

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2007 The Plants Plants of the Centers & CROWERS





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Visit www.nhplantgrowers.org for additional calendar items.

Calendar

August 8, 2007, Vermont Association of Professional Horticulturists, 2007 Summer Meeting & Trade Show, 8am – 4pm, East Dummerston, VT.

August 5-11, 2007, Perennial Plant Symposium and Trade Show, Hyatt Regency Hotel, Columbus, Ohio, (614)771-8431, www.perennialplant.org

August 16, 2007, NHPGA Summer Meeting, Great Hill Horticultural Endowment/Bayberry Nursery, Hampton Falls, NH, 3:30pm – 7:30pm, Preregistration required, Contact: Nancy Adams, 292-5238.

September 3, 2007 Labor Day

September 15-18, 2007, Boston Gift Show, Boston Convention and Exhibition Center, Boston, Mass.

September 24-25, 2007, Perennial Plant Association, Northeast Regional Symposium on Retail Marketing, Radisson Airport Hotel, Providence, RI, www.perennialplant.org.

October 1- 4, 2007, Association of Specialty Cut Flower Growers National Conference and Trade Show, North Raleigh Hilton, Raleigh, N.C., (440) 774-2887 www.ascfg.org

October 10 – 12, 2007, New England Nursery Association Green Summit, Cranwell Resort, Lenox, Massachusetts. Contact: Mary Simard, (508) 653-3112, mary@nensyassn.org www.nensyassn.org **October 27-28, 2007**, New England Going Green Energy and Living Exposition Radisson Center, Manchester, N.H.

November 8, 2007, The Eco-Friendly Garden Center, Concord, NH, Cosponsored by UNH Cooperative Extension and NHPGA. Watch for details in the next issue!

November 12-15, 2007, Garden Centers of America Holiday Tour, Boston, Mass.

February 6 – 8, 2008, New England Grows, Boston Convention and Exhibiton Center, Boston, Mass., (508) 653-3009 www.negrows.org

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Cover photo credit: Nancy E. Adams

The Plantsman is published in early February, April, June, August, October, and December with copy deadlines on the first of each prior month. While camera-ready ads are preferred, set-up assistance is available at a nominal fee. Free classified advertising is offered as a member service. We will carry a short message (no artwork or logos) for one or two issues of The Plantsman.

For further information, please contact the editor: Nancy Adams, 25 Riverbend Road, Newmarket, NH 03857; 603-292-5238: email, nhpga@comcast.net

	2007 A	dvertising Rates 1	he Plantsma	n
	Member	Non-Member	Member	Non-Member
SIZE	6X	6X	1X	1X
1/8 pg.	\$165.00	\$181.50	\$33.00	\$36.50
1/4 pg. V	\$220.00	\$242.00	\$44.00	\$48.40
1/4 pg. H	\$220.00	\$242.00	\$41.00	\$48.40
1/2 pg.	\$412.50	\$453.75	\$82.50	\$90.75
Full	\$550.00	\$605.00	\$110.00	\$121.00



From the Board

Advertising-weeding through the options

Ann Caron, Scenic Nursery

Having an advertising strategy is a lot like weeding an untended flower bed. There are a million different options, most are weeds, but among them are a few gems. How to determine which is which? That depends on your business and your consumer.

At Scenic Nursery, we did our own advertising for the first 7 years we were in business. We didn't have a strategy, we just did what seemed right. We started out with newspaper, did some direct mail, and a few magazines. It seemed to work at first.

Then we started getting bombarded with marketing vendors. One such vendor sold us a space on a vinyl cover that slips over a phone book. He was sending them out to every home in a town adjacent to ours. Seemed like a good idea at the time, but when was the last time you actually reached for the phone book? And how do you quantify if it really works? This turned out to be a weed we should have pulled.

We were also approached by many companies who wanted us to get into TV and radio. While we knew this was a place we wanted to be, we just couldn't justify the expense. Without a real plan, we couldn't see spending the money involved. After a few years, our mainly "print" campaign seemed to be getting less effective and more expensive. We were sending out 25,000 mailers twice a year to people in our town and 8 surrounding towns, and people in our own town were saying "gee, we never knew you were here!" This became quite disconcerting. Also, we were spending more and more money every year, and not seeing the results we should have. It had become apparent we were plant people, not advertising professionals.

We knew we had to make a change, like yesterday!

One Christmas season, a customer came in to buy a Christmas tree. She mentioned she had an advertising company. (Ding! A bell went off!) I asked if she would be willing to meet with us during the winter to discuss a possible working relationship. (When else would people in our business meet?) She was able to develop a strategy for us that would not increase our current expenses, but would give us more coverage and exposure. Because of the buying power an agency has, she was able



to get us into TV and radio for a fraction of what we would have paid on our own. The agency also had us take a hard look at who our target customer is, and how to best reach that customer, something we weren't really doing before. An agency has the manpower and resources to research the demographic and knows ways to get the biggest bang for the buck.

