

# Digger

JULY 2018

LOOK INSIDE



## Showcasing excellence

How nurseries are using display gardens to impress and inspire buyers

PAGE 17

## Colorful Agastache options

PAGE 23

## Protecting plants from ozone damage

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# Digger



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## 15 Leader Profile: Patrick Newton

The self-described "city kid" embraced the challenges of learning a new industry and rose to become Farwest Show chairman.

## 17 Excellence on display

Is it worth the trouble of creating a display or trial garden at your nursery? We spoke to several growers about the challenges and benefits.

SPECIAL  
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## Farwest Show New Varieties Showcase

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**On the cover:** When KG Farms Inc. built a new office for its nursery near Woodburn, Oregon, the owners decided to include a display garden, so visiting customers could see offerings in a beautiful setting. **PHOTO BY CURT KIPP** **On this page:** The display garden at KG Farms Inc. (left) includes an outdoor fire pit and seating area for meetings with customers. **PHOTO BY CURT KIPP** *Agastache* 'Blue boa' is just one of a virtual rainbow of selections available in the genus. **PHOTO COURTESY OF BLOOMING NURSERY**



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# Move forward on immigration

**I'd be willing to bet most folks in our industry don't have an elaborate tie collection. I myself own three.**

They rarely come out except for the occasional wedding or funeral, but this past May, I packed all of them up and headed to our nation's capital to do some politicking on behalf of our members. I am a bit of a fish out of water in a place like Washington, D.C., so thankfully I was in good company with Jeff Stone (OAN executive director), Steve Shropshire (OAN contract legal counsel), and Leigh Geschwill (F&B Farms and Nursery, another grower member).

We set out with a clear plan and loaded schedule to see our entire Oregon delegation — five U.S. representatives and two U.S. senators — along with several folks from a half dozen government agencies. We had each been on a similar mission in the past, as this is an annual gig the association does as a service to the membership.

Now, if I had to do this routine daily I would surely go crazy, but catching a glimpse under the hood of the political engine that basically runs this country is a pretty fascinating experience. It can be a real eye opener. At times it is easy to become quite hopeful (believe it or not) and other times it's downright frustrating.

While we addressed a variety of issues ranging from transportation (the high costs of nationwide freight), to water (storage and quality needs), pest and disease control and funding, new laws surrounding worker protection standards and many other concerns. The "big one" was the same as it has been for years now: Immigration reform.

We've long been a leading voice to help assure a dependable and legal workforce that is critical to our industry (and many others). We have also pushed to establish a system to secure a future workforce that helps our country avoid the perpetual cycle where economic upswings are often stifled by growth-inhibiting labor shortages, especially out in the fields where we make our products.

The good news is that this time, it was different when it came to discussing immigration. Elected officials were actually saying the "I" word, at least in terms of agricultural labor force. It actually seemed to be on most people's radar. There were even bills being kicked around. It gave us a chance to have a more defined voice and not just that tired old groan, "please fix it."

The Ag Act and/or Goodlatte Bill was the talk of the town. Instead of picking it apart for some of the frivolous flaws it may contain, we were able to (in some cases to the amazement of our congress members) say: "We can work with this."

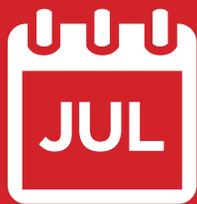
As it looked while we were there — and it continues to evolve for better and for worse — there were several steps in the right direction. Just one step in the right direction would be a miracle given how long the issue has been held hostage and kicked around like a political football. There are dire needs out there for more workers so our industry can grow to meet its demand.

Unfortunately, while a clearer message was more powerful, it was also easier to disagree with. There are well-intended people everywhere holding out for the "perfect" policy at the expense of the "OK" ones. These folks desire to pass a bill that gives them every single thing they want and concedes nothing to those who oppose reform. But how long can we suffer shortage before we have an industry that is irrelevant — too expensive, too much of the same non-laborious crops, and so on? Please don't tell me (again) it'll be after the next election. The time to act is now.

So, put on your tie or leave it at home, but let's get up and get moving forward on this. That way, we can all move forward knowing when there is opportunity we will be able to build teams to take advantage of it. ☺



**Josh Zielinski**  
OAN PRESIDENT



# Calendar

Get the word out about your event! Email details to [calendar@oan.org](mailto:calendar@oan.org) by the 10th day of the month to be included in the next issue of *Digger*.

## **JULY 14-18** **CULTIVATE'18**

Presented by AmericanHort, Cultivate offers educational and networking opportunities and exhibits featuring technology, new products, services and plant varieties. Cultivate'18 will take place at the Greater Columbus Convention Center in Columbus, Ohio. For more information, visit [www.cultivate18.org](http://www.cultivate18.org).

## **JULY 20** **TRUCKS TO SUMMER TRADE SHOWS**

July 20 is the deadline for sending pallets to IGC Chicago. Space is limited and reservations are on a first-come, first-serve basis. Trucks may be subject to cancellation if participation minimums are not met. To make a reservation, contact Kelsey Hood, OAN event and program coordinator, at [khood@oan.org](mailto:khood@oan.org) or call 503-582-2010.

## **JULY 20** **WOODY PLANT CONFERENCE**

The Scott Arboretum at Swarthmore College in Swarthmore, Pennsylvania, will host the annual conference to learn about the latest trends and concerns about woody plants. For more information, log on to [www.woodyplantconference.org](http://www.woodyplantconference.org).

## **JULY 21 AND 23** **WPS TRAINING**

Free two-hour training sessions are being held to instruct employers and handlers about changes that were made to the Worker Protection Standard. The first of two trainings this month will take place on July 21 at Monrovia in Dayton, Oregon. The second training will be July 23 at Alpha Nursery Inc. in Salem, Oregon. Sessions are offered to all industry members and will include presenters from Oregon State University and the Oregon Department of Agriculture. Funding for the training comes from a specialty crop block grant via the Oregon Department of Agriculture. Materials (in English and Spanish) are being created through OAN's partnership with SAIF Corporation. Visit [www.oan.org/wps](http://www.oan.org/wps) for session times and to register.

## **JULY 30-AUGUST 3** **PERENNIAL PLANT SYMPOSIUM**

Presented by the Perennial Plant Association, this event is the largest educational and trade show program devoted solely to herbaceous perennials in North America. This year's meeting place will be Raleigh, North Carolina. Log on to [ppa2018raleigh.com](http://ppa2018raleigh.com) for more information.

## **JULY 31-AUGUST 4** **IPPS PACIFIC RIM CONFERENCE**

The International Plant Propagators Society (IPPS) is holding its annual conference in Kona, Hawaii, enabling guests to network with



## **JULY 11** **MEMBERSHIP DAY**

We love new members! Stop in between 3-5 p.m. and get acquainted with OAN leaders and staff, and enjoy light bites and beverages with us. Learn how to use your OAN benefits and maximize your membership investment. All are invited. RSVP at [www.oan.org/events](http://www.oan.org/events)

horticulturists from around the world. Come and tour plant propagation facilities, farms and gardens with others with others in a tropical paradise. Go to [wna.ipps.org](http://wna.ipps.org) for more details.

## **AUGUST 2** **OAN MT. HOOD CHAPTER PITCH & PUTT**

Members are invited to a golf event is for growers looking to have a good time with their best buddies as they laugh through the highs and low of everyone's short game. Player packages include a sponsor bag, a putter and pitching wedge (or they can bring their own equipment), one ball and one beer. A mandatory closest-to-the-pin competition may triple player's winnings. For more information, contact Anthony Kinen at [akinen5@gmail.com](mailto:akinen5@gmail.com), 503-866-3627; or Scott Ekstrom at [scott\\_ekstrom@yahoo.com](mailto:scott_ekstrom@yahoo.com), 503-926-4321.

