Distinctive Plants For Your Landscape 2011 Selections

- 2010 Plants of Distinction –
  - Ceris chinensis ‘Hearts of Gold’ - Chinese Redbud
  - Buxus sempervirens ‘Der Runk’ - American Boxwood
  - Caryopras purpurea - Buttecup Winterhawel
  - Dvärgins rosamonois Brilliance - Autumn Fern
  - Gerani ‘Sparkling Burgundy’ - Purple Piaaggio Lily
  - Hosta sieboldiana ‘Henry Eilers’ - Sweet Careflower
  - Schizochyrium scoparium ‘The Blues’ - Blue Bluestem
  - Yucca filamentosa ‘Color Guard’

- 2009 Plants of Distinction –
  - Ceris chinensis ‘Don Ever’ - Chinese Redbud
  - Heliebans x hybrids ‘Pink Ice’ - Lenten Rose
  - Hydrangea x ‘Virginia’ - Hydrangea
  - Aparanthon x ‘Moonshine’ - Lily Of The Nile
  - Hydrangea quercifolia ‘Snowflake’ - Oakleaf Hydrangea
  - Thuya ‘Steeplechase’ (19) - Giant Western Arborvitae
  - Buxus ‘Green Velvet’ - Boxwood
  - Stokias ‘Anthony’s Pink’ - Stokes’ Aster
  - Musa aris - Hardy Banana

Virginia Plant Introduction Program
www.beautifulgardens.org
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**VNLA Mission, Vision and Objectives for 2010**

**Mission Statement:** To Enhance and promote Virginia’s nursery and landscape industry.

**Vision:** to become the leader and resource for the Virginia nursery and landscape industry.

**Objectives**

**Educated, Available Skilled Labor Force - Goal:** VNLA will continue to promote programs that will education, train and provide an available skilled labor force.

**Effective Communication and Advocacy GOAL:** VNLA will effectively communication among staff, board, members, partners and the community.

**Maximizing and Allocation Resources - GOAL:** VNLA will secure increased funding from diverse sources and secure the necessary staff, board and committee members to run a dynamic organization.

**Membership and Outreach - GOAL:** Expand and communicate the value of membership.

**Stewardship - GOAL:** VNLA will promote adoption of Best Management Practices.

**Strategic Marketing - GOAL:** VNLA will promote itself as the leader and resource of the green industry.
By the time you will be reading this, the year will be over and you will probably be attending MANTS. You are probably debating to read or not. It is my last letter, so you might as well.

First, I say to you congratulations, no, not for reading on but for making it through this challenging year. Fortunately, it did rain and the dried up summer market sprang to life for some decent fall business. However, if you were not on top of your game, you might not have made it. So now the question is what can you do this coming year to insure your continued success?

I have three suggestions:

1. Enhance your professional image,
2. Engage politically at any and or all levels,
3. Become active in your state association (VNLA) or a regional association. The future will be better, but only if you take proactive steps to make it so.

If you take the time this winter to become a Virginia Certified Horticulturist, I guarantee you that it will most likely payoff during the coming year. Being certified will help you to land jobs and be awarded contracts for landscape installations.

I know many of you have lost out to a low bidder who really did not know what they were doing. In fact, I bet you have even seen jobs that make our industry look pitiful. As a Virginia Certified Horticulturist, you can differentiate yourself so that customers know that you are qualified to do the work. In some markets, we are seeing bids issued to Certified Horticulturist only. Certification pays off for you and the industry.

Politics, it conjures up bad images and many say they do not have time for it. I have heard all the excuses for why folks are not involved, but they remind me of the turtles my dogs carry around during our summer walks. The dogs, like the politicians, hold our future fate while the turtle stays in his shell, hoping for the best. However, when we revisit that trail later in the year, the turtle is just a smelly empty shell that the dog seems just as happy to play with again. If you don’t get your head out like a snapping turtle, your fate will be sealed by the whims of politics. Really, begin a proactive relationship with your state and federally elected officials.

Finally, I urge you to become more involved in your state and/or local Associations. I am not suggesting this because we need volunteers, which we do; but I suggest this for your growth. Many Associations have winter educational meetings. Take advantage of them. You can learn from the speakers and from the attendees. Moreover you will enhance your networks in the industry. This can do nothing but help you. The more you know about our industry, the better prepared you will be for the opportunities that present themselves.

In closing I would like to thank all those who serve on the Board of the VNLA and also those who represent us on the MANTS board. Think about this: they all serve a minimum of 40 hours and they do not get any wages. You will see them listed in the newsletter. If you get a chance, thank them. They have all done a good job for you.

It’s still a great industry with a great product. Keep your head up and out like the snapping turtle.

Ed Tankard, VNLA President
The Beautiful Gardens Grow with Confidence® Plant Introduction Program begins its 3rd year of promoting Plants of Distinction. Grown by participating Virginia growers and featured at selected independent garden centers across Virginia the plants of distinction feature a selection of perennials, ornamental shrubs and trees that have real sales value beyond their current use. We have identified the six plants for 2011 in previous articles (see page 2 for photos). They can found at www.beautifulgardens.org. Plants of distinction from 2009 and 2010 will continue to be promoted.

We are always looking for additional growers to participate in the Beautiful Gardens plants of distinction program. You can be included with one or more of these plants.

Your companies name will be distributed to the 25 plus garden centers we currently work with as a Virginia source and be placed on the web site as a grower of plants of distinction. This can be a profitable tool for expanding the visibility your plant growing business. Staff visits each of the participating garden centers throughout the year and emphasizes locally grown, Virginia quality and our ability to advertise their business. Contact Rick Baker at VDACS to be a part of Beautiful Gardens – rick.baker@vdacs.virginia.gov.

Beautiful Gardens staff and volunteers continue to work toward the future through the addition of plant material at the four evaluation sites, the initiation of breeder workshops, a successful propagation workshop held at Sargeant Reynolds Community College in Goochland, the contracting for plants from the IALR tissue culture lab in Danville, establishing the program coordinators position within the Horticulture Department at Virginia Tech and the preparation for our first “new” plant introduction in 2012. Getting ready for 2012 has included the design of promotional materials, defining a fee structure, having an adequate number of plants for sale, grower agreements and follow up sales for 2013 and beyond.

It is our goal to establish the Beautiful Gardens name as a point of recognition for quality plants of purpose and beauty grown here in Virginia for both Virginia customers and customers in the middle Atlantic area. We ask that you consider us for new plant evaluation, micro propagation and sales. We look forward to new and established growers becoming a part of our small but growing enterprise.

By Rick Baker, rick.baker@vdacs.virginia.gov

---

**VNLA - Beautiful Gardens® Gets Ready for 2011**

---

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**Do You Want to Increase Your Business?**

**Growing Opportunities with Beautiful Gardens**

Some amazing azaleas are coming through the BG program! Scheduled as promotion plants for 2013 and beyond, VNLA members are needed as liner producers. This spring, the tissue culture lab at IALR will have available stage III plants of three evergreen azaleas – two spider (or petaloid) azaleas, ‘White Spider’ and ‘Koromo shikibu’, and a double flowering white, ‘Sandra’s Green Ice’, hybridized by Virginian Dr. Sandra McDonald.

Shortly following these three, another spider azalea will be available - a brilliant red, ‘Cardinal’s Crest’ – hybridized by renown rhododentarian, and one of Beautiful Gardens’ own members, Mr. Don Hyatt.

Hemerocallis ‘VT Spirit’ will be Beautiful Gardens first new plant introduction.

In 2011, tissue culture plants will be available for purchase. These plants will need to be field grown until first flower - typically two growing seasons. Beautiful Gardens will have printed tags with picture and growing information that must accompany sales of ‘VT Spirit’. Full retail promotion is scheduled for 2013.

All plants, both the azaleas and the daylily, must be sold within the Beautiful Gardens network of growers and retailers for the first 3 years.

Please contact me, Lisa Lipsey, BG Program Coordinator, to participate or for more information.

**VNLA – Beautiful Gardens goes to the Governor’s Mansion**

The First Lady of Virginia, Maureen McDonnell, is pleased to partner with Beautiful Gardens Grow with Confidence® and the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Affairs this spring to renovate the garden on the south front side of the Executive Mansion. Almost all of the plant material chosen for the renovation is featured in the 2010 and 2011 ‘Plants of Distinction’ promoted by the Beautiful Gardens program.

The south front garden was the only outside landscaping that was not redone during the renovations 10 years ago, and needs desperate attention. In preparation for the bicentennial celebration of the Mansion, the First Lady is excited to work with Beautiful Gardens to prepare the Mansion for its anniversary year in 2013. There are several projects that the First Lady is focusing on to prepare for this year long celebration, however, the outside appearance of the Mansion is one of the most important aspects that needs to be addressed.

Those Virginia nurseries and greenhouses that donate plant material for the garden will be invited to attend the garden build and plant with the First Lady, as well as have a lunch.
Every April, the Mansion is open for Garden Week in Virginia. It is our goal to have the garden completed by this time so it can be showcased and unveiled for the many garden clubs and tourists who visit during this week.

If you are interested in donating plants, see the attached list and contact Karen Kelly at Shipp & Wilson, info@shippandWilson.com, 804-781-0084.

### Plant Additions to the Mansion Garden

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qty</th>
<th>Plant Name</th>
<th>Size*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Crested Iris ‘Tennessee White’</td>
<td>3 quart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Pineapple Lily</td>
<td>3 quart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Hellebore ‘Pine Knot Strain’</td>
<td>3 quart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Yucca ‘Color Guard’</td>
<td>3 gallon</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Boxwood ‘Green Velvet’</td>
<td>15”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Stokesia ‘Peachies Pick’</td>
<td>3 quart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>Daffodil ‘Golden Echo’</td>
<td>bulb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Autumn Fern</td>
<td>3 quart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Redbud ‘Hearts of Gold’</td>
<td>5’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Winter Hazel</td>
<td>3 gallon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>Daffodil ‘Jamestown’</td>
<td>bulb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Encore Azalea ‘Autumn Chiffon’</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Redbud ‘Don Egoff’</td>
<td>5’</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Hydrangea ‘Snowflake’</td>
<td>3 gallon</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Arborvitae ‘Steplechase’</td>
<td>5’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Boxwood ‘Dee Runk’</td>
<td>3’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Virginia Holly</td>
<td>5’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note all sizes listed are suggested minimums
The President, Jeffrey Howe of Windridge Landscaping Co. Inc. attended Virginia Episcopal in Lynchburg graduating in 1986. He also attended the University Of New Hampshire in 1987-1988, then Virginia Tech in 1989-1991 obtaining a BS in Ornamental Horticulture minor in Turfgrass. He is also a Virginia Certified Horticulturist and PLANET Certified Landscape Professional. Andy Guercio is the Vice-President, The business is located in Afton, VA.

Jeff started in 1989 while waiting to transfer to Virginia Tech to study horticulture. His family helped him purchase a commercial walk behind mower and he quickly gained 23 accounts in Charlottesville. Jeff hired two men that August to continue servicing the accounts while attending college in Blacksburg. It was neat because he would actually link via modem with a computer from his room at Virginia Tech to a computer at his sisters’ stable where he had a small office/ shop. This was before internet. They would have route sheets ready for the guys and “I would come up on the weekend and grab the sheets work ( I’d do the billing later at school) and visit the client yards, repair equipment, mow grass, whatever it took… This worked out well for two years. With the often unpaid help of some good friends, we managed to grow to about 50 clients by the time I was ready to graduate. My vehicle was the primary work truck along with another truck which could not be trusted to make the journey up and down 81 so at times I was happily stranded in Blacksburg.”

One close friend Will Huff was working 60-80 hours a week became a partner because he could not afford to pay him. The he Got a call from a close friend and Fraternity brother at UNH in January 1992 and he said he was interested in investing. “I needed reliable vehicles and Andy brought his knowledge of hardscaping to the company so it was a good fit. We bought an organic lawn care franchise called “Naturally Green”. The owner sold us his equipment and about 50 more accounts for next to nothing.

After five years in business we were eligible for our contractor’s license and Andy passed the exam right away. Our first big project was planting 140 trees in the middle of route 29 right in the Center of Charlottesville. We only lost one tree. We were the first company to install a series of bio filters in the county of Albemarle at the Monticello High School project. These became the prototypical designs for biofilters and water quality sales across the state. Windridge Landscaping has installed over a hundred “biofilters” since that first one.

So 20 years later here they are. “We have done numerous commercial planting jobs for UVA Aquatic Fitness center and Observatory Hill Dining Hall. A large rooftop planting at Carl Harrison Medical research, National Radio and Astronomy Laboratory, Campbell Hall, and we are about to be building a large wall at the new marching band practice facility.”

They participated annually in PLANET day of Service, for the last 3 years. Last year they installed new driveway and sidewalk at North Branch Non profit School in Nelson County. They contribute plant material to many local non profit organizations including Future farmers of America, SPCA, Nelson Health Outreach.
Jeff's hobbies include hockey, skiing, model trains, and ham radio, while Andy enjoys snowboarding.

Jeff's Favorite plant is the Dogwood; “all flowering & Kousas.”

His favorite flower color is the Pink Velour Carl Whitcombs Crapemyrtle.

He dislikes pruning that makes plants look like meatballs.

Jeff's best habit is “hanging any of the days troubles on our “trouble tree” (Laceleaf Japanese Maple saved from a roundup attack) before entering into our home at the end of the work day”.

His worst habit is procrastination and multitasking.

Jeff's Dream Vacation is skiing/snowboarding with my family at some famous resort area in Europe or Canada.

His heroes “any and all volunteer firefighters and EMTs”.

Jeff’s favorite quote “Understand, then be understood”, Steven Covey, 7 Habits Of Highly Effective People.

The best part of Jeff's workday: “whenever I do “walk-throughs” with clients when we are finished with a multiday/ week job.

Jeff’s helpful hint when handling employees: “Listen and let them install their ideas of how to get something done or how to change procedures.”

Jeff feels that the hottest upcoming trend is: “Living retaining walls.”

The best advice he ever received: “Surround yourself with good people, follow regulations and specifications.”

Jeff feels that the how or why their company managed to stay in business so long is probably because they enjoy “the results of our success and the freedom of self-employment. My wife, Christy, took over the accounting in 1994 and has given us the professional office management we needed. She has been instrumental in helping us structure the company from organizational charts to accounting and scheduling. She helped us get into the H2B guest worker program 2003 and has been instrumental in keeping our workforce intact.”

Their biggest challenge was “probably in 2005 when we moved our shop & office to the nursery location in Afton. We had 18 H2B workers (9 new) and several of them faked injuries and tried to claim workers compensation. With the economy booming we nearly hit 2 million in gross sales but our performance and quality....
was not what we wanted. We cut the workforce in half the following year and had a much better season and profit. We started to concentrate on Segmental block walls, concrete pavers, bluestone and even natural stone walls. Decided to get some guys certified and focus on quality.”

**Jeff points out some of his mentors** are “guys like Lee Quillen (Waynesboro Landscape & Garden Center) and George Carter (Ivy Nursery who wouldn’t hire me late in the season and is why I struck ultimately out on my own) because I can almost always recognize an installation job their crews did; the stakes are perfect, the mulch rings are just right and the plant material quality is outstanding and almost never spaced to closely. Dr. Dave Chalmers was my advisor and turf guru at Tech who said we were crazy to try to run a lawn maintenance company in the Piedmont. It took 15 years to figure that he was right (we stopped cutting grass 5 years ago). Dr Alex Niemiera; because of his insane love for plant material and concrete statues.”

*Edited by Sandy Miller*

---

**Issues - The Politics of Invasive Species**

**Natives vs. Non-natives in Landscaping**

Every person in the green industries is impacted on a daily basis by non-native invasive species. We are always trying to balance profitability with what the public finds fashionable and various organizations and state offices find offensive – homeowners love Bradford pears, barberries and English ivy but all three of these plants are on the lists of bad plants all up and down the East coast. Nurserymen have to decide which plants to grow and buy and how many of each to have in inventory. Designers are more or less dependent on what the nurseries have to offer while landscape contractors are caught in between what the designers specify, what the municipality in which they work will allow to be planted and what is actually available to plant. Tree services have to remove dead and diseased trees and treat for insect infestation. Lawn services fight the battle with invasive weeds and non-native insects that want to eat the shrubs we grow and plant. This is the way we all make our livings. It can be a whole lot easier.

Until recently I never really gave much thought about planting native plants versus non-native plants. Most of my customers can kill kudzu so I have always designed and installed landscapes using plants like *Berberis*, *Elaeagnus* and *Ligustrum*. Besides, my customers have seen these plants in every sub-division built in Virginia in the past 20 years – they’re familiar with them and they want them. I’ve also kind of liked stopping by the Native Plant Society’s booth at the State Fair every year and stirring the ladies up with questions about what they considered invasive and why. I had to stop doing that this year since I’m on the Environmental Affairs Committee for the VNLA, but I have other reasons too. During the past year I’ve had the opportunity to hear a few speakers on the subject of invasive plants who are a whole lot smarter than me and I’ve had a change of heart which is about to become a change in the way I do business.

Last year Mary Williams took me to a couple of meetings of a committee that is supposed to supply input to a State committee called the Invasive Species Working Group which is in turn supposed to keep the Governor up to date on the subject of invasives. Mary was a member of the committee and has since moved up to the working group (I bet ya’ll didn’t know that you have a VNLA member working for you at that level).

Since I had been invited to attend these meetings I thought it would be prudent to educate myself a little beforehand. The information is out there for the asking. One of the best sources is at [www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural_heritage/invspdflist.shtml](http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural_heritage/invspdflist.shtml), or simply do a search for Virginia invasive species. I went to the websites for The Chesapeake Bay Foundation, The Nature Conservancy and The Sierra Club. Granted these sites were a little biased, but they gave me a little insight as to what the public thinks about the problem with invasive species. I even looked at the EPA’s site. And, of course, the VNLA, the VGIC and the VAC all keep track of this stuff too.

The Department of Conservation and Recreation’s site was the most informative and to the point. They listed all of the plants in Virginia currently considered as invasive and ranked them as highly invasive, moderately invasive and occasionally invasive. Probably 50% of the plants on this list are either grown by our members (I checked in the latest Growers Guide) or are being purchased from out of state and sold by re-wholesalers. Fifty percent represents a lot of money to our industry. It might be worth a couple of minutes to take a look at the list to see where you fall. I have planted more than a few of the listed plants, myself. I’m not trying to alarm anyone. Just because a plant is on this list doesn’t mean that it has been banned or that it is going to be banned in the near future. It simply means that its effect on the environment is being evaluated. But that doesn’t mean that it won’t someday be banned, either. North Carolina has banned Japanese Bloodgrass and Connecticut has banned *Berberis thunbergii* – so anything is possible. The only constant in business is change. The more you know the easier it is to change with the times, and I think things are getting ready to change again.
One of the speakers I’ve heard this year was Doug Tallamy. Some of you may have heard of him. He gave a talk at John Tyler Community College in Chesterfield County in November titled ‘Bringing Nature Home’. He also has a book out with the same title. Admission was free, it was after dark so it wouldn’t interfere with work and I can always use more CEU’s, so I went. It was the best 90 minutes I’ve ever spent in a classroom.

In the last newsletter I remarked that I didn’t know what is meant by the term sustainability – well now I do. **Balance. Sustainability = balance.**

Tallamy is a professor and chair of the Department of Entomology and Wildlife Ecology at the University of Delaware and he made a pretty compelling argument for the use of native plants in the landscape. As simple the message was, the reasoning behind it was even more fundamental. Native plants support native insects. Native insects support native birds and small animals. These creatures support the larger predators and on and on. Balance.

So what? A lot of us spray pesticides on non-native ornamental trees and shrubs for a living. We see insects everywhere. Yep, but most of these insects are also non-natives as well. Most native insects only feed on a specific few plants and even then they rarely kill the plant – that wouldn’t be a very good adaptation, would it. So, plant more natives, have more native insects and birds and mammals, spray fewer chemicals and have a healthier environment. Agricultural chemicals are always going to be with us thanks to the Emerald Ash Borer, Wooly Adelgid (invasive, non-native species) and a whole host of plant pathogens (some also non-native), but we can cut back on the volume we use, with the added bonus of helping our industry meet the environmental requirements for cleaning up the Chesapeake Bay.
Go ahead ... shoot!

a Plant
da Nursery
a Landscape Design or installation
any Green Industry object you think would make a great photo

VNLA Photo Contest
A winner and prize for each bi-monthly VNLA newsletter
– 6 total per year.
One Grand Prize winner chosen at the end of the year.

Details at: www.vnla.org/AboutVNLA/photography_contest.htm
VNLA - Photo Contest
Rules & Winner

1. The contest is open to any photographer (amateur and professional) except members of Board of Directors of VNLA and their families. Entries are limited to VNLA members and their staff.

2. Each photographer may enter up to three (3) digital images per Newsletter deadline (see #6). E-mail images to info@vnla.org. Include your name, phone number and occupation. One winning entry per photographer per year. You may re-enter non-winning entries.

3. Please e-mail images separately. Feel free to elaborate on any story surrounding the photograph. Photos should be 300 dpi high resolution.

