



New York State Flower Growers

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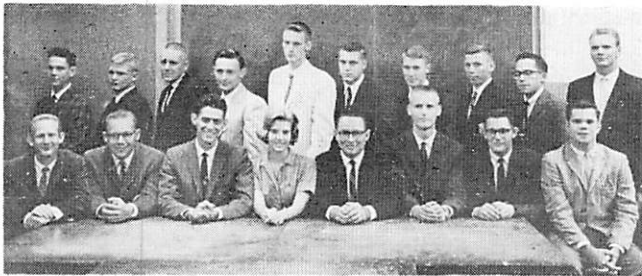
News About The Floriculture Department

John G. Seeley
Department of Floriculture
Cornell University

It is a pleasure to be able to give the members of the New York State Flower Growers a report on the developments in the Department of Floriculture and Ornamental Horticulture.

Undergraduate Students

This fall we have 60 undergraduate students in the various fields of interest of the Department. In September, 21 freshmen arrived on campus. We really have a good group of students.



The Floriculture Class of 1965

(Top row, left to right): Paul Sears, Kenmore, N. Y.; Ralph Powers, Upper Marlboro, Md.; Anthony Steere, Hamden, Connecticut; John Nable, White Plains, N. Y.; Arthur Worthen, Glens Falls, N. Y.; David Kingsbury, Scotia, N. Y.; Richard Walther, Woodmere, N. Y.; Glen Kemak, Seneca Falls, N. Y.; Emil Gasparini, Nedrow, N. Y.; John Philippo, Flushing, N. Y. (Front row, left to right): Jeffery Rank, New Haven, N. Y.; Richard Girards, East Meadow, N. Y.; Paul Blair, Albany, N. Y.; Sandra Passman, Ithaca, N. Y.; David Matuszak, Fayetteville, N. Y.; Steven Kettler, McLean, Virginia; Albert Riccardi, Berlin, N. Y.; Raymond Burleigh, Ithaca, N. Y.

Scholarships and Awards

The various scholarships and awards, some based only on scholarship alone, and others based on need, character, scholarship, and extra-curricular activities are a valuable asset of the Department because these awards are of great help to many students who need some financial assistance as they pursue their collegiate careers. In the accompanying table you will see a list of students and the special awards they received. In addition, many of our students have Regents and State Scholarships.

I would like to bring to your attention the two new scholarships given this year by the Federated Garden Clubs of New York State. You will also be interested to know that the graduate Hottes Scholarship is being used to support Derek Smith as he does his work toward a doctorate degree. Another very outstanding award is the Dreer Award, which usually goes to a senior student and

this money is used for travel and study abroad. This year, returning from abroad are Lawrence Sherk, who has spent the past year at various botanical gardens and nurseries in England and Martin Cohen who has been studying landscape design in Japan. During the present year, M. Noble Holmes is in England. He has been studying plants at the botanic garden at Oxford, and has been visiting and working in various nurseries as well as visiting other botanic gardens, such as that of Edinburgh and Kew. Mr. Holmes expects to enter the commercial nursery business when he returns to the United States.

SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS—1961-1962

Burpee Award—

Virginia Fry Barrett, Webster, N. Y.\$ 50.00

Federated Garden Clubs of New York

State Scholarships—

Virginia Fry Barrett, Webster, N. Y. 250.00

Bradford Bearce, Pleasantville, N. Y. 250.00

F T D Scholarships—

Richard Kowalczyk, Batavia, N. Y. 250.00

Richard Taintor, Mahopac, N. Y. 250.00

Hottes Scholarship—

Graduate—Derek Smith, England2250.00

Undergraduate—

Eugene Ford, Penns Grove, New Jersey 300.00

John Wagner, Richmond Hill, N. Y. 300.00

Joe & Emily Love Scholarship—

Victor Ortloff, Babylon, N. Y. 300.00

Ring Memorial Award—

Eugene Ford, Penns Grove, New Jersey 50.00

William W. Stout Scholarship—

Eugene Ford, Penns Grove, New Jersey 500.00

Dreer Award

M. Noble Holmes, New Britain, Connecticut2500.00

Graduate Students

Many of you have met various students at the recent Florists Short Course. They played an important part in our florists meeting. We have three new graduate students this fall. Paul Nelson, a graduate of the University of Massachusetts, obtained his Master of Science degree at Penn State, and will be working with Dr. Boodley in a study of

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foliar analysis in relation to greenhouse crops, with major emphasis on carnations. William Morton, a graduate of the University of Arkansas, is working toward a Masters degree. His research study concerns the incorporation of nutrients in the mist used for plant propagation. Another newcomer to the Department is Jon Scholes, who comes to us from Utah State University. While there, he helped in the greenhouses and he also has worked with the Squires Bulb Farm in Ogden, Utah, where they grew gladioli, tulips, lilies, and dahlias. John will be working with Dr. Harold B. Tukey, Jr. in a study of the leaching of nutrients from the foliage of plants.

