



# Louisiana Nursery News

March/April 1999

The Newsletter of the Louisiana Association of Nurserymen

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## AG Census Shows 43% Jump In Nursery/Greenhouse Sales

Nursery, greenhouse and floriculture crop sales totaled \$10.9 billion in 1997, up from \$7.6 billion in 1992, according to the 1997 Census of Agriculture released this week by USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service. The increase represents a 43 percent jump in sales over the 1992 Census. Together, nursery, greenhouse and floriculture crops make up 11 percent of total U.S. farmgate receipts, up from 10 percent in 1992. Some 33,935 farms produced nursery plants as their principal crop; floriculture farms numbered 21,824. New farm types covered for the first time in the Census included short rotation woody crops and Christmas trees.

The data were released at a gala ceremony on February 3 at USDA headquarters in Washington, DC, with the American Nursery & Landscape Association and Society of American Florists among the invited guests. The new Census is the first conducted under the authority of USDA and was released 10 months earlier than any previous Census. With the support of ANLA and SAF, Congress in 1997 shifted responsibility for the Census of Agriculture from the Department of Commerce to USDA, to ensure that these important agricultural to policymakers, growers and others.

Conducted once every five years, the Census of Agriculture provides a snapshot of American agriculture at the national, state and county levels. It is the most comprehensive source of statistics available to Congress and others as they make decisions about issues like research, rural lending, tax and trade programs.

The Ranking of States and Counties volume of the Census ranks by number of farms, value of products sold, and production and acreage of major crops. Most of the tables show data for the 20 leading states and 100 leading counties. Most also include the cumulative percent of the U.S. total, as each leading state or county is ranked.

### Horticultural Specialties Survey

The Horticultural Specialties Survey, which growers should by now have completed and returned to USDA, is conducted every 10 years and provides more detailed information about horticultural crops. Response to the survey is mandatory. Those who have not yet completed that Survey should do so as quickly as possible.

It is important to note that NASS data for the Census of Agriculture and the follow-on Horticultural Specialties survey

cont'd on pg. 8

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- May 15** Southeast LA Association of Nurserymen's meeting. Contact Robert LaCroix at 504/229-4570 for additional information.
- May 18** Southwest LA Association of Nurserymen's meeting. Gehron-Teed Nursery DeRidder, LA
- June 1-3** Mid-South Greenhouse Growers Conference Ramada Inn- Southwest Conference Center Jackson, MS
- June 9** 5<sup>th</sup> Annual LA Plant Materials Conference Botanical Garden Pavilion at City Park New Orleans, LA
- July 8-9** Certified Nursery Professional Review & Exam Barnwell Center Shreveport, LA

## 1999 LAN Officers, Board & Committees

### OFFICERS

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Rick Webb, Louisiana Growers, 504/ 748-5850

#### Past President

Gerald Foret, Gerald Foret Wholesale Nursery, 318/ 365-4858

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Wanda Chase, Imahara's Landscape, 225/ 767-2250

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Randy Bracy, Bracy's Nursery, 504/ 748-4716

#### Executive Secretary

Allen Owings, LSU Agricultural Center, 225/ 388-2222

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Chris Bollich, Chris' Nursery, 318/ 748-6513

Dan Devenport, Dan's Nursery, 318/ 898-9295

Robbie Dupont, Dupont Nursery, 225/ 659-2822

Mike Hoogland, Hoogland's Nursery & Landscape, 318/ 746-8655

David Lowery, Windmill Nurseries, 504/ 796-9655

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Frances Thorne, Thorne's Plant Farm, 318/ 462-2914

#### Associate Director

Andy Zimlich, Lerio Corporation, 800/ 457-8113

#### Director/ Research & Education

Dan Gill, LSU Agricultural Center, 504/ 482-1107

#### Administrative Assistant

Laura Crmko, 225/ 667-4744

### COMMITTEES

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Chris Bollich, Ed Bush, Dan Gill, Allen Owings, Wanda Chase

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Randy Bracy, Wanda Chase, Gerald Foret, Rick Webb, Allen Owings

