

Louisiana Nursery & Landscape Magazine



IN THIS ISSUE

5

Industry News

6

Recent
Educational
Program
Highlights

10

Green Industry
Economic Study

11

The Cost of
Doing Business

14

Pot in Pot:
Going Above
Ground

18

LSU AgCenter
Research Notes

20

Burden
Ornamental And
Turf Open House

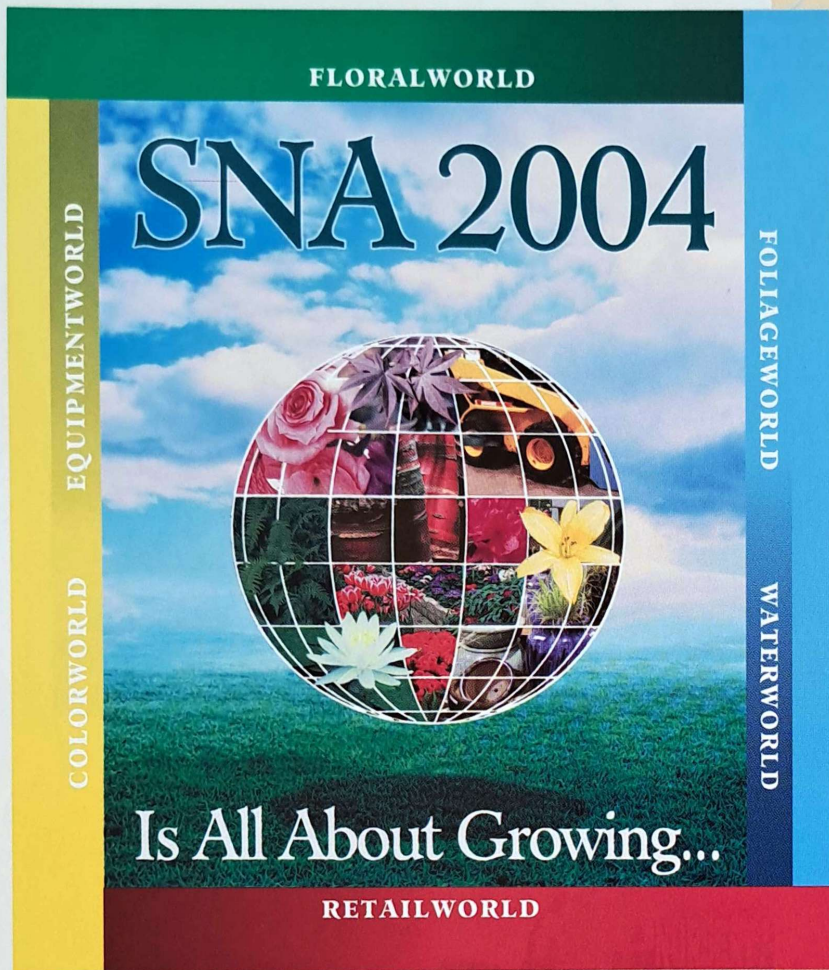
22

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S E C R E T A R Y ' S M E S S A G E

by Allen Owings

Welcome to the summer 2004 issue of the LNLA Magazine. Hopefully most of you had a good spring season. As I write this article we are recovering from the 12-20 inches of rainfall across much of south Louisiana from May 12-19th.

2004 is a big year for LNLA which will celebrate its 50th anniversary. Your Louisiana green industry association was founded in Lafayette on September 17th, 1954. A celebration is scheduled for September 17th at the

Burden Center in Baton Rouge. More information will be coming soon.

Please plan to join your fellow LNLA members and green industry friends for our membership breakfast at the SNA show in Atlanta. SNA's World's Showcase of Horticulture this year is August 12-14th. We will also have a Louisiana green industry social during the Nursery/Landscape Expo in Houston August 19-22nd. Watch your mail for details. ☐

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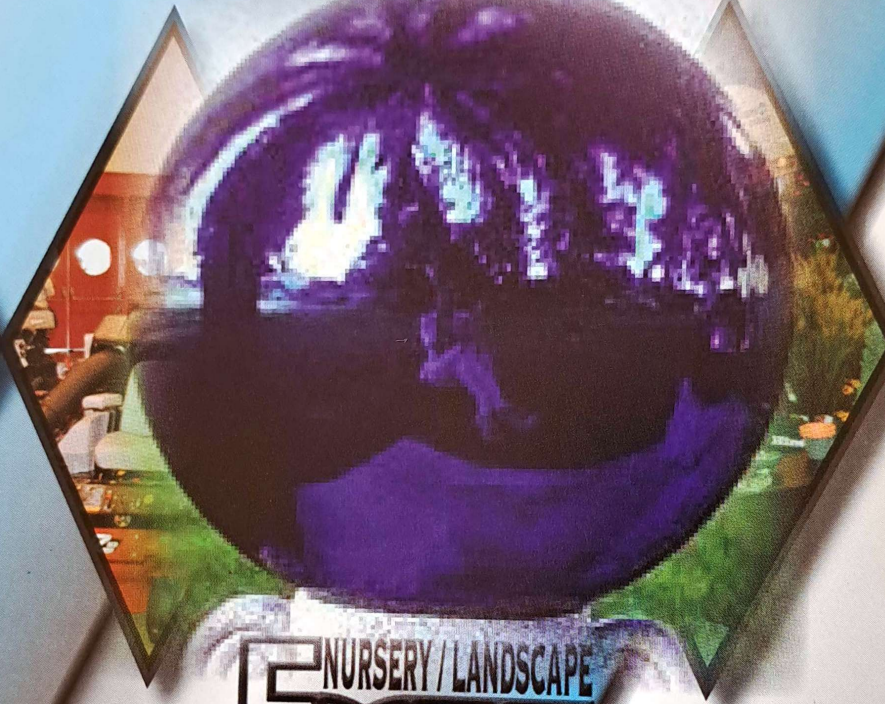
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LNLA Officers and Board Elected for 2005

The Louisiana Nursery and Landscape Association elected new officers and board members at their recent annual membership meeting held at the Gulf States Horticultural Expo in Mobile.