## **AUGUST 5-8** **ISA INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE**

The International Society of Arboriculture will host its annual conference and trade show in the Greater Columbus Convention Center, Columbus, Ohio. Join industry leaders from around the world and learn about the latest developments

in equipment, technology and research. For more information, log on to [www.isa-arbor.com](http://www.isa-arbor.com).

## **AUGUST 16-18** **NURSERY/LANDSCAPE EXPO**

San Antonio, Texas will host this year's showcase of the latest nursery and landscape products. For more information, go to [www.nurserylandscapeexpo.com](http://www.nurserylandscapeexpo.com).

## **AUGUST 22-24** **FARWEST SHOW**

The biggest green industry trade show in the West will take place at the Oregon Convention Center, 777 N.E. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. in Portland, Oregon. The show, produced by the OAN, attracts exhibitors and attendees from across the country and the world. For more information, go to [www.farwestshow.com](http://www.farwestshow.com).

## **SEPTEMBER 26-27** **CANWEST HORT SHOW**

Western Canada's premier horticulture show will take place at Tradex, the Fraser Valley Trade and Exhibition Centre in Abbotsford, B.C. For more information, go to [www.canwesthortshow.com](http://www.canwesthortshow.com).



# Northwest News

OAN members and chapters are encouraged to send in relevant news items, such as new hires, new products, acquisitions, honors received and past or upcoming events. Email [news@oan.org](mailto:news@oan.org).

## ICE arrests 114 employees in Ohio

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) executed one of the largest workplace raids in recent memory when it arrested 114 employees at an Ohio garden center and landscaping company on Tuesday, June 5, the Associated Press reported.

Some 200 federal agents raided two locations of Corso's Flower & Garden Center — one in Sandusky, Ohio, and the other in Castalia, Ohio. Many criticized it as an excessive show of force, including aircraft surveillance and agents securing the perimeter of the facilities. They seized “a large volume of business documents” from the company, ICE spokesman Khaalid Walls told the AP.

The investigation originated in October 2017 after officials arrested a woman who had given stolen identity documents to job workers who lacked legal authorization to work. That in turn led investigators to Corso's, where agents examined 313 employee records and deemed 123 to be suspicious. Criminal charges against the workers are expected, including identity theft and tax evasion. No criminal charges have been filed against the company, but an investigation continues.

This large raid follows May's reports that ICE agents have been dramatically increasing their worksite-based enforcement efforts.

The Oregon Association of Nurseries knows farm businesses may be targeted, and advises members to be proactive by following sound employment practices and maintaining the appropriate employee eligibility records. The OAN has set up a members-only workforce page and information center on the OAN website ([www.oan.org/workforce](http://www.oan.org/workforce)) where people can track this ongoing issue.



## OAN DELEGATION PUSHES FOR ACTION ON IMMIGRATION

A member-led OAN delegation spent four days in late May in Washington, D.C. talking to federal officials and Oregon's members of Congress about the key issues of immigration, the upcoming Farm Bill, and sufficient water for agriculture in the Willamette Valley.

Representing members were OAN President **Josh Zielinski** of Alpha Nursery Inc. (Salem) and OAN Government Relations Chair **Leigh Geschwill** of F & B Farms & Nursery (Woodburn). Assisting were OAN Executive Director **Jeff Stone** and legal counsel **Steve Shropshire** of Jordan Ramis P.C.

In face-to-face meetings, the OAN pushed Oregon's members of Congress to support a resolution to immigration issues that have dragged on for too many years. “Congress keeps saying maybe something will happen with the next election,” Geschwill said. “We want more of a sense of urgency.”

There is a current proposal by U.S. House Judiciary Committee Chairman Bob Goodlatte

(R-Virginia) to create worker visas for agriculture and give workers a chance to get right with the law if needed. The OAN group spoke with the member of Goodlatte's staff who is writing the bill and provided input.

“What we want is a workable visa system that can grow along with the economy,” Stone said.

Stone said the Goodlatte bill “isn't anywhere perfect” but that it's likely to change if it passes the House and moves to the Senate.

The group also provided representatives and Capitol Hill staffers with Farm Bill input, which was well received. OAN pushed for funding for research, pest and disease control, and market access. The bill recently failed due to disagreements on immigration, but is expected to come back over the summer.

Finally, the group met with officials from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to discuss water allocations for ag in the Willamette River basin. The basin has 1.6 million acre feet unallocated, and the OAN pushed for an approach that balances the needs of fish runs, cities and the ag sector (including future growth). ➤

## WILLAMETTE CHAPTER RAISES \$7,800 FOR EDUCATION

The OAN Willamette Chapter Plant Sale raised \$7,800 at its annual plant sale, held April 28 and 29 as part of the Oregon AgFest at the Oregon State Fairgrounds in Salem.

Proceeds go to four participating event partners: the Gervais High School Future Farmers of America (FFA), the McKay High School (Salem) FFA, the Salem-Keizer Education Foundation School Garden Program, and the Chemeketa Community College Horticultural Program.

Plants were donated by several nurseries and augmented by 30 annual flowering baskets grown by Chemeketa horticulture students. At least three students were in the booth at all times and were paired by volunteer sales staff, to learn firsthand about the plants, their growth habits and their exposure, as well as proper sales and customer service practices. Meanwhile, FFA students were there to deliver plants curbside and help customers load their purchases.

A special thank you from the Willamette Chapter goes out to the plant donors: **Alpha Nursery Inc., AF Nursery LLC, A & R Spada Farms LLC, Bailey Nurseries Inc., Heritage Seedlings & Liners Inc., Holden Wholesale Growers Inc., Kraemer's Nurseries Inc., McKinnon Nursery, Schreiner's Gardens, Scheidler Family Nursery Inc., St. Christopher Nursery LLC, T.K. Nursery LLC, Van's Nursery Inc., Woodburn Nursery & Azaleas Inc., and Youngblood Nursery Inc.**

The event was also made possible with the help of booth volunteers **Bruce Colman, Robert Van Klaveren, Kyle Fessler, David Malcolm,** Joy Bierley, Brenda Knobloch, Kathi Ray, James Fisher, Gary Caswell, and co-chairs **Val and Joanne Tancredi.** In terms of extra help, Alpha Nursery Inc. acted as a drop site, Van's Nursery Inc. and St. Christopher Nursery LLC provided trucking help, and Holden provided hand trucks and wagons for the event.



## SAIF BOARD ELECTS JEFF STONE AS CHAIRMAN

**Jeff Stone**, executive director of the Oregon Association of Nurseries, was elected as chairman of the SAIF board of directors. It is a part time voluntary responsibility, and he will continue to serve in his full-time role at OAN. SAIF is Oregon's largest provider of worker's compensation insurance. Stone was first appointed by the governor to the state-chartered organization's board in 2014, and was elected as its vice chairman in 2017.



## STUDIES FIND AMBROSIA BEETLES SEEK TREE ETHANOL

Agricultural Research Services have recently published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences that when a healthy tree emits ethanol when stressed from anything such as drought or frost injury, exotic ambrosia beetles are drawn to that alcohol in the tree's bark tissues. According to a summary by *Nursery Management*, the antimicrobial properties of the ethanol provide a suitable environment for the fungal gardens the female beetles create to feed their larvae and adult beetles. Knowing what they're attracted to could be helpful for targeting the pests.

Read the full article online by visiting [tinyurl.com/yaab3zkb](http://tinyurl.com/yaab3zkb)

## BAILEY NURSERIES SHORTENS BRAND IDENTITY TO BAILEY

As part of a marketing strategy to streamline their branding initiatives across all units, Bailey Nurseries has simplified its corporate identity to Bailey. They have updated their logo to the new name, which also features the company tagline Growing What's Next™. The company will be launching a new website in the fall under the new branding guidelines.



For more info, please contact: [ryan.mcenaney@baileynurseries.com](mailto:ryan.mcenaney@baileynurseries.com).