4. All photographs submitted must have been taken in Virginia within the past five years.

5. All photographs must be related to the Green Industry. The subject can be located in a nursery, back yard, or in a landscape—just so it is obviously related to the green industry profession.

6. Deadline for submission is 5:00 p.m. on the Newsletter Copy Deadline, which is the 15th of January, March, May, July, September and November. All submissions become the property of the VNLA.

7. Model Release forms are required with each photograph which contains a clearly identifiable person. Release forms are available from the VNLA office, on request, and are also available for download from the VNLA website at Model release in MS Word format or Adobe PDF format.

Judging done by the VNLA Communication Committee. All decisions are final.

Winner of the November/December 2010 Photo Contest

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See Details on page 52
Dr. Tallamy, in the appendix of his book, ‘Bringing Nature Home’, lists the most important native plants by region. Once again I consulted the Growers Guide and was pleasantly surprised to find that our members grow nearly 66% of the plants on that list. So the nurserymen are in the ballpark with their inventories. It’s up to the designers and landscape contractors to start using more of these plants. Judging from the attendance at Tallamy’s talk, the public (the people who write us checks) are very interested in his message. I only saw three other professionals at the talk; the rest were either Master Gardeners or homeowners. Change is coming to our industry in the form of regulations (Chesapeake Bay TMDL’s, banned plant material) and from a change in what consumers want. I plan on changing with it.

When I first meet a prospective customer/client, one of the first questions most of them ask is about the name of my company. They ask, “What does Natural Art Landscaping mean”? I usually make something up - I can’t very well tell them that I got the idea for the name from my favorite surf shop. But now I’m going to use it as a real marketing tool. Now, Natural Art Landscaping means we landscape with native plants. This change could be good.

By Tom Thompson,
VNLA Environmental Affairs Chair

Issues - Immigration Controversy in Virginia

Long before Arizona signed its anti-immigrant bill into law, some Virginians had to wrestle with the impact of laws that sought to codify xenophobia. What happened in Manassas in 2005 is a lesson for all Virginians—and especially employers. The City Council passed a housing ordinance designed by anti-immigrant groups to drive immigrant families out of town. The ordinance had predictable consequences: immigrant families felt discriminated against, left Manassas, businesses lost workers and customers, and Manassas faced expensive lawsuits over discrimination. The City Council decided ultimately to rescind the ordinance in January of 2006.

So what’s happening in Virginia today? The same powerful interest group that wreaked havoc on Manassas is trying to force its “enforcement through attrition” agenda on the entire Commonwealth.

The Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR) is the most influential anti-immigrant group in the country today. FAIR claims to have written the agreement that was passed in Prince William County in 2007, which gives local police the power of ICE agents, and allows them to question people who are pulled over based on whether they have “reasonable suspicion” that a person may be undocumented. Their activism will continue into this year’s General Assembly and various state legislators have announced that they will file numerous anti-immigrant bills.

Delegate Albo representing Prince William Co. sees one such legislation as an "anti-sanctuary bill" aimed at Arlington County which he believes (wrongly) has passed a resolution saying it won’t enforce federal immigration laws. The second would require the Superintendent of State Police to make Prince William County’s controversial law absolute statewide. Finally, HB 1430 would give arresting officers the ability to ascertain citizenship of suspects.

The consequences of these bills, if passed, will be drastic for Virginia’s economy. As agricultural employers, we understand firsthand the importance of immigrant workers to Virginia’s workforce. They do work that most Americans will not do.

More importantly, the dollars in taxes and consumption that immigrants put into Virginia’s economy, if lost, would be devastating. According to a study by the Immigration Policy Center, undocumented immigrants comprised 13% of the state’s workforce, most in agriculture, and contributed $142 million in state taxes alone. If they were pulled from the workforce, the state would lose $11.2 billion in economic activity annually.

It is time to focus on statewide legislation, and we need the help of all agricultural employers to show the importance of immigrants to our businesses and the Virginia economy.

As in previous generations, immigrants do the work that is essential but often undesirable. Immigrants pay withholding taxes, FICA, sales taxes, spend money and are good neighbors. We are, after all, a country of immigrants. Comprehensive immigration reform is urgently needed on the federal level and states and cities are re-acting because Washington will not move forward and address this situation. Let your state and federal representatives know how important this issue is to your business.

To get involved in the growing campaign, contact Ruth Lopez, Acting Field Director for the Reform Immigration For America Campaign

rlopez@immigrationforum.org

Submitted by Robin Rinaca,
Eastern Shore Nursery of Virginia
rrinaca@esnursery.com
Tips - Legalizing Our Workforce through AgJOBS

Invisible to most of us going about our busy daily routines, a workforce, often derided and demonized today, continue to toil to keep our America bountiful and beautiful. Their hands sliced and packed the chicken breast or steak we had for dinner last night. Their hands picked the tomatoes and the lettuce we had in our salad for lunch. Their hands planted the shrubs and tended the trees that we drive past in a blur, and while we all may appreciate the greenery, too many take for granted the immigrant hands that toil every day in fields and farms across the country and across the Commonwealth of Virginia.

They are America’s undocumented workers. Every day, all of us rely on their labor in some way. For those of us working hard making a livelihood in the landscaping, nurseries, or agriculture industries in VA, we know better than most that around six out of ten workers in our fields nationally are undocumented. Across America our industries contribute billions of dollars annually in produce, purchases, and jobs. Even in this recession, employers and managers in our industries know the difficulty in finding qualified workers to fill work orders.

The national dialogue about this necessary workforce is limited. “What part of illegal don’t you understand?” is the angry query that ends more conversations than begins any meaningful discussions. No one wants laws to be broken. We all want an orderly and respectful society, under a rule of law. So why don’t these immigrants just get in line and enter the U.S. legally?

The answer is, unfortunately, that the immigration laws themselves are broken, obsolete, and desperately in need of repairs.

There are four major ways under our current system that someone might obtain a green card for lawful permanent residency:

1. A specified immediate family (parent of child) relationship with a U.S. citizen or legal permanent resident.
2. An employer petition for lawful permanent residence.
3. Adjustment from refugee or asylee status.
4. Obtaining a diversity visa through a “lottery.”

Any grower or landscaper in VA applying for an employer petition would soon discover that this is also like playing the lottery – competing for only a handful of available visas against thousands of employers across the country, facing the same workforce problems.

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Effectively, none of these current avenues are available to most undocumented immigrants now working in the U.S. today.

So what’s the solution? In 2001, a national coalition consisting of national, regional, and state groups representing nursery, greenhouse, Christmas tree, fruit, vegetable, dairy, and livestock growers and producers came together and reached a landmark agreement with worker and employer advocates, resulting in a bipartisan bill called the Agricultural Job Opportunities, Benefits and Security Act (AgJOBS.)

AgJOBS essentially has two parts:

1. The critical component would provide an orderly process for legal residency status. It provides temporary legal status for agricultural workers who worked in the U.S. for 100 workdays in the 18-month period ending Dec. 31, 2004. If they complete additional work in agriculture for 360 days during the six-year period beginning with enactment of the bill, they would become permanent legal residents.

2. The H-2A temporary visa program for agriculture would be reformed, making it easier, faster and less expensive for agricultural employers to use. It would still require protections in such areas as housing, workers-compensation insurance and wages for foreign workers recruited and employed under the H-2A program, which is funded through a user fee paid by agricultural employers.

Immigration advocates believe that AgJOBS is a first step toward Comprehensive Immigration Reform, which would reform America’s broken immigration system by securing our borders and simultaneously providing a pathway to legalization for undocumented immigrants already residing in the United States. It would require all undocumented immigrants to get background checked, pay a fine for crossing the border illegally, and get in the back of the line on a pathway to legalization and eventually to citizenship if they should choose to apply.

Today, employers and managers can do all due diligence and do everything right, check documents, fill out the right paperwork, and still be fined by the federal government if someone in our employ is working without proper and up-to-date work papers. AgJOBS is supported by business owners as well as labor unions like the United Farm Workers because it is a sensible solution. While it wouldn’t solve all the problems associated with immigration nationally, AgJOBS would help all businesses in our industry be able to hire legal workers, and be able to engage in strategic workforce planning.

For more information, contact www.immigrationforum.org

News – TMDL: Do you know how this will affect you?

Virginia Agribusiness Council Comments On Proposed Chesapeake Bay Water Quality Regulations

Richmond, VA – “To say we’re concerned is a gross understatement,” is how Virginia Agribusiness Council President Donna Pugh Johnson describes their message to Environmental Protection Agency on the Chesapeake Bay water quality regulations. The Council agrees with Governor McDonnell that the impact of implementing EPA’s proposals may be potentially devastating to the Commonwealth’s economy.

As a result, this week the Council submitted comments to the EPA regarding water quality regulations it is proposing for the Chesapeake Bay. The Council also joined 29 other state and national agribusiness organizations who jointly filed comments to EPA outlining the industry’s concerns with the draft Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) requirements for the Bay. The Chesapeake Bay TMDL, often termed a “pollution diet,” is the largest, most complex TMDL ever undertaken by EPA.

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professionals, agribusiness suppliers, and processors, is committed to environmental stewardship. Clean water and productive soil are fundamental to our businesses,” said Council President Johnson. “We have been doing our part and will continue to do so in order to help create a healthy Chesapeake Bay and local waters. The agribusiness industry has been a willing partner in making environmental progress, and has proven so with our actions, time and time again.”

The Council noted that despite measurable improvements in environmental practices in agriculture, forestry, and urban turfgrass, EPA’s models do not account for many of the voluntary environmental practices that are currently being employed in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. As a result, the draft TMDL fails to acknowledge the success that has been achieved in the Bay by the efforts of the agribusiness industry. Several provisions of Virginia’s Watershed Implementation Plan are supported by the agribusiness industry, including utilizing adaptive management, establishing nutrient trading, and providing flexibility in meeting goals, and balancing the needs of a growing economy with water quality.

The Council expressed serious concerns about the lack of cost-benefit and economic impact analysis in EPA’s Draft TMDL. The potential economic impact to the Commonwealth’s number one industry of agriculture and forestry is beyond significant. “To meet EPA’s aggressive reduction goals, cost share funding is more than critical. Agriculture, lawn care, turfgrass, and forestry, have all seen depressed bottom lines, as have the State and local governments in facing historic deficits,” noted Johnson. “Individual businesses, farmers, and the State cannot meet this unfunded mandate from EPA without significant federal and state funding. These funds must be actually appropriated dollars, not just potentially empty promises.”

In addition to highlighting EPA’s obvious oversight of the agribusiness industry’s environmental stewardship efforts within the Bay, the Council criticized the Agency’s failure to provide sufficient information for the public regarding the draft TMDL and failure to provide an adequate public comment period on such a complex subject. Additional concerns include the inaccurate Bay model used to develop the requirements, and EPA’s questionable legal authority under the Clean Water Act to require certain state actions.

“Our industry is seriously concerned about the potential negative impacts that some proposals may have on the 1.25 million direct and indirect agribusiness jobs in Virginia, and the almost $80 billion in annual economic impact that our industry contributes to the Commonwealth’s economy,” stated Johnson. “We embrace the
need for clean water as a fundamental goal of our agribusiness industry. However, the economic survival of agriculture and forestry must be our top priority.”

The Virginia Agribusiness Council is a non-profit organization committed to representing the agriculture and forestry industries in the Commonwealth through effective government relations efforts. Its membership includes farmers, foresters and other agricultural-product producers, marketers and processors, industry suppliers and commodity and industry associations. It is headquartered in Richmond.

Virginia Agribusiness Council,
We Represent Virginia Agribusiness
with a Unified Voice.

Contact: Katie K. Frazier, (804) 643-3555; (katie.agribusiness@att.net)

Legislation - Virginia Watershed Implementation Program Comments Submitted

[The following letter was sent to the governor from the Virginia Agribusiness Council]

Dear Governor McDonnell:

The undersigned organizations, members of the Virginia Agriculture United Coalition, collectively represent the breadth of Virginia’s agribusiness industry and offer our input on Virginia’s Draft Phase I Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP) in compliance with EPA mandates to develop a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for the Chesapeake Bay.

Over the past several months, our industry representatives have shared with state agencies our feedback and ideas in developing Virginia’s draft WIP. We appreciate the Commonwealth’s willingness to provide a comment period on the draft WIP, and will continue to actively participate in discussions with state and federal officials if further refinements to Virginia’s draft WIP are made.

Further, we appreciate the willingness of your administration to address specific concerns raised by our industry throughout the development of the draft WIP, and look forward to working with all agencies of the Commonwealth to form a reasonable, cost-effective, economically achievable, balanced plan to improve water quality in our streams, rivers, and the Chesapeake Bay, while maintaining the viability of the agribusiness industry.

The comments provided below will address a) environmental progress made by agribusinesses, b) questions regarding the legal and policy issues that arise from EPA’s assertion of authority over implementation of the Draft TMDL, c) Virginia’s overall approach taken in the draft WIP, d) concerns with costs associated with implementing the TMDL and current economic conditions, e) specific comments regarding the agriculture sector section of the draft WIP, f) specific comments regarding the urban/suburban sector section of the draft WIP, and g) concerns regarding EPA’s proposed backstop measures and additional regulations on our industries as suggested by the federal government.

We appreciate the opportunity to be direct and sincere in our response to the draft Virginia Chesapeake Bay TMDL Watershed Implementation Plan and look forward to continuing work with State officials to make progress in meeting water quality goals while maintaining the future viability of the agribusiness in the Commonwealth.

A) Environmental Progress Made by Agribusinesses

Our agribusiness industry, comprised of farmers, foresters, green industry, agribusiness suppliers, and processors, is committed to environmental stewardship. Clean water and productive soil are fundamental to our businesses. We have been doing our part and will continue to do so in order to help create a healthy Chesapeake Bay and local waters.

Specifically:

Agriculture has met 52% of reduction goals for Nitrogen and 50% for Phosphorus and Sediment—all through a voluntary, incentive based program in Virginia. This doesn’t even count the actions farmers are taking on their own without funding. According to the Virginia Department of Forestry, 83% of logging jobs use the proper combination of best management practices. University studies have shown that turfgrass, when maintained properly, serves as an excellent filter for stormwater runoff, can be a carbon sink, and captures sediment. The agribusiness industry has been a willing partner in making environmental progress, and has proven so with our actions, time and time again. Virginia has invested over $80 million into the Agricultural Best Management Practice (Ag BMP) Cost-Share program since 2006. Farmers have matched this spending with $488 million of their own funds (approximately $0.60 of every dollar) and are lined up at the door to do more. While these amounts are significant, this voluntary program has been extremely underfunded by the state or federal government. Annually, willing participants are turned away due to lack of adequate funds at the state and federal level. Even without cost-share funding, agriculture is still taking action. Virginia farmers fence cattle from streams, practice conservation tillage, use proper nutrient management practices, and install buffers along waterways- without federal or state funds-and without being—counted by EPA in the Bay Model. Substantial progress is, without a doubt, being made. Without regulatory pressure, the turfgrass/green industry requested that the state create an Urban Nutrient Management Program so that their professionals can have plans specifically tailored for their businesses. Lawn care operators have supported and signed Voluntary Water Quality Agreements with the state. Major home lawn fertilizer companies have signed agreements to reduce and/or eliminate phosphorus from turf maintenance fertilizers by 2012. Vir-
ginia’s golf industry, through an industry-led initiative, is developing a Best Management Handbook covering water quality, pesticide use, and water supply issues for their industry to implement. These actions clearly demonstrate this sector’s positive commitment to nutrient reductions.

B) Legal and policy issues that arise from EPA’s assertion of authority over implementation of the Draft TMDL

In comments submitted November 1, 2010 to Virginia officials by a group of interested agricultural organizations at the state and national level, specific legal questions were raised regarding EPA’s assertion of authority over implementation of the Bay TMDL and Virginia’s Draft WIP. We call your attention to these comments and ask that the Commonwealth consider them as you move forward in negotiations with federal officials. Specifically, we question EPA’s threats to retaliate against watershed jurisdictions that do not develop WIPs conforming to EPA’s expectations. We believe that these threats exceed EPA’s authority under the Clean Water Act (CWA). We encourage Virginia to continue to establish a plan for implementation of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed TMDLs in a manner that Virginia believes is best for Virginians and the environment and continues Virginia’s recognition of the tremendous progress that has already been made by the agriculture community.

C) Costs associated with implementing the TMDL and current economic conditions

We appreciate the State’s recognition in their cover letter submitted to EPA on November 3, 2010 that the Bay TMDL and Virginia’s WIP will have a high cost for compliance for all sectors. While we agree that there is a benefit of clean waters within the Bay and local watersheds, the economic costs for compliance must be balanced. Water quality programs cannot be developed in a vacuum without considering the impacts to all economic sectors. To this end, we are encouraging EPA to conduct a non-biased economic impact analysis and strongly urge the Commonwealth to do so as well. Experts from landgrant universities from across the watershed could be called upon to evaluate the actual costs of meeting water quality standards for businesses, citizens, localities, states, and the

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federal government. Agriculture is able to estimate some costs of TMDL implementation based on existing data of implementing Ag BMPs through current state and federal programs. For example, Virginia estimates that full implementation of just one practice (cattle fencing) could cost more than $800 million to implement. Fencing cattle from streams, putting in crossings, providing alternative watering systems, etc. costs on average $30,000 for a Virginia cattle farmer. Virginia cattle producers, many of whom farm part-time, do not have extra income from their farming operation available to afford an additional $30,000 to implement this practice. The 2009 Needs Assessment of the Virginia Natural Resources Commitment Fund states that Ag BMP cost-share funds needs will reach $63.2 million annually in 2025 to get 60% NPS reduction goals from agriculture. This is only funding from the state and does not account for federal government’s traditional share of funding or the shared match that comes from farmers. Current funding estimates are only based upon the cost of installing the practice, they do not account for costs such as loss of productive land, replacing practices when weather damages occur, and fluctuations in market conditions. Current economic conditions within the agribusiness industry are extremely difficult. Just as the rest of the nation’s economy has suffered over the past several years, agribusiness sectors have also suffered from several years of profit losses, increased input costs, and limited credit options for individual producers, companies, and operations. The current economic condition in our agribusiness industry simply means that for some, additional monetary resources necessary to meet new regulatory burdens is non-existent. Federal backstops, including new permitting of small dairies and additional, burdensome CAFO requirements, will be enough to drive some farmers out of business if implemented. EPA’s federal backstops requiring more unregulated lands to meet MS-4 (urban lands) requirements may cause significant economic hardship for urban landowners, thereby impacting the green and turfgrass industries. To meet reduction goals, cost share funding is more than critical in meeting the demands of EPA. Agriculture, lawn care, turfgrass, forestry, have all seen depressed profits, just as the State and local governments have been facing historic deficits. Individual businesses, farmers, and the State cannot meet this unfunded mandate from EPA without significant federal and state funding. These funds must be actually appropriated dollars, not just potentially empty promises.

D) Virginia’s overall approach in the Draft WIP

In Virginia’s September 3, 2010 cover letter to EPA, Secretary Domenech highlights the state’s ongoing efforts to improve water quality in the Bay over the past two decades, recognized the severe economic conditions currently faced by Virginians, and the high cost of implementation of the Draft WIP. He further promotes a system built upon flexibility and cost-effectiveness to meet these goals. We concur. Our industry supports Virginia’s approach in the draft WIP to utilize adaptive management, nutrient trading, and flexibility in meeting goals. Implementing the WIP and the Bay TMDL will be costly. In order to best balance the needs of a growing economy with water quality, we support a) adequate and reliable cost-share and technical assistance for agribusinesses, b) providing flexibility and certainty, c) balancing water quality reductions with economic impacts to industries, d) a trading program that allows for all economic sectors to participate, and e) utilizing g adaptive management based upon economic conditions, future advancements in practices and technologies, and true water quality data. Virginia’s draft WIP sets the course for such actions. In general, if EPA is requesting additional detail be provided by the Commonwealth on current programs, we encourage the state to work with EPA to determine the types of information necessary to meet their expectations. Adding additional explanation of current programs will clearly prove that Virginia, through statute, regulations, inspections, and voluntary programs, has taken great strides in meeting water quality goals, and through full utilization of these programs, can make even more progress in the decade to come.

E) Agriculture Sector Section of the Draft WIP and Strategy to Fill Gaps Fully Utilizing Existing Programs,

Adding Details, and Increasing Staff As already stated, state officials should continue working with EPA staff to add details regarding current permitting, regulatory, inspection, and voluntary programs to the draft WIP. Further, we support utilizing current programs, statutes, and regulations to their fullest extent, examining areas where additional staffing, resources, and funding are necessary, and working to address these short falls over time. We urge the state to continue efforts to get full credit for all actions taken resulting from regulatory or permitted actions, as specified in the SB 346 Study Report (November, 2010). If provided with adequate funding and staffing, the Agricultural Stewardship Act (ASA) can be utilized to ensure compliance with water quality laws and serve as an enforcement tool that EPA is demanding. We encourage the State to include information on expanded staffing and utilization of the ASA program in the re-draft of the WIP.
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Ag BMP Cost-Share Funding Is Critical

We continue to support adequate and dedicated funding for cost-share assistance and technical assistance provided through the Virginia Agriculture Best Management Practices Cost-Share program and Soil and Water Conservation Districts. The draft WIP should be amended to reflect a formula utilized to determine Cost-Share and Technical Assistance funding needs, based upon state, federal, and farmer share of costs. We are gravely concerned about including unrealistic BMP implementation goals without any guarantee that government cost-share and technical assistance will be available in the future. Just as the state and farmers will be held to an expectation by the federal government to meet funding goals, so should the federal government. If TMDL goals are not met due to lack of available and adequate funding, the industry should not be left to deal with consequences.

