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## Calendar

**February 6-8, 2008**, New England Grows, Boston Convention & Exhibition center, Boston, MA. [www.negrows.org](http://www.negrows.org)

**February 8-9, 2008**, New Hampshire Farm & Forest, Friday, 9 a.m. – 8 p.m. Saturday, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. Center of NH Radisson Hotel, Manchester, NH. [www.nhfarmandforestexpo.org](http://www.nhfarmandforestexpo.org)

**February 8-10, 2008**, A Symphony of Orchids, NH Orchid Society, Raddison Hotel, Nashua, NH. [www.nhorchids.org](http://www.nhorchids.org)

**March 5-9, 2008**, Portland Flower Show, Portland Company Complex, Portland, ME. [www.portlandcompany.com](http://www.portlandcompany.com)

**March 8-16, 2008**, New England Spring Flower Show, Bayside Expo & Conference Center, Boston, MA. [www.masshort.org](http://www.masshort.org)

**March 23, 2008**, Easter

**March 28-30, 2008**, Seacoast Home, Garden & Flower Show, Whittemore Arena, Durham, NH. [www.dicksonandmcgonigle.com](http://www.dicksonandmcgonigle.com)

**May 11, 2008**, Mother's Day

**June 15, 2008**, Father's Day

**July 29 – 31, 2008**, Penn Atlantic Nursery Trade Show (PANTS), Atlantic City Convention Center, Atlantic City, NJ USA, Contact: (800) 898-3411, [www.PANTSHOW.com](http://www.PANTSHOW.com)

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*Cover photo: Nancy 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](mailto:nhpga@comcast.net)

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SIZE	6X	6X	1X	1X
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1/4 pg. H	\$220.00	\$242.00	\$44.00	\$48.40
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### 2007 A Look Back

Matt McElroy Newton Greenhouse, Newton, NH

**I am sitting at the computer a couple of days after Christmas trying to figure out what happened this past year.** Things started out looking pretty tough with high oil and energy prices that dropped significantly in January to a respectable level. So far, so good. An early spring with strong Mother's day sales and a great Memorial Day week made for the best spring business in recent years. So far, so good. Now we needed a steady fall and Christmas season to finish off a good year. Enter record high energy prices, followed by soft Christmas sales and our customers were left with smaller wallets to use at our stores. We finished 2007 so far, not so good.

What do we have to look forward to in 2008? Well, a weaker American dollar should mean that imported finished material should be priced much higher. Prices at the big box and chain stores showed significant increases last year for the first time in recent memory as well. This trend should continue as shipping and production costs are on the rise for our competitors as well. We now have a more level playing field than



*Matt McElroy*

ever from our distant competition. How do we take advantage of this? Retail shoppers make fewer trips and look for one stop shopping more than ever. We have to now sell more to our customers in each visit. A customer purchasing two or three packs of Impatiens is important, but is not going to make us succeed. The customer that spends two or three hours and spends several hundred dollars is the one that we need to see more of.

Other trends that I see in 2008... It is getting harder than ever to make a profit selling goods. We still have a chance in selling the plants that we grow. But hard goods are available everywhere from the convenience of the local retail outlets to the click of a mouse on the computer. Service is the best niche that I see surviving in our industry. Many greenhouses and garden centers are now installing and maintaining gardens in both the public and private sector. So much for working only seven days a week

I wish there was an easy answer to the high price of oil to ease our current and future production costs. There does not appear to be. Many of us will be looking to alternative sources of energy which means increased financial investments. It is obvious that in difficult times like these, diversity is more important than ever. It will be important to raise the price of plants again this spring. Most customers understand this.

In summary, a lot of things have to go right to make for a very successful business year. Let's hope that 2008 is the next one.



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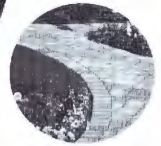
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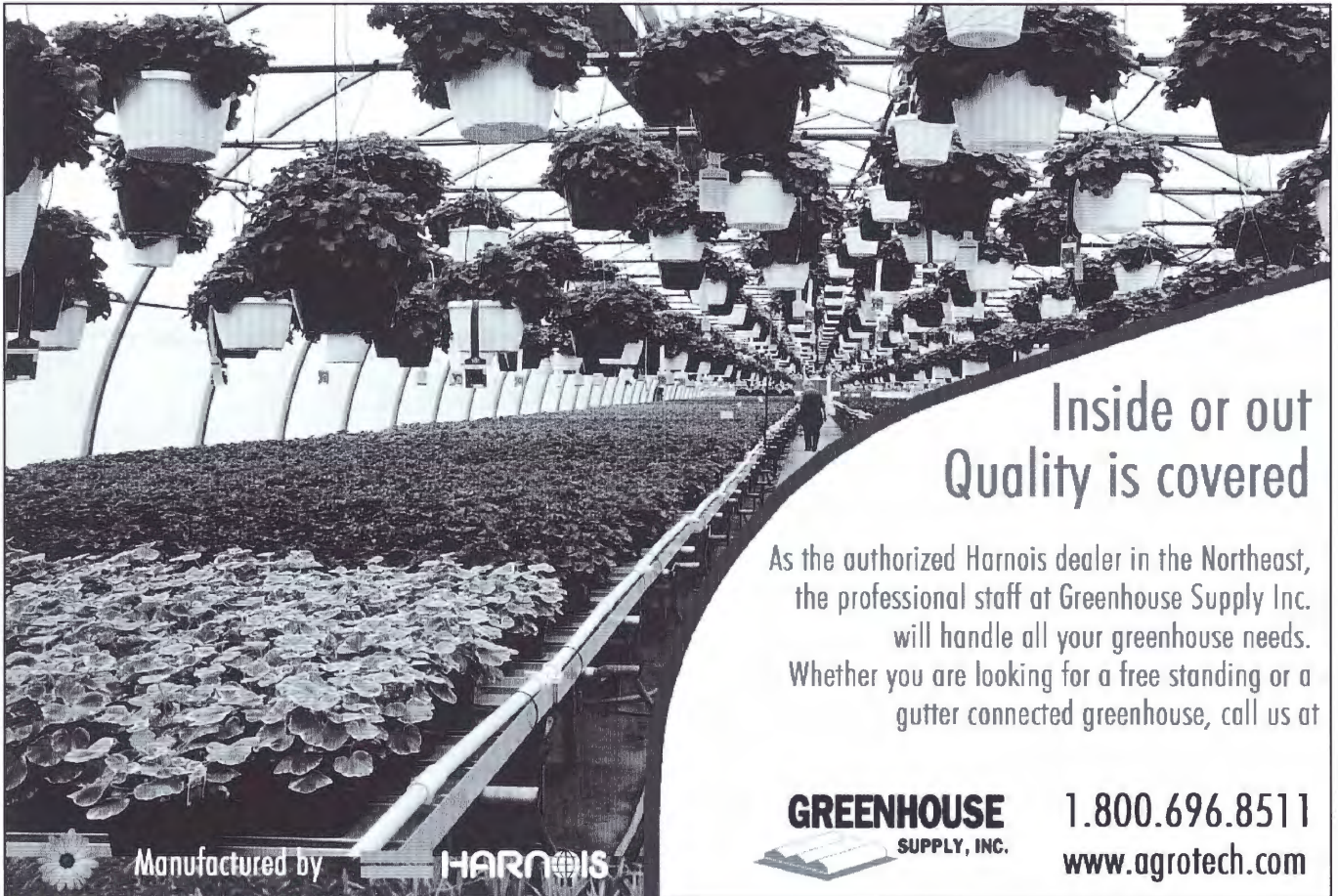
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## New Hampshire News