## DROUGHT PROJECTED FOR OREGON SUMMER

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) reports that snowpack throughout Oregon reached only 70 percent of normal, according to *Capital Press* (Salem, Oregon). River and stream conditions near the Columbia River and west of the Cascades are expected to be below average, while other locations will range from "abnormally dry" to "severe drought." Read more online at [tinyurl.com/yaf54wju](http://tinyurl.com/yaf54wju).



White growth on the lower leaf surfaces of impatiens leaves is typical of impatiens downy mildew. PHOTO BY DR. JILL CALABRO

## IMPATIENS SALES INCREASE AMID CONTINUED IDM THREAT

*Plasmopara obduscens*, the pathogen that causes impatiens downy mildew (IDM), dramatically reduced the marketability of impatiens since outbreaks began in 2004. Sales have increased to match where they were in

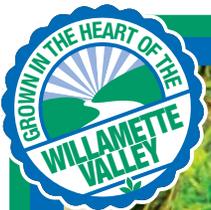
2011; however, the disease continues to be difficult to manage with fungicides and other resistance strategies. Researchers are exploring solutions and offer advice for growers, retailers, and landscapers. For more information, visit [www.diggermagazine.com/impatiens-downy-mildew](http://www.diggermagazine.com/impatiens-downy-mildew).

## SIMPLOT HIRES NEW LEADERSHIP

**Garrett Lofto** will serve as the president and chief executive officer of the J.R. Simplot Company starting on September 1, 2018. He will replace Bill Whitacre, who announced his retirement in April. Lofto has been the president of the company's AgriBusiness group since 2009.



**Doug Stone** has been named the next president of Simplot AgriBusiness, taking over for Lofto. Stone joined Simplot in June of 2016 as vice president of wholesale agricultural sales. Visit [www.simplot.com/news](http://www.simplot.com/news) for more details. >>



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Focusing on the substantial financial benefits that trees have on urban areas, CBS News reported on several studies that published fluctuating changes in the amount of tree cover in major metropoli-

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 Nursery industry news and events, published by the Oregon Association of Nurseries  
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**June 2018**  
**Natural by design**  
 Kym Pokorny shares with us the ways plant communities

tan cities. One study by the USDA Forest Service stated Oregon was one of the states that lost the most urban tree cover over a six-year study period. Read the story at [tinyurl.com/yb6ufln9](http://tinyurl.com/yb6ufln9).

**DIGGER MAGAZINE LAUNCHES eDIGGER NEWSLETTER**

Readers of *Digger Magazine* can now access each month's informative features,

original articles and green industry news in a newsletter format. The publications staff behind the magazine launched last May the new eDigger, a monthly email of the current issue's content. Releasing the exact same editorial content as the print issue, the mobile-friendly platform provides brief summaries and links to the full editorial content similarly published on [diggermagazine.com](http://diggermagazine.com). Interested subscribers must sign up for the service by going to [diggermagazine.com/subscribe](http://diggermagazine.com/subscribe).

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# Five business books worth reading



Ian Doescher

**Ian Doescher is the Director of Nonprofit Marketing at Pivot Group, a marketing agency in Portland, Oregon. He can be reached at [ian@askpivot.com](mailto:ian@askpivot.com).**

**L**OVE READING IN just about any genre, but I don't love reading books about business. The writing is often dry, the information sometimes unhelpful, and the tone often a little too boastful for my taste.

That said, the right book can make a significant impact on work habits, creativity, and overall outlook. Here are five of the best business books I've read recently, none of which made me want to tear my hair out:

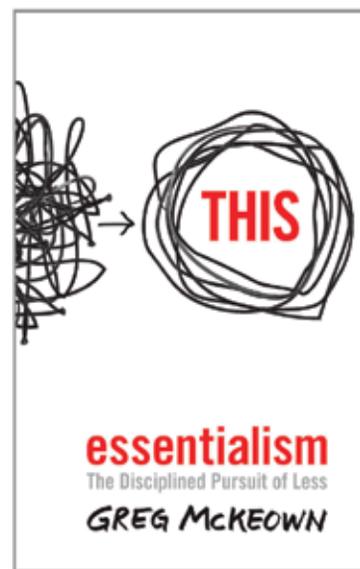
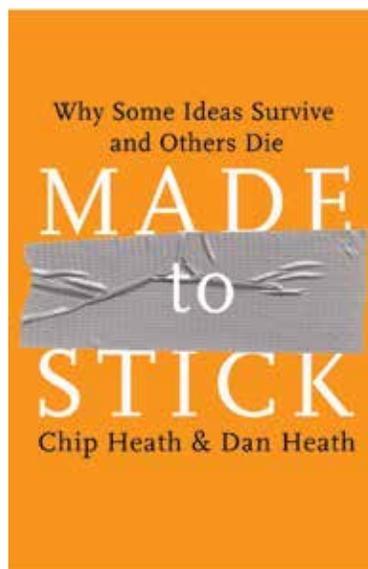
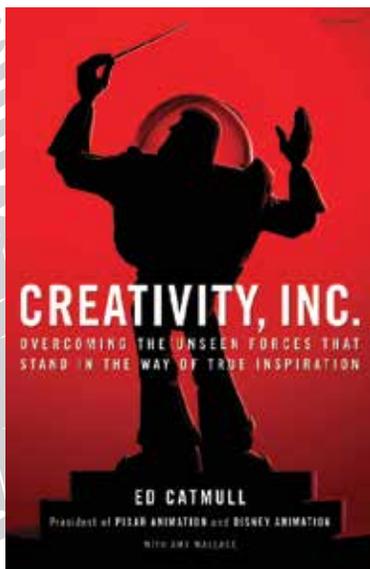
**1. *Creativity, Inc.***, by Ed Catmull and Amy Wallace. Ed Catmull was a cofounder of Pixar, the movie company that created fun, heartwarming animated movies like *Toy Story* and *Inside Out*. *Creativity, Inc.* not only tells the story of Pixar, but also offers an in-depth look at how Pixar created its unique culture. The book offers practical tips about being creative at work and offers vital words about the importance of candor in the workplace. It's my favorite book on this list (other than #5).

**2. *Made to Stick***, by Chip Heath and Dan Heath. What makes some ideas work and other ideas fail? *Made to Stick* is, arguably, the most directly applicable book on this list for people in marketing. The six chapters of this helpful book — “Simple,” “Unexpected,” “Concrete,” “Credible,” “Emotional,” and “Stories” — offer some of the most important ways to get ideas across and make them stick in the minds of your audience. It's a quick book, and extremely useful. If you could only read one of the books on this list, I would recommend this one.

**3. *Essentialism***, by Greg McKeown. How do you focus on the right things without feeling like you have to focus on everything? Greg McKeown makes the argument that too many of us split our focus and, as a result, don't accomplish the things that are truly important to us. *Essentialism* is a helpful guide to saying yes and no to the right things. He even includes advice on how to say no without

feeling guilty and guidelines for saying no with grace. If you are looking for a book equally important for business and personal use, it's this one.

**4. *The Tipping Point***, by Malcolm Gladwell. Occasionally, someone comes along with a book that has such interesting insights, you need to read it a few times to make sure it all soaks in. *The Tipping Point* is the oldest book on this list, and I could just as easily recommend Gladwell's books *Blink* and *Outliers*. In *The Tipping Point*, Gladwell looks at the different factors that make things go viral (though he didn't have that term when the book was published in 2002). One of the biggest lessons I took >>>





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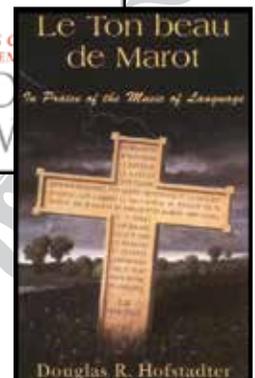
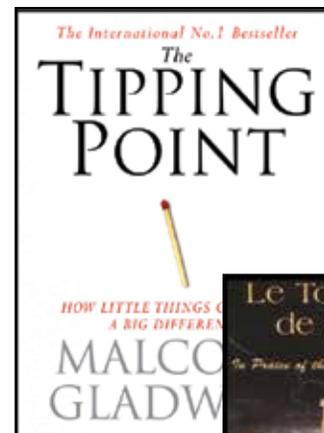


### PIVOT POINTS

from *The Tipping Point* is Gladwell's three personas: connectors, mavens, and salesmen. Those people are often invaluable to marketing efforts.