#### Finance Committee

Randy Bracy, Wanda Chase, Allen Owings

#### GSHE Representatives

Wanda Chase, Rick Webb

#### Louisiana Farm Bureau Nurserymen's Committee

Dan Devenport, Tim Holloway

#### Membership Committee

Chris Bollich, Laura Crmko, David Lowery

#### Research Priority Committee

Robby Barry, Dan Devenport, Mike Levy, Pat Newman, Pat Steltz

#### Website Manager

Gary Marmillion

## In Memoriam

**"Tom" Boudreaux**, owner of Mid-South Sod and a longtime resident of Covington for 25 years, passed away April 3, 1999. He was a board member of the Louisiana Horticulture Commission and a member of the Louisiana and Mississippi Turfgrass Associations. Everyone in Louisiana's nursery industry expresses their condolences to the Boudreaux family.

**Roscoe Dean**, Owner of Dean's Nursery in Lucedale, MS, passed away in April. LAN expresses our sympathies to the Dean family.

**Bobby Fletcher, Sr.**, longtime district agent and formerly 4-H agent with the Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service, died in an automobile accident April 21, 1999. Fletcher was a tremendous supporter of 4-H programs and agricultural programs efforts in southeast Louisiana. LAN expresses our condolences to the Fletcher family.

## Congratulations

**Louisiana Nursery**, Baton Rouge, LA, was recently recognized in Nursery Retailer magazine's listing of the top 100 lawn and garden retailers in 1998. Louisiana Nursery ranked 85<sup>th</sup> in 1998 and 92<sup>nd</sup> in 1997.

**Ed Bush**, assistant professor in the Department of Horticulture at LSU, was recently recognized by the Alpha Lambda Delta freshman honor society for superior instruction in 1998. Ed is a member of LAN's education committee.



## SFA Arboretum

### Open House

May 22, 1999

THE SFA MAST  
ARBORETUM

The SFA Mast Arboretum in Nacogdoches, TX, will celebrate another fun annual "Garden Gala Day," May 22, 1999 from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. The event includes an all-day plant sale featuring a wide range of new, uncommon, and Texas-tough container-grown herbaceous and woody plants, a silent auction of rare plants, some special surprise entertainment, and walk and talk presentations by leading horticulturists in the garden. The event is organized by the SFA Arboretum Volunteer Corps Organization, Master Gardeners and SFA Horticulture Club. This is an opportunity for Louisiana nurserymen to see a wide range of new plant materials on display and to secure start up cuttings. For more information: Call 409-468-3705 at SFA or the Nacogdoches Chamber of Commerce at 409-564-7351.

# COMMON GROUND



## TAN-MISSLARK '99

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# Landscape and Retail Operations That Work Together: A Case Study

The following is based on remarks made by Russ Ireland at the 1998 Management Clinic.

The story of Martin Viette Nurseries/Ireland Gannon Associates in Long Island, NY, is a case study in the successful and profitable blending of a garden center and landscaping service.

Russ Ireland was a pre-med student at college when his father decided to retire and sell the garden center that he had owned and operated for most of his life. Although Russ and his father didn't see eye to eye on many issues, Russ decided that he would take a stab at keeping the business going.

"I said that I would run the garden center for six months and that was it. I never went back to school. I began to enjoy the challenges and the opportunities and stayed in the industry."

Within the first year, Russ realized that the space that the center occupied could never generate the kind of volume necessary for growth. The garden center was in a semi-residential neighborhood with very limited parking and no physical room to expand. Russ had some exposure to landscaping and he figured that he could expand the company in that direction.

The term "design-build" was coined in the garden business around 1965 and Russ started off by sketching designs for customers on nothing fancier than a yellow legal pad. He would pull up in a couple of trucks the next day and lay the entire garden down. This operation started to grow as the retail business remained fairly steady, but the constraints of the location were too much. "When trucks dropped off a load of material, the lady across the street would have her cups fall off her shelves."

Martin Viette Nurseries, with 45 acres of space, was up for sale. Primarily a perennial grower and producer, the location was perfect for Russ and he quickly closed a deal to acquire that business.

Today, Martin Viette and Ireland Gannon are thriving enterprises joined at the hip. Russ has identified a few key elements that he feels helped his company to be successful at both retailing and landscaping.

