

Calling All Progressive Growers!



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The deadline is rapidly approaching for the 2009 Sustainability Progress Awards.

This year, GPN and OFA — an Association of Horticulture Professionals — are again looking for progressive growers who are raising the bar in their sustainability efforts. We want to recognize those forward-thinking companies that have made significant progress toward making their businesses more sustainable.

Last year, the inaugural Sustainability Progress Awards honored Pork and Plants of Altura, Minn., and Floral Plant Growers of Denmark, Wis., for their achievements in their greenhouses and offices to be more environmentally friendly and economically sound.

Here is a sampling of things Pork and Plants and Floral Plant Growers did to advance their sustainability initiatives:

- Installed a new energy-efficient roof poly that reduced energy costs by nearly \$41,000 a year
- Recycled more than 58,000 pounds of nonreusable plastics
- Installed biomass boilers and radiant heat systems that helped cut energy costs in half
- Switched to renewable growing inputs such as coir, parboiled rice hulls, organic fertilizer and captured rainwater

These are examples of just *some* of the things growers can do to help contribute to a better tomorrow. You can read more specifics about what Pork and Plants and Floral Plant Growers did on our website (tinyurl.com/gpn-spa).

But maybe you think your greenhouse is doing something even more innovative or cost-effective than last year's honorees. Maybe you have implemented new production or business practices that are not only helping sustain future generations but also contributing to today's bottom line.

If so, we want to hear about it — and so do other growers. Everyone in the floriculture industry can benefit from learning what other growers have already done and, ideally, applying it within their own operations. Everybody wins when progress is made regarding sustainability.

And don't forget, the 2009 Sustainability Progress Award Winners also will be recognized during the opening ceremonies at OFA Short Course July 11 to 14 in Columbus, Ohio, and be the subject of a feature article in the September issue of GPN.

For information on entering this year's awards competition, you can go to our website, www.gpnmag.com, and click the "Sustainability Awards" link in the left-hand column. There, you will find all of the entry requirements. But you need to hurry: May 15 is the deadline for submissions!

If you have questions about the 2009 Sustainability Progress Awards, feel free to contact me (847) 391-1019 or at thodson@sgcmail.com.

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