**5. *Le Ton Beau de Marot***, by Douglas Hofstadter. Remember the *Sesame Street* song "One of These Things [Is Not Like the Others]"? This is the one on the list that's not like the others. Douglas Hofstadter is a professor of computer science and best known for his Pulitzer Prize-winning 1979 book *Gödel, Escher, Bach*. Hofstadter is also a lover of language, and one of the smartest people whose ideas I've ever had the pleasure of reading. If you are looking for writing inspiration and want to read some fascinating ideas about the creative process, *Le Ton Beau de Marot* is the book for you. It is long — probably as long as any of the other three on the list combined — but it is fun.

Happy reading! These books will help inspire fresh thinking about marketing, about creativity, and, yes, about life in general. In the meantime, they won't put you to sleep with business speak or turn you off books forever. If you pick one up and read it, drop a line — I'd love to know what you think! ☺



# MEET THE LEADER

The voices of Oregon's nursery industry

## WHO IS PATRICK?

I'm kind of a city kid who found his way into the nursery industry. I had owned a couple of small businesses that focused on yard maintenance and hardscapes. My father-in-law presented me with a great opportunity at Powell's Nursery and I jumped on it.

## WHAT IS YOUR GUIDING PRINCIPLE?

I want to grow a quality plant and to have good relationships with my customers. If we grow a plant that my employees and myself are proud of, then we are doing our job. Also, I treat others the way I want to be treated — that goes a long way in life.

## WHAT IS A GOAL YOU HAVE YET TO ACHIEVE?

I want to go on a one-month cross-country road trip with my wife and kids. That might have to wait for a while, but will always be something I'm striving for!

## WHAT'S THE HARDEST BUSINESS DECISION YOU'VE EVER MADE?

There are hard decisions every day. We are dealing with plants that we hope someone will buy in two or three years. Which ones do we grow? How do we treat this bug or that disease? But the hardest decision we had to make was to let all but two of our employees go in the fall of 2008. We saw the writing on the wall and knew we could not survive with the payroll we had. It's hard to let someone you've worked with for eight years go, but we had no choice. To this day, I still think of them and hope they're doing well.

## WHAT WAS YOUR GREATEST MISSED OPPORTUNITY?

I should have taken Spanish classes in school.

## WHO IS YOUR MOST SIGNIFICANT MENTOR?

I have a few mentors, like my dad Mike Newton and my father-in-law Howard Powell.

Howard founded Powell's Nursery in



## Patrick Newton OWNER/OPERATOR

*Powell's Nursery*  
OAN member since 1993

- Farwest Show Committee, Chairman
- Sunset Chapter

1990. He brought me on in the summer of 2001. Howard started me at the bottom and taught me how to grow a quality plant and run a nursery. I didn't like making minimum wage and working in the potting shed at the time, but looking back, I'm grateful. There is nothing on this farm I can't do, from potting and grafting, to spraying, and the office work. Hell, I can even change a spark plug. Now, I own Powell's Nursery and still get his advice on business decisions. Thank you, Howard.

My dad Mike was always there for me.



I knew I could call him with anything and he wouldn't judge. He would listen and give advice. I miss that.

Finally, two men I met when I first started in the industry, Kevin Guy and John Rissberger. I look up to and admire them both. I appreciate all the knowledge they have given me over the years.

## WHAT IS YOUR BEST BUSINESS ADVICE?

Expand within your means. Don't over-extend yourself.

## WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT THE NURSERY INDUSTRY?

I love the camaraderie — we're all in this together.

## WHAT IS YOUR GREATEST CHALLENGE?

The challenges I face depend on the year. Last year, it was weeds. This year has been the weather. The second warmest January on record has turned my grafting schedule upside down. However, with great employees putting extra hours in and a cold February, we have been able to get back on schedule.

## WHAT MOTIVATES YOU TO GO TO WORK EVERYDAY?

I love what I do. I have great employees and am part of an awesome industry and association. I have become friends with most of my customers and look forward to our day-to-day banter.

## WHAT ARE YOU MOST PROUD OF?

My wife Daniela and two kids Isabella and Alec. I couldn't be prouder!

## IN YOUR OPINION, WHAT ARE THE MOST CRITICAL CHALLENGES FACING THE NURSERY INDUSTRY TODAY?

I know I sound like a broken record, but labor is our biggest challenge. With immigration issues, new construction jobs and the explosion of vineyards, labor continues to be a long-term — as well as the biggest — challenge. ☺



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The display garden at KG Farms Inc. showcases a colorful mix of their products. PHOTO BY CURT KIPP

# Excellence on display

Is it worth the trouble of creating a display or trial garden at your nursery?

We spoke to several growers about the challenges and benefits

BY TRACY ILENE MILLER

**M**ANY WHOLESALE AND even retail nurseries establish a display garden on their premises. These gardens can impress, instruct and inspire customers, while showing them what the plants look like in a natural setting next to other plants.

Some nurseries establish trial gardens which can be similar in look or purpose; however, each nursery's approach to creating a display garden is as varied as the operation size, customer base and nursery stock.

We spoke with several growers to learn about the challenges and benefits of establishing and maintaining a trial or display garden.

## New office, new tactic for display

At **KG Farms Inc.** (Woodburn, Oregon), a wholesale nursery that grows deciduous trees, broadleaf evergreen shrubs, and coniferous trees and shrubs in larger sizes, a brand-new office built three years ago offered the perfect opportunity to install

the display garden the nursery never had.

Starting with a blank canvas allowed the nursery to design a  $\frac{3}{4}$ -acre garden that would present the nursery's plants in a much more specific and appealing way than in the field. It also provided an opportunity for customers to observe how individually ordered items, such as specimen grafted conifers, appeared in a landscape alongside grouped commodity items (such as boxwoods, for example).

"People like to see how they can utilize the trees in a landscape rather than just having it at a garden center," said Jay Sanders, KG Farms sales manager. "They like to see how it is displayed in a landscape design."

The nursery staff knew they wanted to create a landscaped area around the building, but by using their own plants, the area would serve double duty as a feature attraction and a sales tool. With the display garden right outside the office, Sanders and other sales people can start their visits with customers in the garden,

walking around looking at the various trees before touring the nursery.

"Most times, our sales are done in vehicles," Sanders said. "With 400 acres to tour, to get out of the truck in the fields is not always the best use of their time. It's better to view the nursery stock in a compact, nicely landscaped plot."

A seating area built into the garden allows for meetings — including with large groups of sales staff.

Sanders finds that customers enjoy strolling on their own if they arrive at the office while he's out in the field. By observing the plants in practical use, their customers understand their maintenance and upkeep, which is a constant question. "It does allow us to talk about the maintenance practice, and they get to see the result," he said.

If he had to make one adjustment, it would be to place the garden so more trees and shrubs could be installed.

"We've kind of backed ourselves into a corner where there is not a lot of open >>>

## Excellence on display

space,” Sanders said. “I’m sure we will want to change out some of the plants as time goes on, but we’re pretty much locked into the design until we change out the plants in the coming years.”

### A home and a display garden

At **J Farms** (Amity, Oregon) — a producer of grafted liners of conifers and Japanese maples, including newer, contemporary cultivars — the move toward a display garden was more happenstance.

“Move” is the operative word: When co-owners Jenni Burkhead and Jim Lewis began grading their homestead for drainage to build a greenhouse in 2008, excess soil was pushed into berms around the house. That soil drove the decision to showcase their cultivars in a now ½-acre garden.