### Winter Educational Meeting Highlights

January 16, 2008



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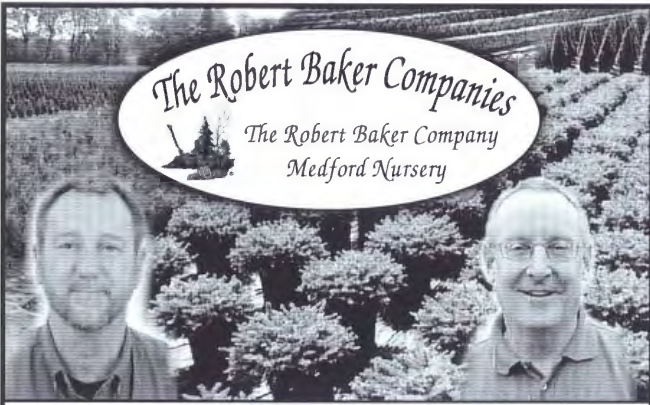
1. Congratulations to UNH students, Cori Belanger & Andrew Gagne, our 2007 scholarship award winners. Brett Andrus, NHPGA President (right) presented the \$750 checks at our annual winter educational meeting.

2. Commissioner Lorraine Merrill, New Hampshire Department of Agriculture, Markets & Food, is greeted by NHPGA President, Brett Andrus. Commissioner Merrill was introduced to the audience in the afternoon session and spoke about the importance of the horticultural community to New Hampshire's economic and scenic landscape. Welcome aboard Commissioner – we look forward to working together to promote and support horticulture and agriculture within New Hampshire and throughout the New England region.

3. Newcomers Dr. Tom Brady, Dean, College of Life Sciences and Agriculture, UNH, (center) and Dr. Brian Krug, UNH Cooperative Extension Specialist, Greenhouse/Floriculture (right) join Dr. Cathy Neal, UNH Cooperative Extension Specialist, Ornamental Horticulture at our winter meeting. Dr. Brady spoke to the audience about the opportunities and challenges facing COLSA in the years ahead. The NHPGA remains committed to supporting our land grant university and its mission of teaching, research, and Extension.

4. Forty wholesale vendors enjoyed meeting & greeting old and new customers. Landscape suppliers, plant growers & brokers, service providers, and educational institutions offered a wonderful array of products for association members. Please join us for next year's event.

5. The winter educational meeting was held January 16 at the Courtyard Marriott/Grappone Center in Concord. Over 150 attendees enjoyed the wide ranging topics including updates on Lyme disease, cooperative buying opportunities, integrated landscaping, pesticide regulations, worker's compensation and UNH horticultural research. Plan on joining us next year - it's a wonderful day to network and stretch the mind.



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### **USCIS Revises Employment Eligibility Verification Form I-9**

*Revision will eliminate certain documents for employment verification*

Washington, DC - U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) announced today (12/07) that a revised Employment Eligibility Verification Form (I-9) is now available for use. All employers are required to complete a Form I-9 for each employee hired in the United States.

The revision seeks to achieve full compliance with the document reduction requirements of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (IIRIRA), which reduced the number of documents employers may accept from newly hired employees during the employment eligibility verification process. The revised Form I-9 is a further step in USCIS' ongoing work toward reducing the number of documents used to confirm identity and work eligibility.

Key to the revision is the removal of five documents for proof of both identity and employment eligibility. They include: Certificate of U.S. Citizenship (Form N-560 or N-570); Certificate of Naturalization (Form N-550 or N-570); Alien Registration Receipt Card (Form I-151); the unexpired Reentry Permit (Form I-327); and the unexpired Refugee

Travel Document (Form I- 571). The forms were removed because they lack features to help deter counterfeiting, tampering, and fraud.

Additionally, the most recent version of the Employment Authorization Document (Form I-766) was added to List A of the List of Acceptable Documents on the revised form. The revised list now includes: a U.S. passport (unexpired or expired); a Permanent Resident Card (Form I-551); an unexpired foreign passport with a temporary I-551 stamp; an unexpired Employment Authorization Document that contains a photograph (Form I-766, I-688, I-688A, or I-688B); and an unexpired foreign passport with an unexpired Arrival-Departure Record (Form I-94) for nonimmigrant aliens authorized to work for a specific employer.

Employers are encouraged to start using the revised Form I-9 immediately. The form will become effective once the notice is published in the Federal Register. Both the revised form and the "Handbook for Employers, Instructions for Completing the Form I-9" are available online at: [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov).

