

Taking Initiative

At OFA Short Course in July, an industry "think tank" took place to discuss the creation of a national marketing program for our industry. At the meeting, attendees discussed the merits of a campaign that would help increase the relevance and consumption of horticultural products to new consumers as well as inspire existing consumers.

Over the years, there have been many conversations about developing this type of campaign. The meeting at Short Course was meant to get people thinking and talking about what the industry can and should do now.

The meeting was organized by Laurie Scullin of the New Product Group and Frank Zaunscherb of Zaunscherb Marketing Inc. *GPN* contributor Stan Pohmer of Pohmer Consulting Group facilitated the discussion.

During this session, growers, breeders, consultants, industry associations, the trade press and many others allied to the horticulture industry were on hand to discuss different ways to raise awareness and increase sales of horticultural products.

Scullin asked the audience, "If we would benefit from a national program, *then* what could it be — and how could it be developed, managed and implemented?"

One of the specific topics that arose was how this new generation of consumers uses the "new media" of Web 2.0, including websites such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, and how the industry could capitalize on this type of media. Scullin and Zaunscherb said the new media outlets are effective ways to control costs while cultivating a new generation of consumers.

Scullin and Zaunscherb are continuing to work on the next phase of the initiative and are seeking industry input. If you have questions or comments about this grassroots initiative, you can contact Scullin at lscullin@thenewproductgroup.com or Zaunscherb at frank@zmi.ca.

I'd like to know what you think, too: Does the industry need a national marketing program? What should it look like? What should the industry do? What will it cost? Drop me a line at thodson@sgcmail.com with your input.

Kudos

Congratulations go out to *GPN* contributor Ann Chase, who recently received the APS Fellow Award from the American Phytopathological Society (see article on page 10). The Society grants this honor to a current APS member for distinguished contributions to plant pathology or the society. Congratulations, Ann!

There's Still Time

If you know of a qualified student who would like to apply for the *GPN*/Nexus Intern of the Year scholarship, there is still time to submit an application, but the deadline is approaching! All applications must be submitted by Oct. 30.

The 2010 *GPN*/Nexus Intern of the Year will receive a \$3,000 check, courtesy of Nexus Greenhouse Corp.; his or her photo on the cover of *GPN* and a feature-length profile in our January 2010 issue; an expense-paid trip to OFA Short Course in Columbus, Ohio; and a four-day Short Course registration, compliments of OFA — an Association of Horticulture Professionals.

For additional information on the scholarship, please go to our website, www.gpnmag.com, and click on the "Special Links" section. If you have any questions about the scholarship program, e-mail me at thodson@sgcmail.com.



(847) 391-1019

thodson@sgcmail.com

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thodson@sgcmail.com	
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pworthy@sgcmail.com	
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jradjevic@sgcmail.com	
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ADVERTISING

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Circulation Office	(847) 391-1042
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ss Stevenson@sgcmail.com	
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