“I never had an actual plan,” Burkhead said. “Design in the conifer world is pretty much a mixture of form, texture and color. So it’s easier to design when you have those elements to place together. As long as you’re familiar with a 10-year growth period, which is what I like to impart, that helps you to figure out placement.”

Given that planting guidelines for trees on the Internet can be global rather than regional, Burkhead said her intention in the garden was for customers to get a realistic sense of a 10-year growth rate based on Oregon conditions, which is a useful benchmark, especially for newer cultivars.

“The display garden gives us, as



growers, real visualization of what the tree really does,” Burkhead said. “It is as educational for us as it is for our customers.”

As a contract grafting operation, Burkhead said customers order consistently year to year, so although they may have visited the garden at least once, “I don’t have people dropping in.”

The garden has been a cost-effective way to promote their varieties. It holds mature plant material that can be photographed for instantaneous communication with clients and for longer-term use on tags, the website, in catalogs and more.

“The bonus is I get to look out every

morning into a nice view,” Burkhead said.

Burkhead said maintenance of the conifers in the garden is not a big drag on her time. “Conifers don’t really require that much maintenance, and my garden doesn’t even have irrigation,” she said. “We try to promote the ones that don’t take a lot of maintenance.”

As a small nursery without regular visitors, maintenance is not the top priority. A hazelnut shell mulch is used, for instance, but weeds show through at times, and they live with it.

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The display and trial garden at Iseli Nursery (below and opposite page) gives customers an up-close experience with the various conifers the nursery grows. PHOTO S BY CURT KIPP



### Expanding over time

At **Iseli Nursery** (Boring, Oregon), their 2.5-acre garden is a display and trial garden only open by appointment. “We like to have everything we grow in there, as well as things that are in the pipeline,” said Sandy Dittmar, consumer marketing representative.

The nursery devotes a large amount of labor and resources into it, and Dittmar said it’s hard to measure sales or the value of the gardens — it just exists.

“For the customers who aren’t as experienced with the nursery’s materials, they see them in the garden,” Dittmar said, “And the experienced customers looking for something different, they find something they may have missed.”

The garden had a piecemeal beginning, starting with some landscaping on one side of the newly-built office building in 1983. Additions were made on each side until 2008 when the nursery was a stop on the tour for the Garden Writers Association annual conference, where all sides of the garden finally were connected.

The garden displays the product line and offers customers a place to see the size and shape of the plants in a landscape setting, as well as the special features that may not be apparent when viewing a small plant. It also provides a place for collectors and conifer aficionados — namely dwarf conifers — from all over the world to come. Plants aren’t sold from the garden, although the inventory in the garden is marked.

Laborers from elsewhere in the nursery have to be tapped to do upkeep on the display garden, which takes some negotiating, Dittmar said. The garden >>

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is the only significant expense because the plants are mature and the majority of hardscaping is in place. Regular upkeep is important for visitors and the landscape photographs used for tags and signage.

Reviewing the return on investment for maintaining the garden, Dittmar said it's hard to measure how many plants sell because of the garden. In some ways finding that value is a struggle for the nursery.

"We have to have faith that any customer who comes in, that it's a service for them to see what these plants can do," Dittmar said.

### Mixing it up

**Kraemer's Nursery** (Mt. Angel, Oregon) is a newcomer to display gardens, introducing a combined display-and-trial garden this spring and summer. The endeavor comes after encouragement from customers and suppliers to do so, and recognizing there is a stronger economy to supports these kinds of projects

"It does have a fair amount of cost associated with it," said Barry Gregory, vice president of sales and marketing. "To make this work, we have to commit resources — someone almost full time — to maintain and care for it, and to get people out there to evaluate and assess the plants."

Otherwise, Gregory sees no downsides. Kraemer's Nursery's customers, mainly big box stores, encouraged the development of the trial garden to better assess new genetics. A benefit for suppliers to trialing plants in this region where not many nurseries are doing so gives them firsthand information on what grows well here — or doesn't — compared with other regions.

"With so many new genetics coming out, to find the best hydrangea you really need to plant three to four to decide which one is the best," Gregory said. "Certainly it's more cost-effective to do so on small-scale trial basis versus bringing in a few thousand and finding out those three to four don't rate."

Out of its 650 acres of production space, the nursery has approximately 400 acres of outdoor containers growing devoted to ornamentals, woody plants and some



roses. The display garden is a little over an acre, and only 20 percent of the space will be planted this year, starting with liners and cuttings. The design will include new varieties grown beside those in the current product mix so they can be compared to see which are truly better for the space. Plants in the ground will be watered and fertilized, but no pesticide will be applied to determine disease resistance.

"We'll have trial plants in the ground like in a garden, then right next to them the same plant in containers to see how they perform," Gregory said. "Even if it is a great plant, if we can't make it look good in a container, it's hard to say we'll go for it."

New plants will be added for trialing each year, with a three-year trial period to assess whether new varieties should replace current stock. At the end of the third year, if something doesn't make the cut, it will be pulled.

"Our goal is not to add more varieties; it is to prove ours are the best," Gregory said. "And I would expect a lot of customers will want to come and look at it, to see what plants are looking best. I almost see it on an annual basis. We have some good sales people, but our best sales vehicle is the nursery. Any time you can get people out there, it is a good thing."

### A customer can only dream

At 4 acres, the display garden at **Sebright Gardens** (Salem, Oregon) is a notably large garden for a nursery. It started out as a personal garden for co-owner

Thomas Johnson.

"I'm a collector and gardener myself, and it just evolved into a display garden for the nursery," Johnson said.

Johnson moved his business from Oklahoma City in 1998. He has two businesses: one that specializes in irises, and Sebright Gardens that specializes in hostas. He started the garden in 2000, but it was not originally opened to the public.

"For anyone starting a nursery, I think it's a good thing to do a display garden," Johnson said, "but it is a tremendous amount of work. I wouldn't do it on this scale if it wasn't a labor of love."

The initial 2½-acre garden was located around the house, and it just kept getting bigger, Johnson said. "Just this last year, I've put in the last bed." He started on the perimeter, slowly filling in and eliminating all the grass as the years passed. Johnson does most of the maintenance himself, as the garden is his passion.

"It's hard for me to put a value on what goes into it, monetarily — I couldn't even tell," Johnson said. "We have a huge amount of plant material that we don't sell. We could propagate if we wanted, but we don't. The nursery is well-known, especially for its shade plants and the biggest selection of hostas in this half of the state."

The garden has become a destination location, with their customers providing the best in word-of-mouth advertising.

**(Continued on page 22)**

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## Excellence on display

The display garden at KG Farms Inc. includes plants the nursery grows, together with other plants, to show how the material might look in a finished landscape. PHOTO BY CURT KIPP



Visitors can easily wander the garden for three or four hours, Johnson said. Many can be found resting at the gazebo in the garden that is open seven days a week from April to November.

“We have some customers who come by every two weeks just to see what’s flowering in the garden,” Johnson said. “People ask if they can be married here.”

But Johnson said the nursery isn’t zoned for hosting events, and he’s not considering going in that business direction — mostly because the garden surrounds his home.

The location is one thing he would recommend or change about it if he had to do the garden all over again. When asked why he would move the garden away from his house, he responds, “So people don’t have their face plastered up against the window, which has hap-

pened,” he said, laughing.

“As a specialty nursery in this day and age, you have to do something different to get people to come see you; otherwise, you are just another nursery,” Johnson said.

“If you can get people to come to your garden and it’s planted in a way that they like, their subconscious goes, ‘If I plant that, my garden will look like that,’” Johnson said. Then, it’s only a few feet to go for customers to buy the plants they just admired.

The sale area and the garden area are separate on his property. Free catalogs are provided in the garden so customers can mark them up as a shopping list, and then head over to the greenhouse where the hostas are arranged in alphabetical order for sale.