To order forms, call USCIS toll-free at 1-800-870-3676. For forms and information on immigration laws, regulations, and procedures, call the National Customer Service Center at 1-800-375-5283.

### **Hunter Flies found in Connecticut Greenhouses**

Storrs, CT - November 19th, 2007 - Hunter flies (*Coenosia attenuata*) are small predaceous flies that have been observed on yellow sticky cards in various Connecticut greenhouses this fall in poinsettia crops.

Hunter flies are originally from Europe and were most likely introduced on plant material. They were first found in the United States in October of 1999 by Elise Schillo-Lobdell, an IPM Scout, at a commercial greenhouse in upstate New York. Hunter flies are in the same family as common houseflies and are similar in appearance, but smaller.

In Europe, these flies are members of a predatory community that colonize greenhouses from the outside and also complete their development in the greenhouse soil and become established there for long periods of time. Both larval and adult stages are predaceous. Adults sit and wait and only pursue prey that are in flight. Hunter flies may prey upon fungus gnats, shore flies, *Liriomyza* leafminers, moth flies and whiteflies.

Adult females lay eggs in the soil that hatch in about 5 days. The fly larvae seek other soil dwelling insects such as fungus gnat larvae as prey. Larvae grow for about two weeks and then pupate in the soil for two weeks.

*cont'd. on page 9*

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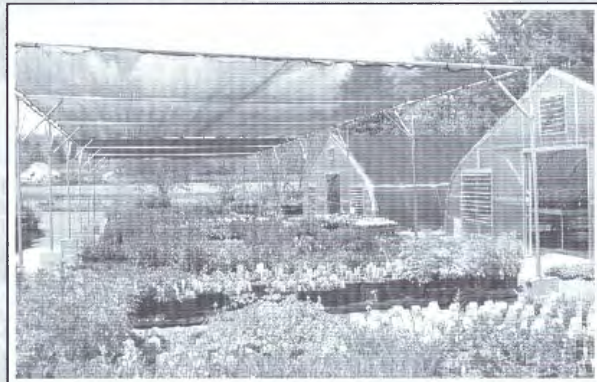
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Photo - John Sanderson and Todd Ugine, Cornell University

Researchers at Cornell University are studying the Hunter flies behavior and biology and its potential as a biological control agent. Currently, they are not available for purchase. If present in your greenhouses, enjoy this free biological control. Leanne Pundt, University of Connecticut

For more information:

*Greenhouse Pests Beware- Old World Hunter Fly Now in North America*

<http://www.ars.usda.gov/is/AR/archive/oct05/pests1005.htm>

*Hunter Flies: Open Season on Fungus Gnats* [http://nysipm.cornell.edu/nursery\\_ghouse/newsletters/default.asp#hunter](http://nysipm.cornell.edu/nursery_ghouse/newsletters/default.asp#hunter)

### **National Sustainable Agriculture Standardization Process**

Madison, WI – Leonardo Academy, the non-profit sustainability and standards development organization (SDO) is facilitating the process to establish the first national standard

for sustainable agriculture.

About the Standard: Interest in standardizing sustainable agriculture has grown dramatically in the past decade around the globe. This rising level of interest has been fueled by a range of critical environmental and social concerns, such as global warming, water shortages, species extinction, dangerous working conditions, unfair labor practices, and disregard for local communities. In response, dozens of sustainability initiatives and programs have emerged. This national standardization initiative has been launched to provide a forum for capturing the collective wisdom of individuals and organizations that have been leading the way in defining and establishing sustainable practices. More information about the standardization initiative, including documents from the initial 2-day orientation meeting held October 29-30, and a copy of the draft standard for trial use, can be downloaded from the Leonardo website, [www.leonardoacademy.org/Projects/ansi.htm](http://www.leonardoacademy.org/Projects/ansi.htm).

About The Leonardo Academy: The Leonardo Academy is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization founded in 1997 with a vision of advancing sustainability and putting the competitive market to work on improving the environment.

### **“Food Grade Organic Weed and Grass Killer”**

Cambria, CA - Pharm Solutions Inc. has announced EPA Registration

for Weed Pharm, the world’s first food grade organic herbicide. Weed Pharm, a non selective weed and grass killer, whose active ingredient is 200 grain “food grade” vinegar, has been the project of Pharm Solutions Inc. since early 2004. Pharm Solutions manufactures the only USDA Certified Organic Pesticides in the world (USDA Certification November 2006) and the food grade organic herbicide is a natural addition to the organic line.

Catherine H. Daniels, Extension Specialist, Washington State University comments, “Several years ago, scientists at the USDA-ARS Sustainable Agriculture Systems Laboratory tested the ability of vinegar / acetic acid to act as an herbicide. Initial results showed that 20% acetic acid (200 grain vinegar) had an acceptable level of control against certain weeds. The news created a huge surge in product demand and swamped Extension Agents with public requests for information. In many locations around the country we can only recommend EPA Registered products, which created a dilemma for us because at that time there were no legally registered herbicides at the 200 grain RTU strength. Some companies sold products illegally or with misleading claims: that just added to the confusion. Some people bought and used illegal products: that raised safety concerns. In general it was a messy and often frustrating situation.”

“The EPA Registration of Weed Pharm solves these problems” states Susan E. Lewis, Founder and Pres, *cont'd. on page 11*

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### **Sustainable Sites Initiative – Preliminary report issued**

San Francisco, CA - The Sustainable Sites Initiative is developing national, voluntary standards and guidelines for sustainable land development and management practices as well as metrics to assess site performance and a rating system to recognize achievement. It is a partnership of the American Society of Landscape Architects, the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, the United States

Botanic Garden and a diverse group of national stakeholder organizations. The U.S. Green Building Council, a major stakeholder in the initiative, has committed to incorporating these guidelines and standards into the future evolution of the LEED® (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Green Building Rating System.

