

Media Relations

November 6, 2013

UNH Greenhouses Get Top Grade for Sustainability

DURHAM, N.H. – The Macfarlane Greenhouse facility at the University of New Hampshire has received the top grade for sustainability by an independent sustainability certification company. The Milieu Project Sierteelt (MPS) Group of the Netherlands facilitates a greenhouse sustainability certification program that assesses energy, water, and fertilizer use; crop protection methods; and waste management (including CO₂) in commercial—and now research and teaching—greenhouses around the globe.

The UNH facility, which received an A, is the first research and teaching greenhouse in the world to participate in this certification program.

In its review of the Macfarlane Greenhouses, MPS commended the UNH facility for its cleanliness, organization, and recycling practices in addition to recognizing its value in providing students with a venue for hands-on experience with industry-relevant research. “Coming from the Netherlands where most universities have horticultural programs, I was pleasantly surprised by the practical influence of the Macfarlane greenhouse,” says MPS representative Arthij van der Veer, who toured the greenhouses in 2013 with greenhouse manager David Goudreault. “This is a very good program that has already implemented a lot of sustainability practices.”

“This partnership with MPS strengthens the university’s leadership role in sustainability and sets the benchmark for responsible operations in agriculture and food research and teaching,” says Jon Wraith, dean of UNH’s College of Life Sciences and Agriculture and director of the New Hampshire Agricultural Experiment Station (NHAES), which operates the greenhouses. “UNH’s participation in this certification program provides the greenhouse staff with immediate access to knowledge, innovation, and advice on quality assurance, the environment, and social issues in horticultural production.”

The certification also allows the Macfarlane Greenhouses to display the MPS logo, and the details of its sustainable practices will be available to growers and associations via MPS’s central database.

Based on the results of the MPS audit, Goudreault has made plans to work with his staff to further increase the sustainability of the greenhouse through modifications to its energy usage. “Given the age and structure of our facility, we have limited choices in what we can do to improve our energy consumption,” said Goudreault of the 25,000 square foot greenhouse facility built in the 1940s. In addition to improvements such as switching from florescent fixtures to LED lighting, Goudreault will collaborate with professor of horticultural technology Rene Gingras to implement a rainwater catchment system that uses gutters to transport water into a submerged tank.

The Macfarlane Greenhouse facility is one of five facilities operated by the NHAES in COLSA. Wraith initiated UNH’s involvement with the MPS certification program after learning about it from alumnus Doug Cole, who owns DS Cole Growers in Loudon, the first MPS-qualified commercial greenhouse in North America.

COLSA offers a wide spectrum of associates, bachelor’s, master’s, and doctoral degrees in the life sciences, agriculture, and natural resources. NHAES, housed within the college, supports regionally and nationally relevant research and engagement related to sustainable agriculture and forest resources management.

The [University of New Hampshire](#), founded in 1866, is a world-class public research university with the feel of a New England liberal arts college. A land, sea, and space-grant university, UNH is the state's flagship public institution, enrolling 12,300 undergraduate and 2,200 graduate students.

Photograph available to download:

<http://www.unh.edu/news/releases/2013/11/images/arti-and-david-1339.jpg>

Caption: Arthij van der Veer (left), representative of the Dutch company Milieu Project Sierteelt (MPS) Group, tours the UNH Macfarlane Greenhouses with greenhouse manager David Goudreault. MPS recently gave the Macfarlane Greenhouses an A for sustainability.

Credit: Victoria Courtland, COLSA

-30-

Media Contact: [Beth Potier](#) | 603-862-1566 | UNH Media Relations | [@unhnews](#) | [@unhscience](#)

Copyright © 2018, The University of New Hampshire • Durham, NH 03824 • UNH main directory: (603) 862-1234.

[Media Relations](#) is a unit of [Communications & Public Affairs](#) which is a division of University Advancement.

[ADA Acknowledgement](#) | [Contact the Webmaster](#) | [UNH Today](#) | [UNH Social Media Index](#)