It also became quite obvious that the internet was now the number one means of information gathering for the majority of people out there. While we had a website (albeit a

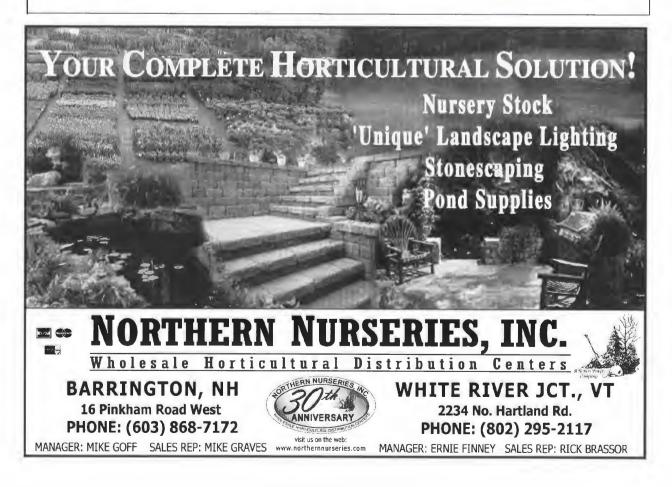
EUPHORBIA 'DIAMOND FROST' has been named one of the GREATEST ANNUALS FOR 2005! per Dr. Allen Armitage - Nov '05 issue of GREENHOUSE GROWER...

"We try to stay away from repeating winners from year to year, but this is the second year 'Diamond Frost' has earned this award. Plants just kept flowering and flowering all season. They never stopped, period! We placed plants in containers and in the garden, and in both cases they were outstanding. The habit was perfect, never exceeding 20" in height, and maintenance was minimal. The delicate...

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DIAMOND FROST

very amateur one) we knew that was the way to get people to realize that driving to Scenic Nursery is worth the trip. Again, I had a million sales reps telling me they could "maximize" my website, make it more user friendly, etc. I could never get past the sales pitch, they all seemed so pushy, not to mention the fact that they were insulting MY website. Then one day I was chatting with a customer and fellow member of the Raymond Chamber of Commerce who mentioned she did websites. For whatever reason, this time I listened. I don't know if it was her non-pushy approach, or the fact that she was local, for some reason, this time I said "OK - let's talk." She has proven to be a wonderful asset to our advertising team. I can email her an update, and before the day is out, it's live on the web. Can't beat that kind of service.

This winter we worked with a business consultant who touted the benefits of "guerilla marketing". This was something we had heard of, but never really put into action. One day I was on an off ramp behind a car that had an actual photograph covering the entire rear window. The company did this kind of signage for a living, and let me tell you - it had my attention. I memorized the phone number and called as soon as I had the chance. We have always believed in the old phrase "a picture's worth a thousand words". This was a prime example. Because we are off the beaten path, we can use all the exposure we can get. Glenn and I both now have beautiful shots of the nursery covering our rear windows,

in an effort to reach people when they least expect it - while they're driving in their cars! And without getting too wordy (we don't want to be responsible for any accidents) we have just listed out website address along with the picture. We are now driving people to the website, where they will find all the information they need. Guerilla marketing at its finest!

While I am a true believer in letting the professionals do what the professionals do, I am also a bit of a control freak. I like to keep a small amount of money budgeted for things that aren't in the strategy. It's not

a huge amount, but it comes in handy for those little things that aren't necessarily strategy driven - but are just the "right thing to do" at the time. Things like advertising in the Miss Raymond Town Fair Pageant program, or the Raymond Arts Associates' program for whatever play they're putting on. They aren't really money makers, but they show our business's support to our local community.

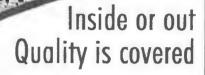
Depending on the size of your company, doing

it yourself may be the way to go. If it works - keep doing it. This is our third year doing TV and radio, and people still comment to me about our commercials. For us, this has been the best avenue. Without the guidance of our agency, I can't say we'd be doing as well. And with the last 3 springs, I shudder to think where we'd be without TV and radio! Our agency has been the machete wielding tour guide we needed to help us navigate the advertising jungle, allowing us to focus on what we do - grow and sell plants!



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Elsewhere in the News



Successful Conference Supports State Grower Associations

New England Floriculture, Inc. sponsors of the New England Greenhouse Conference and Expo, has awarded 5 New England state grower associations \$2000 each, using funds generated from the New England Greenhouse Conference and Expo. In total, over \$10,000 was awarded to New England Grower Associations to support local state programming to benefit the floriculture industry.

2007 Recipients:

Connecticut Greenhouse Growers Assn.

Speakers for programs on propagation and pest management

Maine State Florist and Growers Assn.