Derek Smith has finished the work for his Master of Science degree, and is continuing on toward his doctorate. Derek is expanding on his fine research studies of the effects of day and night temperatures on the development of and flowering of Easter lilies. Joe Hanan, another doctorate candidate, came to us from Colorado State University, and is deep in his research on soil aeration, soil moisture and their interrelationships.

Martin Meyer, a native of Kansas, completed his research on foliar application and absorption of nutrients by poinsettias and chrysanthemums, and he received his Master of Science degree this year. He is continuing on for his doctorate, studying plant nutrition, especially foliar uptake of nutrients by nursery crops.

Roy Mecklenburg, another fellow with an interest in nursery crops, completed the work for his Master of Science degree with a study of methods of determining viability of nursery crops. Right now, he is studying the pathway of nutrients loss from plants as well as some aspects of the leaching of nutrients from plant tissue.

The effect of daylength on flower bud initiation and flowering of snapdragons is the major research of Ed Maginnes. Ted Bruszewski is conducting an interesting study on a method of determining when a plant requires water by use of the measurement of the sugar content of plant tissue with a refractometer. John Cooke, who has had quite a bit of experience in the greenhouse business, is working toward his Masters degree and is conducting a study of the cytogenetics of Achimenes.

Frank Hilario, who came from the Philippines about two years ago, completed his work for the Masters degree. His research was concerned with soil moisture and the soluble salt content as it affects the growth of plants. Frank has worked for the last five months at the Stimings Greenhouses here in Ithaca, and is now on his way back to the Philippines. Roy Larson, who many of you knew because of his important poinsettia research, is now at North Carolina State University.

Staff

You no doubt have noticed that quite a few of our staff members have been speaking and participating in various conferences and Short Courses in different parts of the country, giving information on our latest research achievements.

Those of you who were here at the Short Course, and have been to various extension meetings throughout the state, probably realize that Dr. James Boodley is conduct-

ing research on the nutrition of floriculture crops, and during this past year, has gotten his foliar diagnosis laboratory into operation so that this important phase of research can proceed. He also has been studying the use of various soil substitute mixtures, such as peat with perlite or vermiculite, for greenhouse crops, with special emphasis on bedding plants.

Dr. Robert Langhans has a series of experiments based on the need for more detailed knowledge of the effects of light, daylength, and temperature on the flower bud initiation and development of commercial floriculture crops. His research is enabling him to develop the best controls to maintain very uniform temperature conditions in the various greenhouse compartments being used for these research studies.

Dr. Raymond Fox continues to do an excellent job in his important teaching responsibilities as he handles the flower arrangement and the retail flower shop management courses. As a result of his contributions to the program of the Youth Education Committee of the New York State Flower Growers, Dr. Fox was awarded a certificate of appreciation by your organization at the recent Florists Short Course. We are proud of this achievement.

Dr. Arthur Bing's research on Long Island is primarily in the field of weed control with florist and nursery crops, and we are expecting his studies on the proper handling and storage of cut flowers to expand since this important phase of research can make an important contribution to the industry.

Retired Staff

Often as we travel to extension meetings or as you come here to the Short Course we are asked about some of the retired staff members. Dr. L. H. MacDaniels, after returning from Yugoslavia last spring, went back for a second 6-month assignment starting last October. He will be helping develop a research program in the field of Pomology with special emphasis on apples. Professor Joseph Porter, whose home address now is 5240 31st Avenue South, Gulfport, Florida, is enjoying his new home in Florida. We see him occasionally as he comes up this way in the summer heading for his summer camp in the Adirondacks. He has been doing some landscape work in Florida.

Professor Ralph Curtis is still an active, interested Horticulturist living in Cayuga Heights, just north of Ithaca. Professor Curtis frequently stops in the office here and occasionally borrows some of our plant material slides as he gives lectures to interested garden groups. Dr. Donald Bushey also of Cayuga Heights, is making good use of his retirement time, as he has an active program of work in the field of landscape architecture. He has been doing landscape design work for several college campuses and some industrial establishments.