Landscapes provide valuable services such as climate regulation, clean air and water, and improved quality of life. However, conventional land practices often limit, rather than enhance, the ability of landscapes to provide these important services. The Sustainable Sites Initiative was founded to address this concern and investigate and define sustainability in land development and management practices.

The initiative is in the process of developing the Standards and Guidelines for Sustainable Sites - a compilation of current research, technology, and practices to provide technical guidance and performance benchmarks. The Preliminary Report on the Standards and Guidelines ([www.sustainablesites.org/report.html](http://www.sustainablesites.org/report.html)) is now available for comment. The purpose of this report is to provide a snapshot of the first findings of the initiative with the intention of collecting feedback from professionals and stakeholders. It is critical to receive knowledge and input from other professionals and stakeholders to ensure that the

products of the Sustainable Sites Initiative are relevant to those who influence land practices.

Many local and regional efforts now provide guidelines for improved land development and management practices. Sustainable Sites recognizes the importance and relevance of these programs and is interested in information sharing and partnering.

### **Recommendations**

This report makes three overarching recommendations for sustainable land development and management: 1) assemble a group of knowledgeable and diverse professionals to form an integrated project team, 2) prior to making decisions, conduct a complete and thorough assessment of the site, and 3) integrate land practices that replicate the functions of healthy ecological systems.

### **Conclusions**

Sustainable land practices can support the functions of healthy systems and harness natural processes to provide environmental benefits. The Sustainable Sites Initiative is aimed at providing the land development and maintenance industries with the tools to move toward a more sustainable future.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact [info@sustainablesites.org](mailto:info@sustainablesites.org)

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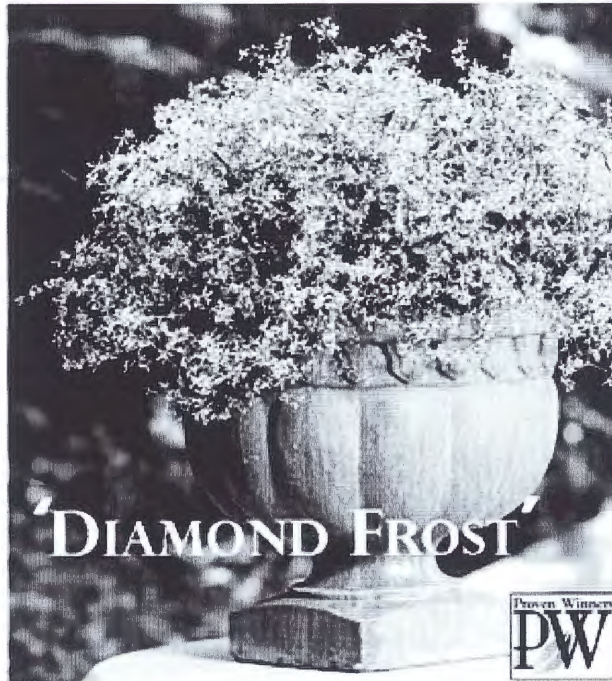
per Dr. Allen Armitage - Nov '05 issue of  
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"We try to stay away from repeating winners from year to year, but this is the second year 'Diamond Frost' has earned this award. Plants just kept flowering and flowering all season. They never stopped, period! 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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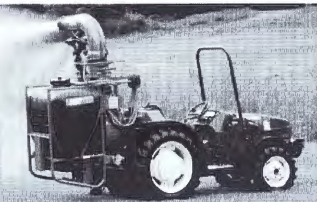
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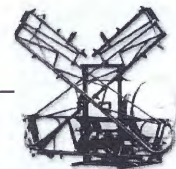
Goldoni Star 75 with JACTO 400 Sprayer



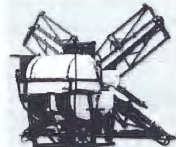
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## The NH Big Tree Program...

**Bigger is Better!**

### **New Hampshire has a long and interesting history of association with trees.**

Since the days when “mast pines” were harvested for the British Navy, trees have played an integral role in our state’s character and economy. The days when the vast expanse of original forest covered most of the state have gone. Today, relatively few large, venerable trees remain to remind us of those earlier times.

In an effort to find, record, and recognize these magnificent individual trees, the New Hampshire Big Tree Program was started in 1950. The list of recorded champions now includes more than 200 giants of their kind. Community Tree Steward volunteers help identify, measure, and record these big trees at the state, county and national levels. The NH Big Tree program cooperates with the National Register of Big Trees through American Forests. For more information on the National Register of Big Trees, visit their website: <http://www.americanforests.org/resources/bigtrees/>.

The New Hampshire Big Tree program is sponsored by UNH Cooperative Extension, NH Division of Forests and Lands and the NH Community Tree Steward Program.

#### **Purpose**

\* To locate the most outstanding examples of the various tree species which grow in New Hampshire



*This national champion Green Ash received 378 points. It's located in Cass County, Michigan. Photo courtesy of The Davey Tree Expert Co.*

\* To obtain the cooperation of the tree owners to protect and preserve specimens as landmarks for future generations to enjoy

\* To stimulate interest in and greater appreciation for trees as a natural resource

#### **About the NH Big Tree Program**

\* Anyone can nominate a tree to be a Big Tree Champion.

\* A registry of all recognized New Hampshire Big Trees as well as a list of all County Big Trees is maintained by the NH Community Tree Steward Program.

\* All recognized New Hampshire Big Trees will be considered for submission for the National Champion Big Tree Registry sponsored by American Forests.

