

BULLETIN

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CANADIAN GREENHOUSE TOUR WAS INFORMATIVE AND INTERESTING

By Dr. Tom Weiler

New York State floral crop producers toured Canadian greenhouses on Saturday, September 22 and discussed several subjects in a growers' program the next day.

The tour, arranged by Walter Nelson, Erie County Cooperative Extension Agent, and Wayne Brown, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food Floriculture Extension Specialist, consisted of stops at the Vineland Experiment Station and five commercial greenhouses in the Grimsby-Jordan-St. Catherine area.

Wayne Brown discussed Vineland's research on various pot and cut crops, including a new crop, Baby's Breath (Figure 1) and showed the group extensive remodeling projects, involving new glazings, rolling benches, heating systems and computerization.

Commercial greenhouse managers led tours through their large, efficient operations in which they had invested heavily for latest fuel saving, mechanization, rolling bench, and computerized environmental control technology. Some of the organizations imported products to U.S. markets. This was of great interest to the visitors. Wayne Brown told the gathering that about 15% of Ontario's \$140 million floral crop is exported to the United States.

Pete Van Beuren of Westland Greenhouses, a division of Lake Shore Produce, Ron Snoei of Bayview Flowers, Ed Sobkowich of Ed Sobkowich Greenhouses, John Valk of Valk Greenhouses, and John and Hank Vankoeveringe of Spring Valley Greenhouses were most hospitable guides (Figure 2 - 5). Use of HID sodium lamps, computer monitored carbon dioxide enrichment, automatic boiler compound addition, and Swiss cultivars of

hydrangea were other highlights. Convention florists returned by way of the spectacular Niagara Falls route.

The Sunday program was organized and lead by Ray Galley of J. H. Galley Greenhouses in West
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Figure 1: Greenhouse-grown *Gypsophila* in experiment by Dr. Theo Blom at Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food's Vineland Station.

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Figure 2: Thermal screen, shade and black-out systems were installed in many glasshouses.

Seneca, N.Y., Walter Nelson and Paul Newman, retired Olean Greenhouses florist. Dr. John Peterson, The Ohio State University, discussed his extensive research on crop growing mixes, water quality and nutrition. He especially emphasized new management practices for peat-lite mixes, including pH control through reduced liming and water acidification to achieve a 5.5 pH. Larry Irwin of J and L Plants, Canyon, Texas, described his company's crops, including kalanchoe, exacum and crossandra. Later in the day he presented his approach to business management and communicated his optimism about opportunities in greenhouse crop production.

Dewey Root or Yoder Sales discussed pot mum and garden mum culture. This included new cultivars and detailed schedules for garden mum production for various markets. Bill Miller



Figure 3: Specialization -- growing only a few crops was very much evident in Canada. Here a crop of Elatior (Rieger) begonias at Westland Greenhouses.

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described Easter lily pot culture and ended the day's program with a slide-tour of field production of lily bulbs and northern California scenery.



Figure 4: Pot spacer held by Bill Miller -- to pick up pots at one spacing and by moving handles place pots down at a different spacing. Photographed at Westland Greenhouses.



Figure 5: Well-drained aluminum plant shelf -- this one pictured is 6-inch. Photographed at Bayview Greenhouses.

Details from these talks will be published in future issues of the Bulletin.

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