

Southeast Texas Nursery Growers' Association Newsletter

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A Word from President... Glenn Middleton

Hello and how are you? We are doing great! The sun is shining and the birds are chirping. We have already had a couple of light fronts and you know what that means. Fall is here! It sure is nice to have some cool weather. I know it gets all the deer hunters ready for action.

If you did not make it to the quarterly meeting, you were one of the few. We had a GREAT turnout! Luigi's did a fantastic job. We will definitely schedule another meeting there! During the meeting, we discussed moving the Tradeshow. Most in attendance thought it was a good idea if we could get another venue that would handle us. There are

several things to consider when approaching this. The Board is, and has been, looking at many options throughout the year. The Convention Center in Galveston is of great interest to us. George Hederhorst is committee chair and should have information by next newsletter.

I would like to welcome our new members. Please welcome them the next time you see them: Savannah Gardens Nursery, New Earth Soils and Compost, Top Notch Tree Farm, and Agrium Advanced Technologies. Thanks for joining guys! We look forward to working with you.

Glenn

General Meeting Event... Field Trip to Nitro-Phos! October 24th, 2009, Beginning at 10am

Mark your calendars for October 24! Nitro-Phos is partnering with Quali-Pro Turf and Ornamental Products to bring you an educational and enriching program. Mark Wiesapape, the Mid-South Sales Manager for Quali-Pro, will be on hand to discuss "Value Added, The Post Patent History."

Mark has worked in the Turf and Ornamental industry for over 14 years. He spent five years in distribution at BWI, five years in manufacturing at Andersons, and has now been working for Quali-Pro for the past four years. He has a Bachelor of Science and a Master of Science in Crop Science from Sam Houston State University.

Mark's presentation will cover post-patent products, some of the history of these products, proprietary products that are coming down the line, and how all of this adds value for the customer... You!

After Mark's presentation, lunch will be catered by Lenox BBQ.

This field trip is sponsored by Quali-Pro Turf and Ornamental Products and Nitro-Phos Fertilizer.

Directions are posted on the back of this newsletter.

QUALI-PRO



Chilli thrips impacting nursery and greenhouse production in Texas!

By Scott Ludwig, *Texas A&M University*

As a ornamental producer you may be thinking that chilli thrips are only a problem on landscape plants. This is definitely not the case. Chilli thrips have been identified in four ornamental production facilities this summer! In one case the grower thought the damage they were seeing was from herbicides. In the other three cases the growers thought they had a disease problem. By not properly recognizing the damage the growers sustained unnecessary crop damages. Proper identification would have allowed these producers to control this pest before it impacted the aesthetic value of their crop.

Description—Chilli thrips are extremely small and difficult to distinguish from other thrips species without the aid of a good hand lens or compound microscope. Adults are pale with dark wings and less than 1 mm in length. Immature chilli thrips are also pale in color and resemble the immature stages of many other thrips species.

Feeding Damage—Infestations by chilli thrips are usually first detected by their distinctive feeding damage. Unlike flower thrips, which feed primarily on pollen, chilli thrips feed on various plant tissues. Feeding causes bronzing (tissues turning bronze in color) of leaves, buds, and fruit. Damaged leaves may curl upward and appear distorted. Infested plants become stunted or dwarfed and leaves may detach from the stem at the petioles in some plant species. Feeding may also cause buds to become brittle and drop. Young leaves, buds and fruits are preferred, although all above-ground parts of host plants may be attacked. Damage can be easily confused with herbicide damage, broad mites, or even a foliar pathogen.

Host range—Chilli thrips have a very broad host range and may feed on many of the common plants. All broadleafed plants should be considered potential hosts for this thrips. Some of the more common plants attacked are roses (all types), oaks, maples, Indian hawthorn, cleyera, begonias, plumbago, blueberry, schefflera, duranta, sweet viburnum, verbena, and crepe myrtle.

Plant Monitoring and Identification—Plants with the symptoms described above should be examined closely for the presence of thrips. Thrips collected from the leaves or buds of plants with suspected damage should be collected and properly identified. Place samples of thrips or suspected thrips-infested plant parts into a Ziploc bag, add a dry piece of paper-towel or napkin to avoid excessive moisture, and seal the bag. Send samples via express mail (next-day delivery) to Chilli Thrips Lab, Texas AgriLife Extension Service, P.O. Box 38, Overton, TX 75684.

Prevention—To prevent the introduction of chilli thrips into your nursery it is important to make sure that material brought into your facility is not infested with chilli thrips. Properly inspect all plant material for signs of damage. If possible place the plants into an isolated area away from your main production area. This will reduce the likely hood of any insects or diseases easily moving into your production area. Scout the plants regularly until you are sure they are clean of unwanted pests.

Chemical Control—There good news is that there are a number of insecticides available to manage this pest. It is important to remember that chilli thrips attack developing terminals and buds. The best time to treat a plant is while it is actively growing. Thrips generally leave damaged plants with stunted or severely slowed growth. Treating the media of infested plants has not been effective in most studies conducted to date. Systemic insecticides, therefore, should be applied as a foliar spray. Pyrethroid insecticides, such as permethrin, cyfluthrin, esfenvalerate and bifenthrin, are not effective against chilli thrips and should not be used. Soft products, such as insecticidal soaps, appear to suppress chilli thrips populations. In order for these products to be effective, they need to be applied on a regular basis. Thrips populations have been shown to increase dramatically once applications have stopped. To prevent insecticide resistance from developing, it is important to rotate insecticides between chemical classes with different modes of action.