#### **Listings of NH's Big Trees**

The New Hampshire Community Tree Steward Volunteer Program has published a list of the biggest trees of each species throughout the state. The State and County Listing of Big Trees (<http://extension.unh.edu/forestry/documents/NHBIGTRS.pdf>) contains the cont'd. on page 15

## FALLS VIEW

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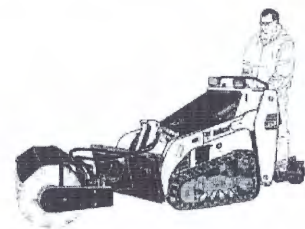
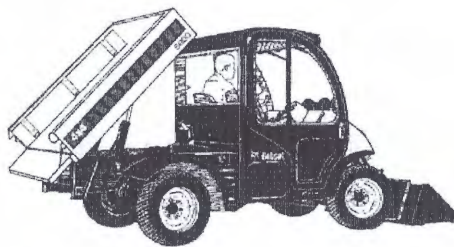
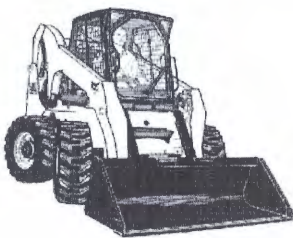
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### NH Big Tree Winners

American Forests uses the following calculation to determine a tree's total points:  
 Trunk Circumference + Height + ¼ Average Crown Spread = Total Points

Species	Latin Name	National Champ (Points*)	NH Champ (Points*)	CBH (inches**)
Green Ash	<i>Fraxinus pennsylvanica</i>	378	247	140
American Beech	<i>Fraxinus grandifolia</i>	429	284	163
Paper Birch	<i>Betula papyrifera</i>	348	263	168
Northern Catalpa	<i>Catalpa speciosa</i>	387	253	160
Balsam Fir	<i>Abies balsamea</i>	259	176	76
Eastern Hemlock	<i>Tsuga Canadensis</i>	377	263	110
American Hornbeam	<i>Carpinus caroliniana</i>	211	78	35
Silver Maple	<i>Acer saccharinum</i>	477	375	249
Eastern White Pine	<i>Pinus strobus</i>	379	378	243
Norway Spruce	<i>Picea abies</i>	317	274	170
Black Walnut	<i>Juglans nigra</i>	443	256	160
Witch-Hazel	<i>Hamamelis virginiana</i>	95	29	12
Yellowwood	<i>Cladrastis kentukea</i>	278	196	126

\* Total Points = Trunk Circumference + Height + ¼ Average Crown Spread

\*\*CBH = Trunk circumference measured at 4 ½ feet above ground level in inches

trees of each species throughout the state. The State and County Listing of Big Trees (<http://extension.unh.edu/forestry/documents/NHBIGTRS.pdf>) contains the following information about the largest specimen of each species measured in New Hampshire: height, tree circumference, average crown diameter, the year the tree was measured, the location by city and county (because most of these trees are on private property exact locations aren't listed), and its status (national, state, or county champion).

The Introduced Big Trees is a list of non-native trees not yet recognized by the National program (<http://extension.unh.edu/forestry/Docs/INTROTRS.pdf>).

To Nominate A Big Tree as a Champion

Do you have a really big tree in your neighborhood, or know of a potential champion Big Tree? You can use the Big Tree list to search for new champion trees. First identify the tree and measure its circumference in inches at chest height. If the circumference measurement is larger or within a few inches of the same species tree on the Big Tree List, you may have a new champion! Whether or not you find an actual big tree champion, looking for the biggest trees in your neighborhood can be lots of fun and a great learning experience.

Please help us by following these steps:

1. Identify the species of tree as best you can.
2. Using a tape measure, measure the circumference of the trunk in inches at 4 1/2 feet off the ground.
3. Compare your circumference measurement to the same species of tree in the NH Big Tree Listings.
4. If the circumference of the tree you measured exceeds or is close in size to a tree of the same species on the listing, contact the NH Big Tree Coordinator online at: <http://extension.unh.edu/forestry/BigTree.htm>. She will get in touch with you within a 2 month time frame.

## Welcome New Members

- ▶ **Abby McFarland**, House by the Side of the Road, Wilton, NH
- ▶ **Ayn Whytemare**, Found Well Farm, Pembroke, NH
- ▶ **Lee Stevens**, Log Cabin Nursery, Claremont, NH
- ▶ **Bianca Dion**, Mike Dion Hydroseeding & Property Care, Inc., New Hampton, NH
- ▶ **Leslie Houey**, Florediem Flower Farm, Alstead, NH
- ▶ **Leslie Lindgren**, Great Hill Horticultural Foundation, Hampton Falls, NH
- ▶ **Eric Helgemoe**, Eric's Farmstand and Greenhouses, Pelham, NH
- ▶ **Amy & Chris Hemingway**, Hemingway Farms, Charlestown, NH

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## Member Profile

**MILL GARDENS 70 River Road, Hanover, NH, 03755 (603)643-8700**

### **Mill Gardens**

by Nancy E. Adams



*Rob and Sara Day and John Stanhope*

### **I always marvel at the ingenuity and resourcefulness of New Hampshire's agricultural business owners.**

Those that are successful have embraced change and encouraged successive generations to find their niche within this changing environment. Dairy farms become vegetable operations which morph into greenhouse/cut flower businesses.

#### **History**

Mill Gardens, Hanover, NH, is an example of this generational

transformation. The business started in 1976 when John Stanhope opened a lumber yard on property that borders the Connecticut River. Twenty five years later, the large buildings which once sawed logs and stored lumber now overwinter plant material. A new garden center, nursery beds, five greenhouses, and large parking lot create the lovely retail environment for Mill Gardens' customers. Since 2001, the seasonal horticultural business has been operated by John, his daughter Sara and her husband, Rob Day, as well as five full-time seasonal employees.

It takes time to develop a new retail business in a town which is described as "discouraging business development". Traditional farming is no longer practiced in Hanover and the competitive environment from neighboring growers in Bradford, Thetford and Lebanon, and a somewhat remote location means Mill Gardens must be on top of its game to succeed. It's doing just that by selling a wide assortment of home-grown plant material in a beautiful setting staffed by knowledgeable people.

#### **Product Mix**

Plant diversity is evident at Mill Gardens. Annuals, perennials, hanging baskets, nursery stock, and hardy disease-resistant Knock Out® & Carefree roses top the list and the



*cont'd. on page 19*



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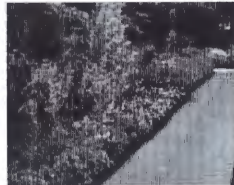
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*Sales Building*



*Greenhouses at Mill Garden*

trend is towards larger sized plant material. Fewer pack cells are sold in favor of 4 1/2" annuals, gallon+ sized perennials and 14" moss hanging baskets.

