



# New York State Flower Growers

INCORPORATED

BULLETIN 190

Secretary, Charles Wilton, Prattsburg, Steuben Co., N. Y.

SEPT., 1961

## Azaleas On Long Island

Arthur Bing and Harry Fries  
Department of Floriculture and  
Nassau County Extension Service

Growing azaleas is big business for some Long Island growers. There are over 2,000,000 azalea plants grown on Long Island each year by flower growers. In addition there are many produced by nurserymen. Slightly over half of the azaleas are produced by two large growing establishments. Most of the azaleas are grown outdoors in open beds covered by frames in the winter or in frames that are heated during the winter. Many pot plant growers consider azaleas an important cash crop. Plants from Long Island are sold all over the eastern part of the United States.

### Long Island Favorable for Growing Azaleas

Why are azaleas grown on Long Island in such large numbers? Favorable climate, suitable soil, and nearness to a large consumer market helped the development of the azalea industry on Long Island. The climate favors growing large plants in a reasonable period of time and producing good, even bud formation which is ideal for forcing into flower for sale as a pot plant. Many of the hardy varieties can be overwintered in unheated frames. The soils in the area are acid and usually well drained. The addition of an ample quantity of peat moss makes a very good media for growth. Suitable water supplies are available for the frequent irrigation which is a must for azalea growing. There are many people in the large cities and suburban areas in the east who purchase azaleas because of their beauty and usefulness.

### Markets

Azaleas are produced for forcing and sale at Christmas, Valentines Day, Easter, and Mothers' Day. Picture 1 shows one of many large greenhouses of azaleas forced into bloom for Easter. Some plants are sold to other florists for growing on or forcing while others are sold as finished pot plants in flower. An increasing number of plants are produced for sale through garden centers and other outlets for use in home plantings. Many varieties of azalea are hardy in the Long Island-New Jersey area. Kurume varieties Coral Bells, Hinodegiri, Hiro Crimson, and Snow are the most commonly grown hardy varieties for greenhouse forcing and also for landscape planting.

### Culture

The hardier Kurume varieties and some of the non-hardy Indica varieties are propagated from cuttings taken primarily when the plants are pruned in July. A few cuttings are taken when convenient at other times of the year. Pictures 2 shows the "making" of cuttings in the headhouse in early July. Picture 3 shows the "sticking"

*(Continued on page 2)*

## Erie County Junior Management Program

Edward Braun, Herbert Forbach, Jr.  
Kenneth Galley and David Mischler\*  
Junior Management Program Committeemen—Erie Co.

Two years ago this summer, a Subcommittee of the Erie County Extension Service Floriculture Commodity Committee met to decide the feasibility of bringing together Junior Florist Managers for educational programs. The original Subcommittee appointed by Commodity Committee Chairman Raymond Galley, Sr., included Herbert Forbach, Jr., Kenneth Galley and Charles Wilton.

In conjunction with Agent Carl F. Gortzig, the Subcommittee planned a meeting for early 1960 to bring together Junior Managers from the retail, growing and wholesale branches of the industry. At this organizational meeting it was proposed that a program for junior management might be developed within the framework of the present Extension Service Floriculture program with the purpose of bringing the junior group (aged 16-30) together periodically for discussion of mutual management-leadership situations peculiar to younger persons moving into positions of junior management responsibility.

Interest shown by the group at the first meeting resulted in the appointment of Junior Managers Edward Braun, Herbert E. Forbach, Jr., Kenneth Galley and David Mischler to a committee to plan and develop programs of interest to junior managers. Discussion of economic phases of the industry, management aspects in detail, employer-employee relations and the outlook for junior management in a changing industry were some of the topics suggested to the committee.

The four-man Planning Committee, working with Carl Gortzig of the Erie County Extension Service, meets four times a year to evaluate past sessions and to plan the next group meeting of junior managers. These programs are planned so that they may be held on an informal basis, usually as roundtable discussions. Group meetings are also organized to take into consideration the interests of the retailer, grower and wholesaler of flowers.

In discussions to date the grower segment of the industry has been represented in greater numbers than retailers and wholesalers. Of course, there is only one junior manager in the wholesale segment of the industry.

*(Continued on page 2)*

\* Edward Braun, Goetz Floral Shop, Buffalo  
Herbert E. Forbach, Jr., Forbach's Flower Shop, Buffalo  
Kenneth Galley, J. H. Galley Florists, Gardenville  
David Mischler, Mischler's Florist Shop and Greenhouses,  
Williamsville

## JUNIOR MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

*(Continued from page 1)*

The Planning Committee hopes for greater retailer participation as the program develops. This would increase the value of these discussions and would achieve one of the basic objectives of the junior management program, namely, greater understanding among those in the various industry segments.

