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Short Course Time

It's hard to believe it's already time for Short Course again. I don't know about you guys, but the spring has just slipped away from me, and I find myself quickly coasting through summer and already thinking about fall. Was Pack Trials really four months ago (check out our pick of the Pack Trials on page 44)?

Just two months ago I was writing about how strong the beginning of the season had been; now the season is over and lots of people are talking about how awful it was. Is that because we're never satisfied or because a small amount of time can quickly turn anything around?

I think it's the time. It's one of the highest impacting factors in our industry and it's one that we can do so little about. And that's why I'm writing — to tout the benefits of spending five precious days away from your company attending the OFA Short Course.

WHY ATTEND?

Because everything you need to run a more successful business can be found at Short Course.

We all know about the educational sessions; it's what OFA is best known for. As in years past, there will be five full days of education, starting on Saturday and ending on Wednesday., that will cover everything from how to market niche crops to using the latest chemicals to whether or not to open a retail location. In fact all of the authors in this month's issue of *GPN* will be speaking on similar topics some time during the Short Course, so if you've never attended educational sessions at the Short Course, reading *GPN* will give you an idea of what you can expect and how valuable the information will be.

What if you are an owner or some other kind of non-grower manager? Should you attend? What would be there for you? Lots, but the tradeshow and the hospitality suites may be the place for you. Many manufacturers wait until the Short Course to unveil new products or programs. (See our Short Course product special on page 66) Plus, sales reps as well as technical specialists are always around the booths to help explain new products or to address concerns you might have about something you already purchased.

In addition to shopping and learning, I know many people who now use the Short Course to schedule annual meetings with all of their major vendors. Everyone will be there, so instead of spending weeks flying around the country, you can meet with every one of your major vendors and work out the details for next year's programs in just a few days; talk about saving time!

Of course, if you're like me, one of the best reasons to attend is to touch base with all the people you know but never get to see. Allright, so I probably need to spend more time working and less time socializing...but isn't socializing kind of like working?

WHY THE SHORT COURSE?

Glorious downtown Columbus, Ohio is not my first travel choice either, but it is one of the few U.S. events I would never miss. In fact, our whole staff attends the show...all nine of us (stop by our booth and visit if you make it to the show). Other associations might provide legislative tie-ins or extended facility visits or, yes, exotic locals, but OFA is the only show focused primarily on greenhouse growers that brings together 10,000 of the most influential people in the industry for a week focused on better business. In my book, that's reason enough.

Bridget C. White

next month...

- Reviewing the spring season
- The latest research on tank mixing — how does it affect performance?
- Runkle explains Florel on perennials

plus...

- grower contracts
- Phygelius production