

NEWS on the GROW

compiled by Catherine Evans



FROM OFA TO YOU

By Joe Boarini

OFA and the Southern Nursery Association (SNA) are partnering to develop a unique trade show and educational event for the retail and wholesale florist industry, retail garden centers and landscape contractors. FloralWorld and ColorWorld will be unveiled at SNA 2003...The World's Showcase of Horticulture scheduled for July 31 to August 2, 2003, at the Georgia World Congress Center.

NEW EVENTS

FloralWorld is co-sponsored by OFA and SNA in cooperation with *Florists' Review*. It will feature nearly 21,000 sq.ft. dedicated to retail florist products, symposium-style design shows, workshops by the industry's best and new product demonstrations.

ColorWorld is also co-sponsored by OFA and SNA in cooperation with the Southeast Greenhouse Conference. It will dedicate nearly 8,000 sq.ft. to floriculture products for the retail and landscape trade, new flower displays and innovative design concepts for annuals and perennials.

Attendees will also get an inside look at what's happening in other segments of the horticulture industry at SNA 2003 by having access to AmericasMart-Atlanta, the region's leading wholesale market for gift, silk and seasonal merchandise and home accents.

RESEARCH CONFERENCE

OFA is also assisting with the new floriculture section of the annual SNA Research Conference, to be held July 30 and 31, at SNA 2003. OFA supplied SNA with a list of floriculture academic researchers, and Steve Carver, OFA manager — technical education, will serve as a facilitator for the floriculture section.

This two-day conference is an opportunity to see where the industry's horticulture research dollars are spent. Top researchers and educational leaders from the South's leading universities will present their latest discoveries in horticulture. Hundreds of topics in 11 categories will be shared in seven-minute presentations. The conference format allows attendees the opportunity to sit in on all or only those topics of interest.

PARTNERING PAYS OFF

OFA is pleased to work with SNA on FloralWorld and ColorWorld. This partnership is another way for OFA to expand our national scope and diversify our activities to support our national membership base.

OFA excels at bringing people to education (e.g., through the OFA Short Course) and is continually looking for ways to expand this effort and take education to the people of our industry. With SNA, and other future partners, we can share ideas, resources and responsibilities without duplicating efforts.

Don't miss out on these two outstanding educational opportunities for floriculture industry professionals to buy, learn and network. The OFA Short Course is July 12-16 in Columbus, Ohio, and SNA 2003 is July 31-August 3 in Atlanta, Georgia. Visit www.ofa.org or www.sna.org for more information.

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National Garden Month Makes a Splash

National Garden Month has been deemed an unqualified success by its sponsors. More than 600 garden centers and 35 green group organizations participated in the month-long celebration.

National Garden Month began in 1986 with a presidential proclamation. "In spite of world events and a late-arriving spring," says Jeff Gibson, marketing manager for sponsor Ball Horticultural's Simply Beautiful, "attention and interest was high, especially among independent garden centers." The entire effort in attracting the participation of independent garden centers was to demonstrate the power of a national promotional campaign. This kind of campaign drives traffic through garden center doors and generates media attention usually reserved for big box stores.

"Independent garden centers staged seminars, set up displays, conducted contests and handed out giveaways with the support of manufacturing partners," notes Gibson, who added that support included local and national PR as well as national television spots on HGTV and The Weather Channel. Cable networks, including HGTV; newswires, including the Associated Press; and major market media, such as *The Washington Post* and *Philadelphia Inquirer* all highlighted the campaign. Special promotional spots on local Weather Channel outlets and in-store banners at participating garden centers provided additional reminders to consumers to celebrate the power of gardening.

According to Gibson, the kickoff for National Garden Month at the U.S. Botanic Garden in Washington, D.C., was a key initiative in the success of the re-launch. It brought major national manufacturers and consumer groups together under one unified banner. For more information on National Gardening Month, visit www.garden.org.



SAF Assists in HIPAA Privacy Rule

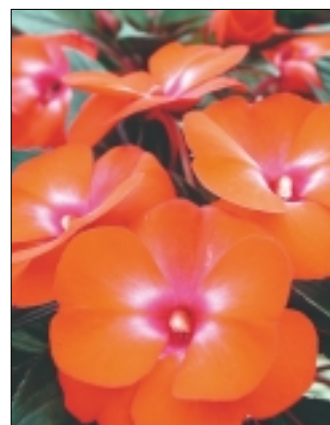
Despite rumors to the contrary, a representative of the Health and Human Services (HHS) Office of Civil Rights recently reassured the Society of American Florists (SAF) that new health-care privacy standards do not prohibit flower deliveries to hospitals. The standards, which were established under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and went into effect in April, have caused some confusion among hospital personnel, patients and the media in recent weeks.

