

Cut Flower Quarterly

Linda Landrum

Mark your Calendar!

The Region 3 Mini-Conference will be Saturday and Sunday, May 30 & 31 at the University of Georgia campus in Athens. Dr. Allan Armitage and I have tentatively set the program starting with an early morning tour of the University of Georgia cut flower trials, followed by a full day and evening of educational topics. On Sunday, the group will tour several cut flower operations in the Atlanta area.

Some speakers already committed for the program are Dr. Mike Evans and Dr. Bob Stamps - University of Florida; and Dr. Armitage and Dr. Michael Dirr of the University of Georgia. Some topics include postharvest handling, cut foliages for the South, and innovative ways to produce cuts.

Due to such an enthusiastic response at the Cleveland conference, the Saturday evening session will be "Ideas

from the Field", which will be a series of 5 minute / 5 slide presentations by actual growers. However, I need volunteers for these talks! Almost any "idea" is acceptable, and might include specific crop information, new pest control techniques, marketing strategies, innovative ways to use equipment, etc. Please don't be shy. If you would like to participate let me know immediately. Remember, if you folks don't volunteer, I'll be forced to "recruit" from my list of Region Three members!

Registration will \$50.00 for ASCFG members and \$65.00 for non-members. This includes facilities rental and lunch on Saturday, a spot on the bus and lunch for the Sunday tours. A more complete package will be sent to all Region Three members, and to others in surrounding states. Space is limited to the first 100 who register, so send your registration back immediately to assure your spot at the 1992 Region Three Mini-Conference!

Today's Interns

Continued from page 10

inspire. Supervisors must understand that this is a part of their job and that they will be evaluated on how well they work with the interns.

Training and education: You may be looking for laborers, but interns are looking for education in addition to work experience. It must be clear in the beginning what sort of activities can be expected and when they will occur. Some programs include educational components as part of the work week such as Friday afternoon field trips. Others provide them either after work or on the weekends.

Promotion: Direct mailings to colleges and horticulture/landscape instructors result in the highest number of applications.

Your announcement should include: name, location and goal of your organization, type of work available, type of educational activities included, length of the term, wage, whether college credit can be arranged, starting date, whether housing is available, required qualifications, application deadline and name and number of the person to contact for information.

Applications and interviews: Matching the right person to the right program makes for a good beginning. Only with a thorough application and interview process can you select the right person. Most programs hire students in their junior or senior year, or those who have recently graduated.

On the application form and during the interview, it is important to clearly communicate your expectations regarding work to be accomplished. You must discern the prospective interns expectations and needs for education and experience. Only when you both have a clear understanding of expectations can you each make a decision.

Orientation: For some people this may be their first work experience. Regardless of their background, all interns will benefit from some form of orientation. Introduce company policies and safety procedures and provide an opportunity for questions.

Evaluation: Periodic evaluations help keep interns and supervisors on track.

Shortly after the interns start working, have them develop a list of job tasks they want to accomplish as well as personal goals. Sharing this with all of the supervisors involved will enable them to direct the daily assignments to accomplish at least some of the goals.

By using a written agreement or list of goals, the supervisors and the interns have a common reference for determining progress. This works for both short and long-term assignments.

Both interns and supervisors need an opportunity to evaluate the overall program and provide constructive feedback to the coordinator.

Are interns for you?

As you can see, internship programs are two-way streets. They are not an easy way to get competent, inexpensive labor. If you provide a positive work and learning experience, you will not only be rewarded with a productive short-term employee, but you will also be promoting your organization and the landscape industry as an exciting, rewarding career.

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