Accounting of Voluntary Best Management Practices

We applaud the state’s inclusion of plans to address the inherent problems with the current system of tracking and verifying agricultural best management practices (Ag BMPs) within the Chesapeake Bay Model. We continue to work in earnest with state officials to implement the terms of SB 346 (Hanger) which will set the state on a course towards tracking and accounting for voluntary best management practice implementation. As envisioned in the WIP, it is critical that regulatory practices already mandated, such as those associated with the Poultry Waste Management Act, biosolids regulations, the Agricultural Stewardship Act compliance, and the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act, for example, be accounted for fully within the Bay Model. Adequate staffing will be crucial to begin implementing this critical program as a means to account for the significant conservation practices already implemented by agriculture already.

Resource Management Plan (Conservation Plan) Approach

As advocated by industry representatives during the WIP development process, utilizing Resource Management Plans (Conservation Plans) will achieve Bay improvements in an economically sensible, scientifically based manner. Specifically, a resource management plan should constitute a suite of Best Management Practices (BMPs) most appropriate for each farm. Each farming operation is unique with respect to its conservation needs. Each varies in its potential to affect water quality. A Resource Management Plan which addresses nutrient management, soil conservation, riparian management, and stream protection as needed, is the most effective means of determining the appropriate BMPs for any given farm. We will continue to work with state officials to further develop this program to ensure that it is effectively and fairly utilized by the State in meeting Bay goals.

Other Specific Questions and Concerns on Agriculture Section

Gap Analysis (page 57) - It is not clear which table is referenced in the first paragraph; this should be clarified or deleted.

Nutrient Management Plans (page 62) - There are two dates listed as goals; 2020 for 95% implementation and 2017 for increases in NMP plan writers. Shouldn’t these be consistent? There should be further discussion on phase-in plans with impacted stakeholders.

Conservation Tillage and Soil Conservation Plans (pages 62-63) - Industry representatives have raised concerns regarding the equitability of focusing conservation efforts on large farms initially (phase-in proposals), and as such, further discussions with impacted stakeholders must occur.

Livestock Stream Exclusion (page 63) - The basis for expectations for farms with a certain number of cows needs further discussion with impacted stakeholders. The section should also be amended to reflect the need for more flexible standards in fencing types, buffer restrictions, and grazing rules.

Container Nursery and Greenhouse Runoff and Leachate Collection and Reuse (page 65) – This specific practice is not currently established as a BMP by DCR, or to our knowledge, credited in the Bay model. Until discussions with impacted industries occur and such a BMP is created, it should not be included in the WIP. The specifics of this practice have not been fully vetted with the impacted industry and there remain many questions from industry, particularly land-locked, small, and retail/distribution operations as to adoption, affordability, and feasibility of this practice.

Contingencies (page 66) – Further discussion with impacted stakeholders regarding contingency plans must occur. The provisions regarding potential mandates of BMPs for land use taxation has never been vetted with agribusiness industry representatives.

F) Urban/Suburban Sector Section of the Draft WIP (Turfgrass industry specific) Urban Nutrient Management

The draft WIP envisions greater restrictions on nutrients in turf and lawn care fertilizer products. Members of the fertilizer, lawn care, golf, and green industries have identified that certain provisions of the draft WIP may be feasible to implement provided they are approached in a
cost-effective manner for impacted industries. Below, we outline amendments and additions to the draft WIP we suggest to specific sections in order to achieve this goal.

**Stormwater BMP Cost-Share Program** (page 78) – We applaud the state’s inclusion of plans to create a stormwater BMP Cost-Share Program and encourage including items such as urban nutrient management, proper fertilizer applications, and incentives for utilizing more efficient nutrient products in this program. In the current economic conditions, without adequate cost-share funding goals, such as Nutrient Management for golf courses, may be unattainable.

**Use of Voluntary Water Quality Agreements with DCR** (page 78) – The industry appreciates recognition of this important voluntary program in collecting data from willing participants within the lawn care industry. We urge the state to also expand the funding and resources provided to this program so that additional companies may participate. There is a willingness from the industry to expand the use of this program; however it is currently limited due to resources and staffing.

**Nutrient Management Plans on Golf Courses** (page 78) – Adequate time must be given to allow for plan writers to be certified in the Urban Nutrient Management program and for plans to be written. Further, cost-share assistance will be critical in helping some golf courses, both public and private, meet this goal.

**Sales Restrictions on Do-It-Yourself Non-Agricultural Lawn and Turf fertilizers**

- **Time of Year Restrictions** (page 78) – Due to climate and grass type differences across the Commonwealth, and the various nutrient needs based upon these differences, the industry urges the state to base any restrictions on no applications to frozen ground, as established in DCR’s Nutrient Management Standards & Criteria.

- **Phosphorus** (page 79) - The wording of this section should be changed to reflect that it is actually a restriction on the phosphorus content of certain fertilizer products, not a ban on all use of the products in all situations. There are circumstances, recognized by the exemptions outlined in the draft WIP, where application of phosphorus may be necessary for home lawns and turfgrass. Further,
the industry urges the state to also provide an exemption in the WIP for biosolids and products with naturally occurring phosphorus. This would parallel other states that have enacted similar restrictions on phosphorus use.

**Ban on Nitrogen Containing Deicers** (page 79) - If a ban on utilizing nitrogen containing deicers were to occur, adequate time (several years) to allow for retailers with the product to clear their inventory must be allowed.

**Proper Storage and Disposal of Non-Agricultural Fertilizers by Retailers** (page 79) – While a good housekeeping practice, it may be impractical and difficult to implement. In addition, the Bay Model does not give credit for this —practice and as such, it should be removed from the WIP.

**G) EPA’s proposed backstop measures and additional regulations**

Virginia’s WIP reflects some practices for both agriculture and turfgrass that we strongly believe, given proper implementation and funding, will result in significant water quality improvements, including: Agricultural Resource Management or Conservation Plans to meet the individual conservation needs of each farm will result in progress without mandating a one-size-fits-all approach.

Turfgrass/green industry practices through utilizing nutrient management plans, amending the content of certain fertilizer products, and educating homeowners, while carefully balancing the costs and unintended consequences of under-managed or under-fertilized turfgrass. Simply put, if the state chooses to build off of the incentive-based practices and programs that have already resulted in progress for decades, EPA does not need to substitute its version of heavy-handed, government regula-

**Conclusion**

As the number one industry in the Commonwealth, the economic survival of agriculture and forestry must be the top priority. We embrace the need for clean water as a fundamental goal of our agribusiness industry. As an integral part of this goal, we believe that policies, programs, and incentives implemented to achieve water quality benefits, in particular Chesapeake Bay restoration, must balance this need for clean water with the world’s need for food, feed, fiber, and fuel. Our industry is seriously concerned about the potential negative impacts that some proposals may have on the 500,000 direct jobs, the 1.5 jobs supported elsewhere in Virginia from each agribusiness job, and the almost $80 billion in annual economic impact that our industry contributes to the Commonwealth’s economy. Again, we appreciate the opportunity to be direct and sincere in our response to the draft Virginia Chesapeake Bay TMDL Watershed Implementation Plan and look forward to continuing to work with State officials to make progress in meeting water quality goals while maintaining the future viability of the agribusiness in the Commonwealth.

Sincerely,

Association of Virginia Potato & Vegetable Growers
Central Virginia Nursery & Landscape Association
Cooperative Milk Producers Assoc
Maryland & Virginia Milk Producers Cooperative Association
Southwest Virginia Agricultural Asoc
Virginia Agribusiness Council
Virginia Cattlemen’s Association
Virginia Christmas Tree Growers Assoc
Virginia Cotton Growers Association
Virginia Crop Production Association
Virginia Farm Bureau
Virginia Forage & Grasslands Council
Virginia Forest Products Association
Virginia Forestry Association
Virginia Golf Course Superintendents Association
Virginia Grain Producers Association
Virginia Green Industry Council
Virginia Horse Council
Virginia Nursery & Landscape Assoc
Virginia Peanut Growers Association
Virginia Pork Industry Association
Virginia Poultry Federation
Virginia Sheep Producers Association
Virginia Soybean Association
Virginia State Dairymen’s Association
Virginia State Horticultural Society
Virginia Turfgrass Council
Virginia Wineries Association

CC: The Honorable Todd Haymore, Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry
The Honorable Doug Domenech, Secretary of Natural Resources
The Honorable Matt Conrad, Assistant Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry
The Honorable Anthony Moore, Assistant Secretary for Chesapeake Bay Restoration
Virginia Bay TMDL WIP Comments via email to: VABAYTMDL@dcr.virginia.gov

Provided by Donna Pugh Johnson, Virginia Agribusiness Council

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WHAT WILL THE NEW CONGRESS MEAN FOR THE GREEN INDUSTRY?

The proverbial dust kicked up by the historic 2010 national elections is settling, and the clearing air provides an improving sense of what may happen in the remaining weeks of 2010, and in January 2011, when the new 112th Congress is sworn in. This special report considers the possible fate of some of the green industry’s most important legislative and regulatory issues in the weeks and months ahead.

Taxes, "Card Check", and Health Care

With a safe Republican majority in the House in 2011, the business community will not have to play defense full time. Initiatives such as the so-called "card-check" legislation regarding union organizing will not be considered by the House.

Taxes may be the issue that keeps the current Congress in Washington until almost Christmas! Failure to act this year would mean a pay cut for millions of Americans in January. That’s a political non-starter. There could be a deal before year’s end on extending at least some of the expiring individual tax relief provisions like the rates and marriage tax penalty relief. Some expired business tax relief provisions such as the expired Research and Development Credit may be included. Also the expired Alternative Minimum Tax income "patch" might be extended for this year.

Next year, modest positive business tax initiatives could be passed by Congress. If they are willing to take small bites, the Republican majority in the House can lead the way and the Senate could follow suit. A good example would be repealing the Form 1099 requirement ushered in by the new health care law, if the current Congress fails to get there before adjourning.

Broader health care reform repeal is unlikely. Even if Congress sent the President a repeal bill, he would veto it. More likely, House Republicans can pick their spots in the appropriations process to slow down some aspects of health care reform. They will still have to negotiate with the Senate and the President, so major changes are not likely. The courts will be the place to watch. Challenges to the health care law probably will go all the way to the Supreme Court. Meanwhile, there is much work to be done with the federal agencies writing the regulations to implement the health care law.

Unless the departing Congress gets there first, the new House majority will want to pass an estate tax repeal bill. There will be those that want repeal and those that want top rate relief. Repeal won’t cross the finish line. A good outcome would be passage of a reasonable higher exemption of $5 million per individual or at least the $3.5 million that was in place in 2010. There is a lot of sympathy for some relief in the Senate and it would be a quick negotiation with the Senate.

Finally, prepare for defense! In the 112th Congress, "tax reform" may be a popular phrase. There are just too many expired and expiring tax relief provisions and no simple ways to deal with the revenue offsets. In addition, deficit reduction will be difficult to accomplish without increasing tax revenues. No one wants to raise taxes so they are going to be talking about reducing "tax expenditures." This is just another way of saying they will try to eliminate various deductions and credits. The big ones on the individual side are the mortgage interest deduction and the charitable contribution deductions. Those may be too big to tackle but there are plenty of others. On the business side, we could see a direct assault on our longstanding tax structure that allows you to expense immediately the cost of plants under cultivation and development, and not maintain inventories for tax purposes.

Agriculture and Environment

In the 112th Congress, Rep. Frank Lucas (R-OK) will assume chairmanship of the House Agriculture Committee, while current Chair Collin Peterson (D-MN) will become the committee’s ranking member. In the Senate, Debbie Stabenow (D-MI) will ascend to Agriculture Committee chair.

The challenge for both Stabenow and Lucas will be to craft a 2012 farm bill under tight budget constraints and pressure to cut spending. We raise this issue because the 2008 Farm Bill featured a number of new programs that have benefited the nursery and landscape industry. They may face serious challenges going forward.

Expect greater USDA and EPA oversight, especially in the House. Expect legislation to clarify that Clean Water Act permits are not needed for applications of pesticides intended to be used in, over or near water.
Little Richard Abelia
Abelia x grandiflora 'Little Richard'
Compact evergreen shrub with white bell shaped flowers on arching branches in summer.
Bloom Time:  Summer to Fall
Height:  3-4'h
Zone:  6
Spread:  3-4'w

Our plants are featured based on the characteristics for which they are most appreciated. You will find the main feature of each plant listed on the top right corner of its tag.
Getting such legislation signed into law will be extremely difficult, but we can expect diligent Congressional oversight of EPA on policies regarding pesticide application, worker protection, endangered species protection, greenhouse gas regulation, nutrient use, and dust mitigation.

**Employment and Immigration**

Even with large majorities in both Houses during the current Congress, Democrats were unable to significantly move a pro-labor legislative agenda through Congress. Similarly, proponents of comprehensive immigration reform were unable to pass legislation in either House of Congress, in spite of Presidential support and majority support in Congress.

While legislative efforts failed, the Obama Administration aggressively pushed worksite enforcement through unprecedented numbers of I-9 audits by ICE of employers, including nursery and landscape employers. The Department of Labor (DOL) has also geared up for more worksite enforcement by hiring several hundred new wage and hour auditors and targeting industries such as agriculture and landscaping, and especially users of the existing H-2A and H-2B programs. Adding to the pain, those programs are being substantially re-written in a manner hostile to law-abiding employers!

With strong Republican control of the House of Representatives in the coming 112th Congress, the good news is that little employment legislation of concern to employers will be enacted.

But the bad news is that labor advocates and DOL can be expected to attempt to achieve through regulatory initiatives what they have not and will not get done legislatively.

On the immigration front, the new Chairman of the House Judiciary Committee will be Lamar Smith, a long-time foe of guest worker programs and any expansion of employment-based immigration. He will make border control and worksite enforcement of immigration law a priority. Expect his panel to pass harsh, anti-employer legislation including making E-Verify mandatory. It will be interesting to see how House leaders, and a narrowly divided Senate, respond. Meanwhile, ICE and DOL worksite audits will continue. Regardless of Republican congressional gains, employers should prepare to be on the defensive.

**Green Infrastructure**

Over the past two years, ANLA and the green industry mobilized to push for increased infrastructure spending to include plants and the managed landscape. While great progress was made on legislation such as the Small Business Environmental Stewardship Assistance Act, momentum stalled with the slide into partisan bickering and gridlock after the health care debate. Given the worsening federal budget situation and calls to cut spending, in 2011 and 2012 ANLA hopes to advance smaller, low-cost initiatives to document the monetary value of environmental and other benefits provided by plants and the managed landscape.

In summary, the 112th Congress brings the promise of a "backstop" against legislative excesses that hurt the business environment for green industry employers, yet also more gridlock due to the political stalemate. Meanwhile, the industry must unify to prepare for additional challenges in the regulatory arena. Despite the temptation to simply opt out, green industry employers would be much wiser doubling down on their efforts to get to know their elected leaders, and vigorously engage in grassroots political action in the new Congress.

*Provided by Craig Regelbrugge, ANLA Senior Director of Government Relations*

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**Legislation - Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP)**

Final Rule Provisions Appear to Address Serious Concerns of the Nursery and Landscape Industry

The 2008 Farm Bill created the Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP) as a primary component of the domestic agriculture, energy, and environmental strategy to reduce U.S. reliance on foreign oil, improve domestic energy security, reduce carbon pollution, and spur rural economic development and job creation. BCAP works by providing incentives to interested farmers, ranchers and forest landowners for the establishment and cultivation of biomass crops for heat, power, bio-based products and biofuels.

If it works as intended, BCAP will address a classic chicken-and-egg challenge: if commercial-scale biomass facilities are to have sufficient feedstocks, then an established, large-scale energy crop source must exist. Conversely, if profitable crop production is to occur, then a viable consumer base must exist to purchase the product.

With the enactment of the updated federal Renewable Fuels Standard, which requires 36 billion gallons of advanced biofuels in the national fuel supply by 2022, new crops must keep pace with these revised Federal targets. Many bioenergy crops need several years to become established. Many bioenergy facilities need several years to reach commercial scale. BCAP is intended to serve as catalyst to unite these multiple dynamics by reducing the financial risk for landowners who switch from familiar, revenue-generating crops to new, unconventional crops in preparation for these emerging markets.
BCAP Structure Built around Four Program Elements

The BCAP program has several elements that are intended to complement each other. First, the BCAP program creates a framework for crop producers and bioenergy producers to be able to team together to submit applications to USDA to be selected as a BCAP project area.

Secondly, if selected, crop producers will be eligible for reimbursements of up to 75 percent of the cost of establishing a bioenergy perennial crop. Next, producers also can receive up to five years of annual payments for grassy crops (annual or perennial), and up to 15 years of annual payments for woody crops (annual or perennial).

Finally, assistance for the collection, harvest, storage and transportation of certain eligible biomass materials to biomass conversion facilities will be available for two years, per producer, in the form of matching payments for up to $45 per ton of the delivery cost to the facility.

Of Laws and Unintended Consequences

The intent behind the BCAP – use home-grown materials and ingenuity to reduce our dependence on foreign energy – is as noncontroversial as motherhood or apple pie. So far so good, right?

Well, not exactly. The nursery and landscape industry’s blood pressure reached dangerous levels early in 2010 when it became apparent that federal matching payments might be made for biomass materials like softwood and hardwood bark that already have established uses and markets, such as for containerized nursery stock growing media, or landscape mulch. Federal matching funds could tip the economic balance, thereby depriving horticultural and other markets from access to materials for which there are not adequate substitutes.

After USDA published a proposed rule for implementation of the program, word began to trickle out from bark suppliers to their nursery customers that because of BCAP, supplies of bark would be tight at best, and certainly more expensive. Industry members and their associations reacted with alarm; how could the industry withstand several bark shortages, or at best absorb an abrupt price increase in such materials, at a time of severe economic strain? Fortunately, USDA put implementation of the program on hold as it sought further public input.

With a new opportunity for comment to USDA, the American Nursery & Landscape Association (ANLA) activated the Lighthouse green industry grassroots network. Hundreds upon hundreds of comment letters were generated from concerned growers, landscape professionals, and retailers.
By the time it was all over, USDA received over 24,000 separate comments. Many of these came from the green industry, a testament to the value of the formal ANLA/state association grassroots partnership.

In official comments filed with USDA on April 9, 2010, ANLA pointed out that over 70 percent of the nursery crop and 100 percent of the greenhouse crop production in the U.S. is now grown in containers. Bark is the major ingredient for the growing media used in most container nursery production, and is considerably important in greenhouse crop production as well. Diversion of bark supplies for other uses, or a sharp and significant change in their market price due to market-distorting subsidies, would threaten most of the domestic nursery and greenhouse crop production industry, valued at roughly $17 billion in annual farm receipts.

Apparent Victory
Means Cautious Optimism

USDA has prepared a final rule implementing the BCAP program. The rule is scheduled to be published in the Federal Register the week of October 25. Preliminary analysis of a prepublisher copy of the rule suggests that USDA heard, loudly and clearly, the grassroots concerns expressed by ANLA and the nursery and landscape industry. In the preamble to the rule, USDA emphasizes that “the purpose of this regulation is to provide incentives for the cultivation of new biomass for new markets rather than divert biomass from existing markets.” The rule goes on to define higher-value products as follows:

“Higher value products may include, but are not limited to, products such as mulch, fiberboard, nursery media, lumber, or paper…”

The rule explains that while materials such as bark and wood chips are generally defined as “eligible materials,” they will not be eligible for federal matching payments if USDA determines that, within distinct local markets, the product is being diverted from higher-value (existing) markets.

Looking to the Future

With large and complex programs like BCAP, there are always a number of implementation devils in the many details. ANLA intends to closely and carefully review the full rule and will alert the industry of any problems or concerns the review uncovers. Meanwhile, industry members who rely on bark or related products should stay in close contact with their suppliers, and notify ANLA and state associations if it appears that such materials are being or might be diverted from established value-added markets because of BCAP payments.

Looking longer term, the industry must think about efforts to reduce its vulnerability to disruption of supplies of critical inputs like bark. One strategy is to diversify the stream of inputs that may be used for plant production. To that end, the Horticultural Research Institute launched a collaborative research project involving USDA ARS, land-grant universities and industry, to look at the development of alternative, sustainable replacements for bark in container plant substrates. This project has been underway for over two years.

ANLA wishes to express its appreciation to USDA for clarifying the intended purpose of the program, and for taking steps to address serious unintended consequences that confronted various industries including the nursery and landscape industry. Watch for updates as BCAP program implementation and related green industry research and development efforts continue.