Johnson expects the garden to require

more and more time to maintain, which is why he’s considering volunteer laborers. He’s heard of other nurseries doing so, and someone at the Hardy Plant Society gave the suggestion.

“I was hesitant, but they said it worked out well,” Johnson said. “It’s a possibility in the future.” ☺



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# A perennial favorite

Traditional and new *Agastache* varieties offer beauty, fragrance and other endearing qualities

BY TRACY ILENE MILLER

**I**F NOT FOR AGASTACHE'S manifold attractive qualities, growers and landscapers may have given up on this sun-loving flowering perennial long ago for its finicky and sometimes sprawling growth habit.

Agastache has endured as a garden favorite with growers and landscapers because it checks off so many boxes even without breeding. It has fragrant foliage, abundant and long-lasting blooms, and heat- and deer-tolerant qualities. It even serves a significant role in pollinator-friendly gardens. That's only for starters.

As breeders more recently have begun to focus on better selections to enhance appeal, including some with a trimmer build and a shorter stature, newer introductions expand the possibilities for agastache's placement in the garden as both a short-lived perennial and a splashy annual.

## Introducing customers to the plant

Agastache is native to North America and parts of Asia. Its name derives from the Greek word "stáchys," meaning "ear of grain," for its dense, terminal spikes of two-lipped flowers and opposite toothed leaves that give it the look of a mature stalk of grain.

Commonly known as hyssop, anise hyssop or hummingbird mint, this genus of about 30 aromatic species includes *Agastache foeniculum*, native to North America; *A. rugosa* from China and Japan; and *A. aurantiaca* from Mexico.

Blooming Nursery in Cornelius, Oregon sells 24 varieties of agastache, but started out nearly 35 years ago selling only two kinds of the plant. Over the years, owner Grace Dinsdale has culled through the better producers to give as many tried-and-true

selections as possible, said Ron Guilford, manager at Blooming Junction retail garden center (an arm of the nursery).

Independent garden centers buy all of the 24 varieties at wholesale volume from Blooming Nursery. At the Blooming Junction garden center, unless the plant is in bloom, customers might bypass agastache.

"For the most part, people stumble upon [agastache] or are led to it," Guilford said. "People who are not familiar with it don't necessarily see the value."

A home gardener is frequently looking at showy plants in real time and often in a 4-inch pot. However, the display garden is where Blooming Junction plants agastache in large swaths, making it an important part of introducing retail customers to their value.

Staff recommendations are also important when introducing customers to the varieties, as are good photographs of the plant in full bloom. A big draw of agastache is the scented foliage, so Guilford never misses an opportunity throughout the day to purposely run his hands through the plant to release its heady scent.

Overall, the taller varieties that are planted en masse to put on a show sell better than the shorter ones, although that might change given the smaller spaces people are growing in, Guilford said.

*A. 'Blue Boa'* is one of Guilford's favorites, mainly because of its intensely deep violet flower with substantial blooms on 2–3 foot spikes. It is one of the nursery's top three sellers. Other popular selections are *A. 'Cotton Candy'*, with a fast-growing, compact 24-inch by 18-inch habit with bubble-gum scented foliage and airy, showy, light pink flower spikes, as well as *A. aurantiaca 'Navajo Sunset'*, with citrus-scented foliage and bright orange-red tubu- ➤

## A perennial favorite

lar flowers that last all summer.

*A. rupestris*, commonly known as threadleaf giant hyssop, is another favorite of Guilford. Kate Bryant, a Portland-based container and garden designer, also uses them even though the unhybridized ones can be “rambunctious, rambling plants,” she said. Bryant has always grown agastache in her personal garden. It was one of the first plants she experimented with and she eagerly incorporates it into the container designs and plantings she does for her clients.

“I see agastache as one of the best plants for pollinators. It is long-blooming, nectar-rich and the colors are dreamy,” Bryant said. “It is a big plant, reaching 2–3 feet, and the foliage has the best scent — minty, spicy and resinous. It is heaven to brush against it.”



*A. rupestris*



*A. 'Cotton Candy'*



*A. 'Navajo Sunset'*



*A. 'Kudos Mandarin'*

According to the designer, the trick with

agastache is educating customers on its ideal growing conditions and its status as a short-lived perennial that endures only a few years in the Northwest, or as a sturdy annual.

If planted in dense, soggy soils, agastache will produce long stems that will split and flop over. The new growth can be headed back, but in general, it is better to place the plant in unamended, well-drained soils with a gravel mulch where they will

live longer. Otherwise, gardeners can enjoy its “voluptuous growth habit” as an annual, Bryant said.

Native to Arizona, New Mexico and parts of Mexico, *A. rupestris* — introduced by High County Gardens of Shelburne, Vermont in the 1990s — has fine, licorice-and-mint scented foliage and smoky purple buds that open to apricot tubular flowers with lavender calyxes. Its habitat is mineral-rich, well-drained soil. With that pedigree, it is a tough plant that can take lots of sun. It’s a favorite and a hot item at Walla Walla Nursery in Walla Walla, Washington, which sells double the number of *A. rupestris* than any other agastache variety.

“It is a huge, unwieldy plant, so it is important to give it space and sunshine —

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A. 'Summer Love'

like in a hot, dry, well-drained position in the open garden," Bryant said.

Agastache can be ideal when you need a plant to fill a new garden in quickly.

"A 4-inch plant can be a 2-foot by 2-foot plant a year later or late the following summer," Bryant said.

*A. rupestris* is a perfect fit if you treat it like something that will fade away as the garden gets mature and other plants begin to steal the sunlight.

Most agastache can work even better as a seasonal plant in container gardens, eliminating the worries of them aging in place.

"They go in and provide a big splash, growing from a small to massive plant in the course of one growing season, providing a show with hummingbirds, butterflies, pollinating insects — and great beauty," Bryant said.

#### Careful cultivation for wholesale growers

Finding ways to grow high-quality agastache has been as much of an experiment for growers as it has been for gardeners — but the growers are trying to do it in quantity, too.

Throughout its 20 years of growing agastache, Walla Walla Nursery has tested as many as 26 varieties. Its current selection is narrowed to 13 that are good quality container plants for the market, according to Mike Richardson, production manager.

Walla Walla Nursery grows between 10,000 and 13,000 plants per season in 3.5-inch pots and 1-gallon pots in early spring, late spring and summer to ensure availability. The nursery location is on the colder side of the plant's hardiness range, so it's not uncommon to use frost blankets or snow for insulation, depending on the weather.

"We've stuck with those that do well in our area [and work in containers]," Richardson said. "There are a few favorites that are hardier and more reliable, and then some of the new genetics are making agastache more attractive for growers."

For instance, the Kudos™ series from Terra Nova Nurseries in Canby, Oregon, with its long bloom season and compact stature of 17–20 inches are attractive >>

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## A perennial favorite

for container growers. They burst with color — gold, yellow, pink and purple — as do the compact A. 'Bolero' and A. 'Mango Tango' from Walters Gardens in Zeeland, Michigan.

"'Bolero' is purple-y, not periwinkle, with a dark green leaf and almost a purple-y vein matching the flower color," Richardson said. "'Mango Tango' is compact, easy for me to grow, and it transitions well into the landscape. It has consistent, reliable blooms and it doesn't grow out of control."

Nonetheless, the older genetics that include the native *A. foeniculum* and *A. rupestris*, should not be overlooked. They provide dynamic interest in mixed plantings, borders and containers, and are impressive as slightly larger, taller specimen-type plants in both the landscape and containers.

"I think some of the older genetics get a bad rap from growers who don't want to grow them because they are taller, but it doesn't mean they don't have a place in the garden," Richardson said. "You can have a 60-inch specimen and build around that."



A. 'Blue Boa'



A. 'Kudos Ambrosia'



A. 'Summer Glow'

Like A. 'Ava' from High Country Gardens, which reaches 5 feet tall with spikes of deep, rose-pink flowers held by raspberry-colored calyxes, or A. 'Blue Blazes' which grows to 4 feet tall with long-blooming lavender purple flowers from mid summer through fall.