Questions—If you have any questions please contact me at swludwig@tamu.edu or 903-834-6191

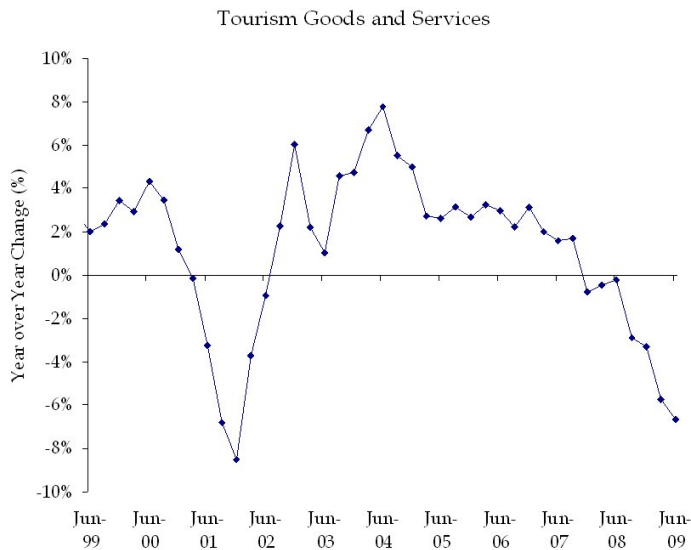
Excerpt from Dr. Charlie Hall's "Making Cents of the Green Economy"

Staycation Makes the Dictionary

Obviously the green industry was partially sustained this year by the *staycation* phenomena. In spite of *Much Ado* having been made in the trade press over this term, I actually talked with someone at an industry conference tonight who had not heard of it so I thought I might provide further commentary. Wikipedia provides this definition:

A staycation (also spelled stay-cation, stacation, or staykation) is a neologism for a period of time in which an individual or family stays at home and relaxes at home or takes day trips from their home to area attractions. Staycations have achieved high popularity in the US during the financial crisis of 2007–2009 in which unemployment levels and gas prices are high. Staycations also became a popular phenomenon in the UK in 2009 as a weak pound made overseas holidays significantly more expensive.

Interestingly, the term was added to the 2009 version of the Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary. Proof of the staycation phenomenon can also be illustrated graphically:



ECNOMPICDATA

2010 Directories Postponed!

If you attended the Sept. General Meeting, you heard the news that the Board is postponing the 2010 Directories until late Spring/early Summer next year. I would like to go through some of the reasons why this is happening:

* Invoices for 2009 Directory Ads were not sent out until July 2009. The economy is tight, and the Board feels that billing for 2009 Ads and 2010 Ads within a couple months of each other would be difficult on the members.

* In the past, billing for Annual Dues and Directory Ads were collected at the same time. Also, there was a frantic effort every December to put all paid members into the new Directory for print. This effort to do both at the same time has led to paid members not being included in the Directory and unpaid members being in the Directory. Having Annual Dues sent in first gives the Board time to put together a more accurate Directory.

* Finally, the back cover is reserved for advertising next year's Tradeshow. The Board feels that if the Directories were created and mailed 6 months in advance (rather than a year in advance), it would be more effective advertising.

The Board will create an addendum to the 2009 Directory for the 2010 Tradeshow.

Looking Back on the September General Meeting "Getting the Most Out of Your Fertilizer Dollar!"

As Glenn mentioned in his letter, there was a large crowd at Luigi's Ristorante Italiano in NW Houston last month... 35 members and guests to be precise! The restaurant was cozy, service was wonderful, food was excellent, and Earl Chipman, our guest speaker, did not disappoint!

Earl's presentation on the different types of fertilizers to use and how varying temperatures affect them was extremely educational. Two tips that I walked away with were 1.) Pick up a label and look at it before purchasing a particular fertilizer. It makes a difference what it is coated in and how much of; and 2.) Don't assume the fertilizer you choose will last. Create a trial to find what will work in your situation. Do some research and you could save yourself money that you are throwing away on the wrong fertilizer!

Discussion regarding moving the Tradeshow was also had. George Hederhorst will continue to look for a venue that would suit our needs.

Lastly, remember that the General Meetings are an easy way for you to get advice, share wisdom, and enjoy an evening with people in your business!

October 2009

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Nursery Growers'
Association**

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"Dedicated to the Highest Professional Standards of the Nursery Industry"

Upcoming Events/Notices...

- Nitro-Phos Field Trip on October 24.
- If you have not mailed in your annual dues, please send those in today!

Directions for Nitro-Phos Field Trip on October 24, 2009:

Nitro-Phos Warehouse, 2600 Callie St., Houston; 713-228-1868.

HEADING I-45 SOUTH: Take 45A/Scott Street exit. Stay on service road thru Scott. Turn right on Callie Street. Drive three blocks to McGowen.

HEADING I-45 NORTH: Take the Scott Street/Downtown exit. Drive on elevated exit. Take Scott Street exit and turn right. Drive south under I-45 to service road. Turn left on service road. Turn right on Callie Street to McGowen.

For more information, contact Jenni Duncan at 866.887.8642 or email at info@stnga.org.