Provided by Craig Regelbrugge, ANLA Senior Director of Government Relations

Research - University Awarded $2.7 Million to Study Pathogen Management, Irrigation Water Quality For Green Industry

BLACKSBURG, Va., Nov. 11, 2010 – The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s National Institute of Food and Agriculture has awarded Virginia Tech a five-year, $2.7 million grant to study integrated management of zoosporic pathogens and irrigation water quality to create a more sustainable green industry.

Chuanxue Hong, professor of plant pathology, physiology, and weed science in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and the project’s director, explained that the study will help the nursery and floriculture industry become more sustainable, enabling it to better compete in the global market. In particular, the project will search for biologically based control methods for the Phytophthora and Pythium pathogens and develop best management practices to recycle irrigation water safely to protect water quality and improve water use efficiency.

“What we learn will have applications not only to crop health but also to much broader areas, such as water quality,” said Hong, who works at the Hampton Roads Agricultural Research and Extension Center[2] in Virginia Beach, Va.
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“This project aims to reduce the crop health risk associated with recycling water for irrigation purposes and to answer the question, ‘How can we make the production of nursery and greenhouse crops a more sustainable industry?’”

Named after the Greek for “plant destroyer,” the Phytophthora genus contains at least 120 species of pathogens harmful to a wide range of ecologically and economically important plants. In Virginia, researchers have identified 35 Phytophthora species from irrigation water. According to Hong, nursery and greenhouse owners faced with a water shortage have to recycle water to irrigate their crops, inadvertently causing these waterborne plant pathogens to affect their plants and, therefore, their bottom line.

“We want growers to recycle water, but we don’t want them to recycle pathogens,” Hong said. Hong and his colleagues are examining the path of these pathogens and developing biologically based management strategies that will prevent them from reaching the pump house. “We are also studying how we can manipulate certain aspects of the water quality, such as the pH level, to kill the pathogens, and we want to know what kind of effect these water quality changes have on crops,” Hong added.

The researchers are studying the biology of the pathogens so they can use this knowledge to develop protocols for best management practices and help growers design or modify irrigation systems that prevent pathogens from reaching horticultural crops. Although Hong and his colleagues are evaluating

Contact: Michael D Sutphin, 540) 231-6975, msutphin@vt.edu

News - American Nursery Credit Association Serves Wholesale Growers

If you are a nursery grower or wholesale supplier to the nursery industry, you should consider joining the American Nursery Credit Association (ANCA). The organization is over 100 years old and has continuously served the credit reporting needs of suppliers to the nursery industry since 1876. Members must be able to report on a minimum of 75 active accounts.

Credit information is reported by members on a website that is accessible only to members and all information is confidential. At present, 140 members report on 110,000 green industry accounts all over the United States and Canada. ANCA strengthens the professionalism in the nursery industry by facilitating commerce between established companies with proven track records.

Given the current economic environment, the Board members of ANCA decided to promote the organization to encourage more suppliers to join and we are actively recruiting more members. Dues are $335.00 annually. New members must submit an application for membership and have three recommendations from current members. All applicants are voted on by the membership.

If you would like more information on ANCA, please check out the website www.macinc.biz or contact Robin Rinaca, ANCA Board member, Eastern Shore Nursery of Virginia at 800-323-3008 or rrinaca@ewnursery.com.

News - John and Linda Stanley Have an Award Winning Year

John and Linda Stanley, the owners of John Stanley Associates are having a year of awards. Belmont Small Business awards announced last week that their company John Stanley Associates had won the Belmont Small Business Export Award.

This is the third recognition of their endeavors in the last twelve months. Twelve months ago the couples business was awarded the Small Business Champions Award for Training and Education in Western Australia and John was awarded Small Business Champion Entrepreneur of the Year for Western Australia.

In July the UK horticultural press placed John in the top 100 most influential people in the UK horticultural retail industry; this was for the second year running and he was the only non UK resident in the list.

This latest award is in recognition of the amount of work the couple do outside of Australia helping small businesses to grow and prosper. On the awards presentation night, John and Linda could not be present to accept their award as they are working with retailers in Hungary, Czech and Poland. Their Eastern European work is a combination of conference presentations, consultancy and retail workshops. The couple work in 28 countries on all continents where businesses exist, they have worked in Czech before, but this is the first time they have worked in Poland and Hungary. Their first trip to Poland has already resulted in four more trips being organized to work with the industry.

You can take a look at their calendar of work on their website www.johnstanley.com.au

Linda Stanley, Research and Marketing Director, John Stanley Associates,
Growing Your Business with Customer Focused Innovation
Tips - Are We Losing the Experience?

I was recently on a panel of garden experts at the GLEE horticultural show in the UK where one of the panelists was from the amateur garden press and he was discovering that consumers were feeling that the experience they received in garden centers were on the wane. This was hotly disputed by the garden retailers on the panel who believed the experience retailers provided the consumer was as good as it has ever been.

A week later the IPG Media Lab Report was released in Australia and this indicated that the consumer in first world lifestyle retailing was saying that in their view the shopping experience was declining by 15% a year. This supports some research my business carried out with our clients late last year.

This then challenges us to debate whether the customer experience in garden centers is on the decline.

I have been saying for a few months that the Farmers Markets have taken market share from independent horticultural retailers. In Australia the growth in farmers markets is around 18% a year and in the USA, according to the USDA, 22% a year. A farmers' market customer is also a garden centre customer. The market shoppers I talk to tell me they prefer a market because it is “Social Church”. Something that garden centers used to be proud to say they owned.

Shopping at an independent garden centre is about the experience, if it was about the product we would all be shopping at the “Box Stores.”

WE therefore have to ask ourselves have we lost the skill in providing the experience, has the customer moved to other retailers for that experience or are they demanding more from lifestyle shopping .I guess the answer is a combination of all three.

What is the Experience?

In Joseph Pine’s book on Experience Retailing he talks about the four aspects required to provide the experience. He mentions that you need the product, but you also have to reduce the stress of the consumer as well as provide education and entertainment. The challenge is for the retailer to question how they are developing these experience factors.

Education has become more important as the educational level of the consumer has declined. The consumer of today as good as it has ever been. The consumer was as good as it has ever been.

If we look at what consumers are saying perhaps it is time to relook at the experience we provide. I suspect that a consumer that is more time pressured than before is looking for ways to savor lifestyle shopping experiences and we need to relook at home we can enhance the experience we provide them if we are to remain relevant in the future marketplace.

John Stanley conducts monthly training on his Members site that helps all retailers keep up with current changes in the marketplace. He is an acclaimed conference speaker, retail consultant and author. For more information on how he can help your business grow go to www.johnstanley.com.au.
Improper pesticide tank mixing can cause problems ranging from mere nuisances to major mishaps, not to mention furthering straining growers’ budgets and labor. Applicators need to follow pesticide label directions precisely to make sure they are applying the right mix of pesticides to treat their ornamental plants. Unfortunately, that does not always happen. Human error can result in a gelatinous mess in the tank or ineffective pest control when the improper mix is applied.

Tank mixing sounds simple enough. Applicators put two or more ingredients in a tank with the aim of controlling a broader spectrum of weeds or diseases. Carefully combining different products can create synergy, meaning a tank mix can be more effective than applying both products separately. However, mixing incompatible chemicals can cause reduced effectiveness, precipitation in the tank, clogging of screens and spray nozzles, excessive residue or runoff, and plant phytotoxicity, stunting or reduced seed germination. The unique science behind each chemical formulation and activity means the mixing process must be approached with significant scientific consideration.

Manufacturers work with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to develop comprehensive product labels to help applicators understand how to handle, store, tank mix and apply a product. Because no two products are the same, every product label carries specific requirements that have passed EPA registration. Two manufacturers may have products with similar active ingredients, but each still has unique mixing directions influenced by its inert and active ingredient formulation variables.

Manufacturers have improved product formulations to make tank mixing easier, but applicators should still follow traditional standards and safeguards. This is especially true when experienced applicators delegate mixing tasks to crew members who are newer to the process.

**Tank Mixing Steps**

Read the label and follow these directions to improve the effectiveness of your tank mix:

- **Wear the proper safety protection.** Pay special attention to any warnings on the product label. For instance, many chemicals can harm a person’s skin and eyes, especially when products are undiluted during tank mixing. Always wear personal protective gear, including gloves, long sleeves and safety glasses to avoid injury.

- **Ensure proper supervision.** No matter the scale of task, tank mixing should always be completed or supervised by a licensed pesticide applicator who is trained in the correct use of the chemicals.

- **Understand water quality.** If needed, improve water quality by adding water conditioners such as pH adjusters or ammonium sulphate.

- **Make a test application before large-scale treatment.** This is especially important when tank mixing new products or new formulations for first-time application at your nursery. Wait a few days to expose any symptoms of phytotoxicity or antagonism.

- **Perform a jar test before filling the tank.** An error as simple as reversing the sequence of two products can create a consistency that clogs nozzles and filters, and requires time-consuming cleanup or the expense of buying new equipment. Conduct a jar test prior to tank mixing to verify correct mixing order. Fill an empty container with water and products in the correct ratios and mixing order listed below. Shake the jar and check to make sure the solution’s consistency can be applied.

**Know the proper addition order.**

Fill your tank at least half-full of water, then begin agitation before adding products.

Add granules and powders and mix well. Apply these additives to the top of tank so they disperse with plenty of water. Granules require time and agitation to separate; allow five to 10 minutes for them to disperse before adding other products.

Add liquid concentrates and crop oils and mix well.

Add water solubles such as glyphosate or amines. With liquid fertilizers as carriers, applicators need to make sure the water is agitated well to prevent product separation.

Add recommended adjuvants or spreaders.

Fill the tank to the desired water level and continue agitation or mix well. Make the spray application as soon as possible following mixing.

Once that tank mix has been applied, procedures must be followed to avoid contaminating the next batch. Thoroughly clean the tank when you are done to prevent residue from affecting your next mix and application. Remind your team to follow these and other proper mixing directions. Always read and follow chemical label instructions. When in doubt, contact your manufacturer or distributor.
Here is the proven sequence for correctly tank mixing chemicals.

- **QUICK TIPS**
  - Fill your tank at least half-full of water, then begin agitation before adding products.
  - Add soluble products.
  - Add product types in this order: WP, DG, LF or DF formulations.
  - S or L formulations.
  - EC formulations.
  - NIS, COC or MSO.
  - Liquid fertilizers.
  - Fill the tank full with water.

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**Tips - Putting in Your Time?**

This is one of those rough newsletters. You know, the kind of topic that comes every 12 to 18 months. They usually come after something strikes me so clearly that I just have to write about it and do so with the hopes that it helps more than it hurts and maybe the hurting will help in the process.

Here's the first impacting statement I want to challenge you with.... I venture to guess that 50% of all the people employed probably should not be employed in their present positions.

Now, if you are willing to keep reading, I'll explain why I've made such a bold statement.

This startling observation was brought to light after many trips around the tradeshow floor last week at the Green Industry Expo. There were those who obviously knew what their role was for the week and they chose to fill it in a very enthusiastic, informative, sometimes creative, but always engaging ways as they met with those individuals walking past their displays or booths.

There were many others, however, who looked like they would have rather been any place else except standing in that space. Their body language, their focus and their attention to people told the story. The chatter going back and forth between them and their fellow employees who also didn't want to be there made it clear that this was not the position they should be in. I also don't believe it is coincidence when their booths were empty without any energy or participation going on. In the terms of the old Monopoly game, this group could have been told to "go directly to jail without passing go or collecting $200.00 ... you are out of the game!"

On the other hand, I had the oppor-
tunity to spend some close time with several clients who were nearly jumping-out-of-their-shoes excited to be at the show, preparing in the morning, setting goals and focusing on how they could help their customers understand what they had to offer along with what sets them apart from their many competitors scattered around the tradeshow floor. Their success was evident in the crowds of people participating in great conversations, looking at brochures, asking questions and committing to follow up after the show was over. Now my question to you is, which person would you be at the tradeshow and, more importantly, which person are you right now in your position? Are you putting in your time or laying the foundation for future success and a rewarding career?

Where do You Practice?

Let's also talk about the danger of practicing your job only on the clock. Often real improvements in your position take an extra effort and those that set themselves apart in a company are willing to go beyond "on the job training." Whether your responsibility is making sandwiches, typing documents or leading a city government ... are you working to get better at it and better at it and better at it, or are you settling with just getting by? Which person would you be in that tradeshow booth? Are you putting in your time or laying the foundation for your future?

Somewhere along the line I heard some consultant say you should be careful not to practice on your customers. This is a tremendous statement, especially when a salesperson has not practiced a sales presentation or a customer service representative has not role played how to respond to an upset or potentially great client or the person who answers the phone has not practiced or been properly trained to do the job effectively. We are constantly practicing on our customers and it will eventually lose more business than it will gain.

The same holds true in practicing on our employers. In the case of the tradeshow, those individuals sitting nonchalantly as people walked past not caring whether they stopped or not and those who were more engaged looking at their watches and playing with their Blackberries were truly practicing on their employers. They are wasting their employers' money and their employers' time and eventually, just as practicing on customers can lose business, practicing on your employer can lose jobs ... namely your job! How about the administrative assistant who only uses word processing when asked to create a letter? A truly great office administrator would become engaged to develop into the greatest word processing expert to ever sit down at the computer. The person who is building a career would be practicing and learning, maybe even on their own time, to be constantly improving the expertise they offer to the company. Imagine an employee who cares about their contribution enough to practice in the evening once or twice a week or when there is a slow hour or two at the office to improve their skills during the day. Why not learn something in addition to what you already know?

Practice, Practice, Practice

Malcolm Gladwell shares in his book, *Outliers*, that it takes 10,000 hours to become an expert at something. A master violinist still practices many hours a day, a great artist is always sketching, a great song writer is always writing songs, a great author is always taking notes and capturing ideas, a great mechanic is always working on a vehicle. Experts become experts because they choose to put in the time practicing. Wouldn't it make sense that a great office manager is always practicing that trade, a great customer service manager is always practicing people skills, a salesperson is constantly practicing and improving skills through role playing?

So with this in mind, and knowing you want to be at your best as you perform your job, consider how many hours you have spent answering the phone or typing a letter or proofreading your work, doing a design, or creating an Excel spreadsheet, doing inventory in the warehouse or practicing your presentation that you will use in a tradeshow booth? Do the math and be sure to find time to practice.

Are you a "Keeper"?

Now that we have some things out in the open, the question I really want you to stop and take 30 seconds to think about is this ... Knowing everything you know about yourself and your approach to your job when you are around your employer, when you are by yourself, when you are in the employee lunch room or standing in the boardroom ... the question is, "Would you hire you?" Use the checklist below for a simple evaluation exercise and if you are really brave, you could have a coTips - Are You a Builder or a Destroyer?

A railroad crew was working in the hot August sun replacing railroad ties and adjusting tracks. As they labored in the blazing heat, an engine pulls up with a fancy caboose all decked out with company colors, and stops a short distance from the crew. A man in a sharp pinstripe suit steps out of the caboose and yells toward the crew, “John. John Hayes.
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Is that you?” To the laborers’ surprise, John yells back, “Yeah, Tom, it’s me. Good to see you.” “Well, come on in and visit for a while,” Tom yells back.

The labor crew stared on in amazement as John laid down his shovel, wiped the sweat from his forehead and walked toward the caboose. The man in the pinstripes gave him a big handshake and a slap on the back as they disappeared into the caboose. After a short time, John came walking back out to once again pick up his shovel and take his place on the crew. Everyone stopped working and stared up at him. “John?” someone finally spoke up. “John, wasn’t that Tom Miller, the president of the railroad?” “Yep,” came his lonesome reply “Well, John, how do you know Tom Miller?” the man continued to pry.

“We both started working for the railroad on exactly the same day over 20 years ago.” The man couldn’t help but ask the obvious question. “John, if you both started working on the same day, how come Tom Miller became president of the railroad and you’re out here in the hot sun laying ties?” To which John stopped working, leaned forward on his shovel with a look that seemed to instantaneously play back the past 20 years and said, “20 years ago Tom went to work for the railroad. I went to work for $1.20 an hour.”

THE SECRET TO CAREER SUCCESS

That’s an old story. But in it is the secret to career success. In every organization that I have been fortunate to work with over the past 15 years, I see examples of both types of individuals mentioned above. There is the individual that comes to work not only wanting the best for his family and future but also has a sincere interest in helping the company grow and succeed. I call this person a BUILDER.

On the other hand, I often come in contact with the individual who has one thing in mind: getting the most amount of money for the smallest amount of effort and doesn’t care what happens to the company. He will just find another job someplace else if this one doesn’t work. I call this person a DESTROYER.

The interesting thing about builders and destroyers is that they each have made the choice of which side of the line they will be on. This is the most important decision an individual can make because it will very likely determine the outcome of a career and future. A look at the characteristics of each will help you to understand why and may help you choose wisely.

DESTROYERS HATE

If you listen to a destroyer talk, you will hear a word or at least a form of a word that all of them seem to use. The word is “hate” and they use it in reference to many things. They hate: Management: for all the “stupid” things they do and all the money they make. Customers: for all the demands they make and complaining they do. Money: because the paycheck is so little and there is never enough to pay the bills.

Other employees: because they get all the easy jobs and “kiss up” to management. Family: because their spouse said something or their child did something. If you listen to destroyers long enough, it becomes evident whom they hate the most—THEMSELVES. But in this fact is the hope that all destroyers can change and become builders by simply changing the way they feel about themselves.

BUILDERS DO WHAT'S IMPORTANT

As I continued to be curious as to what sets builders and destroyers apart, I found the inspiration for my first book, Five Important Things. It became apparent through observation that builders generally do five things that help them on the road of success. The Five Important Things that builders do are: Continue to learn: They read, go to seminars, attend company training, think creatively and are open to the opinions of others. • Appreciate people: Realizing that every great thing that was ever accomplished or will be accomplished happens through people. They focus on learning to work with and understand people.

• Have great attitudes: It takes constant effort, but they focus on things like exercise, eliminating bad habits, getting around positive people and having fun at work or play.

• Set goals: They take the time to have clearly defined and written goals realizing they may not reach them all, but having them gives direction to their life and career.

• Don’t quit: Builders understand obstacles. In fact, they even welcome them. In overcoming obstacles they know they become stronger. Learning to persist is what takes them to higher levels and more responsibility in the organization they work for.

THE BUILDER'S FUTURE

It is not difficult to predict the future for builders and destroyers. Based on my observations, the builders have an opportunity to make an outstanding career and lifestyle for themselves and their families. There are examples all around the country of successful builders who because of their commitment to hard work and the “Five Important Things” listed above are now making outstanding salaries with tremendous opportunities for growth in the future.

THE DESTROYER'S FUTURE

On the other hand, I see many examples of the most capable individuals who, at the age of 25, 35, or 50, are old and worn out, discouraged that they ever got into their profession. It
doesn’t matter if it is a salesperson, technician or business owner; they feel the profession is a dead-end job with no hope of getting better. There is no attempt to improve themselves or their company, which results in no improvements in their careers. They are like what Benjamin Franklin said, “Most men die at age 21 and are buried at age 65.” The future is over for those who choose to be a destroyer. It is a choice going to work for the company or going to work for an hourly wage. The only thing separating the builder from the destroyer is a

A Life or a Living?

One of our favorite stories when we introduce the concept of Builders and Destroyers is the one about the two railroad workers that started working for the same company on the same day. Click here if you would like to read it again or share it with your team.

A railroad crew was working in the hot August sun replacing railroad ties and adjusting tracks. As they labored in the blazing heat, an engine pulls up with a fancy caboose all decked out with company colors, and stops a short distance from the crew. A man in a sharp pinstripe suit steps out of the caboose and yells toward the crew, "John. John Hayes. Is that you?"

Quotes

"I don't know if I practiced more than anybody, but I sure practiced enough. I still wonder if somebody -- somewhere -- was practicing more than me." - Larry Bird

"In theory there is no difference between theory and practice. In practice there is." - Yogi Berra

"Practice does not make perfect, perfect practice makes perfect." - Vince Lombardi

"The first step to getting good is admitting that you aren't (yet)." - Seth Godin

"Your game is only as good as your practice." - Ken Blanchard

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Additionally the website states, "All merchants, whether small or large, need to be PCI compliant. The payment brands have collectively adopted PCI DSS as the requirement for organizations that process, store or transmit payment cardholder data. PCI SSC is responsible for managing the security standards while each individual payment brand is responsible for managing and enforcing compliance to these standards. For questions regarding compliance validation requirements and deadlines as well as compliance reporting requirements, we recommend that you contact your acquirer. For more information regarding the PCI security standards and supporting documentation, including the "Navigating the PCI DSS" as well as targeted Self Assessment Questionnaires to assist small and medium merchants, please visit the PCI SSC website at: [www.pcisecuritystandards.org](http://www.pcisecuritystandards.org)."