Under the HIPAA Privacy Rule, hospitals must maintain a directory of patients' names, their locations in the facility and general health conditions. If a patient asks to be excluded from the directory, the hospital cannot disclose any information about that patient, making direct deliveries or visits by non-hospital personnel to those patients impossible. However, hospital personnel can still deliver flowers directly to those patients.

While the Privacy Rule does not prohibit flower deliveries, some hospitals have imposed their own restrictions on deliveries. In that instance, florists should contact hospital administration for further direction.

Proven Winners Rides to High Sales

In a new way to help promote its new Infinity New Guinea impatiens series, Proven Winners is holding a contest for U.S. and Canadian growers who purchase cuttings through a licensed Proven Winners propagator. The winner of a one two-year lease on an Infiniti G35 Sport Sedan will be selected during a random drawing held April 2004, and the winner will be presented with the car during the 2004 OFA Short Course. All entries must be received between June 1, 2003 and March 31, 2004; each order equals one entry. As an added bonus, Proven Winners is also rewarding the broker sales representative that writes the winning order by giving him or her a check for \$1,000. The Infinity series starts off with 17 cultivars and was developed by German breeder Ludwig Kientzler. For more information on the contest, go to www.provenwinners.com. ♦



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Economy up in 1st Quarter

According to a new U.S. Commerce Department report, the U.S. economy is up 1.9 percent for the 1st quarter of the year. Originally, economists were only predicting a 1.6 percent increase for the first three months of the year. However, even after the slight growth, the economy is still below normal.

Economists are predicting that people are still feeling the effects of the war and unemployment rates, which is why the country is still at a low. However, because of the 1st quarter increase, the predictions are that the economy will be slowly getting better, as the 4th quarter of 2002 produced only a 1.4-percent economic growth. Predictions are for a 2-percent increase in the 2nd quarter of 2003.

In other economic news, the

Department of Labor is reporting that new claims of unemployment benefits have lessened in the past few weeks by 9,000. However, in late May, unemployment rose 83,000 to an 18-month high.

Wholesale Prices Fall

Even with the war in Iraq coming to a close, wholesale prices decreased 1.9 percent in April, making it the largest drop for wholesale prices in almost 17 years. According to the Labor Department, the decrease in the Producer Price Index (PPI), which measures the prices of goods before they reach store shelves, was a complete turn-around from March, when higher energy prices, affected by the war, helped raise wholesale prices 1.5 percent.

Also according to the report, the decrease was more than double the

0.7 percent decline that economists predicted for the month of April. But gasoline and home-heating oil prices dropped a significant amount, creating a little good news for businesses and consumers.

Because of the slow growth, policy-makers at the Federal Reserve are worried that the United States could face possible deflation. It was indicated there is only a small chance of that happening, but the decline could still cause a possible threat to the economy. Currently, members at the Federal Reserve are preparing to cut rates, which are already at a 41-year low, to help with the possible threat of deflation.

Pennsylvania Cracks Down on Container Sizing

In a recent move to prevent

deceptive advertising tactics in the green industry, the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture (PDA) is going to begin spot-checking container sizes at retail outlets starting July 1, 2003. Many meetings have been taking place about container and labeling sizes between PDA and Pennsylvania Landscape and Nursery Association (PLNA) to work on the issue — that Pennsylvania law requires container and labeling advertisements to be completely accurate by reflecting the exact measurement of the actual container volume or size.

The law is applicable to all plant containers, including those measured by volume such as gallon or quart and those measured by size such as 4-inch. The PDA will accept the ANSI Z60.1 standard for nursery pot sizes, e.g., #1 pot, #2

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pot, etc. For example, if the pot is labeled as a 1-gal. container but doesn't actually hold that amount, advertise or label it as a #1 pot container, if it is a #1 pot according to the standard.

The regulations also state that if a pot is advertised or labeled by linear measure (4½-inch pot), the pot

must measure 4½ inches on a side if it is square and 4½ inches on the inside diameter if it is round. The PDA is not concerned if a label is on the container but more if the size and volume is correct or not.