## Create two distinct financial entities

It might seem that there are some efficiencies to keeping the two enterprises as a single financial unit, but Russ found that this was not the case. "Running everything through the same set of books makes it difficult to determine which parts of the business are profitable."

His operations are divided into Martin Viette, which is the retail arm, and Ireland Gannon, the landscaping service. In landscape, labor is the biggest expense, in retail it's inventory. Because the entities have different margins and cost drivers, it is very important to be able to identify financial hot spots as they occur. The business owner must also have the ability to make financial plans and projections. To do so when the revenues and expenses are commingled is almost impossible.

## Identify the services you want to sell

Although the retail and planting arms are different, the company provides four basic services:

- Retailing: A basic garden center.
- Retail Planting: Installation of trees and shrubs purchased at the retail shop.

- Plantscape: Basic yard and garden design beyond purchase and installation.

- Design Build: Full service landscaping.

This combination of services can cover all of a customer's needs from the simplest to the most elaborate.

## Make sure the services complement each other

While a customer sees one seamless entity, the combination provides internal benefits. The companies share overhead, expertise, leads and revenues. Employees can be cross-trained at all levels with corresponding opportunities for retention and growth. Labor can be shifted around at seasonal and slack times, as the need arises.

From the consumer standpoint, plantscape customers benefit from design-build experts, while retail customers have a huge variety of plants to choose from. Design-build customers at the very top of the chain have a diverse organization to serve them.

In short, landscaping and retailing operations may seem like natural complementary arms of the same business and in many ways they are. But they also require approaches and strategies that can be quite different.

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*This article was provided by the American Nursery & Landscape Association (formerly the American Association of Nurserymen) and its grower, retail and landscape divisions, in partnership with your state association. For more information on ANLA, call 202/789-2900; fax 202/789-1893.*

## 1999 Nurseryman & Young Nurserypersons of the Year



J. C. Patrick (above right), 1999 Nurseryman of the Year, receives plaque from Randy Bracy, 1998 Nurseryman of the Year



Will and Delores Hammack (above right), 1999 Young Nurserypersons of the Year, receive plaque from Chris Bollich, 1998 Young Nurseryman of the Year.

## Owings' Ornamental Notes

*Spring 1999-* New vinca cultivars from Pan American Seed will be trialed by the LSU Agricultural Center this year. Included are new cultivars from 1998 (Blue Pearl), 1999 (Cascade Appleblossom, Pink Cooler Improved), and 2000 (Stardust Orchid, Stardust Pink, Stardust Mix, Cooler Mix, and Apricot Cooler).

LSU Agricultural Center trials in 1999 will continue to evaluate perennial verbena cultivars. Over 25 are planned for inclusion, including the Babylon series and new flower color additions to the "Princess" series from Greg Grant at Stephen F. Austin State University.

*Buddleia* (butterfly bush) continue to become increasingly popular. Cultivars are being evaluated in landscape trials this year. These will include Border Beauty, Burgundy, Charming, Dubonnet, Empire Blue, Lavender Ice Cream, Opera, Potter's Purple, Summer Beauty, White Profusion, Alba, Indigo, Plum, Black Knight, Sungold, Orchid Beauty, Bonnie, Royal Red, Honeycomb, Pink Delight, Dartmoor, and Lochinch.

Results from 1998 vinca landscape trials found, once again, that the Pacifica series performed the best. Based on a visual quality rating scale of 1-10 (1=worst, 10=best), the Pacifica series had a 6.6 rating followed by Heat Wave (5.9) and Cooler Series (6.3). The Mediterranean series will be evaluated in 1999.

Year-round flowering percentages for lantana cultivars in 1998 LSU Agricultural Center landscape trials ranged from 13-66%. The best flowering cultivar were Patriot Dovewings, Patriot Sunburst, Patriot Tangerine, Patriot Honeylove, Lemon Drop, New Gold, Gold Mound, Sunrise, Silver Mound, Imperial Purple, Dallas Red,



## 1999 Award & Scholarship Winners



Walter Imahara (*above right*), 1999 James A. Foret Award recipient, accepts congratulations from long time colleague Fred Hoogland, 1998 Foret award winner.



