



Arkansas Re-leaf newsletter

For the Commercial Green Industry

Jim Robbins
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Ornamental
Horticulture

Jim's Corner

I feel like Paul Harvey; and now for the rest of the story. The previous newsletter was already typeset when I submitted a dogwood sample to the Diagnostic Laboratory for diagnosis of a disease I could not identify. Turns out it was the first confirmed diagnosis of Dogwood Anthracnose (*Discula destructiva*) in Arkansas. Before we printed the newsletter, I deleted some text to make room for a brief statement indicating that we had confirmed the presence of this serious disease in Arkansas.

At first, many of us, including the Plant Board, were alarmed by this initial sighting. Thanks to the exceptional efforts of Dr. Rick Cartwright, Sherrie Smith, and Paul Shell, they quickly determined that the disease was in fact already well established across the state in nurseries, garden centers, and in home and commercial landscapes. This is a good example of



Congratulations to James and Rebecca Cosby (Cosby's GH & GC, Crossett) for being featured on the program cover for the 2008 MidSouth Greenhouse and Landscape Conference.

the value of an excellent statewide diagnostic clinic and diagnostician (Sherrie Smith) and the willingness of our State Plant Board (Terry Walker, Paul Shell) to work with the Green Industry on critical issues. Their assessment was critical since it basically establishes the fact that we are beyond

quarantines to control the spread in Arkansas. The group is perplexed by the fact that we have never confirmed the disease in our state and yet it was so widespread geographically. Certainly, the ideal cool and wet spring weather in 2008 plays into our explanation.

Who will this impact in the Green Industry? Everyone, from nurseries and garden centers to landscapers, needs to become familiar with this 'new' disease and the control options available. With this in mind, Dr. Steve Vann is developing a detailed Extension fact sheet that will be available soon. Dr. Vann will also make a presentation at the Arkansas Green Industry Association conference on January 22, 2009. Feel free to contact us before then if you have specific questions about this disease.

In the past few weeks I have received lots of inquiries about premature fall color/decline on Callery pears across the state. I have checked many trees and cannot come up

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Jim's Corner (cont.)

with one explanation for every situation. Clearly, something is wrong with the root system and/or trunk. In a few cases, I can explain the premature decline by planting depth issues (too deep) or trunk injury, but in the majority of cases, I cannot find the smoking gun. These trees are budded, so it is possible it is related to bud failure. If you have an idea, please let us know.



Lots of calls about premature fall color/death on Gallery pears

What's Up?

General

I am pleased to announce that the University of Arkansas has finally developed a searchable index for the 'Plant Health Clinic News.' The newsletter, started in 2006 by Sherrie Smith, is a rich database of information based on samples received by the lab. You can check back issues using the searchable index at <http://plant.pathology.uark.edu/2469.htm>.



There is some indication (http://www.oregonlive.com/environment/index.ssf/2008/07/portlandarea_nurseries_struggl.html) that consumers are increasingly interested in planting fruits and vegetables at home. In Arkansas, one commercial greenhouse reports a significant increase in demand for vegetable transplants, but a local garden center did not notice a significant increase in demand.



If you want to know if there are any federal or state resources/incentives for **renewables and efficiency**, check out <http://www.dsireusa.org/library/includes/map2.cfm?CurrentPageID=1&State=AR&RE=1&EE=1>.



SBA LAUNCHES TAX SAVINGS RESOURCE CENTER
by Laura Fine, Assistant State Director

SBA has created an **online tax savings resource** center to help small businesses understand how they can benefit from the 2008 economic stimulus package signed into law by President Bush earlier this year.

The package includes the following tax incentives for businesses: a 50% bonus depreciation allowance on equipment purchased and placed in service in calendar 2008 and an almost 100% increase in the amount (from \$128,000 to \$250,000) that a business can expense for equipment purchased and placed in the business tax year beginning in 2008.

SBA's new tax savings resource center demonstrates the benefits entrepreneurs can gain from the 2008 economic stimulus package. The center, located on <http://www.sba.gov/stimulus/>, contains three resources in the package:

1. The **FACT SHEET** provides a clear explanation of the small business tax benefits.
2. The **DEPRECIATION CALCULATOR** tool provides

an estimate of the first-year depreciation available under the provisions.

3. The **ONLINE SEMINAR**, a brief tutorial, summarizes the tax benefits and concludes with the depreciation calculator.

The SBA encourages small businesses to contact their tax advisor to determine exactly how the provisions and implementing tax code of the 2008 economic stimulus package apply to their business. The IRS website at <http://www.irs.gov/newsroom/article/0,,id=179227,00.html> provides additional information.

Source: *SBDC E-News* 6/25/2008



I probably don't need to tell anyone that **pesticide and fertilizer prices are up**. According to the Hindu report (<http://www.hindu.com/thehindu/holnus/015200805270921.htm>), DAP sold for about \$252 per metric ton in January 2007 and was selling for about \$1,230 per ton in May 2008. The price of muriate of potash (MOP), the most common source of potassium, rose from \$172 to \$288 in 2007. By late April 2008, MOP sold for \$500 per ton. The price of urea, the world's most common nitrogen fertilizer, rose from

about \$277 to \$405 per ton in 2007 to \$452 per ton in May 2008. I have heard from many growers about the fact that glyphosate has doubled in price in 2008 (<http://cornandsoybeandigest.com/inputs/news/0408-higher-price-herbicide-preemergence-chemicals/>; <http://weedsience.unl.edu/pdfarticles/glyprice08.pdf>).

