



Tim Hodson, Editorial Director
(847) 391-1019 • thodson@sgcmail.com

Hang On and Enjoy the Ride

With the stock market plummeting and the government stepping in to help the home mortgage industry, the economic roller coaster that America has been riding this year really got exciting in October. And who knows what November and December will bring?

In most years, it is usually the unpredictable weather that has such a big impact on growers. This year, it's the weather *and* the economy driving growers crazy! And nobody really can control either one.

I have no doubts that it is the uncertainty of both of these issues that is keeping many of you awake every night.

Costs Keep Climbing

The state of the economy is really forcing growers like you to look at all of your costs and how they will affect greenhouse performance and your bottom line. Earlier this year, *GPN* and *OFA* — an Association of Floriculture Professionals — surveyed more than 500 growers to find out what their biggest concerns were today and what they would be in five years. It really came as no surprise that energy and input costs were at the top of both those lists.

Fluctuating energy costs have been a thorn in the industry's side. But other input costs continue to climb too, including greenhouse chemicals.

That is why this issue has several different articles that take a good look at the developments that have been taking place involving greenhouse chemicals. These articles are designed to give you a better understanding of what these chemicals can and cannot do so that you can make an informed decision when it comes to selecting the right products for your growing operation.

Not only are there economic considerations, but many growers are now being pressured (by local governments and/or consumers) to alter the use of chemicals on your products. These types of issues make your greenhouse chemical decisions even more challenging.

In this Issue...

We went straight to the industry's experts to find out the latest trends in greenhouse chemicals. In "Catalysts for Change" on page 22, Jim Bethke,

Ray Cloyd, Margery Daughtrey, Joyce Latimer and Jim Barrett offer their perspectives on some of the chemical products that are available for controlling greenhouse pests and diseases, as well as plant growth regulators. We have also included a special product section on page 27.

Erik Runkle's Technically Speaking column "The ABCs of PGRs" provides an excellent overview on growth regulators. The table on page 58 is one you might just want to cut out and keep as a handy reference.

A.R. Chase's Pest & Disease column (page 18) also provides you with suggestions on some of the most effective chemicals that are available for dealing with *Cylindrocladium*. And the Ask Us column on page 20 answers additional questions about the use of PGRs.

These articles will provide you with a little more insight into some of the chemical quandaries your business may be facing.

I Want My Hort TV!

I also wanted to let you know about a new project we are launching this month called Hort TV. It's an online video network hosted on our website. Each month, a new "episode" of Hort TV will debut on our website, www.gpnmag.com.

In this month's episode, you will be able to find out more about the *GPN/OFA* 2008 State of the Industry survey that I mentioned above, and *GPN* Consulting Editor Dr. Jim Barrett will share his views on some of the things that are taking place in our industry. Associate Publisher Bob Bellew also has an interesting piece on the Chicago Botanic Garden.

Future programming on Hort TV will focus on industry news, education, new products and event coverage. This online "TV" channel will feature on-demand how-to videos and educational information for industry suppliers. Go to www.gpnmag.com to check it out.



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