Elected to the executive committee were: President - Cody Arceneaux, Live Oak Gardens, Ltd, New Iberia; Vice-President - Nathan Dondis, Greengate Garden Center, Lake Charles; and Treasurer - Laney Strange, Mid-State Nursery, Forest Hill. Pat Newman, Folsom Nursery, Folsom, will serve as past president in 2004. Allen Owings will continue as Executive Secretary and Dan Gill will continue as Director of Education and Research.

Board members elected for terms expiring in 2006 are Tom Fennell, Clegg's Nursery, Baton Rouge; Beth Perkins, Banting's Nursery, Bridge City; Danny LaFleur, LaFleur's Nursery, Washington; Rusty Ruckstuhl, Grass Roots, Inc., Lafayette; and Brian Breaux, Louisiana Farm Bureau Federation, Baton Rouge. Continuing as board members with terms expiring in 2005 are Mark Humphries, Louisiana Landscape Concepts, Shreveport; Mark Womack, Ganier's Southdown Gardens, Houma; Frances Thorne, Thorne's Plant Farm, Leesville; and Dan Devenport, Dan's Nursery, Abbeville.

CNLP Review and Exam Held in February

The LNLA Certified Nursery

Professional Review and Exam was held Feb. 26th and 27th at Burden Center in Baton Rouge. About 30 green industry professionals participated and 15 of the people who took the exam passed all five sections. They included Sandy Baham (Southern Gardens and Landscaping), Chad Everage (Magnolia Nursery Inc.), Julia Fernandez (Clegg's Nursery), Milton Gordon (The Yard Doctor), Amie Hardgrave (CNI Wholesale), Anna Hayden (Nicholas and Banting), Paula Hotard (Home Depot), Holley Hughes (Greenway Nursery), Greg LeBlanc (Greg's Greenworks), Susie Melancon (Airport Garden Center), Amanda Scott (Louisiana Nursery), Bryan Seymour (Imahara's Landscape), James Tims (Louisiana Nursery), Peggy Tucker (Myrtle Grove) and Mark Womack (Ganier's Southdown Gardens). Contact Anthony Witcher (awitcher@agctr.lsu.edu) at 225.578.2415 for additional information on this program.

Louisiana Irrigation Association Formed

A new group that should help green industry businesses in Louisiana has been formed. The Louisiana Irrigation Association (LIA) has been developed to "promote efficient irrigation practices through the proper design, installation and management of irrigation systems through educational and informational programs". LIA is a member of The Irrigation Association (a North American Association). You can visit the association website at www.li-a.org. Mike Gray is the association president. He can be reached at 318.387.8663. Dues are \$100 annually for regular members,

\$300 annually for associate members, \$25 annually for non-voting affiliate members, and \$25 annually for university and educational professionals.

One of the first major goals of the LIA is to initiate licensing for landscape irrigation in Louisiana. A bill has been developed that will be introduced in the spring legislative session. The Louisiana Nursery and Landscape Association is supportive of this legislation. If passed, the licensing process will be regulated by the Louisiana Horticulture Commission at the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry. ■

Green Industry Social

A "Louisiana Green Industry Social" was held Wednesday February 25th in New Iberia. The Louisiana Nursery and Landscape Association teamed with Live Oak Gardens to host the event at the Bayless Center/Rip Van Winkle Gardens. About 120 green industry professionals attended the Ash Wednesday event despite the cloudy weather and occasional showers. A complimentary seafood buffet was provided. Guest speakers were Dan Gill and Roger Hinson of the LSU AgCenter and Grant Stephenson of Horticultural Consultants in Houston.

RECENT EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Gulf States Horticultural Expo

Educational programs were held again this year in conjunction with the Gulf States Horticultural Expo (GSHE) late January in Mobile, AL. GSHE is sponsored by the Alabama Nurserymen's Association, Mississippi Nursery and Landscape Association and the Louisiana Nursery and Landscape Association.

Concurrent educational sessions were provided for wholesale nursery growers, greenhouse crop producers, landscape contractors and retail garden center managers. In addition, special topics such as plant material and pesticide management were discussed in special workshops.

Featured speakers included Gary Knox from the University of Florida, Bob Losyk of Innovative Training Solutions, John Ruter from the University of Georgia, Robert Hendrickson of the Garden Center Group, Jim Barrett from the University of Florida, Donna Fare from the USDA and James Altland from Oregon State University.

Over 500 individuals attended educational programs at GSHE this year. Educational program support was provided by the USDA Risk Management Agency along with Urban and Community Forestry Grant Program.

Landscape and Lawn Maintenance Workshop Held in Covington

The LSU AgCenter and the St. Tammany Parish Master Gardener's Association held a landscape and lawn maintenance workshop at the Greater

Covington Center in Covington on Wednesday, February 11th. Over 120 green industry professionals and master gardeners attended.

LSU AgCenter horticulturist Tom Koske led off the program discussing environmental considerations involved in residential and commercial turfgrass maintenance. Urban storm water is an emerging issue that lawn and landscape maintenance firms will need to start dealing with shortly.

The LSU ACenter is actively involved in a new program initiative at the Hammond Research Station. Resident coordinator at the Hammond Research Station, Regina Bracy, gave an overview of plans to develop an urban landscape program for southeast Louisiana. This will include research and demonstration projects to serve Louisiana's growing landscape contracting and maintenance industry.

Insect management in the landscape is an important topic of current interest. Major insect pests include several species of scale, azalea lace bugs, thrips and fire ants. LSU AgCenter entomologist Dale Pollet stressed the importance of pest identification prior to control efforts, scouting should be an important part of an insect management program. It is also important to "properly manage a landscape system" to reduce pest problems.

