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Turbocharge your career at Farwest

It's almost Farwest Show time, and I am pumped for it.

The Farwest Show has been a staple in my life for as long as I can remember. My first memories of the show were going there with my parents as a small child. The highlight for me was getting together with my brother as my parents manned the booth, and seeing how much loot we could accumulate. In our minds, it was like a warmup to Halloween.

Candy was the clear goal, but we would take anything people were giving out: hats, pens, trinkets — any of it was gold for us. There were some lessons there in decorum: how to approach people to achieve the best haul of goods.

Who would have thought that our nursery future was already a work in progress at that point?

Fast forward to today, and now I have my kids doing the same thing. It's just one of those things that makes me smile as I watch them do what I did as a child. I wonder if this isn't part of the allure that led me to this fantastic industry. After all, it's the people that solidified my desire to be part of the nursery business.

The value of Farwest isn't limited to bottom-line sales traced directly to the show, and it's not about the candy, either!

I have too many conversations with people that judge the show by how much product they sell. I am not dismissing the importance of selling product. After all, that's one of the main goals we go in with, too!

I would just challenge you to look at other things the show offers — things that can and will add value to your operation. It really pays to expand your company's definition of what a successful tradeshow looks like. Get out, attend some classes, see what new varieties and products are showcased, see some of the phenomenal speakers that will be there, and go to the networking events.

In terms of networking events, are you an up-and-comer in the nursery industry? Then you should check out the Emergent event. This is always a special get together for me, because it helped turbocharge my career advancement, propelling it forward at a faster pace. I formed countless relationships at the event, leading to new customers and lifelong friends.

I highly encourage you to have your younger employees attend. It is a fast track to making connections that will help your people achieve personal and professional growth. Please invest in getting all the young people you know to this event. It's these opportunities for connection that keep the future of our industry bright.

If you are a woman in horticulture, then check out the Women in Horticulture networking event to meet up with friends old and new. This event has been going on for a decade and has connected like-minded women to accelerate their careers forward. Plus, whether you're a woman or not, you can show your support by checking out the awesome shirts that are available as a fundraiser. You can find the link on the Farwest website.

My favorite thing to do at the show is walk the floor and catch up with other growers and see what new trends are taking off so that we can better align with them. This is the best opportunity to get a finger on the pulse of what's going on with innovations, sales, and tips for overcoming the never-ending seasonal issues we face.

I can't wait to see you there! ☺



Josh Robinson