While speaking of retirees, we probably should mention Ira Reed, because most graduates of this Department remember Ira as the chauffeur of the department transportation vehicle. He is living in Varna and he occasionally drops in at the greenhouse, but we see him most at the volunteer fire department meetings and activities in Varna. Ralph Christy, whom you recall was Superin-

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Florist Horizons For 1962

Dana C. Goodrich
Department of Agricultural Economics
Cornell University

Business on the up-turn. Customer incomes higher. Continued pockets of unemployment.

Observers of our nation's economy see these as major features for 1962. What can the flower industry glean from these indicators of economic progress? Since ours is not an industry provided with statistics that describe its economic situation, forecasting for floriculture has to be based on indications of the nation's economy. (In fact, we are deprived this year of what few industry statistics have been available in the recent past. No crop reporting figures for selected cut flowers are available.)

As a start to our search for florist horizons, then, let's turn to a re-cap of events. The 1960-61 recession was the mildest and shortest in the postwar period. Recovery was well established by mid-year. Some florists who felt the slack in consumer purchases noted an easing of the situation as early as mid-1961. Others located in market areas afflicted by deep-seated unemployment were slower to benefit. Some of these are still sensing the impact of lingering joblessness.

Current evidence points to a fuller role for industrial production and a further return to more normal levels of spending by consumers. Mr. and Mrs. Citizen were strangely reluctant to resume high levels of purchasing during the recovery period. Good news is found in retail sales for late fall and early winter, though. Our all-important consumer appears once again ready to spend.

A look at some of the U.S. business indicators bears this out. With the nation's gross national product once more on the rise after the dip of late 1960 and early 1961 and with consumer incomes climbing to new highs, times look favorable for Mr. and Mrs. U.S. next year. Not even the spectre of rising prices clouds the short-run outlook; the continued upward crawl of the consumer price index probably will be too small to put a damper on consumer buying.

The message for florists? Compared to 1961, things look as good or better for 1962. Remember that retail flower sales in the industry usually benefit from general prosperity. For growers? Short-run projections suggest that returns to agricultural producers are not likely to change much during the new year. Flower growers can expect about the same prices in 1962 as in 1961, perhaps buoyed slightly by the effects of a larger population and a rising economy. On the supply side, pressures that have existed in some areas of the country over past years to increase production will continue, but with diminished vigor. The results probably will be only a moderate increase in flowers produced.

Let's look closer at the old theory that "as the nation goes, so go flower sales." Sales by retail florists have long been associated with the general health of the nation's economy. Is it possible that this effect in future years may be quite different from the influence we think exists today? To see how such a change might come about,

turn for a moment to the way our industry operates.

The bulk of today's flower sales are still largely the result of deliberate decisions or intentions on the part of retail customers. Purchases are made with a special event in mind. For this major portion of our industry's sales, the demand may be said to be relatively inelastic, or responding but little to changes in price or economic conditions. That is, a change in flower prices is not likely to cause an equally large change in purchases for these "necessary" items.

On the other hand, flower purchases that tend to be made on impulse, most often without any special event in mind, are still minor but are likely to grow in importance with the expansion of non-florist outlets. Purchases of this type are known to be of a relatively elastic nature; that is, sales may be highly influenced by price changes. An increase in price relative to consumer's spendable income could trigger reductions in sales; conversely, the availability of flowers at prices lower than ordinarily offered by retail florists can and do push sales upward.

What has all that to do with the outlook for the future of floriculture? Simply this. Our industry sales in the future will be more sensitive to the general economic well-being of the retail customer. We can expect more of a boost in total flower sales (including those of the non-florist) with general prosperity. On the other hand, during not-so-good times, the industry should expect a more marked reduction in total revenue as a result of declining sales and/or lower prices.

Don't look for this feature to exhibit itself next year—or the next. It is a longer-run phenomenon—one that may be difficult to detect even five years from now. But it will come, so long as non-florists continue to improve the effectiveness of their flower merchandising. Meanwhile, for 1962 the horizon for florists appears little changed from the years just ended.

U.S.D.A. Plans Survey Of 1961 Cut Flower Production In 6 States

In early January the Crop Reporting Board of the United States Department of Agriculture will again undertake the collection of information covering sales of selected cut flowers in 6 States for 1961. Grower reports will be collected by mail in California, Colorado, Florida, Illinois, Iowa, and New York. The data collected will be comparable with that collected in 1959. The current survey information, while available for only a few selected States, will enable the industry to appraise trends within these States, and at the same time obtain some indication of National trends.