The LSU AgCenter has been actively involved in landscape evaluations of herbaceous annuals and perennials over the last 4-5 years. LSU AgCenter horticulturist Allen Owings gave an overview of evaluated plants. New cultivars of petunia, begonia, melampodium, lan-

tana and perennial verbena are now available for commercial and residential use. Information on ornamental sweet potato variety availability and Athens Select plants was also presented.

LSU AgCenter county agent Annie Coco presented information on wholesale nurseries located in south Louisiana and also provided plant availability lists of wholesale nurseries in this area. The Southeast Louisiana Nurserymen's Association (SELNA) hosted an open house of area nurseries last October.

Numerous azalea varieties are available at wholesale nurseries in Louisiana. A recent survey of a few nurseries in Louisiana revealed 152 varieties being grown. Popular groups of azaleas include the Indicas, Glenn Dales, Rutherford hybrids, Satsukis and Kurumes. Also, the very popular Encore azaleas are now available in over 20 colors. LSU AgCenter horticulturist Allen Owings reminded attendees of the keys to success with azaleas in the landscape - proper soil pH, bed preparation, lacebug control, irrigation management and variety selection.

The program concluded with LSU AgCenter horticulturist Dan Gill highlighting trees, shrubs and ground covers for Louisiana landscapes. Trees mentioned included Taiwan cherry, Oriental magnolias, grancy greybeard (fringe tree) and parsley hawthorn. Shrubs discussed included loropetalum, flowering quince, Florida anise, Indica azaleas, native deciduous azaleas, bridalwreath spirea, deutzia, hydrangea, mock orange and pineapple

■ **EDUCATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS** -
continued on following page

RECENT EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

■ EDUCATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS – continued from page 6

guava. Ground covers for Louisiana include liriopie and monkey grass. Two liriopie species are commonly used—*Liriope muscari* and *Liriope spicata*. *Liriope muscari* is a clumping type while *Liriope spicata* is a spreading type. Monkey grass, also called mondo grass or Ophiopogon, includes dwarf and regular size growth habits. Other highly recommended ground covers include Asian jasmine, English ivy, Algerian ivy and ardesia. Some of the ground covers are available in variegated forms.

Educational Program Held at Forest Hill

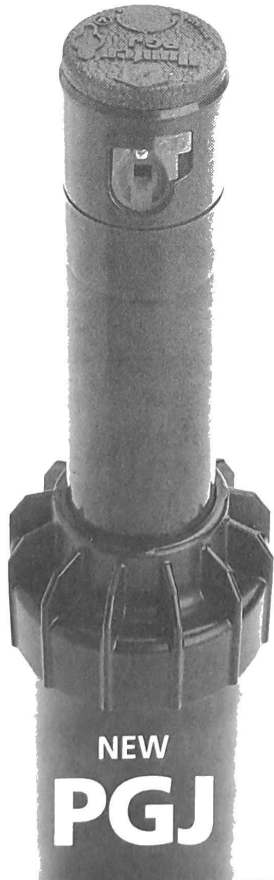
The LSU AgCenter held a nursery production meeting in Forest Hill on January 26th. Topics discussed included pest management, potting media characteristics, disease control, economics of crop production and weed identification and management.

LSU AgCenter entomologist Dale Pollet emphasized proper pest identification and familiarizing yourself with label recommendations. Chemical rotation and re-entry periods after application are also important.

In pesticide application, formulations are important. Realize that rates may change with formulation type. Many chemical companies are also now providing pesticides in wettable powder and flowable formulations instead of emulsifiable concentrations. The LSU AgCenter is also currently attempting to survey and identify scale species present in Louisiana. Contact Dale Pollet at (225) 578-2180 or dpollet@agctr.lsu.edu for help with your insect management program.

LSU AgCenter horticulturist Allen Owings explained the importance of chemical and physical properties of media in ornamental plant growth. Media pH is also critical. Pine bark, hardwood bark, cotton gin trash,

■ EDUCATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS – continued on page 8



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RECENT EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

■ **EDUCATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS** – *continued from page 7*

rice hulls and bagasse will be studied in LSU AgCenter evaluations in 2004.

Disease management and control is also a major problem that nursery growers in Louisiana must deal with. Root rot is very common and is the number one disease problem in Louisiana. Soil borne pathogens include Pythium, Phytophthora, Rhizoctonia, Fusarium and Thievalopsis. LSU AgCenter plant pathologist Clayton Hollier recommends prevention over control. He also mentioned increased cases of bacterial soft rots on iris, daylilies and agapanthus.

LSU AgCenter horticulturist Carlos Smith gave an overview of weed control in the nursery. Weeds need to be properly identified to achieve maximum control. Are your weeds annual or perennial? Is the weed a grass, broadleaf

or sedge? The answer to these questions will help determine the method of control. The costs of weed control vary by method. Hand weeding combined with recommended herbicide applications can be conducted for a cost of \$850-1100/acre annually in a typical nursery. Hand weeding alone will cost \$3600/acre annually.

The economics involved in nursery crop production is not often discussed but LSU AgCenter economist Roger Husser stressed the significance of cost based production. He provided a comparison of production costs for typical nurseries between 1990 and 2002. He found that costs involved in plant production have not increased as significantly as inflation over the last 12 years. ■

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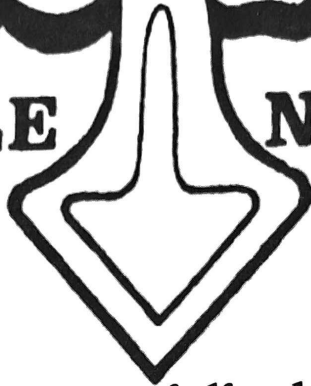
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Green Industry Economic Study

by Roger Hinson, LSU AgCenter

Louisiana's "green industry" continues to be one of the leading economic contributors among the state's agricultural commodities. The combined wholesale production and retail distribution of commercial nursery products, along with sales in the area of landscape and horticultural services, golf course maintenance and related expenditures, and green industry activities in other industries contribute more than \$2.2 billion annually to Louisiana's economy. While many agricultural industries rely on production (wholesale farm gate value) to generate economic stimulus, the green industry provides significant economic contributions from the service and retail sectors. The most current figures are for 2001 and based on a recently completed LSU AgCenter study led by agricultural economics professor Roger Hinson.