1999 LAN Scholarship winners are Gretchen Tebe (*left*), Julie Summers (*center*), and Rebecca Achord (*right*). All are ornamental horticulture majors at LSU.

“Owings...”  
and White Lightnin’.

Year-average visual quality ratings for coleus cultivars in 1998 LSU Agricultural Center landscape trials ranged from 4.3-8.0. This was based on a rating scale from 1-10 (1=worst, 10=best). Superior cultivars from Ducks Foot Red, Swiss Sunshine, Plum Parfait, Burgundy Sun, Solar Set, Solar Flare, New Orleans Red (Red Ruffle), Solar Shadow, Solar Furnace, Solar Sunrise, and Solar Spectrum.

Zinnias will be evaluated in 1999 LSU Agricultural Center landscape trials. Included cultivars are the Dreamland series, Sun series, Dowher series, Pukino series, Peter Pan series, Profusion Orange and Profusion Cherry. Several other cultivars are also being tested.

Modern rose cultivars least susceptible to black spot in 1998 were Shreveport, Secret, Class Act, Mirandy, and Chrysler Imperial. Cultivars with the most black spot were Iceberg, Lady, Singin’ in the Rain, Seniorita, and Chicago Peace.

Milliflora petunias currently being evaluated in LSU Agricultural Center trials are Fantasy Pink Morn, Fantasy Red, Fantasy Blue, Fantasy Salmon, Fantasy Crystal Red, Fantasy Carmine, Fantasy Ivory, Fantasy Pink, Fantasy Crystal and Salmon Light. The Wave series are also currently being evaluated (Rose Wave, Purple Wave, Misty Lilac Wave and Coral Wave).

Dwarf and miniature crape myrtles in trial plantings from 1999-2000 are Chickasaw, Pocomoke, Pixie White, Delta Blush, Baton Rouge, Mardi Gras, New Orleans, Lafayette, Pink Blush, Purple Velvet, Orlando, World’s Fair, Bicolor, Sacramento, Cordon Bleu and Houston. \*

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In 1998, Congress voted to provide \$1.2 million in horticulture/floriculture research.

Source: American Nursery & Landscape Association

"AG Census..."

are **completely confidential**. The data is protected from IRS inquiry, and even legal process, by Title 7 of the U.S. Code. NASS has an unblemished record of confidentiality.

*Interested nursery professionals can view the Census data, broken out by national, state and county levels, on the NASS website at [www.usda.gov/nass](http://www.usda.gov/nass). \**

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## LDAF Horticulture & Quarantine

◆ **Giant Salvinia** - This aquatic weed, *Salvinia molesta*, originated in Brazil but has been found to occur in the Far East, India, New Zealand, Australia, South Africa and other areas including the state of Florida. It is considered a noxious aquatic weed with enormous potential to become a weed problem in lakes and waterways. Recently, it has been found in Texas and Louisiana, most notably in Toledo Bend Reservoir. State Wildlife & Fisheries personnel have regulatory oversight responsibility over these waterways and they are taking action to contain and eliminate the weed wherever it is found.

The weed also is known to move in the nursery trade, where LDAF personnel have regulatory oversight responsibilities. Recent spot inspections by LDAF personnel revealed that this weed is being offered for sale at nursery outlets as an ornamental aquatic plant for home water gardens. LDAF personnel will continue to look for this weed during routine inspections at nursery grower and nursery stock dealer locations. Federal law prohibits the entry of this plant into the United States. Because of its noxious weed status, LDAF considers Giant Salvinia to pose a threat to agriculture (including the rice and crawfish industries), and movement into or within the state of Louisiana is prohibited. When found the plant will be returned to origin or destroyed.

◆ **Cuban Land Snail** - In recent months the Cuban Land Snail (*Zachrysis porvisoria*), has been found as a hitchhiking pest on nursery stock imported from Florida. This snail is considered to be a damaging pest of ornamental nursery stock and home garden plants. It is at least as damaging as the European Brown Garden Snail, a common pest of nursery stock in California. LDAF maintains an active quarantine against the introduction and spread of all plant-feeding snails that threaten agriculture products. If you find snails on any plant shipments received from Florida or any other source, please notify LDAF immediately.