Deborah Whigham — owner of Digging Dog Nursery, a mail-order specialty nursery in Albion, California — does mostly cuttings. Growing agastache in a warm, sunny greenhouse closed against the cold is a challenge because they like good air circulation. Digging Dog Nursery grows agastache in Anderson pots, 3 inches square by 5.5 inches deep, with an open bottom.

"For a finicky plant, it has a lot of pluses," Whigham said. "That's why I keep growing it, and my customers love it. We are drawn to agastache because they are

fabulous. You can put it in a sunny border, it's great in a cottage garden and in a butterfly garden, and its aromatic, so you can put it by a walkway. Most of the agastache bloom from June through September, and there are not a lot of plants that offer that kind of bloom time. Its summer show is just great."

Any literature will tell you it's hard to get them to overwinter, which is why she's excited about A. 'Blue Boa'. It is supposed to be more winter hardy.

Her favorite is A. 'Black Adder', an introduction by Coen Jansen Nursery in The Netherlands, which she's had success with both in the greenhouse and in sales.

"It has proven more reliable in greenhouse production," Whigham said. "It always successfully overwinters and is overall less finicky than some of the other hybrids."

Although the blue and purple agastache are easier to grow, Whigham said, the pinks and reds are more popular. Two of her best-sellers are A. 'Rosy Giant', a 4–5 foot tall and less winter hardy variety, and A. *mexicana* 'Sangria' reaching 3–4 feet tall with red-purple flowers and lemon-perfumed foliage used for tea. Whigham offers the prolific-blooming A. 'Firebird', with its mix of copper, coral, pink and red-hue flowers rising above a compact 2–3 foot tall plant.

"Generally, my philosophy is to promote long-lived perennials, but there are certain plants that are just fun to have because they have so much merit," Whigham said. "But you shouldn't feel a failure if you lose [agastache] after two or three years." >>



A. 'Summer Sunset'



A. 'Poquito Butter Yellow'



A. 'Kudos Coral'

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## A perennial favorite

### What's in a name?

There's no shortage of pronunciations of agastache. Depending on who you talk to, most of the time you will hear it called "aa-guh-STACH-ee" or "aa-guh-STAH-key." At Terra Nova Nurseries, a leader in agastache breeding, they pronounce it "uh-GAS-ta-kee."

"Based on its Greek roots, that's the proper pronunciation," said Chuck Pavlich, director of new product development.

Terra Nova Nurseries released two popular series of agastache after breeder Janet Egger envisioned a better plant. Her goal was to have upright, well-branched background plants with distinct colors.

The result was the taller Summer™ series released over a two-year period between 2007 and 2008, followed by the Kudos™ series in 2012-2013, in part to answer the call for more compact plants.



By breeding with a little-known species from Eastern Oregon and the Rockies, *A. cusickii*, Egger was able to achieve even better results than expected. Yielding increased disease resistance for downy mildew, a problem for agastache in humid climates, and a genetic dwarf that needed no PGR as a pot crop. The plants have also increased hardiness to USDA hardiness zone 4. They come in a range of bright, distinct colors.

*A. 'Morello'*, another newer Terra Nova introduction launched in 2016, tops out at 33 inches in bloom, maintains the same hardiness as Kudos, and was immedi-

ately in demand.

"It is such an unusual purple-y foliage in spring and summer with big bundles of cherry-juice flowers — large flowers, lots of them, in this unusual shade, a designer shade — and mildew resistant," Pavlich said.

Terra Nova Nurseries is introducing an even shorter series, Poquito™, that is a third more compact than Kudos and available in four colors. Pavlich said there will certainly be more colors.

As agastache is gaining in popularity, the expectation is it will be increasingly more available from growers and desired by customers in the coming years. ☺

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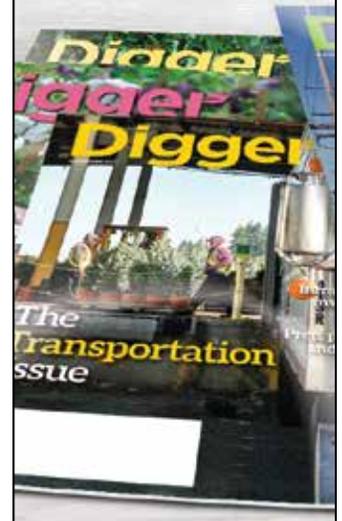
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# GROWING KNOWLEDGE

Series content is coordinated by Dr. Jay Pscheidt, professor of botany and plant pathology at Oregon State University in Corvallis, Oregon.



An ongoing series provided by Oregon State University in collaboration with the United States Department of Agriculture and in partnership with the Oregon Association of Nurseries

## Ozone in the low zone

These oxygen molecules in the lower atmosphere, also known as smog, can damage growing plants

BY JAY W. PSCHIEDT

**D**URING THE SUMMER, attention turns to air quality all over the western United States, as smoke from hot forest fires fills our valleys. Most of the smoke is made of small particulates that are not known to damage plants.

At about the same time, however, ozone can rise to damaging levels during the heat of summer.

Ozone in the upper atmosphere protects us from the damaging radiation of sunlight. It can also be used to sanitize irrigation water. But at certain concentrations for certain periods of time, it can injure sensitive plants.

Ground-level ozone is called smog. Smog-forming pollutants are primarily generated by internal combustion engines, not smoke from forest fires. Traffic and activities in urban areas generate the most pollutants, but often the wind blows the pollution to outlying suburban and rural communities. Emissions of hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen in the morning combine with summer heat and intense sunlight in the afternoon to produce ground-level ozone.

Smog is a problem for the greater Portland and Medford, Oregon metropolitan areas during the summer months. It is created most often on days when the temperature is 90 F or higher, especially when winds are light or non-existent.

All areas of Oregon currently meet the federal air quality standard for



Smoke can be seen during the Columbia gorge fire of 2017. Particulates in smoke are not harmful to plants as they are to humans. PHOTO BY JAY W. PSCHIEDT

## Ozone in the low zone

ozone. These levels, however, are based on human health. Sensitive plants can have problems when the ozone concentration is between 50–120 parts per billion (ppb) for extended time periods. The ozone monitoring station in Eugene, Oregon recorded at least seven days during the summer of 2017 that met this requirement.

Ozone levels in the Puget Sound basin have exceeded the National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) on several occasions in the last century. Sensitive plants are at risk if they're grown near Seattle and Tacoma, Washington; Portland, Oregon; Vancouver, British Columbia; or any growing metropolitan area.

### What are the most sensitive plants?

The list of sensitive plants is long, but it includes alder, begonia, blackberry, currant, dahlia, fuchsia, grape, lilac, milkweed, ninebark, Oregon ash, Oregon oak, petunia, poplar (including aspen), radish, sequoia, snowberry, sycamore, tomato, and tulip tree. There can be wide differences in tolerance within a group or species where certain cultivars are more sensitive than others.

Symptoms of ozone injury on plants usually occur between the veins on the upper leaf surface of older and middle-aged leaves, but may also involve both leaf surfaces for some species. The cells of the palisade parenchyma of the most recently expanded leaves are the most sensitive to ozone injury. Tissue along the major veins usually remains unaffected.

For dicots exposed to high concentrations of ozone, symptoms may include bleaching, flecking, stippling, and interveinal necrosis. Less severe symptoms can include bronzing, chlorosis and premature senescence of various plant parts.

Monocots may show chlorotic or white necrotic lesions or necrosis of the margin and tip of the leaf blade. Less severe symptoms can also include chlorosis and premature senescence.

Severe conifer symptoms include needle banding where clear bands of chlorotic tissue develop, as well as needle tipburn. Less severe conifer symptoms include fleck-



Ozone damage to Jeffrey pine (*Pinus jeffreyi*) shows here as small chlorotic flecks on the needles. PHOTO BY DAVID SHAW

ing of older needles, mottling of younger needles, and premature needlecast.