Louisiana's farm-gate wholesale sales in the greenhouse and nursery product area of the green industry were estimated at \$120 million in 2001. Woody ornamentals (trees and shrubs) account for most of these sales. Other segments included here are floricultural crops, annual bedding plants, herbaceous perennials, foliage plants, sod and fruit/nut trees. Greenhouse and nursery employment was estimated at

2,824. Sales in the wholesale production area of the green industry in Louisiana have been steady, but not significantly increasing, for the last three years. In addition to sales, total personal income from greenhouse and nursery product sales in Louisiana during 2001 was \$55.8 million, with \$87.3 million generated in gross state product.

The landscape and horticultural services area of Louisiana's green industry contributed \$266.1 million to the economy in 2001 and employed 9,361 individuals. This includes items such as landscape contracting, landscape maintenance and landscape design services. Total personal income in this area was \$110.5 million, with \$166 million in gross state product.

Results of this study at the trade or retail level indicated impacts on our economy of 14,905 jobs, \$511.3 million in gross sales, \$245.9 million in personal income and \$410.1 million in gross state product. These findings increased more than two-fold from 1995 sales figures, according to survey results from the National Gardening Association showing that household purchases of garden products more than doubled from 1995 to 2001.

Another category combined two areas of economic activity: (i) horticulture-related activities and expenditures reported in other industries such as construction and (ii) golf. The total contribution to the Louisiana economy of this activity was estimated at \$685.9 million in gross sales, \$524.1 million in personal income, and \$656 million in gross state product in 2001. In addition, 22,394 Louisiana jobs were attributed to these areas of economic activity. This increase was attributed to a rapid rate of growth in commercial and public construction, and to the inclusion of activities like landscape maintenance and mowing by churches and other non-commercial entities.

In summary, the total economic impact of the green industry in Louisiana in 2001 was more than \$2.2 billion in gross sales, approximately \$1.15 billion in personal income and \$1.69 billion in gross state product. The total employment impact was 56,680 jobs. The green industry, not only in Louisiana, but nationally, enjoyed a significant growth trend from the early to the late 1990s. Although some segments have slowed in growth, the green industry remains a major contributor to Louisiana's economy, trailing only forestry, in significance, among agricultural sectors. ■

Table 1. Impact of the Green Industry on Louisiana's Economy

Industry/Sector	Gross Sales	Total Personal Income million dollars	Gross State Product	Employment jobs
Greenhouse and Nursery Products	119.9	55.8	87.3	2,824
Landscape and Horticultural Services	266.1	110.5	166.0	9,361
Trade (Retail)	511.3	245.9	410.1	14,905
Related Horticultural Activities and Golf	685.9	524.1	656.0	22,394
Agricultural, Forestry, Fishery Services	7.0	2.4	3.2	167
Mining	8.1	2.0	5.4	31
Construction	27.9	12.1	12.7	371
Manufacturing	66.9	10.8	17.6	298
Transportation, Communication and Utilities	89.8	23.3	51.0	545
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate	166.8	27.4	116.5	978
Services	248.7	130.5	153.8	4,684
Government	16.4	5.1	6.9	122
Total	2,214.8	1,149.9	1,686.5	56,680

The first four lines illustrate the impact of the industries or industry sectors included in the analyses. The other lines depict the cumulative effects of the models on other significant industries or industry sectors.

The Cost of Doing Business

By Phil Nilsson, Green Industry Consultant, www.nilssonbooks.com

Determining job cost is the starting point to intelligent bidding and estimating. Mastering the skills of estimating is the best defense to help ensure that the work is not over or underbid. Plenty of jobs are lost because of high bids where an acceptable profit could have been made with a lower price tag if the contractor had only known at the time. By the same token, plenty of jobs are won based on low price, too low in fact, making it a miserable experience having done the work. Priced just right is where you want to be but of course this doesn't guarantee you the work, just that if you do get it, there's a chance at profits.

Hit or miss bidding is out of the question because virtually every customer looks for, and usually takes, the absolute lowest price. There's less room for error in setting a price that not only covers cost, but also provides an adequate profit. Easier said than done because the entire process must take into account numerous variables of cost in an industry where the saying "time is money" is an understatement.

Of course the lazy way out is to totally ignore the cost of doing business, and focus instead on price. The reasoning is that if the price is right, you'll be awarded the job in spite of your costs. This is the same as saying that you have very little control over price and that price is decided in the market place. That may be true but the real reason you want to know cost is not so much that price is solely determined from costs but that cost is your "command center" of control. If you don't know cost you have no reference point of control. Without cost knowledge you actually give up control and don't know for certain on any completed project what the profit was, and in some cases may be uncertain if indeed costs were covered.

With job cost knowledge you can know if you have efficient costs (can't be done cheaper or faster) and that's about as good as it gets. Using your efficient costs as a starting point you can then develop prices. You might want to come up with three price levels for the very same job.* Base Price, Realistic Price, and Premium Price. For any one bidding event do the mental "gymnastics" of trying them on for size price wise to see which you'd like to go with. Sometimes a contractor may find himself "hungry" for work and at other times booked so far in advance that a lower price is not needed to generate work. Nevertheless, bidding and pricing is the single most important thing you'll do because it is the "future" of where your business is go-

ing. Today's bids are tomorrows' customers and the real "make up" of your company. Your company is the customers, you, employees, and assets necessary to deliver your services.