Design demonstration at Fryburg Fair, fall design program, scholarships

Mass. Flower Growers

Education program for retailers and growers on website development

New Hampshire Plant Growers (NHPGA)

Continued efforts to renovate and upgrade the NHPGA web site

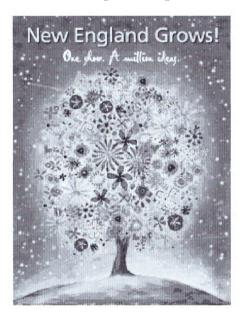
Vermont Assn. of Professional

Horticulturists produce a consumer guide to VAPH member businesses, Vt. Certified Horticulturists program, and Vermont grown

New England Grows Announces Chris Zane Of Zane's Cycles As Keynote Speaker For 2008, New Program On Plant I.D. Essentials

BOSTON, Mass.—New England Grows, the Northeast's largest Green Industry exposition and educational conference, has announced that Christopher J. Zane, owner of worldfamous, Connecticut-based Zane's Cycles, will give the keynote address on the opening day of the 2008 event. New England Grows 2008 will be held Wednesday, February 6 through Friday, February 8 at the Boston Convention & Exhibition Center in Boston, Massachusetts.

The keynote is new to the 15-yearold educational conference, held annually by the Green Industry for horticultural professionals. As owner of one of the largest retail bicycle stores in the nation, Zane will reflect on his successful business model. A 23-year veteran of the retail bicycle industry at age 39, he will share his unique approach to marketing. Among the strategies Zane will describe are continual learning, a customer's lifetime value, guerrilla marketing, bootstrapping, community relations, cost controlled customer service and image branding.



"We are delighted Chris Zane can join us to help launch New England Grows' exciting new format," said Greg Schaan, president of New England Grows. "With expanded learning opportunities for Green Industry professionals, New England Grows 2008 promises the best educational program the industry has to offer, as well as access to leadingedge research and expert business advice."

Zane's inspiring keynote address will help kick off the 2008 conference on Wednesday, February 6. The opening day's events will center on the topnotch educational program for which

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Elsewhere in the News



Wednesday, February 6 – Friday, February 8, 2008 BOSTON CONVENTION & EXHIBITION CENTER Boston, Massachusetts

New England Grows is known. On Wednesday afternoon, there will also be a new networking reception on the tradeshow floor and extended exhibit hours will be offered on Thursday and Friday. Pre-registration is required for the new keynote address. Visit www.NEGrows.org to register. remains committed to maintaining an optimum visitor-to-exhibitor ratio. As a result, the number of display booths available for the 2008 show is limited and exhibitors are encouraged to reserve space early. New sponsorship opportunities are also available to exhibitors before, during and after the event. To reserve exhibit space, or learn more about sponsorships, please contact Diane Zinck, Exhibits Manager, at dzinck@negrows.org or 508-653-3009.





New England Grows is also launching

a new session entitled "The Essentials of Plant ID" in 2008. This innovative educational session will be followed by a hands-on plant identification challenge on the tradeshow floor. Many exhibitors will display plant material at their booths for identification purposes. Conference attendees will receive a list of booths to visit, as well as an answer form to complete and return to Extension experts at the Great Ideas pavilion. The program will conclude with a prize drawing at the pavilion for participants who have correctly identified all of the plants on the tour.

New England Grows

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The Plantsman

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Member Profile

Carpenter's Olde English Greenhouse & Florist Owner: Rob Carpenter

220 South Main Street . Newmarket, NH 03857 (603) 659-3391

History

Carpenter's Olde English Greenhouse & Florist is a second-generation, family-owned business that's thriving on Main Street in Newmarket, NH. Back in 1950, John & Rosie Carpenter started a small hobby greenhouse from which they sold plants. Within eight years, the parttime plant business 'blossomed' into a full-time occupation. Sound familiar? both parents can still be found on the premises helping make the business a continued success.

Carpenter's is also a full-service florist shop (Rosie's passion) located on the ground floor of the two-story family home. Although the shop is located directly in front of the greenhouse complex, the large house obscures the view of the greenhouses and Rob often feels that florist customers



Rob Carpenter - John & Rosie's son - entered the business in 1975 when the family bought Lee Greenhouses, a wholesale operation in Dover, NH. Rob transitioned to the Newmarket business in 1985 when John & Rosie stepped down from running the day-to-day operations. However, t florist customers are unaware of the depth and breadth of the entire business operation. Web-based wireservice offerings have expanded the reach of their florist business...but Carpenter's has yet to create their own dedicated web site.