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| Region         | Review or Test | Dates 2011 | Location                                      | Time     | Fees Mmbr | Fees Non Mmbr | Check Pay to | Contact Person     | Phone                  | Email                                      | Class/Test Registration Deadline |
|----------------|----------------|------------|-----------------------------------------------|----------|-----------|--------------|---------------|--------------------|------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| Hampton Roads  | Advanced Review| January 11-20 Tues/Thur | Lancaster Farms’ Conference Room, Suffolk | 6-9pm    | $ 75      | $ 100        | VNLA          | Cheryl Lajoie       | 757-484-4421          | Cheryl@lancasterfarms.com               | December 30, 2010               |
| Hampton Roads  | VCH TEST       | January 24 Monday | Mid-Atlantic Horticulture Short Course, The Founders Inn Virginia Beach | 6-9 pm  | $ 55      | $ 250        | VNLA          | Cheryl Lajoie       | 757-484-4421          | Cheryl@lancasterfarms.com               | January 10, 2011                |
| Hampton Roads  | Advanced Test  | January 24 Monday | Mid-Atlantic Horticulture Short Course, The Founders Inn Virginia Beach | 6-9 pm  | $ 75      | $ 300        | VNLA          | Cheryl Lajoie       | 757-484-4421          | Cheryl@lancasterfarms.com               | January 10, 2011                |
| Hampton Roads  | Review         | February 1 - March 10 Tuesday/Thursdays | Lancaster Farms’ Conference Room, Suffolk | 6-9 pm  | $ 125     | $ 150        | VNLA          | Cheryl Lajoie       | 757-484-4421          | Cheryl@lancasterfarms.com               | 1/21/18/2011                    |
| Hampton Roads  | VCH TEST       | March 12, 2011 | Lancaster Farms’ Conference Room, Suffolk | 8am-noon | $ 55      | $ 250        | VNLA          | Cheryl Lajoie       | 757-484-4421          | Cheryl@lancasterfarms.com               | February 25, 2011               |
| Hampton Roads  | TEST Basic & Advanced | June 15, 2011 | Lancaster Farms’ Conference Room, Suffolk | 6-9 pm  | $ 55      | $ 250        | VNLA          | Cheryl Lajoie       | 757-484-4421          | Cheryl@lancasterfarms.com               | June 1, 2011                    |
| Northern VA    | Review         | February 1 - 17 Tuesday/Thursdays | Meadows Farms Landscaping, Chantilly | 6:00-9:00 pm | $ 75      | $ 150        | **VNLA**      | Amy Ordonez         | (703) 503-4554          | ordonez94@aol.com                         | January 15, 2011               |
| Northern VA    | TEST           | March 3, 2011 | Meadows Farms Landscaping, Chantilly | 5:30 - 9:30 pm | $ 55      | $ 250        | Amy Ordonez   | (703) 503-4554       | ordonez94@aol.com                         | February 17, 2011              |
| Northern VA Leesburg | TEST       | February 16, 2011 | Monroe Technology Center | 6:00-10:00 pm | $ 55      | $ 250        | VNLA          | Deborah Chaves     | 703-771-6560           | deborah.chaves@lcps.org              | February 2, 2011               |
| Northern VA Leesburg | TEST       | May 19, 2011 | Monroe Technology Center | 10 am - 2 pm | $ 55      | $ 250        | VNLA          | Deborah Chaves     | 703-771-6560           | deborah.chaves@lcps.org              | May 5, 2011                    |
| Richmond       | Review         | Jan. 24 - March 7 2011 | Henrico County Government Complex - Board Room | 6:30-9:30 pm | $ 25      | $ 75        | VNLA          | Terry Koci         | 804-305-1259           | info@cvnla.org                        | January 10, 2011               |
| Richmond       | TEST           | March 14, 2011 | Henrico County Government Complex - Demo Kitchen | 6-10 pm  | $ 55      | $ 250        | VNLA          | Jeff Miller        | 800-476-0055           | info@vnla.org                         | February 28, 2011              |
| Central & SW VA | TEST           | TBA March 2011 | TBA Lynchburg or Charlottesville | 1-5 pm  | $ 55      | $ 250        | VNLA          | Jeff Miller        | 800-476-0055           | info@vnla.org                         |                                |
| Richmond       | Advanced Test  | TBA September 2011 | TBA Richmond | 1-5 pm  | $ 75      | $ 300        | VNLA          | Jeff Miller        | 800-476-0055           | info@vnla.org                         |                                |
| Central & SW VA | TEST           | TBA November 2011 | TBA Lynchburg or Charlottesville | 1-5 pm  | $ 55      | $ 250        | VNLA          | Jeff Miller        | 800-476-0055           | info@vnla.org                         |                                |

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Research - Invasive Plants and the Nursery Industry

The importation and use of nonnative plants has long history in the US. Thomas Jefferson (circa 1800), commenting on his services to the US noted “The greatest service which can be rendered any country is to add a useful plant to its [agri] culture.” (Thomas Jefferson Agriculture Institute). In 1827, under the Administration of President John Q. Adams, the following was put forth in a Circular to a portion of the Consuls of the United States “The President is desirous of causing to be introduced into the United States all such trees and plants from other countries not hither-to known in the United States, as may give promise, under proper cultivation, of flourishing and becoming useful.” (Hough, 1882). The US government first funded plant importation in 1839 through the Agriculture Division of the Plant Patent Office. In 1862, one of the duties of the first Commissioner of Agriculture, Isaac Newton, was “to collect, as he may be able to, new and valuable seeds and plants; to test, by cultivation, the value of such of them as may require such tests; to propagate such as may be worthy of propagation, and to distribute them among agriculturists” (Hodge and Erlanson. 1956). Thus, plant importation has been a long tradition in the US. However, the topic of nonnative plants has become a controversial and contentious subject.

There are many stakeholders in the invasive plant arena including the gardening public, the nursery and landscape industries, the forestry industry, those labeled as environmentalists, and government officials including legislators. Due to the nature of the nursery business, the nursery personnel finds themselves in the midst of the invasive plant debate. The debate involves the freedom to import and sell nonnative plants, some of which may be potentially invasive, versus the control of the sale of potentially or known invasive plants. As an example of this control, Massachusetts and New Hampshire have banned the sale of burning bush (Euonymus alatus), Norway maple (Acer platanoides), and Japanese barberry (Berberis thungbergii). At the time of this writing (July 2010), Maryland legislators have proposed House Bill 1360 entitled Department of Agriculture – Invasive Plants – Labeling and Notice (http://mlis.state.md.us/2010rs/bills/hb/hb1360f.pdf); this bill proposes to ban the sale of common nursery species such as sawtooth oak (Quercus acutissima), Japanese flowering cherries and hybrids (Prunus spp.), ornamental pears (Pyrus calleryana and cultivars), Japanese spirea (Spiraea japonica), burning bush (Euonymus alatus), Chinese and Japanese wisteria (Wisteria sinensis and W. floribunda), English ivy (Hedera helix), periwinkle (Vinca spp.), creeping bugleweed (Ajuga reptans), pampas grass (Cortaderia selloana and C. jubata), and Japanese silver grass (Miscanthus sinensis); several other species accompany this list. Thus, nursery industry personnel must be proactive in their approach to selling potentially invasive species by developing a set of best management practices or else legislators will be making the decisions on what plants to sell.

The purpose of this article is to elucidate the terminology, concepts, and issues within the invasive plant arena. Knowledge of these facets will allow stakeholders to better understand and discuss invasive plant issues. We will also discuss the role of the ornamental horticulture industry and what the industry can do to employ best management practices in dealing with nonnative species and potentially invasive plants.

What is an invasive plant?

The main focus of controversy is that some nonnative plants, also termed ‘nonindigenous’, ‘exotic’, or ‘alien’ plants, are invasive and cause ecological or economic harm. One of the main impediments to a clear understanding of the invasive plant discussion is the numerous terms that often have multiple interpretations. The interpretation of “invasive” depends on one’s point of view and several definitions exits. The definition that carries legal weight is that proposed by the US Government; an invasive species is “an alien species whose introduction does or is likely to cause economic harm or harm to human health.” (Federal Register – Presidential Documents 1999). Thus, by definition, an invasive plant species is nonnative.
Labeling a native plant growing in its native environment as “invasive” would be technically incorrect. For example, eastern redbudcedar (*Juniperus virginiana*), a conifer native to most of the eastern half US (Figure 1), has weedy tendencies (invades exposed areas and abandoned fields), however, it is not considered an invasive species when growing in its native range. Then what is an “alien” plant? The US Government’s definition of an alien species “means, with respect to a particular ecosystem, any species, including its seeds, eggs, spores, or other biological material capable of propagating that species, that is not native to that ecosystem.” (Federal Register – Presidential Documents 1999). The US Government’s definition of a native species “means, with respect to a particular ecosystem, a species that, other than as a result of an introduction, historically occurred or currently occurs in that ecosystem.” Ecosystem plays a part in the definition of alien and native species and is defined as “the complex of a community of organisms and its environment.” (Federal Register – Presidential Documents 1999). ‘Ecosystem’ is somewhat of a nebulous term relative to determining the native range of a plant species. Native range maps of plants in the US have been established by historical botanical records, and give approximate boundaries for native plant ranges. Such maps, e.g., Figure 1, are given for individual woody species in the Silvics of North America (United States Department of Agriculture – Agriculture Handbook 654 - Silvics of North America). Despite these definitions, commonplace descriptions of the terms native and nonnative often vary. “Native” is often referred to in terms of continental, country, or state borders. Black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*) is a tree species native to the central US Appalachians and the Ozark Mountains but is labeled an invasive species in New England states and California. Thus, labeling a plant as native to the US, or even region of US, has limited meaning since a plant native to one state may be invasive in another state. Southern magnolia, (*Magnolia grandiflora*) is native to the southeastern US but is widely planted throughout the mid-Atlantic and nearby states; southern magnolia is technically a nonnative species in areas outside of its natural range.

**What is plant invasion?**

Plant populations are not static; they are constantly expanding and receding. Thus, plant population expansion is a natural phenomenon. However, human activity has greatly influenced plant populations. In some cases, plant population ranges are being significantly reduced, as in the case of habitat destruction. In some cases population ranges are being significantly increased, as in the case of widespread sale and transport of species, or by animal/wind/water spread of seeds of those planted species. The typical occurrence of plant invasion occurs in three phases (Figure 2). The first phase is the lag phase that is characterized by slow population growth. The second phase is the exponential phase characterized by rapid population growth. The third phase is the naturalization phase in which the curve flattens out and the species has established a self-perpetuating population. The duration of the lag phase, the time from initial introduction to the inception of rapid population growth, depends on numerous factors including species, environment, climate, and human-mediated factors; this phase can occur in years or decades. Woody species typically have a lag period of many decades and this can exceed 100 years. In contrast, lag periods for herbaceous perennials is much shorter than for woody species.

**Invasive species vary in their aggressiveness.** Some authors, (Colautti and MacIsaac, 2004) have categorized invasive species into three stages of invasiveness: 1) widespread but rare, 2) localized but dominant, and 3) widespread and dominant. Thus, to assemble all invasives into a single group would be impractical since environmental impacts of invasive species vary from relatively innocuous to quite damaging. Remembering that the definition of an invasive species is “an alien species whose introduction does or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm …”, the harm aspect differs depending on the invader. We will now discuss how invasive plant species can impact the environment.

**How do invasive plant species harm the environment?**

Although invasive species are an environmental problem, the proportion of nonnative plant species that become invasive is quite small. The term “harm”, synonymous with impact, is open to interpretation. Some researchers characterize impact on the basis of range, abundance, and the per-capita or per-biomass effect of the invader. To fully understand the invasive plant issue, one must consider that invasive plant species have varying degrees of impact, ranging from relatively harmless to very environmentally disruptive. The ranking of impacts of invasive plant species will be discussed in a later section.

Without a doubt, invasive plants can dramatically impact the environment; they can do so at the ecosystem level and at the community and population levels. In terms of the ecosystem level (large-scale effects), invasive species can affect 1) geomorphological processes such as soil erosion and sedimentation rate, 2) hydrological channeling processes such as surface water channeling, water table depth, and soil-water holding capacity,
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3) biochemical cycling such as soil and water chemistry, and 4) disturbance (e.g., fire, weather, human-mediated impacts) regime such as the type, frequency, intensity, and duration of disturbance in the presence of invasive plants. In terms of the impacts on community and population levels, invasive species can change 1) stand structure such as occurrence of new species or placement of new species in an area, 2) recruitment of natives such as physical barriers, allelopathy (chemicals exuded by plants that inhibit/kill competing species), or changes in microclimate, and 3) resource competition such as plant species competing for light, nutrients, water, or space.

**Can invasive potential be predicted?**

Predicting which nonnative plant species will become invasive is one approach to keeping potentially invasive species out of commerce, thereby eliminating the threat to the native environments. However, predicting which species will be invasive in a particular area is a difficult task due to the complexity of nature. There has been an abundance of work to determine the plant characteristics and ecological factors that lead to plant invasion. At present, the most reliable and powerful predictor of a species’ invasiveness is its record of invasiveness in other nonnative sites. Many prediction schemes have been developed to assess the potential of plant species to be invasive. These approaches to understanding the invasive potential have significantly increased the ability to predict which species will be invasive.

**Using lists of known invasive and noninvasive plants, prediction models have correctly identified 80 to 90 percent of invasive nonnative species.** One of these models identified a single question, “Is the species a weed elsewhere?” as correctly identifying 92% (57/62) of the invasive plant species in Florida. This one simple question also correctly identified 92% of Florida noninvasive imports (Gordon et al. 2008). The methodology for the prediction of invasive plants has not been integrated into a package that is easily used by those who are not well versed in ecology. A need also exists for prediction schemes to include, among other variables, the role humans play in overcoming the effect of random natural events on immigrant plant populations.

**Prediction based on biological characteristics can reliably foretell if a plant will establish and spread.** However, prediction is less reliable in forecasting the impact a species will have on an environment. Because invasiveness and ecological impact are not necessarily linked, some scientists are in favor of categorizing those invasive plant species that have a profound effect on biodiversity, about 10 percent of invasive plants, with the term “transformer species.” The notorious saltcedar (Tamarix spp.) is an example of a species that has significantly altered many western U.S. riparian ecosystems. Transformer species, because of their impact, would receive the majority of resources for containment, eradication, and control.

**What is the role of the ornamental horticulture industry in the invasive plant subject?**

Since the 1700s, the US nursery industry has produced and sold tens of millions of landscape plants, many were nonnative species, which have graced our landscapes with inestimable environmental, aesthetic, economic, and social benefits. However, the nursery industry has also imported plant species that have been quite harmful to our environment. By 1994, 235 woody nonnative woody species had become naturalized in North America; 85% of these were introduced by the landscape trade (for aesthetic or functional purposes, i.e., erosion control) (Reichard, 1994). Of the 300 invasive plant species (all types) in the US (except for Hawaii), 50% of them were imported were imported for the horticultural purposes (Randall and Marinelli, 1996).

**The nature of the nursery industry fosters the potential for nonnative species to become invasive.** The industry mass propagates, transports, and sells plants throughout the US. The frequency of introduction of invasive species, known as invasion pressure, is one of the most important factors that contribute to the invasion of an area. One recent study (Pemberton, 2000) looked at the role of the ornamental horticulture industry in invasion pressure by relating the naturalization rate of invasive plants to the number of years an invasive species was sold in the nursery trade. Results showed that the rate of naturalization increased as the period of sale increased. For example, only 1.9 percent of plants naturalized that were sold for one year, whereas 30.9 percent of plants naturalized that had been sold for ten years or more. Once sold, garden plants are cultivated. Cultivation is an important process in overcoming the destructive forces of random natural events. Ultimately, cultivation favors the invasion process. Additionally, plant characteristics that make desirable garden plants, such as a fast growth rate, abundance of fruit, and tolerance of poor growing conditions, also favor naturalization and invasiveness. The very nature of the ornamental horticulture industry (selling, transporting, and cultivating species) has the potential to foster the invasion process. Lag time (the time from introduction to the inception of exponential population growth) is most likely shortened by the mass propagation and distribution of potentially invasive species. Another phenomenon termed “invasional meltdown” (Simberloff and Von Holle, 1999), the interactive activities of nonnative species facilitates each other’s invasive capacity, may also shorten lag time or serve to enable invasion. An example of invasional meltdown occurred in south Florida where 20 species of fig (Ficus) were commonly used as landscape species; these species did not establish...
self-sustaining populations due to the lack of a pollinating insect. Upon the introduction of an exotic wasp that served as a pollinator in the early 1970s, one of those fig species, *Ficus microcarpa*, has established self-sustaining populations (McKey and Kaufmann, 1991).

**What should the ornamental horticulture industry do?**

How does one make decisions about nonnative plants that are invasive or potentially invasive? Information on the Internet can be overwhelming, confusing, and inconsistent. Although a variety of lay sources may describe a particular species as “invasive,” what resources are available to determine if this information is science-based? Vendors and consumers of nonnative taxa (any taxonomic unit such as a genus, species, or cultivar) are generally unaware of a taxon’s invasive potential. There are a few good web sites that include ranking systems of invasive impacts based on scientific observation. NatureServe, a nonprofit conservation organization, has a current data-based assessments of nonnative plant species. On the NatureServe website (http://www.natureserve.org/), click on the butterfly icon (NatureServe Explorer tool). Then type in the name of the plant in question in the Species Quick Search box. Then click on the U.S. Invasive Species Impact Rank (IRank). NatureServe has assessed 452 plant species. Each species is given an overall invasive ranking based on ecological impact, current distribution/abundance, trend in distribution/abundance, and management difficulty. Other sources that have developed rankings relevant to Virginia residents are the Virginia Native Plant Society in conjunction with the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural_heritage/invspdflist.shtml) and the Southeast Exotic Pest Plant Council (http://www.se-eppc.org/). These groups have ranked species according to their perceived and observed threats to the environment.

The above-mentioned ranking systems assess nonnative plants that are already naturalized in the U.S. Determining the invasiveness of new introductions is more difficult. Another complication of the invasive plant problem is that a nonnative species may be regionally invasive. For example, a species that is a problem in the eastern part of Virginia may not be a problem in the western part of the state due to temperature or ecological constraints. Presently, the only good options for gardeners concerned about the invasive potential of nonnative plants is to stay aware of the invasive status of plants by accessing the aforementioned sites.

The nursery industry should develop a best management practices (BMP) approach to invasive plant species. A key component of this BMP approach would entail each nursery to determine which of the species they sell that has a NatureServe invasive rank.

If a plant is ranked, then the nursery

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should label these plants with the rank; the region of current invasion, as well as the Ecological Impact, Current Distribution/Abundance, Trend in Distribution/Abundance, and Management Difficulty subranks.

Native plants, and nonnative landscape plants that have been proven to be noninvasive, can be used in place of invasive species that negatively impact natural areas. Regional plant societies such as the Virginia Native Plant Society have developed lists of plants (http://www.dcr.state.va.us/dnh/native.htm) native to the state and physiographic provinces. Additionally, there are multiple books that provide instructions on how to propagate and grow plants native to specific regions (http://www.mdflora.org/booklist.htm#landscaping). When selecting indigenous plants, one should remember that native plants may not necessarily be better adapted to a particular region than nonnative species. Considering how dramatically we alter the ecology of our residential habitats (e.g., soil, vegetation, sun/shade, temperature, and water regimes), a native plant may not be better suited to a garden environment than a nonnative plant. However, there are many aesthetically pleasing native plants that thrive in garden settings and provide environmental benefits such as nectar and fruit for native birds and butterflies.

Finally, if a nursery operator or gardener would like to use a native plant as an alternative for a specific nonnative plant, there are books and websites that have this information (e.g., Brooklyn Botanical Garden, 2006; http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural/heritage/nativeplants.shtml [click on “Native Plant Tables”]; http://www.mdflora.org/publications/invasives.htm). Below is a list of Internet resources for native plant alternatives. In sum, a responsible nursery operator will judiciously sell plant species native to the region or nonnative species that do not invade natural areas (e.g., daffodil, etc.), rather than nonnative plants that harm the environment or have the potential to do so.

Alex X. Niemiera, Virginia Tech Department of Horticulture, Betsy Von Holle, Department of Biology, University of Central Florida

### Tips - Internet Sources for Invasive Plant Information

- **Avoiding, Removing Invasive Plants [EPA]**
  - http://www.epa.gov/reg3esd1/garden/invasives.htm
- **Invasive Alien Plant Species of Virginia**
  - http://www.epa.gov/reg3esd1/garden/invasives.htm
- **Invasive Alien Plant Species of Virginia [species list]**
- **Invasive and Exotic Species**
  - http://www.invasive.org/
- **Invasive Plants of the Eastern United States: Identification and Control**
  - http://www.invasive.org/eastern/
- **Managing Alien Invasive Plants in Natural Areas, Parks, and Small Woodlands**
- **NatureServe Explorer**
  - http://www.natureserve.org/explorer/
- **Plant Conservation Alliance Alien Plant Workshop**
  - http://www.nps.gov/plants/alien/factmain.htm
- **Plant Invades of the Mid-Atlantic Natural Areas**

**Species Factsheets [alien species in Virginia]**

**Southeast Exotic Plant Pest Council**
- http://www.se-eppc.org/

**The Nature Conservancy – Invasive Species**
- http://www.nature.org/initiatives/invasivespecies/

**USDA – State Laws and Regulations**

**Virginia Native Plant Society**
- http://www.vnps.org/invasive.html

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**Complete the Quiz on page 51 and get 1 CEU for your Virginia Certified Horticulturist re-certification!**
If you are a Virginia Certified Horticulturist, answer the following questions from the previous article, mark your answers on the card insert to the left and mail or fax back to the VNLA office towards your recertification CEU’s for your Virginia Certified Horticulturist.