Where Do You Start With Job Cost?

contractors incur three kinds of cost -

- Direct costs
- Indirect costs
- Overhead costs

Direct costs are those expenses that happen because labor was applied, equipment and vehicles were put into action, materials were used and work was done. Direct costs are usually easy to predict when you know how much time a project will take and what equipment and materials will be needed.

Indirect costs follow or "tag along" with direct labor, such as payroll taxes, employee benefits, insurance, fuel consumption, depreciation, repairs and other on-the-job costs. Although payroll taxes, benefits and insurance can be easily estimated, the indirect costs related to equipment are tougher to predict. Depreciation of equipment is a given, but fuel consumption can vary greatly and repairs are often unexpected.

Overhead costs include any expenses that support the operation of a business. Good examples are: rent for facilities, utilities, advertising, property taxes, storage, insurance on buildings, office expenses and other "behind the scenes" costs that in some cases take place simply because time went by. The overhead expenses, for the most part, take place even when no work was done. Rent and insurance are the most common examples. As with some indirect costs, certain overhead costs are easily estimated - rent, utilities, taxes and insurance - while others - advertising and office expenses - are more difficult to estimate.

The difference between direct costs, indirect costs and overhead expenses can be understood by visualizing what happens in your business on any given workday. Direct costs happen when work is done and labor is applied. The

■ **THE COST OF DOING BUSINESS** – *continued on page 12*

■ THE COST OF DOING BUSINESS

— continued from page 11

workers come in to work, and as soon as they turn the key in the ignition, direct costs and indirect costs follow them and stay with them all day. Overhead, or “back at the shop expenses,” are just that. These costs are “left behind” items of expense that support the operation.

Analyzing And Using Job Costs

Labor and indirect costs represent the bulk of expense for most contractors and dwarf true overhead costs by comparison. The questions to answer about these costs can be reduced to what I call “time costs.”

- How much does time cost my company?
- How much time will the job take?
- What are my hourly or time profit goals?
- What are my hourly direct costs?
- What are my hourly indirect costs?
- What is my overhead rate per hour?

To answer these questions is to formulate a bidding system.

You can easily relate to a financial statement and assign time costs to each expense category by simply dividing each cost category by the total number of production hours your company applied over the course of your season. Doing that gives you a capsule of actual costs, and it can be used to compare to estimated costs that were used at the job bidding stage. The variations between estimated job costs and actual costs are then used to find cost variations. In other words, job costs were supposed to

be, or bid at, a certain price, and the actual costs were different.

What Do You Need To Bid The Work Based On Cost?

A good understanding of work required, along with good labor time hour standards. This is the crucial step to the entire job estimating process. If you don't know within perhaps 10% of labor time required, your job bids are destined to be inaccurate. Labor is a big factor, the biggest single expense you have, and costs are highly dependent on job time knowledge. You thought a job would take 1,000 hours and it took 1,200.

A knowledge for job specifications and job time standards, or experienced times for each phase of the work.

An hourly cost factor for the three areas of cost, including direct costs, indirect costs and overhead costs.

A realistic attitude about profit per hour that can be added to costs in arriving at a total price that the customer can afford, which will stand the test of competitiveness and will turn a profit. Keep in mind that if your company does not operate efficiently that this is not the customer's problem and the competition may not allow adding profits on top of inefficient costs just because you happen to need to earn a living. Production time and methods needs to be “as good as it gets” then add a realistic profit to it and this will also tell you your “walkaway price” as well.

Making Job Costs Happen...

Once you have a handle on hourly job costs and can assign these costs to job functions that will take place

at the job site, you need to make them happen by adhering to labor time budgets. This is where the labor hours and costs on paper are proven at the job site with good control over expected, or anticipated, costs and actual costs.

Can you get the job done within the estimated time? Profits go up and costs go down when the job is done faster; profits go down and costs go up when the job takes longer than expected. Having said that, job costs are truly estimated costs since many variables are at play in the process of actually doing the work. Since labor is the single biggest expense, controlling labor and informing the employees of job time goals are important parts of cost control and profit achievement.

Elements Of Cost...

Direct costs such as payroll expenses, are an easily calculable figure ... payroll hourly rates multiplied by realistic labor times required to do the work.

Indirect costs follow direct costs and are closely related to hourly payroll rates. Payroll taxes, benefits, depreciation on vehicles and equipment - in fact the entire cost lineup that supports labor activity in the field - can be lumped together to develop an hourly rate based on the time, by the hour, of actually using the support equipment or “expense group.” The only shortcoming you may have is that to assign an indirect cost per hour, you'll have to estimate the total production hours predicted in the current season.

Overhead costs have a less impact and represent a far lower total expense group than direct or indirect

■ THE COST OF DOING BUSINESS

— continued on following page

■ THE COST OF DOING BUSINESS

— continued from page 12

expenses. The best you can hope for in terms of developing an hourly overhead rate to apply to total labor hours projected for any given job is to lump the entire year's overhead expense and estimate the total number of labor hours expected for the year. That overhead total is then divided by the hours to arrive at the overhead per hour rate. As the backlog of work increases, hourly overhead rates go down; and as the backlog drops, hourly overhead rates rise. This doesn't mean, however, that increases in overhead can be passed on to the customer for the company that doesn't have enough work to carry overhead at a conservative rate. Unreasonably high lucrative overhead expense schedules make a company far less competitive from a cost point of view.

Last but not least is the addition of profit to the cost group to arrive at a price to assign to the work. Sometimes a final price can be higher; sometimes it needs to be lower in view of current market and economic conditions. But here too, you should arrive at an hourly profit add on that justifies a reasonable profit.

Of course the higher the profit expectation, the lower the chance of being awarded the work. Profit after and beyond cost is the true "mystery" number that's locked up and somewhat a "secret" in virtually every job bid submitted. Some contractors will use industry averages for profits. Others will charge what they think the "traffic will bear," while still others will test their price levels, including profits, by going with a higher and higher price for the same work until they find the price ceiling. Another view is to ask yourself what amount of money is being the boss worth? Is it \$50,000, \$100,000, \$200,000 a year? If you were to replace yourself with a hired manager what would it cost? What's it worth "being you"? Part of your compensation is salary as a management cost to the business, and the other part profit that you earn for invested capital at risk in plant and equipment.