Business Transition

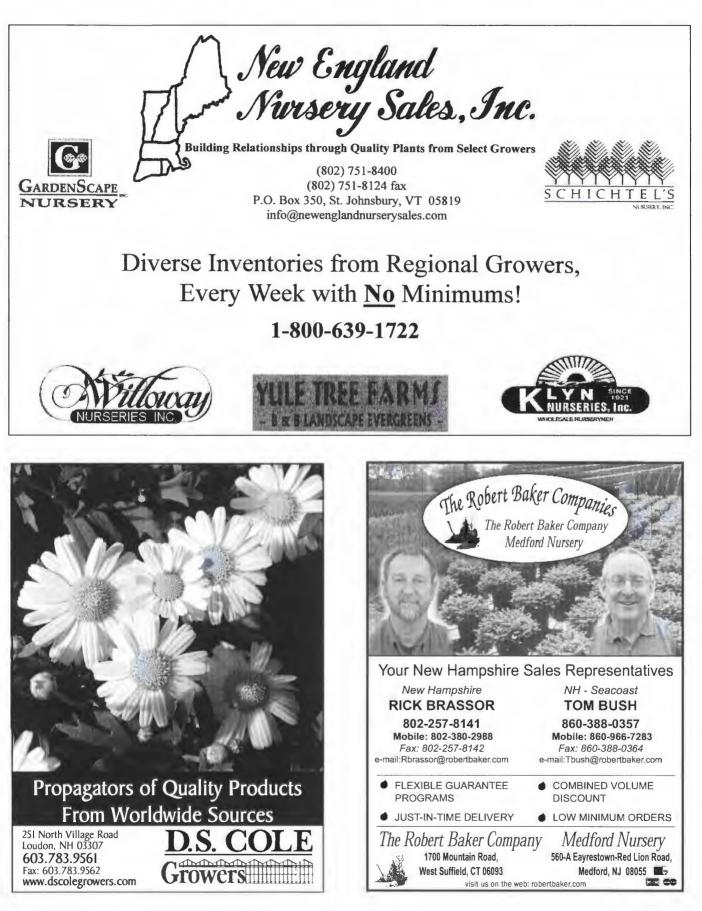
Time has changed the sales mix at Carpenter's. While

wholesale once accounted for approximately 70% of the business, Rob estimates that retail now enjoys the lion share of sales at 60%. Geranium cuttings were once the key wholesale product but now, spring prefinished and finished annuals top the list. Carpenter's also wholesales



Easter lilies and poinsettias but wholesale accounts in holiday plants are steadily declining except to 'specialty' groups such as churches and civic organizations.

As Carpenter's transitions toward increased retail sales, the utilization of greenhouse space has been dramatically impacted. Several large greenhouses located behind the main sales area were once full of stock plants and geranium cuttings during the winter months. These houses now sit idle while winter operations concentrate on the three main retail greenhouses.



Member Profile

Consumer Preferences

Ah...the customer. Rob finds the interactions with his customers – the sharing of information, informal kidding, and overall smiling faces – the most enjoyable aspect of the business. He likes meeting and greeting old and new friends, and retail sales provide a wonderful



avenue for these interactions. In short, it's fun!

As times change, so has the product mix that Carpenter's offers. Pack annuals dominance has been replaced with 4-inch Proven Winners. Perennials continue to climb with a steady increase in 4inch and gallon-size containers.

Rob has also noticed a shift in sales with his customer willing to wait until Memorial Day to make major purchases. In fact, Memorial Day weekend was his busiest of the season. Folks are also making plant purchases throughout the summer extending the retail sales period.

The Future

As Rob gazes into his crystal ball, the images appear cloudy. He's not sure that his boys are interested in horticulture, which raises the question of business succession. This quandary is one felt by many multigenerational business owners and may only be answered with the passage of time.

Meanwhile, Rob will continue to expand the retail side of the business while maintaining its current size. He feels the florist shop must become better integrated into the entire operation. This might require a change in the overall design and layout of the complex.

Overall, Rob feels lucky to own a business he loves. His advice to others? Success comes with the ability to accept change...learning how to deal with the ups and downs... and a willingness to continue moving forward. What will the next 57 years bring?







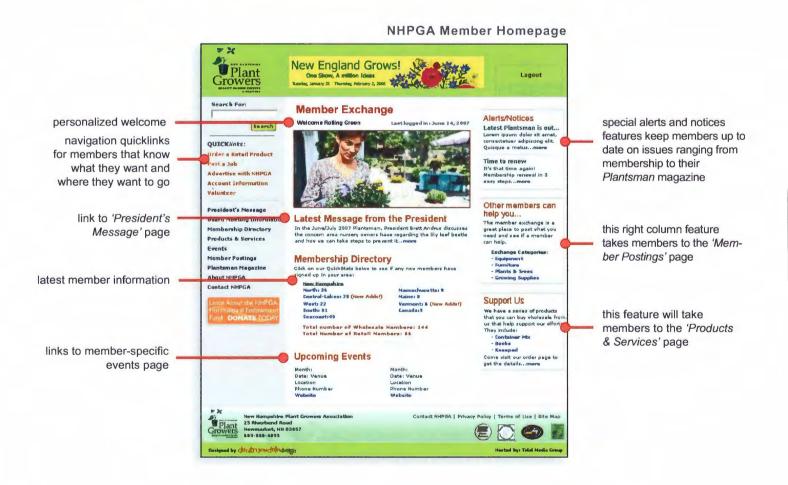
Main NHPGA Homepage

Embracing the Web - www.nhpga.org



Main NHPGA Homepage

NHPGA Member Homepage



NHPGA Web Committee Report

by Darian Hendricks

As part of the redesign efforts of the new NHPGA website and the recommendations that came from the Web Assessment, the NHPGA Board of Directors has formed a Web Committee to lead the charge of our evolving web presence. Reporting directly to the Board, the Committee's primary role and responsibilities are to:

- Be the primary liaison to the Board, sponsors, members and vendors regarding the web
- Develop and oversee web policies, guiding principles, and priorities
- Manage scope and ongoing evolution of the website
- Approve the content for publishing on the Web
- Develop a business strategy for the site

The Committee is currently comprised of the following individuals,

- Rick Simpson, Board member
- Bryan Wentworth, Board
 member
- Nancy Adams, Executive Director
- Daniel Truesdale, Dan Truesdale Designs
- Darian Hendricks, Dan Truesdale Designs

The web provides an opportunity for NHPGA to achieve these benefits over the long-term: increase in membership, new and additional value-added services / resources, increase revenue opportunities, drive business to and awareness of our members, and reduce administrative overhead.