◆ **Burrowing Nematode** - Routine inspections at nursery grower and nursery stock dealer locations across the state by LDAF personnel also have found that many shipments of nursery stock from Florida do not bear proper certification for burrowing nematode. All plant material from Florida (as well as from Hawaii and Puerto Rico) must be certified to meet

Louisiana's general nursery stock and burrowing nematode requirements for nursery stock. Certification is in the form of a stamp on the invoice indicating official confirmation of freedom from burrowing nematode by the appropriate government agency (e.g., the Florida department of Agriculture and Consumer Services). Plant material not bearing this certification may be infested. This nematode does not occur in Louisiana and LDAF maintains an active quarantine against its introduction. You should be suspect of any material from the above-listed states that arrives without proper certification.

◆ **Kikuyugrass** - Kikuyugrass, *Pennisetum clandestinum*, is a federal noxious weed native to eastern Africa. It holds the potential to become an invasive species in certain habitats, where its weedy characteristics allow it to out-compete other desirable plant species. Entry into the United States is prohibited by USDA except under a special noxious weed permit.

Several years ago, USDA granted permission to Mr. Eykamp of Arizona Kikuyu Limited to grow test plots of a cultivated variety of kikuyugrass named "Whitter" under a restricted permit. Recently, however, Arizona Kikuyu Limited began offering this cultivated variety for sale nationwide through advertisements in trade journals and popular magazines. This offering was in direct violation of the conditions of the federal permit. USDA chose not to renew the permit, but also chose not to pursue additional restrictions on the sale and movement of the federal noxious weed status, leaving enforcement responsibilities up to individual states. Because of its noxious weed status, LDAF considers kikuyugrass to pose threat to agriculture regarding the sale of this plant, please notify LDAF immediately.

◆ **Brokers** - One important key to safeguarding the plant resources of Louisiana is the ability to identify the point of origin of plant material moving into and within the state. This is especially true for nursery stock. Certification of nursery stock issued at the point of origin should accompany that stock to its final destination, allowing LDAF personnel to confirm that the stock meets our state plant quarantine requirements. However, it has become increasingly difficult to obtain such certification as more and more stock is moved by plant brokers. Brokered plants often arrive in the state without original certification, and thus no evidence that the plants meet our plant pest requirements. LDAF personnel then must stop-sale the stock until proper certification can be tracked down, causing delays in offering the material for sale. It is crucial that proper certification accompany all plant shipments into the state. This certification requirement protects you and your stock. Please check to see that all plants you receive have point-of-origin certification and notify LDAF if you receive stock without it.

**Please contact LDAF offices with questions, comments, or information on any of the issues mentioned above at (225) 925-7772. \***

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# HAVE YOU SEEN THIS PLANT?

Giant salvinia, *Salvinia molesta*, is an aquatic fern prohibited in the United States by Federal law.

Status: Currently invading sites in Texas and Louisiana, giant salvinia has the potential to infest aquatic habitats, wetlands and rice fields across the South. Native to South America, its introduction by humans has caused severe economic and ecological problems in many countries including New Zealand, Australia and South Africa.

**The Problem:** Giant salvinia grows rapidly to cover the surface of lakes and streams, spreading aggressively by vegetative fragments. It forms floating mats that shade and crowd out im-

portant native plants. Thick mats reduce oxygen content and degrade water quality for fish and other aquatic organisms. Mats impede boating, fishing, and swimming and clog water intakes for irrigation and electrical generation.

**Characteristics:** Oblong floating leaves, 1/2 to 1 1/2 inches long. Young plants have smaller leaves that lie flat on the water surface. As plants mature and aggregate into mats, leaves are folded and compressed into upright chains.

Leaf surfaces have rows of cylindrical hairs topped with four branches that are joined at the tips to form a "cage" (view with hand lens). These hairs give a velvety appearance and repel water. Distinguish from common salvinia, *Salvinia minima*, which has leaf hairs with branches always free at the tips.