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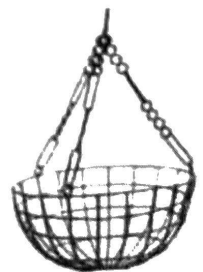
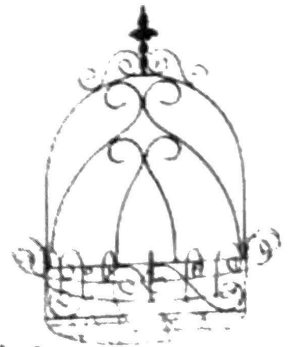
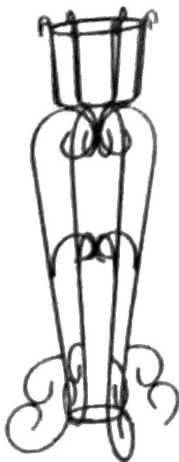
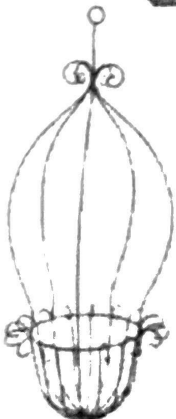
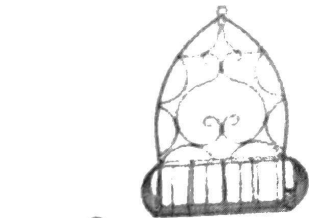
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Pot In Pot: Going Above Ground

by Allen Owings, LSU AgCenter

Growers across the southeastern United States have been implementing pot-in-pot production systems to a varying degree for the last 10-15 years. This practice is widely used in some areas and has not been pursued to any degree in others. Some field growers are converting land to pot-in-pot production, and growers using traditional container production systems are experimenting with different pot-in-pot systems because of the advantages they offer.

Traditional pot-in-pot production attempts to combine field and container growing techniques and offers advantages over these production systems. A "socket" container is placed in the ground, and a second pot containing the plant to be grown is placed into the socket. Advantages of pot-in-pot production, when compared to traditional container production, include reduced heat stress to the root system during the summer, elimination of container blow-over and minimization of root zone temperature fluctuations during the winter. Irrigation requirements can also be reduced. In-ground pot-in-pot has been shown to produce a larger root mass in plants when compared to conventional container production. Of course, a larger root mass should translate into improved transplant success and faster establishment in the landscape.

A primary requirement for an in-ground pot-in-pot system is a well-drained soil base or the installation of a drainage system to remove excess rainfall or irrigation water volume when a poorly drained soil is used. Normally, a sandy soil, or most cer-



The above-ground system places a potted container in a socket pot on the surface of a container yard, a ground cover clothed area or field soil

tainly a soil no finer textured than a sandy or silty loam, is needed if drainage improvements are not made. Additionally, installing an in-ground pot-in-pot system is labor intensive and requires considerable equipment. The system also is permanently located once installed, so future production plans and nursery layout must be considered carefully before installation.

In the mid 1990s, work began on the introduction of an above-ground pot-in-pot production system. You may also see these referred to as "nested containers." Seven and fifteen gallon containers are most common. This method is intended to overcome some of the disadvantages associated with in-ground pot-in-pot, while still taking advantage of the insulation value of a socket container. The above-ground system places a potted container in a socket pot on the surface of a container yard, ground cover clothed area or field soil. The socket pot has flared sides to prevent blow-over and needs only a little soil or mulch at the base to be held in place.

Advantages of above-ground pot-in-pot compared to in-ground pot-in-pot include significant labor and cost savings at installation. It also allows for adjustment in future container spacings and eliminates the need for ideally drained soils or the need to install a drainage system. Escape roots can sometimes be a problem with in-ground pot-in-pot plants, whereas escape roots are normally less of a problem in the above-ground system. Blow-over may occur once in a while with aboveground pot-in-pot while it never occurs with in-ground pot-in-pot if the socket pots are properly installed. Both methods will save significant man hour dollars in picking up plants in windy conditions. Retail garden centers and re-wholesale yards should consider an above-ground pot-in-pot system for short-term holding of large trees and shrubs that are prone to blow over.

Studies comparing root zone temperatures and size of the root mass usually show that a plant properly maintained under an in-ground pot-in-pot production method will have minimal root zone temperature fluctuations and increased root growth compared to an above-ground pot-in-pot system. The insulation capability of the above-ground pot-in-pot system is considerably less than the in-ground pot-in-pot system, but the above-ground method has been shown to reduce the amount of root stress/kill on the southwest side of containers when compared to traditional container growing. Research is needed to further investigate these issues. ■

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Regular Members - \$ Based on gross sales

Any corporation, partnership, firm, or person engaged in any facet of the green industry or other related business with a definite address and appropriate facilities having further been actively engaged in the nursery business in a reputable, trustworthy and ethical manner for one year in Louisiana.

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Associate Members - \$100.00

Associate members shall be reputable persons, firms, or corporations outside the state of Louisiana actively engaged in the growing and selling of nursery stock, and reputable persons, firms, or corporations inside or outside the state of Louisiana engaged in the supplying of accessories incidental to the nursery business.

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Business Employed By : _____

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Governmental Agency/Educational - \$ No Charge

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OPTIONAL: Members wishing to support these funds should add the \$\$\$ to their dues check. LNLA will forward the funds on to ANLA.

ANLA Beacon Fund - \$10.00

An industry fund supporting federal immigration and labor law reform.

ANLA Lighthouse Fund - \$36.50 An industry fund supporting grassroot legislative lobbying efforts.