To that end, the following tangible goals are to be achieved by investing in a more robust web presence:

- Increase NHPGA visibility and awareness regionally by 15% of 1295 average unique monthly visitors to the site, currently
- Drive increased traffic to the site by 10% of 1295 average/ month visits currently
- Increase membership by 5-7% of current 200 members
- Be a financially self-sufficient suboperation of NHPGA
- Improve member satisfaction w/ NHPGA (a baseline satisfaction measure to be determined by the current survey)
- Drive business to our members (to be measured through eofferings and traffic divergence to member sites)

The committee has developed a survey to measure the current NHPGA member climate with regards to satisfaction with organization, computer and Internet literacy, and prioritization of online features that provide the most value to our members. The survey results along with input from our consultants and best practices will drive our rollout of additional site content.

Simultaneously, we are embarking on developing a business case for generating revenue and the associated costs and cost savings with adding new functionality, features, and content.

This web undertaking is leading to exciting opportunities for NHPGA to build a stronger association and provide more online programming to support member interests. In our next issue of The Plantsman we will share with you some of our findings, vision, research, and survey results.

NHPGA is definitely taking a leadership role for our industry in leveraging the web in useful and desirable ways for our members.

Please turn to pages 14 and 15 for a full color look at our newly redesigned NHPGA website.

New Hampshire News

Spring 2007 Twilight Meeting June 26, 2007 Lake Street Garden Center, Salem, NH

We extend a special thank you to the Wolfe family and their wonderful employees for a delightful evening last month.

We toured the garden center, visited with old friends, and thanks to UNH Cooperative Extension our co-hosts for this event - the group was brought up to date on the latest **IPM concepts** by Extension Specialists Dr. Cheryl Smith, Dr. Stan Swier and Dr. Cathy Neal.





August/September 2007



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The Plantsman

New Hampshire News

First Pioneer Recognizes Contributions of Gary R. Mateson of Epsom, NH

by Robert Smith, Vice President, Public Affairs and Knowledge Exchange

First Pioneer Farm Credit, the largest lender to agriculture in the Northeast, recently recognized the outstanding contributions of Gary R. Matteson, a cut flower grower from Epsom, New Hampshire for his service to First Pioneer. Mr. Matteson retired from the First Pioneer Farm Credit Board of Directors having reached is 12-year term limit as a First Pioneer director.

"On behalf of the entire First Pioneer family of customers, directors and employees, I extend our deep appreciation to Gary for his outstanding service and commitment to First Pioneer. He has been a strong and effective national Farm Credit leader and innovator on behalf of agriculture and rural America," said First Pioneer President and CEO Bill Lipinski.

Gary Matteson from Epsom, New Hampshire operates New England Anemones, a cut flower operation with his wife, Sabrina. He is credited with many accomplishments as a Farm Credit leader including efforts to initiate and carry out Farm Credit HORIZONS, a national project that analyzed changes in agriculture and rural communities and identified actions necessary to strengthen



the Farm Credit System for future generations. Mr. Matteson testified in numerous hearings on policies to strengthen Northeast agriculture and rural communities. Through this fall he will be in Washington, DC working on the 2007 Farm Bill on behalf of the Farm Credit System.

First Pioneer is a member-owned agricultural cooperative and part of

the nationwide Farm Credit System, which is celebrating 91 years of service to American agriculture this year. First Pioneer's service area covers New Hampshire Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York and Rhode Island. First Pioneer Farm Credit extends \$2.4 billion in loans from 15 branch offices. For more information, log onto www. FirstPioneer.com.