Although there are seven acres on site, the retail area centers around the garden center building which emphasizes organic fertilizers, tools, and pottery. They grind their own hardwood and softwood bark mulch, offer Intervale compost, and sell soil, loose stone, and pavers for the do-it-yourself homeowner.

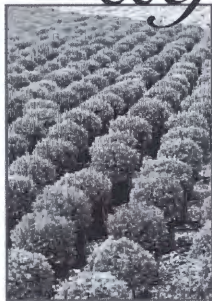
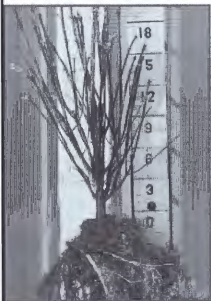
### **Marketing**

Finding the right mix of advertising, promotions, and offerings continues to be a challenge. While local newspaper (Valley News) advertising is most effective, other periodicals and classes have not been successful in increasing customer traffic and sales. Word-of-mouth advertising is their best sales tool as evidenced by increasing yearly sales figures.

### **The Future**

Now that the horticultural business has been operating for six years, it's clear that they need to expand the growing area not necessarily the sales area. This might include expanding the unheated greenhouse growing space and reducing the display area to accommodate this change. Plant material would then be brought up to the sales yard as needed. Signage also needs to be improved to encourage more self-directed sales. Perhaps this will be this year's winter activity, John!?

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## WHAT IS ECO-FRIENDLY?

by Margaret Hagen, Extension Educator, Agricultural Resources  
UNH Cooperative Extension, Hillsborough County

**The things that used to come to mind when people talked about going “green” were the use of compost and organic solutions for insect, disease and fertility problems in the garden.** But thanks to the concerns of citizens all over the globe, going green has risen from practices adopted by a few to mainstream culture. In fact, going green is often referred to now as being “eco-friendly” or environmentally sustainable, and has its own terminology and set of parameters. Manufacturers of many home and garden products have been quick to climb on this bandwagon, touting their products as eco-friendly, in the hope that you will purchase their product for this reason.

But what does eco-friendly really mean? What is it that makes a product eco-friendly?

Eco-friendly products are made of environmentally friendly materials. They usually contain recycled materials or rapid renewables. Recycled materials are those that had a previous use and are now being re-used in a new way. One example would be the use of newsprint in the garden as a mulch to control weeds. Another way to recycle would be to use salvaged materials as we did when turning part of a discarded candle-pin bowling alley into a new dining table.

Or products may contain what are called “rapid renewables” or sustainable materials. Commonly known examples are bamboo and cork. Using rapid renewables helps to protect precious natural resources. It is usually easy and economical to quickly replace these products, sustaining a steady supply without depleting our natural resources. However, bamboo and cork come from tropical countries and must travel long distances to reach us. A better source for renewables might be wood from our native New Hampshire forests and stone from our native bedrock.

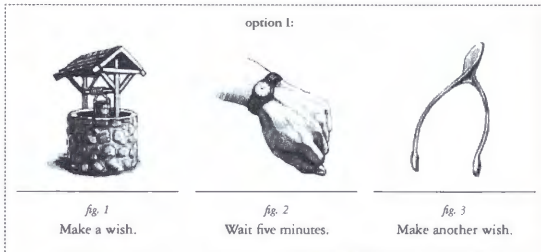
Products that have gone through very little processing before coming to market are considered eco-friendly because they consume very little energy during manufacturing. Examples would be products like granite steps or benches, stone pavers and some wood products. Products that are handmade also tend to use little energy during manufacture, and so are considered environmentally friendly. Eco-friendly products are as free as possible from harmful chemicals and compounds. In production the use of toxic compounds such as wood preservatives or creosote, volatile



*Products such as granite steps or benches, stone pavers and some wood products that have gone through very little processing before coming to market are considered eco-friendly because they consume very little energy during manufacturing.*

organic compounds, chlorine and PVCs (these deplete the ozone layer) are reduced or eliminated. This also applies to organic food, produced using management practices defined under the Organic Foods Production Act. Organically grown food is produced in a way that replenishes and maintains soil fertility, uses minimal off-farm inputs, uses no synthetic fertilizers or pesticides, and encourages a biologically diverse agricultural system. Organic foods are one alternative. Another would be locally produced, unprocessed food that doesn't travel to us from across the country or even from outside the country.  
*cont'd. on pg. 23*

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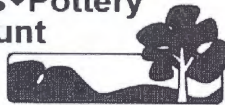
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One goal of true eco-friendly product manufacturers is to minimize depletion of the environment during production and transportation to market. Manufacturing plants often have high heating, cooling and electric costs, and many require large amounts of water. Eco-friendly manufacturers try to reduce their dependence on natural resources like water. They actively recycle and work to reduce their energy use. Their products have minimal packaging, and that packaging often consists of recycled materials. Distribution may be limited to keep the use of fuel to a minimum. Companies that use hand labor to manufacture, package and distribute their product, rather than machines, are also considered environmentally friendly.

Eco-friendly products have multiple purposes. They are manufactured out of environmentally friendly materials and often have a long shelf life. One example is cloth bags. These can be made of jute, hemp or other materials. They are used to bag groceries, carry books and for a multitude of other tasks; and they last for years. In addition, they help people reduce the amount of goods they need to purchase, thus reducing the amount of goods that need to be manufactured. Lastly, such products help people reduce the amount of trash that gets sent to landfills.

Eco-friendly products often come from companies where working conditions are humane and healthy, and their workers are paid a living wage. Known as fair trade, this affects humans and not the sustainability

of the earth; however, it is one more component of what makes a product "green". Fair trade is about making a decent living, and most of us have heard this term used in relation to coffee and tea growers in other parts of the world.