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Strahan Joins LSU Faculty

Ron Strahan is originally from Rayville, LA where he grew up on a cotton farm. He earned a Masters of Science degree in weed science (1996) and a Ph.D. in horticulture (2002) working on the selective removal of perennial grass weeds in southern turfgrasses. During his graduate career at LSU, Ron worked as an extension associate for several state specialists. Working as an extension associate was both educational and rewarding. It allowed him the opportunity to meet producers and agents while gaining valuable experience with many of the crops grown across the state. Ron is an assistant professor in the area of ornamental and turfgrass weed control and will be working with nursery crop and turfgrass producers along with parish agents throughout the state. His work will focus on weed identification, turf and ornamental plant tolerance to herbicides, and the demonstration of proper herbicide use to reduce emphasis on hand labor.

Daylily Evaluations

The LSU AgCenter initiated a program in 2003 to evaluate the landscape performance and daylily rust susceptibility of All-American daylily cultivars. The All American Daylily Selection Council had named eight winners prior to 2004 – these include Black-eyed Stella, Bitsy, Frankly Scarlet, Plum Perfect, Judith, Lullaby Baby, Star Struck, and Leebea Orange Crush. 2004 winners are Chorus Line and Lady Lucille. Thus far, Judith, Leebea Orange Crush, and Star Struck have been most susceptible to daylily rust, while Plum Perfect and Frankly Scarlet have shown mild susceptibility. Bitsy,

Black-eyed Stella, and Lullaby Baby did not obtain daylily rust infestation in 2003. The 2004 winners have been added to the study and will be evaluated this year. Flowering times, including observation on dates of bud development, and visual quality ratings are being recorded weekly during the growing season. Additional data from this study will be available over the next year or so. Additional information on All-American daylilies is available at www.daylilyresearch.org. Information on this daylily project is available from LSU AgCenter horticulturists Allen Owings and Anthony Witcher at 225/578-2222.

Herbaceous Plant Evaluations

Herbaceous plant trials at the LSU AgCenter have been on-going for a number of years. Observations over the 2003 and early 2004 seasons have shown some of the following to be very good landscape performers.

- Coleus 'Mississippi Summer Sun'
- Coleus 'Solar Millennium Red'
- Lantana 'Athens Rose'
- Lantana 'Morning Glow' series
- Portulaca 'Hot Shot' series
- Rudbeckia 'Prairie Sun'
- Ornamental Sweet Potatoes 'Sweet Caroline' series
- Perilla 'Magilla'
- Petunia 'Tidal Wave' series
- Petunia 'Lavender Wave'
- Melampodium
- Dianthus 'Purple Bouquet'
- Dianthus 'Amazon' series
- Dianthus 'Dynasty' series
- Cleome 'Linda Armstrong'
- Graptophyllum 'Chocolate' and 'Tricolor'
- Zinnia 'Swizzle' series

Information on LSU AgCenter herbaceous plant trials is avail-

able by contacting horticulturists Allen Owings or Jeff Kuehny at 225/578-2222. Herbaceous plant trials at the LSU AgCenter are being supported by the Louisiana Nursery and Landscape Association in 2003 and 2004.

Nursery Container Blowdown Project

The Louisiana Nursery and Landscape Association is supporting a container blowdown study being conducted by LSU AgCenter ag engineer Dick Parish. A test of systems to prevent/reduce blowdown of trees in 15-gallon containers was installed at Bracy's Nursery on March 2, 2004. Eight treatments were included and all were installed on Loblolly pine, bald cypress and Nuttall oak. Treatments included the nursery standard of one stake per container, two types of wire basket supports (with and without staking), plastic pot-in-pot supports (with and without staking), a trellis system with straps and individual fence post stakes with plastic tree supports. Installation labor was recorded. Labor and material costs ranged from \$0.33 per container for the standard to \$11.29 container; however, the components of most of the systems can be reused for several years with little or no additional labor cost. Amount of blowdown from each system will be monitored throughout the season. Additional information on this project is available by contacting Dick Parish at the LSU AgCenter's Hammond Research Station (985/543-4125).



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Burden Ornamental And Turf Open House

"The last time I was here two years ago, this was a hay field," said Larry Bourgeois. "It was fun to drive up and see what they've done."

Bourgeois of Covington Nursery was one of the visitors at the inaugural nursery, landscape and floriculture open house held April 23 at the ornamental and turfgrass research facility at the LSU AgCenter's Burden Center in Baton Rouge.

The former 25-acre hay field is now horticultural research space. "This is a welcomed and valuable addition to Burden Center," said Dr. Pat Hegwood, the center's resident director.

Burden Center is a 420-acre facility in Baton Rouge and one of 20 research stations operated in Louisiana by the LSU AgCenter. Including 15 acres of formal gardens and 150 acres of forest, the center originally was owned by the Burden family from the mid 1800s until the final segment was donated to LSU in the early 1990s.

The new horticulture research area joins formal gardens and plant collections, the Ione Burden Conference Center, the Steele Burden Memorial Orangerie and the All-America rose display garden, as well as the Rural Life Museum, which is operated by the LSU A&M campus.

Dr. Allen Owings, an ornamental horticulture specialist with the LSU AgCenter, said the research programs at Burden are designed to support commercial nursery, landscape and turfgrass operators in Louisiana. Many of the research results also are adaptable to homes, he said.

Owings said wholesale nursery production in Louisiana is concentrated in

What's happened here would not have happened without support and encouragement from the Louisiana Nursery and Landscape Association," said LSU AgCenter Chancellor Dr. Bill Richardson. "This is the beginning.

three areas - the Folsom/Amite/Covington area, the Forest Hill area and the Lafayette/Opelousas/New Iberia area.

Wholesale production of nursery plants is a \$100 million to \$120 million per year industry, Owings said. But when you add retail sales, landscaping and other segments of what is known as the green industry, the contribution to the Louisiana economy approaches \$2.2 billion a year.

Owings said the top research priorities for the industry are plant evaluation and weed, disease and insect control followed by irrigation and fertilizer usage.