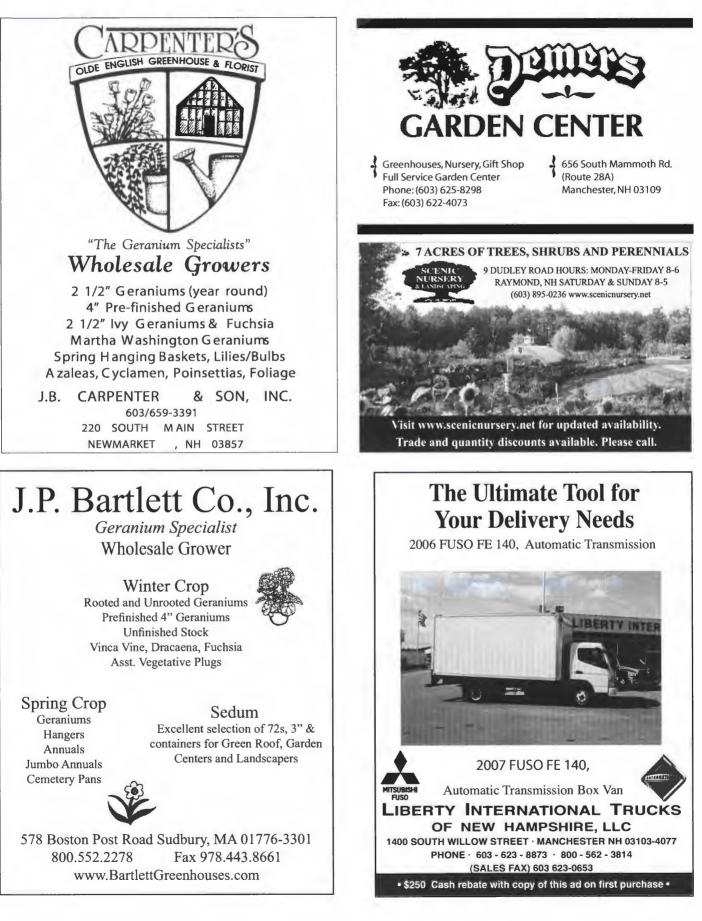


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Pioneer Pointers

Check Up Time!

Congratulations! You've successfully navigated through another busy (and hopefully profitable) spring

season. Now that the mad rush is over and you've got some breathing room before the fall season starts, it's time for your mid-year check up. And no, we're not talking a physical check up, but rather an overall business check up. Here are some areas you should be evaluating at this time:

- Record-keeping: Are you up to date with all the income and expense entries in your records? Have all the bank statements been reconciled? Are invoices for Accounts Receivable current? Do you have a formal system for following up on late receivables? Remember the GIGO principlegarbage in = garbage out. Your records won't tell you anything meaningful if they're not accurate.
- Business Results: Once your records are accurate, have you reviewed them? How do the 2007 year-to-date (YTD) income and expenses compare to those of 2006 YTD or your 2007 YTD budget? What are the reasons for significant differences? Are there any expenses you can manage better? Have you reviewed your product mix to determine what the big winners and slow sellers

were? Have you made notes of possible changes in product mix to assist you with planning for the 2008 season? Is there any stale inventory you should dump, rather than continue to carry it?

- Customer Service: Presumably you've been collecting customer contact information over the season. Have you followed up with e-mails or a mailing to thank the customer for their patronage? Or to let them know about upcoming product for sale or even planned business changes that would impact them? Or sent out surveys to determine what you do well and what you can improve? Have you evaluated customer recommendations for possible implementation?
- Processes: Most businesses have standard procedures for

completing tasks. Have you spoken with your staff to discuss what processes have worked well, those that could be improved, and suggestions for what those improvements might be? Have you provided individual feedback to your employees in regards to their performance? And requested their feedback on your performance as a manager?

There are many other areas besides those detailed above that you could and should be reviewing. Keep in mind that a periodic review of your business provides you with the necessary information to make informed and timely decisions about the direction of your business.

First Pioneer Farm Credit provides financial services to the green industry. Their services include consulting, recordkeeping/accounting support services, tax preparation/tax planning, credit, leasing, appraisals and payroll. For more information about any of the above financial services, please call the Bedford, NH branch office at 1-800-825-3252. (KDK)

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The Plantsman

Book Review

Work in the horticultural field for enough years and you begin to develop a valuable reference library. While nothing compares with hands-on experience, it's impossible to be well versed in all facets of this complex industry.

Questions often arise as to which books should be found in a horticulturist's library. I'll offer the following as prime candidates. Although expensive, the wonderful photographs and comprehensive descriptions will surely help in identifying insects and diseases of trees and shrubs. If you'd like to share some of your favorite references, please drop me a line.

The descriptions that follow are provided to us courtesy of Amazon. com's web site.

Insects That Feed on Trees and Shrubs

by Warren T. Johnson (Author), Howard H. Lyon (Author) List Price: \$79.95

This comprehensive handbook, acclaimed when it was first published in 1976 as "one of the most useful reference manuals on diagnostic entomology yet produced," has now been completely revised and expanded to reflect recent advances in technology and the wealth of new information affecting the "Green Industry." LOOK INSIDE!"



Augmented by 241 full-color plates, it gives the essential facts about more than 900 species of insects, mites, and other animals that injure woody ornamental plants in the United States and Canada, and provides means of quick visual identification of both the pests and the damage they cause.