Many forest and landscape trees are susceptible to ozone injury. Extensive injury was detected on forest ozone biomonitoring sites in California, with ponderosa and Jeffrey pines, mugwort, skunkbush, and blue elderberry showing injury. Little or no injury was detected in Oregon and Washington forest sites.

Symptoms of ozone injury on ponderosa pine include a chlorotic needle mottle, which develops from the tip to the base on older needles. These symptoms are followed by a necrotic tip dieback. The oldest needles become senescent and turn a uniform tan color. Normal needle retention is for 3–5 years, but ozone-affected needles are cast prematurely leaving the chlorotic mottled one-year-old needles on the tree.

Eastern white pine is also sensitive. Symptoms start with minute, silver flecks radiating from the stomata of current-year needles. These tiny flecks develop into larg-

er chlorotic flecks. These may develop into pink-to-red lesions and bands that spread to the needle tips. Normal needle retention is for three years but the resulting needle-cast leaves only current season needles.

Sensitive rhododendrons and azaleas show reddish brown stippling on the upper leaf surfaces and an overall general reduction in plant size. 'Nova Zemla' is a sensitive rhododendron while 'Delaware Valley White', 'Roadrunner', and 'White Water' are sensitive azaleas.

In grapes, the damage is referred to as "oxidant stipple" or "ozone stipple" and has been observed in Oregon. Symptoms of ozone damage appear predominantly on older grape leaves. Small interveinal spots, 0.1–0.5 mm in diameter, occur only on the upper leaf surface. The lower leaf surface does not show stipple symptoms, but may show necrotic spots if symptoms are severe.

Stipple may begin as a yellow color but is most commonly recognized when



The leaf damage is unknown but ozone is suspected due to the distribution of symptoms on plants and leaves. Not the damage is worse on the upper leaf surface and between veins.

PHOTO COURTESY OF OSU PLANT CLINIC IMAGE

spots become brownish bronze to dark brown. Heavily stippled leaves may have a uniform bronze appearance from a distance and necrotic spots up to 2mm in diameter. The tissue in the veins surrounding lesions remains green. Affected leaves eventually drop from the vine. Growers may confuse this with spray damage.

The most common symptom of ozone damage on field-grown beans is bronzing, in which a purple-brown discoloration that develops on the upper surface of the leaves. Bronzing on green beans has been observed in Oregon that could be due to ozone. The symptom was observed late in the season and could easily be overlooked since crops are senescing or have other diseases (such as powdery mildew). Symptoms of air pollution and ozone injury have been observed in multiple bean fields in central Washington, particularly in adzuki bean crops.

Ozone injury has not been observed on small fruit crops in the Pacific Northwest. >>

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## Ozone in the low zone



Figure 3. Chlorotic spots on onion leaves due to ozone damage. PHOTO COURTESY OF OSU PLANT PATHOLOGY SLIDE COLLECTION

Another common pollutant that forms from the incomplete combustion of fossil fuels is ethylene. This can be a problem for greenhouses and shipping containers where heaters are not properly vented. It also occurs when exhaust from vehicles idling outside a greenhouse drifts into plant production areas. Premature loss of flowers, epinasty, yellowing and abscission of foliage are common symptoms.

To conclude, if you are near or downwind of a metropolitan area, air pollution might be the cause of mysterious leaf problems that show up just after hot summer days. ©

*Jay W. Pscheidt is a professor of botany and plant pathology and extension plant pathology specialist at Oregon State University. He can be reached at [pscheidj@science.oregonstate.edu](mailto:pscheidj@science.oregonstate.edu)*



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# Don't sleep on the WPS

**During the administration of Barack Obama, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) expanded the rules for agricultural operations to protect workers from pesticide exposure. These rules make up the Worker Protection Standard (WPS).**

With a new administration, the same rules apply. While not passed by Congress, these rules are very real and the nursery and greenhouse industry across the nation must comply.

Some of the rules are pretty basic, and they reflect current practice — “don't spray people” would be one example. Other regulatory elements, however, collide with existing agricultural practices. That impact is where your association comes in.

How can we help OAN members comply with the federal rules and protect their workers, all without disruption to what you do? It turns out we have a plan. We have aligned with a certified trainer who will explain how you can keep the weight of federal and state regulators off your shoulders.

Last year at the OAN Convention, experts from the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA), Oregon State University (OSU) and our agricultural partner, Oregon Farm Bureau Federation, shared basic information about the WPS and what was coming for the year. Out of that issue discussion, the OAN pressed ODA, OSU and the State Accident & Insurance Fund (SAIF) to provide training materials before the regulatory citations and fines go into effect in 2019.

Industry trainings began in June and will continue through July, followed by webinars in August. What I noticed most during the June trainings was the requirement that all new employees must undergo pesticide training before reporting to work. The employer must keep a record of training employees.

## What is the WPS?

The WPS was written by the EPA to reduce the risk of pesticide poisoning among agricultural workers and pesticide handlers.

It's enforced differently in each state; in Oregon, the Oregon Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) enforces the standard.

The WPS applies when a pesticide with the words “agricultural use requirements” on the product label is used on plants grown or sold at outlets such as retail nurseries or greenhouses. It covers agricultural workers (people involved in the production of agricultural plants) and pesticide handlers (people who mix, load, or apply crop pesticides) who work on farms and in forests, nurseries, and greenhouses.

What is not commonly understood is that the WPS is in effect with both restricted use AND general use pesticide applications. Exceptions apply for families (as defined by page 88-91 in the “How to Comply” Manual), ag-use pesticides that are used post-harvest, and ag-use pesticides that are used to protect structures or weeds in non-crop areas.

The WPS basics require employers to inform employees about pesticide safety; protect them from potential pesticide exposure; and mitigate pesticide exposures if they should occur. Annual safety training is required, with an emphasis on critical training points for both workers and handlers, central posting sites and record retention, and stringent rules about the Application Exclusion Zones (AEZ). Restricted Entry Intervals are a critical control point for the health and safety of the agricultural workforce.

## Commitment to safety and innovation

The nursery and greenhouse industry in Oregon is committed to the safety of its workers through collaboration with ODA, USDA and OSU Extension. Proper pesticide application allows the nursery industry to thrive as a traded sector and grow and sell high-quality plant material.

As stewards of the land and environment, we are seeking innovations to improve pesticide application and reduce spray drift. Over the past two years, a team with representatives from USDA, OSU, the Ohio State University and the University of Tennessee have tested new technology for a pesticide sprayer that could reduce chemical volume by 50 percent and be friendlier to the environment. This type of innovation, as well



Jeff Stone  
OAN EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

as integrated pest management practices and collaboration between federal, state and local entities will ensure that we continue as a leader in the agricultural sector.

## Training and resources

Providing training and resources is critical to your success. In conjunction with OSU and ODA, the OAN secured USDA Specialty Crop Grant funds to conduct trainings throughout the Willamette Valley, bringing the content to you. I am proud that the OAN is offering training to all nursery industry operators whether they are members or not. The industry must comply and that means all of us.

I am also pleased that SAIF is joining us as a partner to provide our members with WPS DVDs and central posting materials in both English and Spanish. By the time you read this, the OAN will have shipped DVDs and the safety posters to every grower, greenhouse and retail operator as a member benefit.

The OAN has also created a members-only landing page with the latest training and information tools relating to the WPS ([www.oan.org/wps](http://www.oan.org/wps)). We will conduct two more regional training sessions: July 20 at Monrovia in Dayton, Oregon and July 23 at Alpha Nursery Inc. in Salem, Oregon.

Certified pesticide applicators will receive pesticide credits. Remember: there is no grace period for WPS training and the association is doing everything it can to provide you with critical information to ensure compliance with this standard.

WPS compliance is a big deal. The OAN is working hard to make sure you have every tool to train and protect your workers and your operation. A safe work environment is what you do every day! ©



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