Programs held to date include the following: On March 31, 1960 the organizational meeting described in this article was held in the Erie County Extension Service Farm and Home Center, East Aurora. Ten persons from all segments of the industry were present. Based on the interest shown, future programs were then planned. The next meeting was held on June 13, 1960. A panel on "The Past, Present and Future of the Floral Industry" included presentations by the members of the Planning Committee, Ed Braun, Herb Forbach, Jr., Ken Galley and Dave Mischler. A lively discussion followed their presentations.

On October 3, 1960, after a delicious steak roast at the Emery Park Ski Lodge, Dr. James Boodley of Cornell University moderated a discussion on "The Responsibility of Junior Management."

A film on "Human Relations and Communications" was presented by Carl Gortzig at the November 7, 1960 meeting. This topic made a very worthwhile evening for all.

Our junior management group was invited to dinner and participation in the poinsettia and lily meeting held yearly by the Erie County Extension Service at the Farm and Home Center, December 8, 1960. This meeting was of particular interest to junior managers in the growing field.

"The Future for Junior Managers in the Western New York Flower Industry" was the topic of the February 20, 1961 meeting. The session was moderated by Ed Markham of Vaughan's Seed Co. Junior managers left this meeting with an enthusiastic challenge concerning the future of our industry.

We closed our first year of activities on May 1, 1961 with a tour and discussion at the new wholesale house of White Brothers Rose Corporation, Buffalo. Hub White and Paul Walker moderated the panel for the evening, with a look at the wholesaler's part and importance in the floral industry and the challenge flower marketing holds for managers of the future.

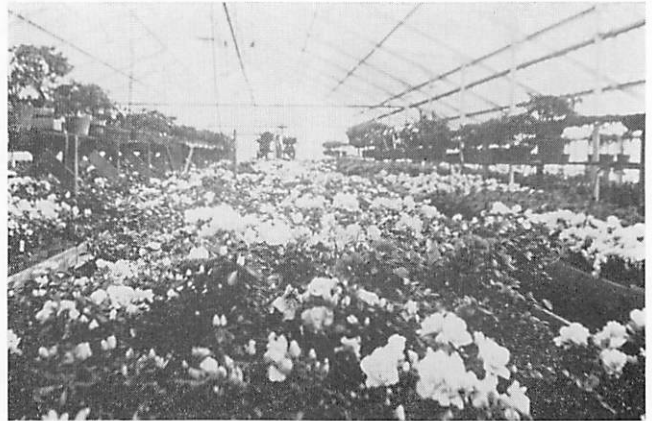
What has now become an annual highlight of the Junior Management program—the summer steak roast and discussion—was held on July 17, 1961, at the Emery Park Ski Lodge. Professor Dana Goodrich of Cornell's Department of Agricultural Economics, led the group's discussion of basic business economics and trends and their effects on floribusinessmen.

What do we consider our accomplishments to date? What are our plans for the future? These are questions which the four-man Junior Management Committee constantly ponders. To date we have attracted less than half of the young people engaged in the floral industry in Erie County. We have considered this an indication that perhaps the Junior Management program is unnecessary; however, the people in attendance are very enthusiastic

*(Continued on page 4)*

## AZALEAS

*(Continued from page 1)*



**Picture 1** A large house of azaleas before Easter.



**Picture 2** The "making" of azalea cutting in early July.



**Picture 3** The "sticking" of azalea cuttings.

of cuttings in sand. The cuttings are firmed into the sand by pounding on a board with a hammer next to the newly stuck row of cuttings. The bench shown in the photograph is approximately  $5\frac{1}{2}$  x 95 feet and when full contains about 80,000 cuttings. After the cuttings are rooted they are planted in flats or benches of peat or peat plus sand or soil and grown indoors until the following spring when they are ready for "planting out" in beds.

Soil preparation before planting is very important.

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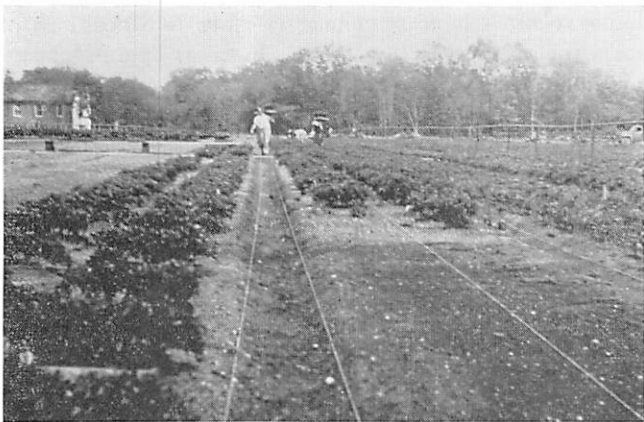
## AZALEAS