Eco-friendly products often reduce the environmental impact of the building that they're used in. One recent example is a local radio station that advertises the use of solar power to run the station. Composting toilets, appliances that use electricity efficiently (e.g., ENERGY STAR), products that are powered with solar energy, efficient wood stoves/furnaces and devices that remove pollutants from the air are all eco-friendly.

Is there any product on the market that can incorporate all of the practices discussed here? I doubt it. In fact, there is no legal definition of what makes a product eco-friendly, sustainable or green.

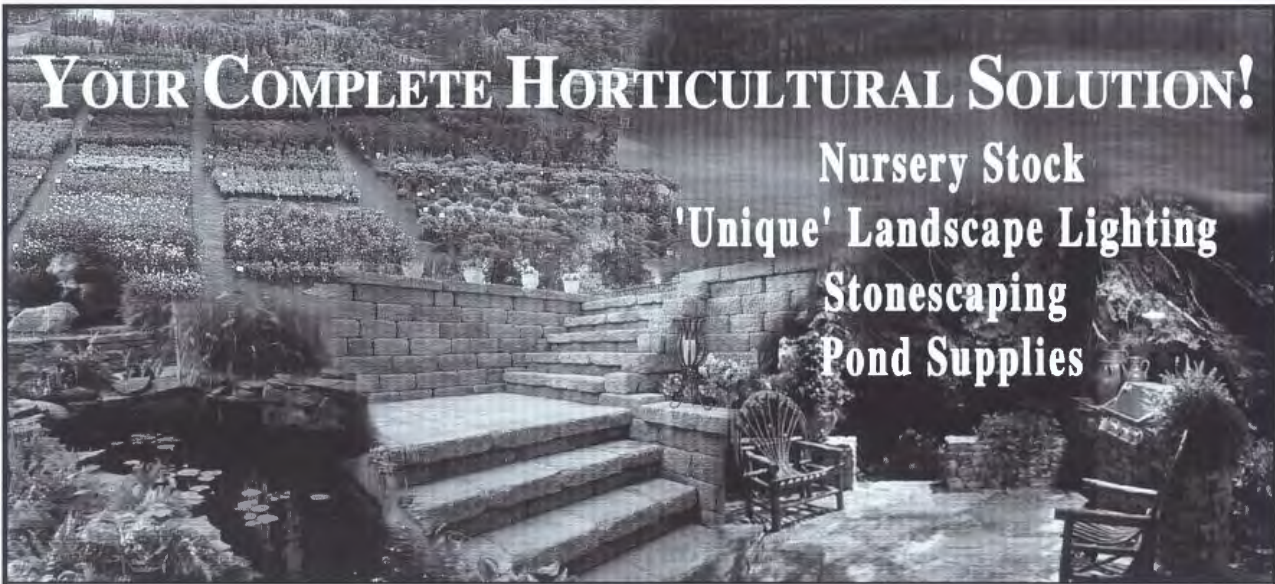
So how do you know if a product is truly eco-friendly or if the promotional material is just hype? In order to really know, you have to become a highly educated consumer. Sometimes that just means reading the ingredients on the label really carefully. Sometimes products meet certain standards or are endorsed by a well-respected entity. If a product is certified organic, for example, you know that it has been produced using certain practices and that an inspector has verified that the grower or producer has followed those practices. Sometimes it means doing a little research into the manufacturing practices of the company selling the

product. Ultimately, it means deciding which of all the elements that go into making a product "green" matter most to you, and then basing your buying decisions accordingly. As you attend trade shows this winter keep your eye out for some of the new eco-friendly products that



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have emerged on the market: Zeba superabsorbent granules created from natural cornstarch to hold moisture in the root zone; pots made from fibreclay (a patented process that uses only 10% of the energy required to make other ceramics or plastics); Dynamite premium fertilizers; Organic Mechanics™ potting soil which is an all-purpose, peat-free mix comprised of 100% organic materials (doesn't deplete peat bogs); and biodegradable pots made from paper, bamboo, rice and other grains, coir fiber and even composted cow manure. You might also want to spend a little time browsing the product list on the website of the Portsmouth NH based company, Extremely Green ([www.extremelygreen.com](http://www.extremelygreen.com)).



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### Answering the Hard Questions

**Spring is here once again – but before the fields call you out of the house, take a few minutes to think about where your business is and where you would like it to be.** When you focus your attention on the immediate needs of your family, your business, and your customers, you may lose sight of the bigger picture. If the unexpected occurs, are you in a position to take advantage of the new situation?

We've put together some questions that can help you establish a starting point. Once you figure out where you are, you can work on the roadmap that will take you where you want to go. Some questions may not be easy to answer, but you shouldn't ignore them. Figuring out the answers takes time and may take help from a professional, whether an attorney, an appraiser, a tax professional, or a business consultant. They can help you get back to the job you love.

#### Taxes

Many of you have just filed or will be filing shortly your 2007 tax returns. Were you surprised by a small refund or worse, a large amount due? Working with a tax professional can help eliminate those surprises. Questions that your tax professional can help you answer include:

- \* Should I lease equipment or buy it?
- \* How much can I reduce my taxable income if I invest in retirement accounts?
- \* How can I maximize my Social Security Earnings?
- \* Should I prepay expenses this year, or defer them until next year?
- \* What is the Domestic Production Credit, and am I eligible for it?

#### Business Operation

LLCs, Partnerships, S Corps, C Corps, Sole proprietorships – they all have advantages and disadvantages. If you need assistance determining which business entity is right for your operation, ask a business consultant. They can help you figure out these difficult issues:

- \* Are there increased liability issues on the farm?
- \* Is there an expansion on the horizon?
- \* Is labor management a growing concern?
- \* How can we hire better employees and improve our compensation package for current employees?
- \* How can we track our operational strengths and weaknesses and then use this information to improve our business?
- \* How is my business doing compared to others in the same industry?

#### Transition

Perhaps the hardest part of farming is bringing someone new into the business, or exiting from the farm gracefully. Selling the farm on which you've lived your entire life can be very difficult; giving up control of the business to the next generation can be harder. A business consultant will listen to you and aid you in determining what options make the most sense. Among the questions you may have are:

- \* Should I try to sell land or business?
- \* What's the best way to ensure a smooth transition to the next generation?