The PDA has tentatively set a 90-day compliance period for industry members to reverse siz-

ing and volume problems, giving them a cut off date of approximately September 1, 2003. Currently, PDA is working with PLNA to make everyone aware of the issue in order to make the compliance fully understood. For more information about the regulations, contact (800) 898-3411 or go to www.plna.com.


APHIS Amends Regulations

In order to help prevent the spread of plant diseases into the United States, USDA has decided to amend regulations, requiring additional declaration to appear on the phytosanitary certificate that accompanies all *Pelargonium spp.* (geraniums) and *Solanum spp.* imported into the United States, except anything imported under the Canadian greenhouse-grown restricted plant program.

The extra declaration must clearly state that the plant material was produced in a production facility that has been tested and found to be free of *Ralstonia solanacearum* race 3 biovar 2 or that *Ralstonia solanacearum* race 3 biovar 2 is not known to occur in the region the materials were produced. The USDA has recently discovered that geranium plant material coming into the United States poses a risk of carrying the bacterial strain that causes potato brown rot.

ANLA Tour Heads to Virginia

The American Nursery & Landscape Association's (ANLA) annual Grower Tour is planning on taking attendees to member facilities in Virginia during a September 18-21 tour. The tour is scheduled to end just as ANLA's Legislative Conference begins. The Grower tour offers unparalleled educational opportunities by going behind the scenes at a variety of growing operations to show the successful strategies employed by nurseries growing a huge assortment of plant material. The tour also provides networking opportunities as well as non-tour functions.

The tour will begin in Washington, D.C., Thursday afternoon to go to Ingleside Plantation Nurseries for a tour and wine tasting. After settling in Williamsburg, Va., Friday and Saturday stops include: Mobjack Nurseries, Brent & Becky's Bulbs, Bennett's Creek Wholesale Nursery, Lancaster Farms, Lilley Farms & Nursery and Historyland Nursery. On Sunday, September 21, attendees will arrive back in Washington, D.C., in time for the opening reception of ANLA's Legislative Conference. For additional information go to www.anla.org. 

calendar

July

16-20: ANLA Convention and Executive Learning Retreat
Boston, Mass.
(202) 789-2900
www.anla.org

17-20: 6th Annual Meeting and Hydro-Mart Exhibition
New Orleans, La.
(703) 392-5890
www.hydromerchants.org

27-3: Perennial Plant Association Symposium
Sacramento, Calif.
(614) 771-8431
www.perennialplant.org

29-31: PANTS
Fort Washington, Pa.
(717) 238-1673
www.plna.com

31: Pleasant View Gardens Open House
Loudon, N.H.
(800) 343-4784
nancyn@pvg.com

31-2: Southern Nursery Association Trade Show
Atlanta, Ga.

(770) 953-4411
www.sna.org

31-2: All-American Selections Summer Meeting
Ventura, Calif.
(630) 963-0770

August

6: New England Nursery Association Summer Expo
Loudon, N.H.
(508) 653-3112

15-16: Garden Writers Association Annual Symposium
Chicago, Ill.
(703) 257-1032

20-23: CalScape Expo 2003
Irvine, Calif.
(707) 462-2276
cipa@cipaweb.org

21-23: Farwest Show and Seminars sponsored by GPN, Lawn & Garden Retailer and Proven Winners
Portland, Ore.
(503) 653-8733
www.farwestshow.com

September

18-21: ANLA Grower Tour
Virginia
(202) 789-2900
www.anla.org

24-27: SAF Annual Convention
Boca Raton, Fla.
(703) 836-8700
www.safnow.org

October

8-11: International Plant Propagators' Society Western Region Meeting
Portland, Ore.
jim.mcconnell@baileynursery.com

17-18: Xeriscape Conference
Albuquerque, N.M.
(505) 468-1021
www.xeriscapem.com

16-17: NGMA Fall Meeting
Tampa, Fla.
(800) 792-6462
www.ngma.com

November

5-8: Horti Fair
Amsterdam, The Netherlands
www.rai.nl

12-15: ASCFG's National Convention and Trade Show
Vancouver, BC, Canada
(440) 774-2887
www.ascfg.org

January 2004

14-16: Mid-America Horticultural Trade Show
Chicago, Ill.
(847) 526-2010
www.midam.org

15-17: TPIE
Fort Lauderdale, Fla.
(800) 375-3642
www.fnga.org.

22-25: ANLA Management Clinic
Louisville, Ky.
(202) 789-2900
www.anla.org

Save the Date:

April 18-20, 2004
AHMA Hardware Show
Chicago, Ill.
(800) 723-9895
www.ahmaharwareshow.com