The survey will, as before, cover 4 cut flowers—Carnations, Chrysanthemums, Gladiolus and Roses. All commercial producers in the 6 States will be asked to report information on 1961 sales, and value of sales. Growers will also be asked to report their intentions of plants in production in 1962. A commercial producer is defined as one who *grows* and *sells* \$2,000 or more of Nursery and Flower products within one year. Only commercial pro-

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tendent of the rose gardens is living near campus and he keeps active with gardening and furniture restoration.

New Developments

There is not much we can give you in the line of brand-new developments, but we can point out that Jim Boodley has been actively working in helping develop the plans for the College of Agriculture greenhouses and control environment rooms, which we hope will go from the blueprint stage to the active construction stage in the next year or so. This will be an important addition to our research facilities. Dr. A. W. Dimock had been active in this work for about a year and a half, and that is why you have not seen him spending as much time as usual on problems of plant pathology.

Commercial Floriculture Extension

The Departments of Plant Pathology, Entomology, Agricultural Economics, and Floriculture continue to cooperate in conducting a commercial floriculture extension program. A development this year is the plan to do more agent training to give them the opportunity to conduct more of the educational programs in the counties directly with the florists. We have a good staff of county agents with men having special training in Floriculture and Ornamental Horticulture in Chemung, Nassau, Suffolk, Westchester, Rockland, Erie and Oneida Counties. Agents in several other counties conduct extension programs for greenhouse operators. We are expecting to have a well-trained man working with the commercial floriculture and nursery industries in the capital district as soon as we can get a well-trained person on the job.

The county extension service is the first line of information on the latest developments in research and the latest information on commercial floriculture crop production. The other change in our extension program this year was the moving of the Florists Short Course to the latter part of October and early November, and from all accounts, this has worked out very well.

An Invitation

I would like to extend to you an invitation to visit the Department here at Ithaca at any time you can. Since the staff members are often out of town either on research or extension responsibilities, it may be desirable to make an appointment ahead of time. This also helps because all of us have some teaching responsibilities too. I also would like to extend an invitation to you to let us know your thoughts, in case you have suggestions as to kinds of research or extension work that you feel would be helpful to the industry.

Wanted Weight Grading Scales

Remember the special scales which weighed up to 8 ounces graduated by 1/4 ounces? We know some florists interested in obtaining several for grading flowers. Our supply is exhausted.

Do you have a set of these scales not in use and in good condition? If so, write to John G. Seeley, Department of Floriculture.

Short Takes

Jim Boodley

Apples and flowers don't mix! Recently one grower put several bushels of apples in his bulb cellar after the bulbs were panned. One month later no roots had formed. Other growers have been storing apples in their refrigerators. Not a good thing to do either since apples produce ethylene gas which can have disastrous effects on flowers. Our thanks to C. Wilton for this reminder.

* * * * *

If you still have any energy left after the Christmas rush, now would be a good time to evaluate the poinsettia crop. Did you change your cultural practices any this year? If so write down the good points and the bad points that you observed. How did the plants finish off? Were they early or right on time? Why not pick up a spiral bound note book and keep one for each crop? This way you'll have your records to use next year for modifying things if necessary.

* * * * *

Now is the time to look up the bedding plant records from last year. Here again you can check on what varieties, colors, types of plants sold best. Maybe you can try the new ideas you have in your mind for promoting more sales. Have a list of what you will have to offer ready to mail out by the first of March. Too early? No sir! It may still be winter but gardeners are looking through the catalogues and getting their plans made for that spring season.

* * * * *

Drench the bench, see Cornell Recommends if you're going to grow lilies where you have had poinsettias and you can't steam sterilize. Just additional insurance against the carry over of root rot.

U.S.D.A. Survey

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ducers handling one or more of the cut flowers under survey will receive the January questionnaire.

The continued success of the program of "Crop Reports" for the cut flower industry will be dependent upon the cooperation the Department receives from each grower. Individual reports are confidential and will be used only in developing State totals. Prompt response from each grower will facilitate the completion of the report. Additional mailings of questionnaires to growers failing to answer the first request for the information will delay the completion of the survey and the publication of the results.

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YOUR EDITOR, BOB LANGHANS