Discussing your ideas and challenges with a professional tax preparer or a trained business consultant can often open your eyes to a simple solution or help you focus the business in a new direction. It's a complicated world, and no one expects you to do it alone.

*First Pioneer Farm Credit provides financial services to the green industry. Their services include recordkeeping/accounting support services, tax preparation/tax planning, credit, leasing, consulting, 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. (SAS)*

# National Plant Data Center

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**If you're looking for a comprehensive plant database and additional information on conservation plants, culturally significant plants, invasive plant species, Federal & State Threatened & Endangered Species and much more...look no further.**

The USDA, Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) has compiled an award winning PLANTS Web site contains general information on all 43,000 U.S. plant and lichen species, plus expanded information on over 2,500 conservation plants.

Bookmark their web site – as my Grandmother would say, "It's a corker!"

<http://plants.usda.gov/>

## **Vision**

The National Plant Data Center (NPDC) is recognized as a national and global leader in developing taxonomically-based databases and disseminating plant information and technology to assist in the conservation of our natural resources.



## **Mission**

The NPDC provides leadership for the design, development, management, access, and marketing of Agency plant information, particularly through the PLANTS Web site. It focuses resources on plant data definition, collection, quality control, integration, interpretation, dissemination for the Natural Resources Conservation Service's use in conservation practices and automated tools. It partners internationally to acquire plant data and new technologies and provides a national standard for basic plant data.

*cont'd. on page 27*

## Available Plant Information

Plants, soils, and climate demand sound resource data in order to address conservation needs. The PLANTS Web site provides basic information on all plants in the United States and more detailed information of 2500 conservation plants for use in decision-making by conservationists, community leaders, and other landowners.



### All Plants

**Plant Profile:** Available for the 43,000 plants in PLANTS. Provides direct access to basic attribute data, such as: name, synonyms, distribution map (state level for all and county level for forty-eight of the states), family, growth habit, duration,

Wetland Indicator Status, related Web sites, and selected levels of nativity. It provides access to images, Fact Sheet, Plant Guide, or characteristics, if available. Thumbnail distribution maps are available for all species within each genus. The Biota of North America Program has been the major collaborator for these basic data.



### Conservative Plants

**Plant Guides:** Two to eight page documents addressing the use, description, propagation, establishment, production, and

availability of a species. The guide also contains references for further inquiry. PLANTS currently has 600 guides online. Format: pdf or doc.

**Plant Fact Sheets:** One to two page documents informing the user about various species of conservation plants. Format: pdf or doc.

**Plant Characteristics:** View over 100 plant characteristics such as appearance, use in conservation and restoration, growth requirements, and suitability for conservation practices for 2,500 conservation plant species and cultivars.



### Culturally Significant Plants

**Plant Guides:** Detailed document addressing key plant species of importance to the Native American culture. Format: pdf or doc.



### Invasive Plant Species

**State Noxious Plant Checklists:** State legal lists integrated into PLANTS with links to move information.

**Invasive Plant Checklists:** A list of plants from various published sources for species with known invasive characteristics. Includes links to additional sources of information.

**Links:** General links to Web sites pertaining to weed management and control.



### Federal & State Threatened & Endangered Species

Lists of threatened and endangered plants are integrated into PLANTS. View lists of currently accepted names and access further information, both on and off site, for the listed species.

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NPDC @ PLANTS

**Current New Hampshire retailers selling New Hampshire Plant Growers Container Mix include:**

Barrett's Greenhouse, *Swanzey*  
 Churchill's Garden Center ,  
*Exeter*  
 Coll's Garden Center, *Jaffrey*  
 Demer's Garden Center, Inc.,  
*Manchester*  
 Dodges Agway, *Hampton*  
 Goudreault Farm/ Greenhouse,  
*Plaistow*

House By The Side Of The Road,  
*Wilton*  
 Longacre Nursery Center, *Lebanon*  
 Murray Farms Greenhouses,  
*Penacook*  
 Nicole's Greenhouse, *Concord*  
 Rodonis Farm & Greenhouse,  
*Litchfield*

Rolling Green Nursery, *Greenland*  
*Raymond*  
 Scenic Nursery & Landscape,  
*Raymond*  
 Spider Web Gardens, *Tuftonboro*  
 Wentworth Greenhouses, *Rollinsford*

**Success Statistics**

- Sales from 2003-2007 total 12,510 bags
- \$12,510 contributed to the NH Horticultural Endowment Fund since the inception of the Container Mix program with Fafard
- Approximately \$3,000 is generated annually from Container Mix sales to support the NHHE

# Grow with us.

*(And help us grow!)*

## ALL-PURPOSE CONTAINER MIX READY TO USE, FOR INDOOR & OUTDOOR PLANTS

The New Hampshire Horticulture Endowment (NHHE) was founded in 1997 as an extension of the New Hampshire Plant Growers' Association. Each year, the NHHE grants money to researchers working on related issues in the field of horticulture that will assist New Hampshire Plant Growers. Proceeds from the sale of this soil will help this fund grow.

And your support in making this purchase helps make New Hampshire a greener place to live.

For more information, or to place an order, please contact  
 John Gerken of Gerken Horticultural Sales,  
 59 Old Rabbit Hollow Road, Swanzey, NH 03446.  
 Telephone (603) 357-3734  
 or email [jgerken@worldpath.net](mailto:jgerken@worldpath.net)



For each bag purchased,  
**\$1.00** goes to horticultural  
 research for New Hampshire.

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## Credit Profile

Only a lender with Farm Credit's up-close understanding of green industry businesses can really see you for who you are. And what you can become. That's the reason behind the generations-long relationships between our loan officers and ag families throughout the Northeast.

Any lender can run numbers: we walk alongside you, at your location, to take a good look at every detail that factors into your business cycles. Because no statistics can ever really provide the complete picture.

Call Farm Credit today to learn about credit options that are framed by your unique circumstances.



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