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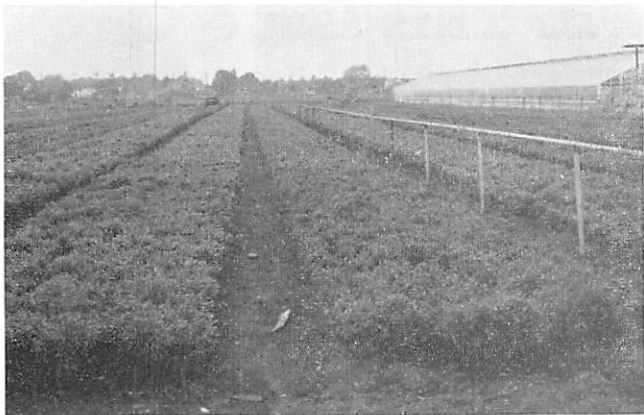
Ample supplies of organic matter are rotted into the beds so that a loose fluffy media results. This makes for good growth of the fine azalea roots and for easy planting by hand. These beds are expensive to weed by hand. More growers are using pre-planting treatments such as steam, methyl bromide, or newer materials to eliminate later weeds. Picture 4 shows the steaming of an outdoor bed 6 x 200 feet using irrigation pipes to conduct the steam from a large permanent boiler. Picture 5 shows azaleas being planted in the steamed soil. Picture 6 shows part of a large field of azaleas.



**Picture 4** Steaming of an outside bed in preparation for azalea plants.



**Picture 5** Planting of azaleas in the field.



**Picture 6** A large field of azaleas.

Non-hardy varieties are carried over winter in heated frames or greenhouses. Hardy varieties are carried over winter in non-heated frames that are built around and over the beds in which the plants are grown. The frames are covered with sash and mats during the winter.

About 10% of the azalea plants are produced by grafting of the non-hardy Indica varieties on coccinea as the understock. These are grown primarily for the larger flowered tree like larger plants. The understock is grown in small pots in the greenhouse and then grafted from February to early July. The picture 7 shows newly grafted plants in the grafting case with the strings that bind the scion to the understock. After the graft union is complete, the plants are removed from the grafting case, strings removed and then grown in heated frames (picture 8) or greenhouses.



**Picture 7** Newly grafted azaleas.



**Picture 8** A heated frame of azaleas.

Plants to be forced for Christmas are potted in the spring and grown in the greenhouse all summer to get an early set of buds (picture 9) or are potted in August and given a cold storage treatment to get bud development early enough for forcing for Christmas. Forcing for holidays in the spring is much easier because the plants in the frames have developed their buds much farther while in the cold frames. The end product is plants suitable for delivery to the customer (picture 10).

*(Continued on page 4)*

## AZALEAS

(Continued from page 3)



Picture 9 Greenhouse grown azaleas for early flowering.



Picture 10 Azaleas ready for wrapping.

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## Short Course

Date

Oct. 31, Nov. 1 & 2

### Program In Next Issue

NEW VARIETIES, NEW EQUIPMENT,  
DEMONSTRATIONS, NEW RESEARCH, TALKS,  
QUESTION & ANSWER PERIODS—THE WORKS!

Mark Your Calendar

## JUNIOR MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

(Continued from page 2)

about meeting together and about the future of the floral industry. We can assume that those who have not become active are either not interested in becoming better managers, or because they are still in high school have not become sufficiently involved in the business to wish to join in this type of a program. We expect many of the latter group will join us as they become more active in their own family business.

One of the greatest accomplishments has been of a social nature in that getting to know one's competitors, suppliers, and wholesale customers personally is an aid to successful management. Our discussion type of program has helped to bring out the ideas of the individual members so that we will know each other better.

The Junior Management program will probably remain a small discussion group. It will be a success if it continues to attract younger members who will gradually become active in the discussion. The older members will gradually lose interest as they assume increasing management responsibilities in their respective businesses. The organizational abilities they have acquired through participation in the Junior Management program may well be put to use on Extension Service, United Florist or New York State Flower Growers Association committees.

The junior managers' program, then, has begun to achieve some of its short-term goals. Its long-term objectives, however, will be achieved only as well informed, industry-minded junior managers move into positions of increasing responsibility in their business operations and in industry affairs.

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## New Varieties and New Equipment

If you have a new variety or a new piece of equipment that you would like to display at the short course—contact Jim Boodley, Dept. of Floriculture, Cornell University, Ithaca, N. Y.

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## In This Issue

- Azaleas on Long Island
- Erie County Extension's Junior Management Program

YOUR EDITOR,

Bob Laughans