Retail

According to the July 2008 newsletter from the Mid-South Hydrangea Society, Plant Introductions, Inc. (Watkinsville, GA: Dr. Michael Dirr's plant introduction company) will release a **re-blooming lacecap hydrangea** in 2009 called 'Twist 'n' Shout'. The parents are the remontant mophead, 'Penny Mac', and his lacecap, 'Lady in Red'. The same newsletter hints that he may be ready to introduce a pink flowered smooth hydrangea (*H. arborescens*). If you are a plant geek, you may want to join the Mid-South Hydrangea Society (www.midsouthhydrangea.com). Their functions/activities and newsletter are exceptional.



According to the 2008 Garden Writers Association Foundation (GSAF) survey, the number one reason (33% of respondents) **people garden is "for better mental health, nutrition or fitness."**

Source: *American Nurseryman*, July 1, 2008



I like how The Big Greenhouse in Richmond, VA, referred to their pest control section as the '**Garden Pharmacy**.' According to the 2008 GWAF survey, a majority of American households are concerned about the environmental impact of gardening products.

Landscape

You should not be surprised, but not all **shrub roses** are created equal. The following are blackspot susceptibility results for 2007 from the 'Earth Kind National Trial' (<http://earthkindroses.tamu.edu/>). *Resistant*: no cultivar; *Slightly Susceptible* (lower end): Knock Out, Blushing Knock Out, Pink Knock Out, The Fairy, Belinda's Dream, Folksinger; *Moderately Susceptible*: Carefree Wonder, Dublin Bay, Country Dancer, Flora Dora, Pearlie Mae, Penelope, Sea Foam, Prairie Harvest; *Highly Susceptible*: Quietness, Summer Wind.

Source: Based on a talk by Dr. Allen Owings at the Mid-South Greenhouse Conf., Raymond, MS, June 2008.



The Arkansas State University-Beebe Agriculture Department will be offering courses that will lead to a **technical certificate in Landscape and Turfgrass Management** beginning this fall. This certificate program requires a total of 28 semester hours and could be completed in two semesters. This is an excellent opportunity for people who are looking for technical expertise in horticulture but don't want to spend four years getting a bachelor's degree. The first course in this program, Introduction to Landscape Management, will be offered this fall on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:30 a.m. to 10:50 a.m. at the ASU-Beebe campus and farm. This course will emphasize the design, implementation and maintenance of homeowner and commercial landscapes. If you have any questions please call Jerry Sites at 501-882-8246.

Greenhouse/Nursery Growers

Dr. Brent Pemberton (Texas A&M) reported on the 'North Texas Winner's Circle Awards' for 2007 at the Mid-South Greenhouse Conf., Raymond, MS, June 2008. Winners are Celosia New Look Dark Red (Benary), Coleus Tiny Toes (Ball FloraPlant=BFP), Dorotheanthus Mezoo Trailing Red (S&G), Euphorbia Burgundy Wine (PW), Iresine Blazin Lime (BFP), Juncus Blue Arrows (PanAm), Lantana Luscious Tropical Fruit (PW), Talinum Limon (PanAm), Zinnia Profusion Knee-high Red (Sakata), Zinnia Solcito (PanAm) and Vinca Cora Series (Goldsmith).



A recent research report from Cornell (*Growertalks*, June 2008) summarized results from a study investigating the potential use of controlled-release fertilizer (CRF) in a traditional liquid **fertilizer (LF) program for potted chrysanthemum production**. Their results demonstrate that if your goal is to produce the largest mum plant, LF is still an important component. CRF used by itself produced a nice, marketable plant, but plants were not as large as those that received LF or a combination of LF and CRF.



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

Thatch Prevention and Control, **FSA6139**
Growing Turfgrass in Shade, **FSA6140**

Nitrogen Arithmetic:
Reducing Fertilizer Costs
With Math and Management (online at <http://turf.uark.edu/turfhelp/archives/070708.html>)



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Upcoming Events

August 6: UofA Turfgrass Field Day, Fayetteville. Contact: <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/24528877/>.

August 7-9: Southern Nursery Association (SNA) Trade Show, Atlanta. Contact: <http://www.sna.org/snaforum2008.cfm>.

August 14-17: Texas Nursery & Landscape Assoc. (TXNLA) Expo, Houston. Contact: <http://www.nurserylandscapeexpo.org/>.

August 21-23: FarWest Show, Portland. Contact: <http://www.farwestshow.com/>.

September 28 – October 1: Plug & Cutting Conf., Rosen Plaza, Orlando. Contact: <http://ofaconferences.org/>.

November 7-8: Growertalks Sustainability Conf., Frisco, TX. Contact: mmazza@ballpublishing.com.

January 21-22, 2009: Ark. Green Ind. Assoc. (AGIA)/Ark. Turfgrass Assoc. (ATA) Trade Show & Conf., Hot Springs. Contact: www.argia.org or www.arkansasturf.org.

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