Invasive Plants and the Nursery Industry
Prepared by: Nanette Rider Whitt

1. The statement: “The greatest service which can be rendered any country is to add a useful plant to its (agri) culture”, was said by which President:
   A. George Washington
   B. Thomas Jefferson
   C. John Adams

2. The topic of nonnative plants has become a controversial and contentious topic.
   A. True
   B. False

3. What can the Nursery Industry do to help with plants classified as invasive?
   A. Nothing
   B. Develop and employ BMP’s (Best Management Practices)
   C. Stop selling invasive plants.

4. Stakeholders in the invasive plant arena are:
   A. Government officials
   B. The forestry industry
   C. Environmentalists
   D. Nursery and landscape industries
   E. All of the above

5. Plant populations are static.
   A. True
   B. False

6. A native plant, growing in its native environment can be labeled as “invasive”
   A. True
   B. False

7. The occurrence of plant invasion happens in:
   A. Two stages
   B. Three stages
   C. Four stages

8. “An alien species whose introduction does or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm” is the Government’s definition of:
   A. Non indigenous plants
   B. Exotic plants
   C. Invasive plants

9. Invasive plants impact the environment at the
   A. Ecosystem level
   B. Community and population levels
   C. All of the above

10. The time from plant introduction to the inception of exponential population growth is called:
    A. Lag time
    B. Cultivation time
    C. Invasion time

11. Native plants are always better adapted to a particular region that nonnative species.
    A. True
    B. False

12. Plant cultivation does not favor the invasion process.
    A. True
    B. False

13. Plant characteristics which favor invasiveness are:
    A. Slow growth rate
    B. Tolerance of poor growing conditions
    C. Abundance of flowers
    D. All of the above

14. The percentage of invasive nonnative species that can be correctly identified by prediction models is:
    A. 25 - 50%
    B. 50 - 80%
    C. 80 - 90%

15. A plant species, that other than a result of an introduction, historically occurred or currently occurs in a particular ecosystem is known as:
    A. Invasive
    B. Native
    C. Alien
## 2010 VNLA Virginia Certified Horticulturist Review Class/Test Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Review or Test</th>
<th>Dates 2011</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Fees Mmbr</th>
<th>Fees Non Mmbr</th>
<th>Check Pay to</th>
<th>Contact Person</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Class/Test Registration Deadline</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hampton Roads</td>
<td>Advanced Review</td>
<td>January 11-20, Tues/Thur</td>
<td>Lancaster Farms’ Conference Room, Suffolk</td>
<td>6-9pm</td>
<td>$ 75</td>
<td>$ 100</td>
<td>VNLA</td>
<td>Cheryl Lajoie</td>
<td>757-484-4421</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Cheryl@lancasterfarms.com">Cheryl@lancasterfarms.com</a></td>
<td>December 30, 2010</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hampton Roads</td>
<td>VCH TEST</td>
<td>January 24, Monday</td>
<td>Mid-Atlantic Horticulture Short Course, The Founders Inn Virginia Beach</td>
<td>6-9 pm</td>
<td>$ 55</td>
<td>$ 250</td>
<td>VNLA</td>
<td>Cheryl Lajoie</td>
<td>757-484-4421</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Cheryl@lancasterfarms.com">Cheryl@lancasterfarms.com</a></td>
<td>January 10, 2011</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hampton Roads</td>
<td>Advanced Test</td>
<td>January 24, Monday</td>
<td>Mid-Atlantic Horticulture Short Course, The Founders Inn Virginia Beach</td>
<td>6-9 pm</td>
<td>$ 75</td>
<td>$ 300</td>
<td>VNLA</td>
<td>Cheryl Lajoie</td>
<td>757-484-4421</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Cheryl@lancasterfarms.com">Cheryl@lancasterfarms.com</a></td>
<td>January 10, 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hampton Roads</td>
<td>Review</td>
<td>February 1 - March 10, Tuesday/Thursdays</td>
<td>Lancaster Farms’ Conference Room, Suffolk</td>
<td>6-9 pm</td>
<td>$ 125</td>
<td>$ 150</td>
<td>VNLA</td>
<td>Cheryl Lajoie</td>
<td>757-484-4421</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Cheryl@lancasterfarms.com">Cheryl@lancasterfarms.com</a></td>
<td>1/21/18/2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hampton Roads</td>
<td>TEST Basic &amp; Advanced</td>
<td>March 12, 2011</td>
<td>Lancaster Farms’ Conference Room, Suffolk</td>
<td>8am-noon</td>
<td>$ 55</td>
<td>$ 250</td>
<td>VNLA</td>
<td>Cheryl Lajoie</td>
<td>757-484-4421</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Cheryl@lancasterfarms.com">Cheryl@lancasterfarms.com</a></td>
<td>February 25, 2011</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hampton Roads</td>
<td>TEST</td>
<td>June 15, 2011</td>
<td>Lancaster Farms’ Conference Room, Suffolk</td>
<td>6-9 pm</td>
<td>$ 55</td>
<td>$ 250</td>
<td>VNLA</td>
<td>Cheryl Lajoie</td>
<td>757-484-4421</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Cheryl@lancasterfarms.com">Cheryl@lancasterfarms.com</a></td>
<td>June 1, 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern VA</td>
<td>Review</td>
<td>February 1 - 17, Tuesday/Thursdays</td>
<td>Meadows Farms Landscaping, Chantilly</td>
<td>6:00 - 9:00 pm</td>
<td>$ 75</td>
<td>$ 150</td>
<td>NVNLA</td>
<td>Amy Ordonez</td>
<td>(703) 503-4554</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ordonez94@aol.com">ordonez94@aol.com</a></td>
<td>January 15, 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern VA</td>
<td>TEST</td>
<td>March 3, 2011</td>
<td>Meadows Farms Landscaping, Chantilly</td>
<td>5:30 - 9:30 pm</td>
<td>$ 55</td>
<td>$ 250</td>
<td>VNLA</td>
<td>Amy Ordonez</td>
<td>(703) 503-4554</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ordonez94@aol.com">ordonez94@aol.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Northern VA</td>
<td>TEST</td>
<td>February 16, 2011</td>
<td>Monroe Technology Center</td>
<td>6:00-10:00 pm</td>
<td>$ 55</td>
<td>$ 250</td>
<td>VNLA</td>
<td>Deborah Chaves</td>
<td>703-771-6560</td>
<td><a href="mailto:deborah.chaves@lcps.org">deborah.chaves@lcps.org</a></td>
<td>February 2, 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern VA</td>
<td>TEST</td>
<td>May 19, 2011</td>
<td>Monroe Technology Center</td>
<td>10 am - 2 pm</td>
<td>$ 55</td>
<td>$ 250</td>
<td>VNLA</td>
<td>Deborah Chaves</td>
<td>703-771-6560</td>
<td><a href="mailto:deborah.chaves@lcps.org">deborah.chaves@lcps.org</a></td>
<td>May 5, 2011</td>
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<tr>
<td>Richmond</td>
<td>Review</td>
<td>Jan. 24 - March 7, 2011</td>
<td>Henrico County Government Complex - Board Room</td>
<td>6:30-9:30 pm</td>
<td>$ 25</td>
<td>$ 75</td>
<td>VNLA</td>
<td>Terry Koci</td>
<td>804-305-1259</td>
<td><a href="mailto:info@cvnla.org">info@cvnla.org</a></td>
<td>January 10, 2011</td>
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<tr>
<td>Richmond</td>
<td>TEST</td>
<td>March 14, 2011</td>
<td>Henrico County Government Complex - Demo Kitchen</td>
<td>6-10 pm</td>
<td>$ 55</td>
<td>$ 250</td>
<td>VNLA</td>
<td>Jeff Miller</td>
<td>800-476-0055</td>
<td><a href="mailto:info@vnla.org">info@vnla.org</a></td>
<td>February 28, 2011</td>
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<tr>
<td>Central &amp; SW VA</td>
<td>TEST</td>
<td>TBA, March 2011</td>
<td>TBA Lynchburg or Charlottesville</td>
<td>1-5 pm</td>
<td>$ 55</td>
<td>$ 250</td>
<td>VNLA</td>
<td>Jeff Miller</td>
<td>800-476-0055</td>
<td><a href="mailto:info@vnla.org">info@vnla.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Richmond</td>
<td>Advanced Test</td>
<td>TBA, September 2011</td>
<td>TBA Richmond</td>
<td>1-5 pm</td>
<td>$ 75</td>
<td>$ 300</td>
<td>VNLA</td>
<td>Jeff Miller</td>
<td>800-476-0055</td>
<td><a href="mailto:info@vnla.org">info@vnla.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Central &amp; SW VA</td>
<td>TEST</td>
<td>TBA, November 2011</td>
<td>TBA Lynchburg or Charlottesville</td>
<td>1-5 pm</td>
<td>$ 55</td>
<td>$ 250</td>
<td>VNLA</td>
<td>Jeff Miller</td>
<td>800-476-0055</td>
<td><a href="mailto:info@vnla.org">info@vnla.org</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

You MUST pre-register with the VNLA Office, 2 weeks prior to the test/review class.

VNLA Register for Review Classes with the NVNLA.

For updated information, go to the VNLA website Certification page at [www.vnla.org/certification.htm](http://www.vnla.org/certification.htm)

VCH Certification Study Manuals are available from the VNLA Office for $135.00 including tax and shipping; Horticopia A-Z CD’s are available for Plant Identification review for $97.00 including tax and shipping. Check or credit card

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**Tips – Telephone Doctor: Tone of Voice**

*It's All About Tone of Voice and the Words We Use*

Your Mom was right. It's not always what you say, but how you say it.

Next to "Nancy, what's the best way to answer a phone?" the second most often asked question is "Nancy, how important is the tone of voice?"

Answer: VERY.

Several times I've been told things that weren't that bad; however, the tone of voice and the words were so wrong. I walked away not wanting to do business with that company anymore.

True Story: After purchasing an item in a store recently, at the check out counter the clerk told me the amount and I wrote the check. He took it and looked up my account on his database. Without looking up at me he said, "If you're gonna write a check, I have to see a picture ID."

The "TONE" he used was very threatening in my perception. (And perception is reality.) I'd been a customer with them a long time and this was the first time I'd been asked for ID. I immediately made a decision not to return there any more. Why? Because of his tone of voice and the words he used.

There were several ways he could have told me he needed an ID. Especially since he saw from the database (which he found prior to my handing him the check) I had been at that store many times before.

He could/should have said, (with a SMILE, which changes the TONE) "Mrs. Friedman, I see you're on the database and shop here often. Most folks know you on sight. I've only been here 3 days and haven't met everyone yet. If I can get your driv-

er's license this time, next time I'll recognize you."

Gosh, you can feel the difference just by reading the words. More importantly, you could HEAR the difference in his TONE.

On the other hand, I went into the jewelry store the other day to pick up an item. When I said to the owner, who does know me, that I was here to pick up my watch, I could sense he seemed to blank out on my name. With a big smile he said, "Good, glad to get it. By the way, which name will that be under?" Great save and a class act.

Practice on finding the most positive tone and words when you talk with customers. And yes, smiling will help you with the tone!

*Nancy Friedman, The Telephone Doctor, named one of meeting planners favorite speakers! Meetings & Convention magazine*

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**Tips – What's in Your Pesticide Shed?**

Every year, the Office of Pesticide Services puts together a list of “Most Common Violations” which we share during recertification meetings. For a couple of years, the top three violations stayed fairly constant although their order shifted some. This year the list has changed. Before we share how, can you list the top three violations from last year’s list? If you answered “Certification and Licensing”, “Misuse” or “Recordkeeping” you would be correct. These have appeared in the top three for the past two years. This year “Recordkeep-

ing” and “Certification & Licensing” remain the top two, but “Misuse” has been knocked down to the number four spot. What knocked out misuse?

Before we answer that question, let’s discuss misuse. During trainings, staff members remind applicators to follow the label because “The Label is the Law!” That’s a slogan you may get tired of hearing, but if you heed the advice, you will protect human health, including your own, the environment and avoid potential fines. With the emergence of new pests, some companies have begun to try different products to achieve control. Some have even begun to search through their secret “stash” of older products to find the “silver bullet”. They reason that if it worked in the past it will work today. They may further think that since a pesticide has been highly effective against other similar pests it will be effective against an emerging pest.

The problems with this logic are that 1) it’s not always true; 2) the pests may be resistant to older chemistries; 3) the product may not be registered for use on the sites where the pests are found; and 4) the product may no longer be registered for use in Virginia.

Be sure that the products you’re using are currently registered in Virginia. If you have cancelled pesticides, take advantage of the disposal program offered by the Office of Pesticide Services. Information about the pesticide disposal program can be found on our website.

Applicators should be aware that if a site isn’t listed on the pesticide label then they cannot make an application to that site. Hopefully, that is one of the first things they learn as an applicator. It would be a violation of the law. Applicators are also aware they can no longer use certain products such as those containing DDT or chlordane. They may not realize, however, that some of the other products they have in storage are also no longer legal to use. At this point, you might be asking, “If the EPA hasn’t banned the product, can’t I still use it?” Not necessarily.
Central North Carolina Nursery Association

Plantsource N.C. is a plant locator service provided by The Central North Carolina Nursery Association Marketing Group. Fax your plant list to Plantsource N.C. Toll Free Fax 1-866-268-3509. Your list will then go out to all CNCNA Marketing Group Members for quotations. Each member that can supply items will reply by fax directly back to you.

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336-643-3727, fx 336-643-0840, 1-800-758-8121

Cedarview Farm Nursery
4082 Range Road, Stem, NC 27381
919-528-4147, fx 919-528-4147
contact@cedarviewfarmnursery.com

Clark’s Liner Farm
4156 Blue Creek Lane
Oxford, NC 27565
919-962-1020, fx 919-693-9554

Foxwood Farms Camellia Nursery
480 Foxwood Road, Madison, NC 27025
336-339-6835, fx 336-427-5817
Foxwoodcamellias@gmail.com
www.foxwoodfarmsnursery.com

Greensboro Mulch Supply
4832 Hwy.150 E., Browns Summit, NC 27214
336-656-7067, fx 336-656-7977

Greensboro Shrub Nursery
4514 Old Burlington Rd., Greensboro, NC 27405
336-621-6579, fx 336-621-8867, 1-800-849-4514 email: sales@gosnursery.com
www.gosnursery.com

Greenthumb Nursery, LLC
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Hickory Hill Nursery
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Irving Farms
190 Carter Dairy Road, Stoneville, NC 27048
336-932-0256, fx 336-623-2636
irvingfarms@yahoo.com

JBL Nursery
2903 Oak Ridge Rd., Oak Ridge, NC 27310
336-215-8740, fx 336-643-5534

Kenneth E. Bell
5143 N. Church St., Greensboro, NC 27455
336-337-2322, fx 336-288-8811
bell3955@bellsouth.net

Lewis Nursery
P.O. Box 90, Cascade, VA 24069
434-685-7383, fx 434-685-1302
lewissnursery@chatmossable.com

Montgomery Nursery
1985 Mt. Hope Church Rd., Mcleansville, NC 27301
336-697-9042, fx 336-697-9966, 1-800-444-1116

O’ Southern Blooms
4022 River Ridge Road
Browns Summit, NC 27214
336-656-4666, fx 336-656-4771
Elisa.Thames@yahoo.com

Oregon Hill Shrubs
990 Oregon Hill Road., Reidsville, NC 27320
336-348-3380, fx 336-939-3348

Piedmont Carolina Nursery
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www.piedmontcarolina.com

Plantworks Nursery, Inc
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919-732-6594, fx 919-732-1634
email: doug@plantworksnursery.com

Pritchett Farm Nurseries
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Ralph Modlin Farms
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336-880-0317, fx 336-431-6350

Ray’s Creative Landscaping & Tree Farm
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336-399-7876, fx 336-776-9474
raysland@bellsouth.net

Shiloh Nursery
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www.triadlandscapesupply.com
triaflandscapesupply@bellsouth.net

Wagoner’s Nursery, LLC
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336-449-5532, fx 336-449-0134
www.wagonernursery.com, wagonernursery@gmail.com

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When a pesticide’s federal registration is cancelled either by the registrant or the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), a notification will be released which gives guidance on when manufacturing and distribution will have to cease. The notification will also include information related to the continued sale and use of existing stocks of the product. In some cases, no stop use date is ever given which means the end user can continue to use the pesticide according to the label. In other cases, the EPA will set a stop use date.

Like the federal government, Virginia has requirements for the registration of pesticides in the state. According to the Virginia Pesticide Control Act, “Every pesticide manufactured, distributed, sold, offered for sale, used or offered for use shall be registered…” This means that a manufacturer, retailer or distributor cannot sell products which have not been registered in the state. It also means that an applicator cannot use a product which is not currently registered in the state, regardless of the federal status of its registration.

All product registrations expire on December 31 unless renewed by the registrant. During the 2010 year, over 14,000 pesticides were registered in the state. This may seem like a high number, but it encompasses a broad group of chemicals from insecticides and herbicides to disinfectants and similar biocides. Since product registrations expire annually, it is important for businesses to check their inventories to make sure they are only using currently registered pesticides. They also need to use caution when purchasing pesticides, especially from online vendors or other out of state sources. These vendors may not be aware of state specific registration requirements. They may inadvertently sell pesticides that are not registered in Virginia. Most professionals purchase pesticides from licensed distributors who are aware of the state laws but they do need to be aware that it is illegal to use unregistered pesticides in the state.

Are you still wondering which violation pushed “Misuse” to number 4? It was the sale of unregistered pesticides by retailers. Throughout the year OPS Investigators conduct routine marketplace inspections at retailers and distributors across the state. During these inspections a number of cancelled and never registered pesticides have been found. Some of the cancelled products haven’t been registered in 15 to 20 years. The Virginia Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services (VDACS) has two resources that pesticide applicators can use to check the registration status of pesticides: Kelly Solutions and the National Pesticide Information Retrieval System (NPIRS) Public websites. Both websites contain up to date registration data for pesticides registered in Virginia. These websites can also be used to search for potential alternative pesticides for various sites and pests. To learn more visit our website at: www.vdacs.virginia.gov/pesticides and select the link for “Product Registration”.

**Remember the “Label is the Law”.**

Don’t use pesticides on sites which do not appear on the label. Take time to check your inventory and make sure that the products you’re using are currently registered in Virginia. If you have cancelled pesticides, take advantage of the disposal program offered by the Office of Pesticide Services. Information about the pesticide disposal program can be found on our website.

For more information, contact: Mr. Micah Raub, Program Coordinator, VDACS, Office of Pesticide Services, P.O. Box 1163, Richmond, VA 23218. You can also reach Mr. Raub by phone at (804) 786-4845 or by email at micah.raub@vdacs.virginia.gov.

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**Research - Weed Management**

**Suggestions for Container Nursery Production**

Weed management is a year-round concern for nursery producers. For weed control in container production, the two primary ways weeds are controlled is through hand weeding and pre-emergence herbicide application. Scheduling these activities is important to minimize the expenditures on weed control.

I have put together a table of a possible schedule. For simplicity, I only picked one herbicide for each timing, although there often are multiple choices. So one could use BroadStar, OH2, Jewel, or Regal O-O, for example, instead of Rout. So do not feel locked into my choices. I picked Rout for the conifers and woody plants in spring because of its effectiveness on common groundsel. I picked Free-Hand for the May treatments based on its effectiveness on spotted (prostrate) spurge. I picked Snapshot for the November treatment since it is effective on a wide range of winter annual weeds, including annual bluegrass and common chickweed. Growers will need to determine which herbicide best fits each application for their nursery.

The treatment prior to covering houses in fall is important to reduce the number of weeds that germinate in overwintering structures during the winter and early spring. There are no preemergence herbicides registered...
for use in covered houses due to the potential for trapping of herbicide vapors around nursery foliage. These vapors can injure nursery crops, especially those that have broken bud in the overwintering house. So we must wait until houses are completely uncovered in spring before resuming preemergence herbicide applications. That is why it is important to have a preemergence application in fall.

Determine which product fits your nursery best based on cost, effectiveness, and tolerance in the nursery species to be treated. One could make fewer than 5 applications per growing season - each grower will need to determine the best program for their nursery.

For those producing conifers, the sprayable products SureGuard or Goal could be used instead of a granular herbicide. Both SureGuard and Goal control small emerged weeds as well as provide residual control. Conifers have to be dormant or the new growth hardened off when overtop applications are made.