Product Details:

- * Hardcover: 560 pages
- * Publisher: Cornell University Press;
- 2 Rev Sub edition (April 1991)
 - * ISBN-10: 0801426022
 - * ISBN-13: 978-0801426025

Diseases of Trees and Shrubs

by Wayne Sinclair (Author), Howard H. Lyon (Author) List Price: \$85.00

First published in 1987, Diseases of Trees and Shrubs has become a standard reference for plant health specialists, plant diagnosticians, horticulturists, arborists, foresters, and their students. Now thoroughly revised, fully updated, and illustrated with more than 2200 digitally optimized color images in 261 full-color plates and more than 350 black-and-white

Books For Your Reference Library

by Nancy E. Adams, Executive Director

photographs and drawings, the second edition is an unrivalled survey of the diseases of forest and shade trees and woody ornamental plants in the United States and Canada. The book is both an authoritative reference book and a powerful diagnostic tool. Organized according to type of disease-inducing agent, the second edition is also designed to be helpful in classroom and field instruction. Symptoms, signs, and cycles of hundreds of diseases are described and microscopic features of many pathogens are depicted in photos and line drawings. A searchable CD-ROM included with the book contains bibliographic entries for more than 4500 works that readers can consult for additional information or images. This remarkable scholarly work-praised as one of the best horticultural books of the twentieth century--lays claim to the same accolade for the twenty-first century.



Product Details:

- * Hardcover: 660 pages
- * Publisher: Cornell University Press; 2 Har/Cdr edition (November 2005)
- * ISBN-10: 0801443717
- * ISBN-13: 978-0801443718

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research for New Hampshire.

Research Report

Treating Petunias With Bonzi By Drench or Subirrigation

by Douglas Cox

Plant, Soil and Insect Sciences University of Massachusetts, Amherst

Many different methods of applying plant growth regulators (PGRs) have gained official label approval in recent years. The Bonzi (paclobutrazol) label lists several "chemigation" applications including drench treatments with spaghetti tube systems or with precision dosing equipment and application by ebb and flow subirrigation systems

or saucers. However, practical recommendations are needed for growers on how to apply PGRs by these new methods.

I've found that the growth of poinsettia, geranium, and grandiflora petunia can be successfully controlled by Bonzi applied in either a single treatment or in multiple applications by drench or subirrigation at low levels of active ingredient (a.i.).

In this study, funded New Hampshire Plant Growers Association, I looked at the growth response of multiflora petunias treated with Bonzi in single or multiple applications by growth medium drench or subirrigation, with or without stock tank dilution, and at different stages of plant development. Multiple drench treatments were meant to simulate application of PGR by a spaghetti tube system or with precision dosing equipment. Application at different times during the crop were meant to determine whether stage of plant development had an effect on the level of growth control achieved by Bonzi using the various application methods.

How the plants were grown

Seeds of 'Primetime Mid-blue' petunia, a multiflora type, were sown in plug trays on January 10, 2006 and on February 13 the seedlings were transplanted to 4-inch pots of Fafard 3B soilless mix. Plants were grown using standard practices and were fertilized with 20-2-20 at 200 ppm N. Plants were irrigated from overhead or were subirrigated from 5-inch saucers depending on treatment.

Plants in all treatments were treated with Bonzi at 1.65 mg a.i./pot. Bonzi was applied in a single drench or subirrigation treatment, 10 subirrigation treatments, or 10 drench treatments. Control plants were watered and fertilized from overhead with fertilizer solution containing no Bonzi.

Single Bonzi treatments were made and the multiple treatments were started at three stages of plant development: when the plants were 2-3" in diameter, when 1 or 2 branches had reached the rim of the pot, or when at least 2 branches extended about 2" beyond the rim of the pot. Multiple treatments are referred to as "early" (February 21), "mid" (February 26), or "late" (March 6), respectively. Bonzi solutions were applied at 3.4 fl.oz. (100 ml)/pot. In all cases this volume of solution was absorbed and completely retained with no drainage. The solutions used for multiple drench and subirrigation also contained fertilizer.

The Bonzi solutions used to treat plants 10 times contained the chemical at a level 10% of that used to treat plants once. To determine the effect of stock tank dilution on Bonzi's plant growth effects, plants were treated 10 times with solutions from tanks to which no fertilizer solution was added as the solution was used up (no dilution). In other treatments Bonzi solution was maintained at the starting volume by the addition of fertilizer solution each time the plants were watered to replace what was used to treat the plants. The latter solution was diluted to 20% of the original Bonzi concentration by the end of the experiment (i.e., 80% of the starting volume was replaced by fertilizer solution containing no Bonzi). This treatment was meant to simulate how a commercial subirrigation system might be operated where water is added to the storage tank to replace what is absorbed by the crop.

Plant measurements were taken on March 29 one week after the last Bonzi treatment was made. Plant height, plant diameter, number of open flowers, number of branches, and plant fresh weight were measured at this time.

Results

Regardless of the method of application or timing of application Bonzi drench (Table 1) and subirrigation (Table 2) treatments were effective in reducing the height, plant diameter, and shoot fresh weight of petunia compared to the untreated control.

Most reductions in height and diameter were statistically significant compared to the control and the size reductions caused by Bonzi application were commercially desirable in all treatments.

The number of open flowers and branch number were not significantly affected by Bonzi treatment, but there seemed to be a trend toward more open flowers with Bonzi treatment compared to the untreated control.

