. Contact www.argia.org or www.arkansasturf.org.


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