If one desired a sprayable herbicide for woody plants and certain perennials, Gallery plus an annual grass herbicide such as Barricade would be an option. Especially check the Gallery label for a list of those species that can be treated.

Certain species, such as dwarf burning bush, ajuga, and oxeye daisy, can be injured by Gallery. When treating perennials, check to see if the species you are growing can be treated with Snapshot. For those intolerant of Snapshot, consider FreeHand or pendimethalin (Corral, Pendulum 2G).

We do have selective options, including Envoy, Fusilade/Ornamec, and Segment for postemergence grass control in most non-grass monocots. We do not have selective options for postemergence control of broadleaf and sedge weeds in most nursery crops. That is why we must rely on hand weeding and preemergence herbicide application for weed management in container production.

Jeffrey Derr is a Professor of Weed Science at Virginia Tech’s Hampton Roads Ag. Res. & Ext. Center (HRAREC) in Virginia Beach.
forests and backyards in 17 eastern states, killing hemlock trees and devastating natural ecosystems.

Under the direction of ARS geneticist Denny Townsend (now retired), the arboretum began a breeding program in the 1990s to develop hemlock hybrids tolerant to HWA. The scientists crossed hemlock species native to the United States with germplasm—collected in Asia—of hemlocks that have shown tolerance to the insect. Now, 10 years later, Olsen and Bentz have developed 140 hemlock hybrids, 108 of which are suitable for testing.

In 2006, Olsen and his colleagues began a multi-year field trial to test each hybrid’s degree of tolerance to HWA. Testing more than 170 trees, the researchers artificially infested the hybrids by attaching HWA-infested branches to the hybrids’ lower branches and securing them with mesh bags to prevent the insects from escaping. They found the species *T. chinensis* and its hybrids to be most tolerant to HWA.

Details of the scientists’ studies have been published in the Journal of Economic Entomology, the Journal of Arboriculture and the Journal of the American Society for Horticultural Science.

The hybrids are appealing not only due to their tolerance, but because they have good vigor and shape. Still, the researchers have several years of testing to complete before they can release these hybrids.

*By Stephanie Yao*
and they are working with VDACS on establishing fertilizer application regulations as well as working with General Assembly on ag and general issues throughout the year. She stressed the need for feedback to the VAC whenever they send out requests for info or positions on current issues.

- Danny Shreckhise, VAC board member, and VNLA past president, gave a report on how he sees the VAC helping agriculture and the green industry. Jim Saunders, past chairman of VAC and VNLA member, etc. He reviewed how the VAC had worked with the VLNA and the Virginia Farm Bureau to resolve an issue on plant labeling last year and other work the VAC has done, and also stressed the need to follow up with responses.

- On the VNLA’s violet basket delivery to the General Assembly, Donna suggested that the VNLA have extra people help, have a “leave behind” info piece about the VNLA and current issue concerns as well as spending a few minutes in each office expressing the VNLA’s legislative concerns. She also suggested that the VNLA provide brochures at the VAC Appreciation Banquet.

**VGIC Update** – Lorene Blackwood, VGIC President, gave an update on the Virginia Green Industry Council’s activities which include:

- Horticulture Student Gardens Contest at the State Fair
- Coordinating plant donations from the Green industry for State Fair Horticulture Garden as well as landscaping around the grounds.
- Coordinates the donations and setup of all the hall and table decorations of plants and arrangements at the VAC Appreciation Banquet in January, valued at over $3,500.
- Sponsors the consumer educational GoGreen Garden Festival for the last five years at the Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden and at the Science Museum of Virginia.
- Helped sponsor a pilot plastic pot recycling project at Stranges’ Garden Center and Boulevard Flower Garden this year which was coordinated by Joyce Lati-mer.
- The VGIC was the only green group to provide input at the recent DEQ comment session in Richmond.
- Coordination of a survey on “How Green We Are” as an industry to use this information to promote the fact that the green industry has “green solutions” to environmental issues, but the industry is not promoting this fact.
- A meeting is scheduled with Dean Alan Grant on January 12 in Richmond to discuss the extension restructuring and other issues and partnerships between the Virginia Tech College of Agriculture and the green industry.

**Secretary’s Report** – the minutes of the previous board meeting on June 12 had been emailed out and Steve Grigg moved that they be approved as emailed, seconded and passed.

**Treasurer’s Report** – Steve Grigg reviewed the Year-to-Date Financial Reports which had been emailed prior to the meeting and reviewed the proposed 2011 VNLA Budget. Additional footnotes will be added to the budget and it will be posted on the VNLA website in December for members to review and provide input prior to the Annual Membership Breakfast Meeting at MANTS.

It was moved that the Beautiful Gardens Plant Introduction Program be zero funded for 2011, seconded, passed by 11 votes and 1 abstention.

**VDACS** – Larry Nichols, gave an update on current issues and projects with their staff of 18 inspectors:

- Nursery Inspection is their main responsibility, inspecting 316 nurseries (9,648 acres)1833 retail nurseries, which includes the box stores.
- They also handle CAPS/Invasive Species Surveys, set and monitor regulatory regulations and quar-antines.
- Norm Dart, Plant Pathologist, works in regulatory/nursery industry only. Over the last year, he diagnosed 300 nursery related samples, 1,800 samples for PPV (plum pox) and SOD, 85 samples for CWR. VDACS gets some federal funding for the disease surveys.
- Invasive Species issues are handled by Debbie Martin through the CAPS program.
- Compliance agreements are issued to nurseries to ensure nursery stock that is to be shipped out of Virginia is compliant. California has strictest requirements.
- Montana Reciprocity Decision – for the last year or more, a Virginia nursery had to buy a Montana nursery license to ship into Montana. This will probably be reversed when their bi-annual state legislator meets in 2011.
- VDACS is a regulatory agency, but want to work with the industry wherever needed.

**Action Items**

**MANTS Directors** – a draft policy and future directors terms (copy attached) was reviewed that was proposed by the current MANTS directors which included a 6 year term, to work to have landscape, grower, and retail represented, if possible, and these representatives should preferably be a past president of VNLA.
It was the consensus of the board to ask for MANTS financial reports for last three years. A new representative would take Doug Hensel’s place in 2012. The VNLA board would vote on the directors annually, and requested that one of the three MANTS representatives be at VNLA board meetings for MANTS reports. Duane will draft a letter and send to Ed and Jeff to review.

Chesapeake Bay - legislation and our response and position – no additional action

VA Tech positions we have asked for and where we stand with them now? Extension restructuring will reallocate current positions.

Mission H2O – the State Water Supply Meeting was discussed at last meeting, developing a state wide plan and Steve recommends that we continue representation. Ed is representative on committee.

VNLA Benefits for landscape members – Sonya looking at design competition and has been looking at how 6 -7 other groups are handling their programs.

What are members’ problems? How are we going to help them become more successful? John is still getting information from Jim Harrell on health insurance. John will make a presentation at the MANTS meeting.

What can the VNLA do to work more closely with the regional groups?

• HRNLA and CVNLA dues payment options will be added to the VNLA invoices if the regional groups want to try this.
• VNLA Directors need to go to their regional associations with updates about the VNLA. Bullet points will be developed for the directors to use.

Regional Association Reports

HRNLA – Cheryl Lajoie noted that they are having educational programs on Bay issues at their winter meetings. Ed will attend their fall meeting. 21 people have already signed up for their winter Virginia Certified Horticulturist Exam review class.

SVNGA – Matt Shreckhise
CVNLA – Tom Thompson
VSLD – Diane Roselius

Executive Director Report - Jeff (written report emailed prior to the meeting and attached.)

Economic Impact Survey – somewhat still up in the air at Virginia Tech.

12-12:30 Lunch

Committee Reports:

Executive Committee – Ed Tankard
Strategic Plan Review – Ed Tankard discussed the need to update the VNLA Strategic Plan and the consensus was to schedule a planning meeting in February or early March and...
use the facilitator from the previous planning meeting. Duane Shumaker suggested that the Resource Development Committee and the Governance Committee be combined into one committee, the Resource Development and Governance Committee. It was the consensus of the board to accept this recommendation.

Certification – Cheryl Lajoie – reported that the Landscape Chapter 15 for the Virginia Certified Horticulturist Manual was almost finalized and she would send the final version to Jeff to email to VNLA Board for final review.

Membership – John Barbieri reported that he was still working with Jim Harrell on details of some of the membership benefits.

Public Relations – Mark Maslow reported on the VNLA Field Day 2010 and noted that the 2011 Field Day would be at Ingleside Plantation Nurseries & Winery in Oak Grove.

- Sonya Westervelt will be taking over as chair of Public Relations for next year.

Legislation – Steven Moore
- Mission H2O – most recent meeting was 10/28. Was anyone able to attend? What is the VNLA’s stance on this agenda? I will bring the “Proposal for Content of State Water Supply Plan” with me to the meeting so that we can discuss.
- EPA calls Virginia’s WIP as having “Serious Deficiencies”. How does the VNLA stand in position of the Virginia Agribusiness Council’s response?
- Proposed H2-B Regulation Increase on Worker Wages. The Department of Labor (DOL) is considering changing the way it uses to calculate prevailing wages for H2-B workers from a four tiered system to an arithmetic mean of the Occupational Employment Statistic (OES). The DOL estimates that this change in methodology will increase hourly wages for landscaping services by $3.60.
- Partnership with the Virginia Horse Council. Does the board want to continue to use the violets or go to the Pony Tail Palms as legislative gifts? Also, should we partner with the Virginia Horse Council in this effort? It was the consensus of the board to not partner with the Horse Council this year.

Environmental Affairs – Tom Thompson (see attached report on plastic recycling)

Education – Steve Grigg reported that the Summer Tour and Education Program 2010 had a positive income. The committee is looking at possibly not having a Summer Tour in 2011.

Communications – Matt Shreckhise reported that Windridge Landscaping

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would be the next profile in the Newsletter. There was some discussion on making an option to members on whether they would like to get the Newsletter in print format or just an electronic version to help the VNLA go green.

Research – Matt Sawyer noted that the 2011 Research Reception/Auction would be held at the National Aquarium in Baltimore, on Thursday, January 6, from 6-8 p.m. with drinks, light snacks and access to the Aquarium exhibits.

Beautiful Gardens – written report (emailed and attached.)

Technology – Sonya Westervelt – it was the consensus that there wasn’t any overwhelming need to continue this committee and Sonya would move to chair the Public Relations Committee and Mark moves up to President next year.

Old Business:
VNLA Positions Statements – Duane Shumaker – no changes.

New Business:
2011 slate of officers and directors for annual meeting
Officers
- President – Mark Maslow
- Vice President – Steve Grigg
- Secretary/Treas – Matt Sawyer
- Past President – Ed Tankard

1-year Directors
- Sonya Lepper Westervelt
- Steven Moore
- Tom Thompson
- Doug Hensel

2-year Directors
- Cheryl Lajoie
- Matt Shreckhise
- John Barbieri

A motion was made to ask Laurie Fox to replace Bonnie Appleton as the HRAREC Educational Advisor, seconded passed.

Strategic Plan Updates – It was the consensus that the Board should have a strategic planning meeting this winter to update the 2006 plan. Jeff will send the contact info to Mark Maslow of the previous facilitator, Kathy Stockburger.

4:15 p.m. Adjourn

Respectively submitted,
Jeff Miller, Exec. Dir.

Mission Statement: To Enhance and promote Virginia’s nursery and landscape industry.

VISION to become the leader and resource for the Virginia nursery and landscape industry.

What are members problems? How are we going to help them become more successful?

Upcoming Events

Winter Board Meeting, Tuesday, January 4, 2011, 1-5 p.m. Baltimore Convention Center

Annual Membership Breakfast Meeting, Thursday, January 6, 2011, 7-9 a.m.

Research Reception/Auction at the National Aquarium in Baltimore, 6-8 a.m.

Committee Reports

Environmental Affairs Committee Report

On Wednesday, October 6th, I attended a public comment session about the Chesapeake Bay TMDL’s. It was hosted by the University of Richmond and sponsored by the EPA and the Virginia DEQ. Agriculture and horticulture were well represented by several farmers, some nurserymen, a few landscapers, golf course superintendents and some representatives of some of our professional organizations. There were also some concerned citizens and students in attendance. In total about 250 people were there. The meeting was a combination of a question and answer and public comment session. Most of the questions as well as the comments came from people in the green industries and covered topics ranging from the science behind the TMDL’s to timeframes for implementing the program to financing the changes necessary to meet the EPA’s goal for Virginia.

The comments from people not in the green industries were focused on farm operations and golf course operations – nursery and landscape businesses were generally left alone – and the comments were less than positive. EPA’s response to most of the questions was pretty vague; DEQ’s responses were confusing. I got the impression that EPA doesn’t care what we have to say and that DEQ doesn’t know what to do. Public comment will be open on line - http://www.epa.gov/chesapeakebaytmdl/ - or by mail until November 8th, 2010.

There is still no news about the Invasive Species Working Group meetings. There have been no meetings of any committee since last December.

The plastic recycling program is still open. At Field Day I talked with a representative from Griffin Greenhouse and Nursery Supply about a plastic recycling program that they have started in Pennsylvania, and how they were thinking about expanding it to other states. Less than a week later Dr Joyce Latimer sent out an email notifying me that Griffin’s office in Richmond was going to be accepting plastic pots from nurseries and landscapers. Up until then the plastic recycling program had been open to homeowners and plastic was being accepted at Strange’s and Boulevard Flower Gardens. It seems like her plastic recycling pilot program is off to a good start.

Provided by Tom Thompson, VNLA Environmental Affairs Committee
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CVNLA

The CVNLA will be partnering with Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden again this year to put on our Short Course. The Short Course will be held on February 2nd and 3rd, with the pesticide recertification course on Friday, February 4th. The title of this year’s program is “Shades of Green: The Vital Roles of Gardening”. The speakers will include Katy Frazier from the Virginia Agribusiness Council, who is going to be giving the latest update on the Chesapeake Bay cleanup, and Kevin Heffernan, a Stewardship Biologist with the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, who will be speaking about invasive species in Virginia.

For more details or to register for the symposium go to www.lewisginter.org.

The CVNLA will be building a display garden for the Maymont Flower and Home Show again this year. The Show runs from February 10th through February 13th and is held at the Richmond Convention Center. The theme for this year’s show is ‘Garden’s on Broadway’. The CVNLA will be building a garden based on Shakespeare’s ‘A Midsummer Night’s Dream’.

The Christmas party is on Tuesday, December 14th and will be held at Maymont in Richmond.

Provided by Tom Thompson

Suggested Protocol for VNLA Appointing MANTS Directors

The appointment of Virginia’s representatives to the MANTS board should be for a 6 year time period. With 3 representatives serving Virginia, there should be an appointment or a reappointment every 2 years. It is suggested new board members begin serving at the February board meeting in even calendar years. Because of West Virginia’s board members starting in odd years, this will prevent two new board members from beginning their service at the same time. Based on turnover in other states, sometimes a reappointment may be best to maintain some continuity of board members. Too much change in board makeup over a short period of time could be detrimental to MANTS. For the record, the VNLA Board is reminded that there are no board term limits for the Maryland Board members.

In regards to appointments, a new representative should be recommended by the outgoing board member to the state President with input from the other 2 board members. Additional input could also be sought from previous MANTS board members from the state. It is suggested that the appointment be by vote of the two remaining directors and the state President. New appointees should be
consulted first and then be required to attend a minimum of 2 board meetings before being appointed. Reappointing a standing director may be in the best interest of the board from time to time.

Makeup of the full board should be considered when determining a board replacement. Currently, Virginia has 2 growers on the board and 1 retailer. Both growers are also exhibitors. It is good to have grower/exhibitor representatives on the board who feel firsthand the impact of MANTS policy. Retailers can use the show as a buying venue. With possible retailer representatives from the other member states, a landscape contractor could be an alternative possibility. Keeping a retailer or landscape contractor on the board also is imperative to get an insight from the buyer’s perspective. “Out of the gate” the suggested individual should have some understanding of MANTS to be considered as a board member.

The time line for electing the new board member would be so that they could attend the October (odd year) and January (even year) board meetings prior to their beginning service in February (even year). This would mean appointments taking place in the summer of odd years.

For the record, 1/3 of the MANTS attendees are landscape contractors, 1/3 garden center affiliates, and 1/3 are everyone else combined.

John Lancaster would be the 1st to be replaced or reappointed in 2012.

Tom Saunders cycles out in 2014
Doug Hensel cycles out in 2016

Provided by Tom Saunders
Executive Committee meets by conference call on a monthly basis to review current issues and manage activities. The full Beautiful Gardens committee meets at least twice a year for expanded input and professional guidance.

Growers – there are currently 16 Virginia growers supplying plants to the Beautiful Gardens program. They must each be a member of VNLA. Some of these growers provide only one or two plants while others carry almost our entire inventory. The plants promoted in 2011 will include the 2011 Plants of Distinction and those plants featured in 2010 and 2009. We encourage increased participation - it can increase your visibility and sales to existing customers and to new customers.

Garden Centers – We are currently working with 25 garden centers in Virginia. A number of these garden centers are very supportive of our “local” program. Several of the garden centers need continuing support from BG staff to stay on task and will be reviewed and possibly replaced in 2011. Garden centers are asked to set up a Beautiful Gardens display, identify BG plants around their display yards, use our posters and signage, give out BG brochures at the counters, include BG information on their web sites and use BG staff for talks and demonstrations at special events. Marketing staff visited each participating garden center at least four times this spring. We have been challenged in 2010 by reduced staffing at many of the garden centers and the extremely hot weather this summer.

Promotions – Beyond promoting Beautiful Gardens at and through the garden centers, we take every advantage to get the word out. Jeff includes information and columns on a regular basis in the VNLA newsletter. VDACS has put out two releases this year to support the 2010 Plants of Distinction. The Master Gardeners continue to be a valuable asset at the evaluation sites and in getting the word out about Beautiful Gardens.

Public Relations - Free lance garden and environmental writer, Sylvia Wright, has been an invaluable supporter of the program sending out releases and copy to her many media contacts throughout the year. We displayed information at Maymont, The Virginia GoGreen Garden Festival and the Virginia State Fair. We keep brochures at the Science Museum of Virginia, Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, J Sergeant Reynolds CC many others other locations. Several of our committee members have been able to highlight the BG program during radio and television interviews.

Plant Selection and Management – The Beautiful Gardens committee and plant selection sub-committee selects the “Plants of Distinction” each year and is constantly looking for potential new plant introductions to include in the evaluation sites.

Plants of Distinction must be hardy, resistant and beautiful. They must be relatively easy for growers to propagate and finish and be attractive to the consumer for retail sales. The same is true of the new plants we consider.

Four plant evaluation sites are currently being maintained: the Virginia Tech Urban Hort Center; The Claytor Nature Study Center of Lynchburg College in Bedford; Paul Edmonds Park in Halifax County and the Norfolk Botanical Garden. Program Coordinator, Lisa Lipsey, oversees site maintenance, plant evaluation, and the addition of new trial plants. Volunteer Master Gardeners continue to supply valuable labor for upkeep and record keeping.

Plants of Distinction and new introductions are being discussed and sought on a regular basis. Plants of Distinction will be recognized and promoted for three years giving growers and retailers adequate time to grow and promote each plant.

New plants will be offered to the public beginning in 2012 with the #33 daylily that has officially been named “VT Spirit”. Other new plants under evaluation are a tetraploid lily bred by Master Gardener Bud Gregory of Luray, VA; an unnamed, lavender blooming crapemyrtle from the breeding program at The National Arboretum; numerous magnolia hybrids bred by Bill Smith of Richmond, VA; seven different plants from Dr. Alex Niemiera’s 2008 China expedition; pomegranate seedlings from seed collected from Beijing Botanical Gardens by Dr. Rumen Conev; and from Judith and Richard Tyler, Pine Knot Farms, new hellebores currently at IALR for tissue culture evaluation and production. The committee is constantly searching for and asking about new plants for inclusion in the Beautiful Gardens program. We ask that all VNLA members consider Beautiful Gardens for new plant introductions.

Funding – The Beautiful Gardens committee has been diligent in their efforts to wisely and effectively utilize the capital provided to them since the programs inception. We currently operate on a balance of grant monies carried forward, active grants, the VNLA contribution, Virginia Tech’s taking on the position of Program Coordinator and “in kind” functions provided by VDACS and others. An itemization follows:

Balance carried forward
VNLA for 2010 = $15,000
USDAs / VDACS Promotional Grant = $10,000 Ended October 4, 2010 All spent
USDAs / VDACS Liner Grant = $10,000 $7,000 spent to date Ends Oct 2011
USDAs / VDACS Breeder Workshops Grant = $10,000 Managed by VA Tech
USDAs / VDACS Native Plant Grant = $30,000 Managed by VA Tech
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VNLA Newsletter November / December 2010 67
BG Program Coordinator Position = 50% time by VA Tech Hort Dept (currently 80% time position)

Tag / Sticker Sales = no income in 2010 – Tag sales for new plants will be required in 2012

* Income generation will begin with the sale of contracted plants from the IALR lab in Danville during 2011, and the initial sale and continued sales of new plant introductions in 2011, 2012 and beyond. (Income would include the BG fee for each plant sold that covers contractual and/or patent agreements)

We would request that VNLA continue to contribute to the Beautiful Gardens program in 2011 at the current level of support.