Considering all treatments, plant height, number of branches, and fresh weight were not different between drenched and subirrigated plants (Table 3). Drenched plants were smaller in diameter and had fewer open flowers than subirrigated plants.

More in depth data analysis (not shown) revealed that the method of drench application (single, multiple application with no dilution, multiple application with dilution) did not affect the height or width of petunia. However, when Bonzi was applied by subirrigation, height, but not width, was affected by method of application. When plants were subirrigated, they were shortest with a single application and tallest with 10 applications of diluted solution. Compare plant size in Figures 1, 2, and 3.

Timing of application had no discernable visible effects on height and width, but the "late" treatment resulted in statistically larger diameter plants with both drench and subirrigation and the "mid" treatment resulted in the shortest plants with subirrigation, but timing had no effect on height when the plants were drenched with Bonzi.

Conclusion

The results of this experiment with multiflora petunia and earlier ones with grandiflora petunia, poinsettia, and geranium demonstrate that Bonzi can effectively reduce height and other growth parameters when applied by drench or subirrigation in single or multiple applications. I did not find any additional benefit, such as increased plant uniformity, of multiple versus single applications. Therefore the decision to apply Bonzi by subirrigation, through a spaghetti tube system, or repeated use of precision dosing equipment would depend on individual circumstance. If a grower were to choose to apply Bonzi at every watering, no more than 10% of the level recommended for one application should be applied at each watering. If subirrigation is used the stock tank should not become diluted more than 60% of the starting volume without risking loss of growth control.

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Research Report

Table 1. Effects of method and time application on the growth of 'Primetime Mid-blue' petunia drenched with Bonzi.

Application method	Application	Plant height (cm)	Plant diameter (cm) 42.4	No. of open flowers	No. of branches	Fresh weight (gm) 163
Control		24.6	42.4	17	7.8	163
One drench	Early	18.3	30.5	15.7	7.9	142
application	Mid	17.8	32.9	15.4	7.6	<u>135</u>
	Late	18.6	36.0	19.6	7.8	139
10 drench applications Full strength.	Early	18.0	31.8	19.5	7.6	137
	Mid	<u>17.8</u>	34.0	18.3	8.1	132
	Late	18.8	36.0	18.1	7.8	134
10 drench applications 20% dilution.	Early	<u>18.8</u>	33.7	20.4	8.0	142
	Mid	17.9	33.6	17.8	7.9	140
	Late	<u>19.6</u>	35.7	16.5	7.3	141
	1					



Figure 1. (Left to right). No Bonzi applied, one application by overhead drench, and one application by subirrigation. PGR was applied when two or more branches extended 2" beyond the rim of the pot.

^zMeans followed by a different letter are significantly different. (1 inch = 2.54 cm)

Table 2. Effects of method and time application on the growth of 'Primetime	
Mid-blue' petunia subirrigated with Bonzi.	

Application method	Application time	Plant height (cm)	Plant diameter (cm)	No. of open flowers	No. of branches	Fresh weight (gm) 163
Control		24.6	42.4	17	7.7	163
One subirrigation application.	Early	<u>19.2</u>	33.3	18	7.8	143
apprication	Mid	<u>18.1</u>	32.3	16	7.8	<u>133</u>
	Late	17.6	35.8	20	8.1	139
10 subirrigation applications. Full	Early	<u>19.5</u>	34.0	25	8.1	143
strength.	Mid	<u>19.8</u>	<u>34.3</u>	21	7.6	<u>131</u>
	Late	18.4	36.6	18	7.8	127
10 subirrigation applications. 20%	Early	<u>19.6</u>	33.8	23	7.9	138
dilution.	Mid	19.1	35.2	21	7.3	130
	Late	22.3	37.5	17	7.9	147

^zMeans followed by a different letter are significantly different. (1 inch = 2.54 cm)

Table 3. Overall effects of applying Bonzi by drench vs. subirrigation on the growth of 'Primetime Mid-blue' petunia.

Application method	Plant height (cm)	Plant diameter (cm)	No. of open flowers	No. of branches	Fresh weight (gm)
Drench	18.7	33.8	17.8	7.8	(gm) 138
Subirrigation	18.5	34.8	20.1	7.8	137
Significance	ns ^z	*	**	ns	ns

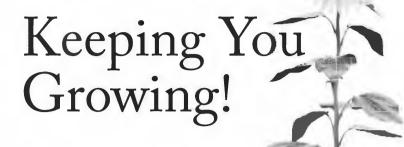
^zDifferences between drench and subirrigation were not significant (ns) or were significant at the 1% (**) or 5% (*) level.



Figure 2. (Left to right). No Bonzi applied, 10 applications of dilute solution by overhead drench, and 10 by subirrigation. Treatment solutions were not diluted by adding water or fertilizer solution. PGR was applied when at least two branches extended 2" beyond the rim of the pot.



Figure 3. (Left to right). No Bonzi applied, 10 applications of dilute solution by overhead drench, and 10 by subirrigation. Treatment solutions were diluted to 20% of the original PGR concentration by adding water or fertilizer solution. PGR was applied when at least two branches extended 2" beyond the rim of the pot.



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