Underwater root-like structures conceal stalks with egg-shaped spore cases attached. Spore cases are not found on young plants.

**Prevention:** Plants can be carried overland on anything entering infested waters. Boaters and anglers can help prevent spread by removing all aquatic plants from propellers, intakes, trailers and gear before leaving a launch area. Always blow out jet ski intakes and wash boats and equipment land-side before traveling to a new waterway.

## Help Protect Our Aquatic Resources

## Watch Out For And Report Giant Salvinia

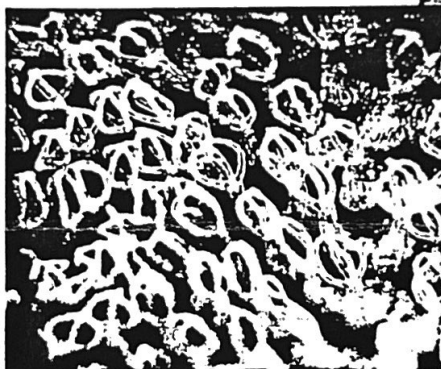
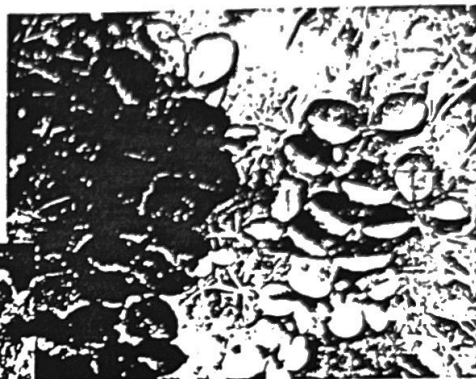
Giant salvinia may be introduced with aquarium or water garden plants. If you have seen this plant in cultivation or in the wild, please contact the Nonindigenous Aquatic Species Toll Free Hotline:

**1-877-STOP-ANS**

In Texas, call — Texas Parks and Wildlife Department at 409-384-9965.

In Florida, call — Florida Department of Environmental Protection at 850-488-5631.

More information on the WWW at <http://nas.er.usgs.gov/ferns>



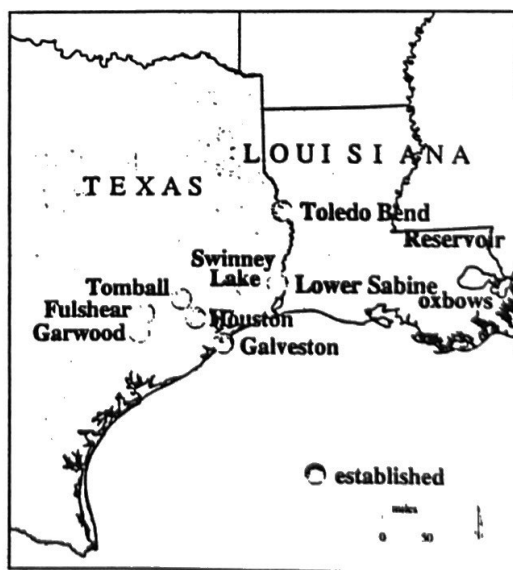
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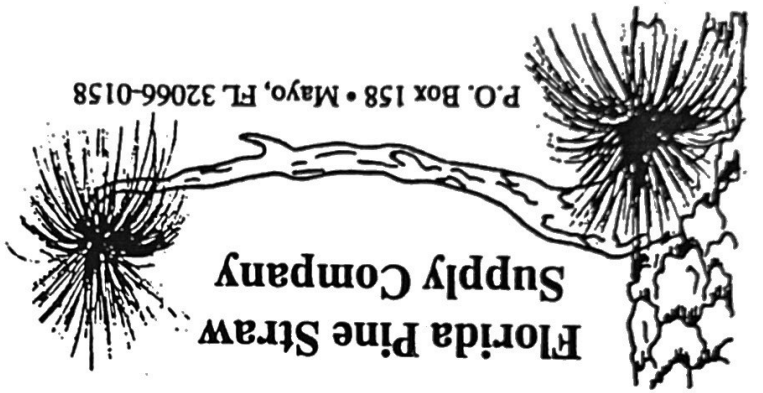
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