2010 Accomplishments

- 50% position at Virginia Tech for Program Coordinator – Lisa Lipsey
- Contract with IALR for the propagation of plants for Beautiful Gardens
- First Breeders Workshop at Virginia Tech for Master Gardeners College – the next being scheduled for spring 2011 at Norfolk Botanical Garden
- Liner / Propagation Workshop at J Sergeant Reynolds CC
- Revise business plan this fall
- Increased emphasis on native plants in Plants of Distinction
- Registration of our new daylily, ‘VT Spirit’, with the American Hemerocallis Society

Provided by Lisa Lipsey and Rick Baker

Executive Director’s Report

July

- Attended the Virginia Agribusiness Council’s Town Hall meeting in Blacksburg
- June Board Meeting Minutes
- Went to Tobacco Commission Meeting in Wytheville to request and extension for the Beautiful Gardens grant which was approved through 4/30/11
- VNLA Field Day coordination with Laurie Fox at HRAREC
- Sent out Field Day news releases to trade media
- Sent Field Day brochures to re-wholesalers, members with traveling sales staff and VNLA Board
- Comp Field Day registrations to regional groups, other associations, VDACS and government officials
- Beautiful Gardens reimbursement requests filed
- Filed reports with Chesterfield Commissioner of Accounts for Shoosmith Estate
- Tax return/Audit info to CPA
- Newsletter layout, formatting
- New software training, data checks, edits, standardization

August

- Newsletter to Printer and proofing
- New website conversion software training and setup of new online credit card processing system
- Order new Certification Banner and stand
- Participated in VA Tech Ag Econ VALOR strategic planning meeting to develop an Ag leader development training program
- Prepared Research Reception/Auction flyer for Newsletter and MANTS pre-registration mailing
- Field Day Exhibitor solicitations
- Field Day broadcast emails and faxes
- Field Day process pre-registrations, program prep, signage, etc
- VGIC Conference Call to develop a Chesapeake Bay White Paper

September

- Order carpet/tables for MANTS
- Field Day onsite registration, Summer Tour
- Site visit Ingleside Plantation Nurseries for 2011 Field Day layout
- VGIC GoGreen Virginia Garden Festival at the Science Museum of Virgina - Set up VNLA Certified Horticulturist display and scheduled VCH to answer consumer questions
- Prep and ship VT Extension brochures, VCH Banner/Certification info to State Fair to be distributed by Master Gardeners
- Broadcast PLANET Employee Compensation Survey to VNLA landscape members twice
- Set up VNLA display at the VA Tech College of Agriculture’s Homecoming Ag Industry tent “tailgate/lunch” prior to the game
- Summer Tour and Field Day Surveys on Constant Contact
- “How Green is Your Business” survey sent to members for VGIC and Joyce Latimer
- Registrations for PLA review class at JW Townsend Inc by Lesley Sewell
- VNLA Grower Guide print data listings, report forms, letters, ad info to 3 groups: 2010 participants, previous participants, member growers, and non-member growers with membership solicitation

Monthly

- Bank Account reconciliations (4 SunTrust checking accounts, 4 SunTrust investment accounts)
- Member dues payments and new member processing
- Accounts payables
- Monthly Beautiful Gardens Executive Committee Conference calls
- Website updates for BG and VNLA
- Forward Virginia Agribusiness Council weekly updates
- Legislative alerts to Board and members from VAC, ANLA, PLANET, etc
- Questions about membership, certification, re-certification
- Process orders for Certification Manuals and test registrations

Provided by Jeff Miller, Exec. Dir.
Events – Plant Explorer at VA Tech

The Hahn Horticulture Garden at Virginia Tech presents “The Explorer’s Garden”
An evening with Daniel J. Hinkley, founder of Heronswood Nursery and award-winning plantsman and author.
Thursday, February 24, 2011 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., reception to follow.
Virginia Bioinformatics Institute Auditorium, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg

If you thought that the age of the great plant explorers was over, guess again. Dan Hinkley, founder of the original Heronswood Nursery, has scoured the globe for botanical treasure, a bounty that has enriched gardens worldwide. In his presentation “The Explorer’s Garden”, he not only highlights numerous plants, he conveys with passion and humor how plants relate to one another, and to our human experience, across the planet. His plant-collecting trips span Chile, Costa Rica, South Africa, Japan, Korea, China, Vietnam, Nepal, Bhutan, India, New Zealand, Europe, and North America.

Dan is the author of “The Explorer’s Garden: Rare and Unusual Perennials” which is in its fourth printing at Timber Press and a New York Times’ Editor’s Choice. In 2009, he added “The Explorer’s Garden: Shrubs and Vines from Four Corners of the World.” Dan has been awarded the Scott Medal, the Liberty Hyde Bailey Award, and the Veitch Memorial Medal. He serves as horticultural consultant to Monrovia Growers and to several design firms, including Gustafson Guthrie Nichol, Portico, and The Berger Partnership. Do not miss this opportunity to hear one of the world’s foremost horticulturists and plantsmen, right here in Southwest Virginia! Admission: $15 general public, $10 Friends of the Garden.

To register for this event or any other Hahn Garden seminar or workshop, visit our website at www.hort.vt.edu/hhg or call 540.231.5970.

More Winter Seminars and Workshops at the Garden:
“Gardening with Deer: Plants, Prevention, and Pest Control” with Paul Westervelt, Saturday, February 12, 10:00 a.m. to noon.

“Home Landscaping Solutions: Transforming Difficult Spaces” with Catriona Tudor-Erler. Thursday, March 24, 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
Provided by Dr. Holly Scoggins, Director of the Hahn Horticulture Gardens.

Tips - Downsizing Fallout

Awareness and Preparation Will Help Protect You and Your Business
by Ken Von Forell, CPCU, Hortica Insurance & Employee Benefits

Whether you call it “downsizing”, “rightsizing”, or by the old school name, “layoffs”, it’s an unpleasant but necessary step that many business managers today are taking.

In these difficult times of a shrinking economy, tight credit, and wide-scale unemployment, many managers have already undertaken the tasks of reducing staff, reducing hours, implementing furloughs, freezing or cutting wages, reducing benefits or combinations thereof.

The choice of what action to take, and the scale of that action, will take all the management expertise and fortitude you can muster. You know, or have a good idea of, how you think each employee will take the news. Most people are reasonable; many could see it coming; and most would make the same decisions if they were in your shoes.

However, there will be times when the reactions are not what you expected, not what you planned for or even what you can imagine. Desperate people can sometimes do desperate things. Reaction to being let go will run the gamut of emotions. And not everyone is going to go “quietly into the night” and look for another job. Disgruntled ex-employees can cause you sleepless nights, legal battles, and even threaten your safety and the safety of others.

Let me share a few examples of what I have seen over the years. Vandalism is a common way for disgruntled ex-employees to exercise revenge on a former employer, and company-owned equipment is the common target. Sugar
in the gas tank, stolen distributor caps, and flattened tires are common acts of vandalism.

Some ex-employees are much more diabolical. One case I remember involved the dumping of a gallon of Roundup herbicide into the automatic fertilizer system at a large greenhouse. By the time the plants were all fried, the former employee had already vacated his apartment and left the area.

Another employee took one last trip into the greenhouse to supposedly gather his things. While in the greenhouse he discretely repositioned a high-power grow light from an up position to a down position on its support. In the up position, everything was fine; in the down position the very hot light came into contact with the energy curtain when the curtain closed at night to keep the heat in the greenhouse. The resulting fire damage was almost $200,000.

Physical destruction by vandalism or theft of equipment, supplies, money or product is frustrating, but most losses can be covered by properly written property insurance that you buy to protect your business.

Sometimes employees want to get more in your face with the retaliation. Legal actions for wrongful termination, discrimination, and sexual harassment are common ways ex-employees strike back. These actions are referred to as “employment practice hazards,” and are a common use of the legal system today. As a result, employment practices liability insurance is a recently introduced product commonly being purchased by business owners of all sizes.

One small business owner fired an employee for poor performance. In less than 30 days the business owner received a summons stating he was being sued for sexually harassing the employee. The workplace was allegedly hostile to the female employee. It takes a lot of time and from $10,000 to $40,000 to defend yourself against such an action, even if you are innocent. In this case, as proof of the hostile environment, she produced e-mailed jokes of a sexually explicit nature that had circulated on the company e-mail.

The last area to mention is fraudulent medical or workers compensation claims. It is expected that when there is downsizing of a workforce, any and all legitimate medical claims against an employer-sponsored health plan will be filed. It is perhaps naïve to think that people won’t take advantage of the system to file other claims that they normally wouldn’t file if still employed.

The workers’ compensation system is one that many displaced employees are quick to take advantage of. One larger employer found that every year after they had let their seasonal workforce go, a significant spike in sore back claims, sore shoulders, etc. were filed. In the recent downturn, one company thought they were doing their employees a service by giving notice of layoffs two weeks before the layoffs took place. The number of claims filed in those two weeks dwarfed the number of claims filed over the previous two years.

What to do? Where to go for help?

Here is the shameless plug for a good insurance agent who knows and understands your business. Theft, vandalism and property damage of all types are an easy fix. Employment Practices Liability Insurance protection requires some attention. Some companies build in a limited amount of coverage for a very reasonable premium. Stand-alone policies of higher limits are available to customers for reasonable rates today. The time to buy it is before you have a problem.

Finally, one area that insurance companies and agents are providing value-added services to policy holders is in the area of Human Resources consulting. Many times if you buy a policy for protection, it comes with consulting services from HR specialists or defense minded attorneys, with no additional cost. If you have suspicions that a necessary action might result in a very negative response, you have a chance to discuss it with an experienced professional who can walk you through the steps to protect yourself and your business from these expensive and troublesome pitfalls.

The choice of what action to take, and the scale of that action, will take all the management expertise and fortitude you can muster.
Does your insurance company think “photosynthesis” is the latest feature on a digital camera?

In a competitive business environment, you can’t afford an insurance company that doesn’t understand your business. Hortica has over 120 years experience in the horticultural industry. We provide specialized insurance solutions and loss control strategies that other companies don’t deliver.

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Winterize, Winterize, Winterize

by Ken Von Forell
Hortica Insurance & Employee Benefits

By the time this makes it to publication, and you take a minute to look it over, the winter of 2010-2011 will be upon us, or nearly so.

What will it bring? I don’t know. Forecasting the weather is the greatest job on earth. No matter how flawed the forecast, people will still listen and hang on the prognosticator’s every word.

Over the five years since I moved back to the Olympia area, we’ve had some interesting winters. Remember the snowstorms a few years back that had everyone stuck at home for days leading up to the Christmas buying season? My retailer friends remember them, and not fondly.

Winter in the Northwest can offer anything: golfing weather near Christmas; snow-packed streets; 90 mile an hour winds; avalanche dangers in the mountain passes; extended periods of freezing temperatures; and mild sunny days followed by major storms.

I am not a horticulturist, so this article won’t have any tips about protection of plants. My message this month is to encourage you to be prepared for just about anything that Mother Nature might deliver in the way of a winter surprise.

Check your heating systems and the surrounding areas
Severe cold temperatures require heating systems to function at prolonged peak capacity. Routine maintenance is a must. Also remember to check all spaces around heating appliances for proper clearance. Combustibles such as newspapers, boxes, and packaging materials can be tucked into spaces during summer time with little consequence. When heaters are again being used to maximum capacity, any combustibles pose threats and problems. Fires from overheated furnaces, flu pipes, chimneys, etc. are quite common causes of property damage.

Those who heat with boilers have already most likely had their boiler inspected, repaired and ready to go for heating greenhouses. Smaller heating appliances deserve the same attention to maintenance as boilers. Don’t let your plumbing introduce the next Ice Age

Act now against the floods of Spring
As the winter storms start to wind down, and spring is on the horizon, the troubles might just be beginning. Even Northwest neophytes like me know that after the snows, winds and rains of winter, the floods of spring are not far behind.

Federal flood insurance is still available to protect your business. Floods, mud slides, land slides, etc. can impact almost anyone. The most important thing to remember about purchasing flood insurance is that there is a 30-day waiting period before coverage takes effect.

People who work with the land are resourceful and generally very careful. There is nothing really new under the sun (or clouds) when it comes to preparedness, so just a word to the wise.
Legislation - Lighthouse Program Tools

Where to learn about federal actions that could affect your business

Each Lighthouse partner state association has set up a legislative website created by Capitol Advantage. These sites allow you to look up information on your state legislature's activities. They also show the most urgent pending federal action and are directly linked to ANLA's Lighthouse webpage (www.anla.org/lighthouse). The ANLA Lighthouse page has program information and grassroots tips.

Where To Begin

The best way to begin is to visit the VNLA legislative website at www.vnla.org/legislation.htm and click on the “Legislative Update” button. Click on the “take action” button. This will link you to the legislation and what action to take. Check periodically to see what key bills are being considered by Congress that will affect your business.

Again, keep an eye on newsletters as they will be posting articles to keep you informed of pending legislation and emerging national issues. When alerted, please take a minute to write or call your representatives and make your voice heard regarding legislation that will impact your business and the industry.

Tips on Voicing the Concerns of the Green Industry to Congress and the Public

Unsure about how to effectively build a relationship with your elected leaders and staff? Visit the Lighthouse website at www.vnla.org. By clicking on the Legislation button and then the “Legislative UPDATE” button, you can view the Lighthouse Program Grassroots Action Guide, which will guide you through the basic steps to communicating with Congress.

How Do I Look Up My Elected Leaders?

Drop by the VNLA website at www.vnla.org and click on the link to state and federal legislation. Then Click on "Congressional Delegation" where you will see your state's elected officials. If you don’t know who your Legislators are you can look them up by zip code. Here you can link to "Send Message" in order to contact your representative.

Alerts: Only Have A Minute?

The Lighthouse Program Makes It Easy.

We understand that running a successful business is time consuming and, therefore, business people have limited time to follow the political process. Therefore, at key points in the political process when there is an urgent need for the industry to be heard, you will get a Legislative Alert by fax or email, with specific instructions on what is needed. Usually, the Legislative Action website will feature a sample letter which you can personalize and send to your elected leaders by email, mail or fax. It only takes a few minutes to do your part.

How Can I Quadruple the Voice of My Business?

Many industry businesses have at least two, three, or four employees who may want to take an active part in shaping the industry's future, too. Please share this information with them, and encourage them to take part in the program too. If 2,500 industry businesses respond to an urgent call to action, and each has four employees participating, Congress will have 10,000 impressions made!

What if I Am An ANLA Member, Too?

ANLA members have formed the core of the industry's grassroots power base for years. Most are already trained and empowered to take action on issues important to them. When Lighthouse alerts are issued, some members may receive more than one alert, possibly through different communication channels. If so, please take the requested action, and share any extra alerts with a key employee other industry businesspersons. ANLA members also have exclusive access to federal law compliance information, expert legal consultants, and other benefits. For details on membership, visit www.anla.org.

How to Write Letters to Congress Using the Lighthouse Program Web Tools

1. Go to the state association webpage www.vnla.org/legislation and follow the links to the Legislative Action page;
2. Click on Issues and Legislation, then click on Legislative Alerts.
3. View the posted Alerts, and select the appropriate issue.
4. Enter your zip code for a sample letter. Personalize it, then print and fax, or send as an email.
Congratulations to these newly Virginia Certified Horticulturist!

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2011 PESTICIDE Recertifications
BY THE INDUSTRY, FOR THE INDUSTRY

IN & OUT IN FOUR HOURS – CATEGORIES 3A & 3B
• These classes are taught by industry leaders and give information attendees need (we don’t just read out of a standardized training manual).
• Persons who only want categories 3A and 3B can be done in four hours.

SCHEDULE
8 A.M. to 12 P.M. Required attendance for 3A, 3B, 5A, 6, 7A, 10, 60
12 P.M. to 1 P.M. Lunch (on your own)
1 P.M. to 3 P.M. Required attendance for 5A, 6, 7A, 10, 60
(except if 60 is desired for 3A, 3B)

DATES & LOCATIONS
JAN 20  Fredericksburg
FEB 15  Virginia Beach
MAR  Fairfax (Date TBA)
MAY 24  Staunton
JUN  Williamsburg (Date TBA)
JUN 28  Virginia Beach
JUL 19  Fredericksburg
November has been a very busy and exciting time around Saunders Hall. This is always a special time around the department as we rush to finish semester projects and look forward to our extended Holiday break and the upcoming New Year.

We are still in the midst of our search for our open Assistant Professor Rhizosphere Biology and Plant-Microbe Interaction (Blacksburg Campus), Assistant Professor of Fruit Crops (Winchester campus), and Assistant Professor of Nursery Crops (Hampton Roads campus) faculty positions. These positions represent strategic hires to replace recent faculty losses due to retirement and attrition.

In addition to these Horticulture faculty positions and positions in other departments, the college is currently interviewing for the open Director and Associate Dean for Extension position. We hope to have all of these positions filled within the next few months.

Please be sure to check out the upcoming events at the Hahn Horticulture Garden by going to the department home page and following the electronic footpath to the garden. As always, we would love to hear updates on our alumni and other friends. Enjoy!

With kind regards,
Roger Harris, Interim Head, Department of Horticulture, www.hort.vt.edu
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After you enroll you'll have access to savings on inbound and outbound shipping and the unparalleled customer service that PartnerShip is committed to providing. This ANLA member benefit comes at no cost to you and has no minimum shipping requirements or obligations.

Visit www.PartnerShip.com/42ANLA for a full summary of your FedEx discounts, as well as information on our other services, including discounts on LTL freight shipments.

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Ed Gilman, Urban Trees Professor
Mike Goatley, VT Turfgrass Specialist
Jon Goldman, Brand Launcher
Dan Heims, Terra Nova Nurseries
Grady Miller, NCSU Turfgrass Specialist
Joe Neal, NCSU Weed Scientist
Kelly D. Norris, Rainbow Iris Farm
Vincent Simeone, Wonders of the Winter Landscape
W. Gary Smith, ASLA, From Art to Landscape
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For schedules and more information, visit mahsc.org or call (757) 523-4734
Upcoming Events


January 24, 2010, VIRGINIA CERTIFIED HORTICULTURIST BASIC & ADVANCED EXAMS at the Mid-Atlantic Horticulture Short Course, Virginia Beach 6-9 p.m. Contact: 1-800-476-0055, VCH@vnla.org

January 25-30, 2011, MID-STATES HORTICULTURAL EXPO Kentucky International Convention Center, Louisville; Hosted by the Kentucky and Tennessee Nursery & Landscape Associations www.MSHE.org 931-473-3951


February 2-4, 2011, CVNLA SHORT COURSE/LGBG SYMPOSIUM “The Vital Roles of Gardening” Pesticide Recertification: Feb. 4 at Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, Contact: www.lewisginter.org or 804-262-9887 x 328

February 3-5, 2011, SC HORTICULTURE INDUSTRY (SHI) TRADE SHOW & SEMINARS Myrtle Beach Convention Center, South Carolina 803-743-4284 www.scnla.com

February 10-13, 2011, MAYMONT FLOWER & GARDEN SHOW Greater Richmond Convention Center, Richmond, VA Contact: 301-330-4128 www.MacEvents.com

February 16-20, 2011, PLANET EXECUTIVE FORUM, Amelia Island, FL Contact: 800-395-2522

February 24, 2011, THE EXPLORER’S GARDEN, an evening with Daniel J Hinkley, founder of Heronswood Nursery and award-winning plantsman and author, presented by the Hahn Horticulture Garden at Virginia Tech in the Virginia Bioinformatics Institute Auditorium, Blacksburg 6-7:30 pm, reception follows Contact: 540-231-5970 www.hort.vt.edu/hhg


April 16-24, 2011, HISTORIC GARDEN WEEK IN VIRGINIA Contact: www.vagardenweek.org

April 22, 2011, EARTH DAY Contact: Mother Nature

April 22, 2011, PLANET DAY OF SERVICE – NATIONWIDE Contact: 800-395-2522


For a Current Calendar of Events, go to: http://virginiagreen.org/events.htm

2011 Virginia Certified Horticulturist Exam Schedule

February 16, 6-10 pm, Leesburg, Monroe Technical Center, Northern VA, (Deadline 2/2/11)

March 3, Chantilly, Meadows Farms Landscaping, 5:30-9:30 pm (Deadline 2/17/11)

March 12, Suffolk, Lancaster Farms, 8 a.m. - noon (Deadline 2/25/11)

March 14, Richmond, Henrico County Gov’t Complex, 6-10 p.m. (Deadline 2/28/11)

TBA Lynchburg or Charlottesville, March TBA

May 19, Leesburg, Monroe Technical Center, Northern VA, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m., (Deadline 5/5/11)

June 15, Suffolk, Lancaster Farms, 6-9 p.m. (Deadline 6/1/11)

For a Current Listing of VIRGINIA CERTIFIED HORTICULTURIST review classes and test dates, go to www.vnla.org/certification.htm

And see listings in this Newsletter on page 41
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