"I think it is going to be very good for the nursery industry," Bourgeois said of the new research facility. "We've needed this type of research for a long time."

Bourgeois said he believes the LSU AgCenter's research will mirror the conditions the nurseries face and provide answers to the problems they have.

Cody Arceneaux, the current president of the Louisiana Nursery and Landscape Association, said his

organization contributed funds to the research facility with a part of a grant it received from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

"The nursery industry appreciates the AgCenter's efforts," said Arceneaux, of Live Oak Gardens in New Iberia. "Our commitment stands because what [they] do affects us every day.

"We look forward to years of great research and positive gain from this facility," he said.

The investment in the research facility also included funds from the LSU AgCenter.

"What's happened here would not have happened without support and encouragement from the Louisiana Nursery and Landscape Association," said LSU AgCenter Chancellor Dr. Bill Richardson. "This is the beginning."

As part of the field day that drew about 80 visitors, LSU AgCenter researchers presented information on new crape myrtle varieties and demonstration plots of an array of early-season bedding plants.

Dr. David Himelrick, head of the LSU AgCenter's Department of Horticulture, said future plans include research areas for turfgrass and flowers as well as greenhouses.

"We have lots of plans for the future," he said.

The LSU AgCenter is planning another open house at the facility for the fall - when other plants will be available for evaluation, Owings said. ■



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LNLA Awards and Scholarships for 2004

The Louisiana Nursery and Landscape Association presented scholarships for 2004 at the recent Gulf States Horticultural Expo in Mobile.



This year's recipients of \$1000 scholarships are (left to right): Robin White (Louisiana Tech University), Kathryn Karsh (LSU), Catherine Broussard (LSU), Mickey Kleinhenz (LSU), and Susan Clark (South-eastern Louisiana University).

Industry awards for 2004 were also presented at the LNLA annual membership meeting.

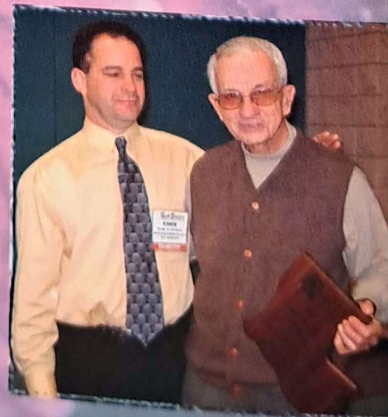


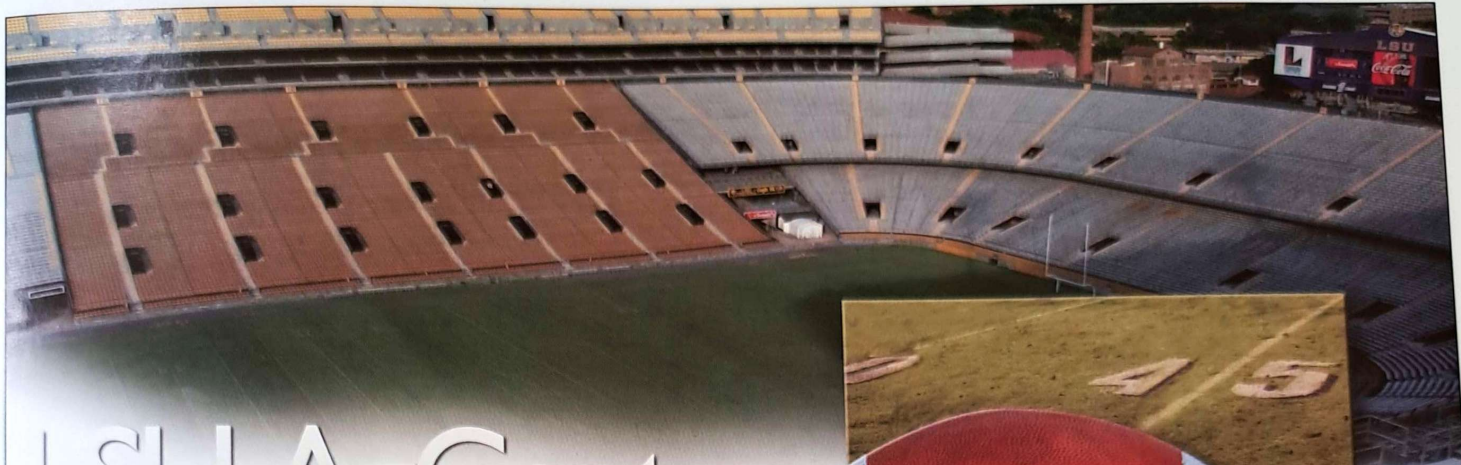
The 2004 Nurseryperson of the Year is Steve Adams, Adams Nursery, Forest Hill.



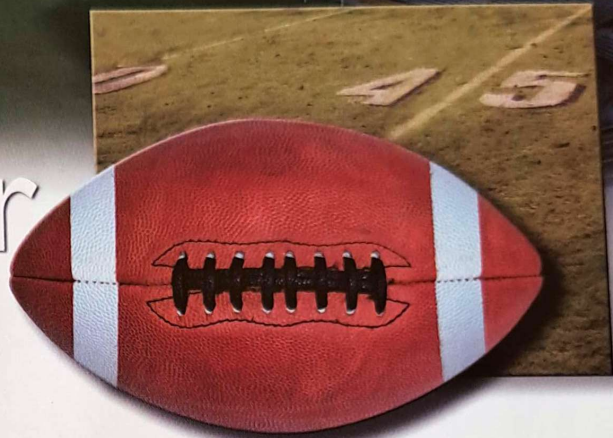
The 2004 Young Nurseryperson of the Year is Laney Strange, Mid-State Nursery, Forest Hill.

The James A. Foret Award for 2004 in recognition of career contributions to Louisiana's green industry is Julian Dondis of Greengate Garden Center in Lake Charles.





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