



Dear Friends,

January 11, 2008

Long ago before the advent of our modern calendar, there was a thirteenth month tucked in between December and January. As I drag the Christmas decorations back into the attic and struggle to fit once again into those trade show clothes from last year, I find myself longing for that 'extra month', a quiet interlude for recovery, reflection, repose and crash dieting.

For CENTS, please remember to drop your catalogs off at MacKenzie Nursery Supply or Gilson Gardens by Thursday, January 17, or at the NGLCO booth (#5033) during the show. This is an excellent opportunity for members who do not attend the show to have their materials displayed!

For your own booth at all the trade shows, please display the NGLCO map/brochures (available at Gilson Gardens) and act as a personal ambassador for our Association!

February Meeting

Most of us would be challenged to remember a time when 'Labor' was not our number one issue! Even with social security no-match letters temporarily on hold, there's a good chance we will see a turbulent and troubling labor market this Spring. In addition to the availability of workers, one issue that is impacting an increasing number of Ohio nurseries is the Workers Compensation group-rating program. While those of us in the program enjoy discounted rates, those who encounter a few bad claims can find themselves dropped by the program and facing 600-700% increases. Our February workshop and dinner meeting will address some of these labor-related issues.

In addition, as our industry faces dramatic increases in fertilizer costs, another workshop will address the effective use and monitoring of 'slow-release fertilizers' in different types of media. Properly used, these products can reduce costs and eliminate most runoff into our lakes and streams.

Date: Wednesday February 27, 2008

Location: Rider's Inn (792 Mentor Avenue/Rt 20, Painesville)

Workshops

2PM to 4:30PM:
No charge

Slow-Release Fertilizers

Willie Faber, Sun Gro Horticulture
(former Extension Specialist)
Hosted by Sun Gro Horticulture
Presented by OSU Extension-Lake

Agriculture Payroll Update

H2A, Unemployment, Lake1Stop
Workers Compensation,
Hosted by Ohio Job & Family Services
and NGLCO

Social Hour: Following the workshops until 6:15 PM

Dinner Meeting: Workers Compensation Group-Rating Program

Dinner Price: \$35

More Details: In our February letter

Propagators Forum

The next in our series of Propagators Meetings will be Wednesday, February 6, at Klyn Nurseries, from 3 PM to 4:30 PM. Randy Zondag will lead a follow-up discussion on Grafting with hands-on demonstrations.

Poly Recycling

We have a new Associate member who is interested in recycling our nursery poly:

Mondo Polymer Technologies
Ronnie Wesel
PO Box 250 Reno, Ohio 45773
(740) 376-9396 (FAX) (740) 376-9960

This looks like the most workable opportunity so far for disposing of our poly in a cost-effective and environmentally friendly manner. We will provide a fact sheet with recommended procedures for removal and storage at our February meeting.

Natural Gas Users Group

Our quotes from Direct Energy for a Natural Gas Users Group were comparable to what many members were currently paying. Each participant is free to contract with Direct Energy or stay with their existing supplier. This is something we can reevaluate each year based upon market conditions at that time. Thanks to all the members who responded with usage information!

NGLCO Economic Impact Survey

Members will soon be receiving a brief confidential survey designed to gather economic impact data for our local industry. This information is not available anywhere else and is critically important in our dealings with elected and regulatory officials! This is a combined project by NGLCO and OSU Extension-Lake. Please respond quickly and completely!

NGLCO Committee Activities

Our NGLCO Advisory Committee comprised of past presidents and current board members met last week to discuss the changing role of our association. Recommendations will be reviewed at our February meeting.

A group of members interested in further documenting 150 years of local nursery history met recently and discussed how to move forward with this task.

The Executive Board will conduct a half-day planning session next month. Please contact the board or me if you have matters to be addressed!

Out and About

Bill Mainland and I met last month with the agribusiness committee of the Lake County Economic Development Council (Ernie Brass, our new Associate Member from Money Concepts is chairman of that committee). Among the topics discussed was the possible off-season 'sharing' of workers between nurseries and local grape growers.

Local growers met at Klyn Nurseries in December for a round-table on tree protection products.

BFG Supply will hold a Growers Clinic on March 4th at Geneva State Lodge. Contact your salesman for details.

With two major windstorms in the last two months unleashing gusts in excess of sixty miles per hour, some of our houses were uncovered earlier than planned! Some good news though... Randy promises to hold another overwintering clinic before we cover this Fall!

Sincerely,
Mark Gilson, President