

Barberries, Webinars, and HRI Turns 60



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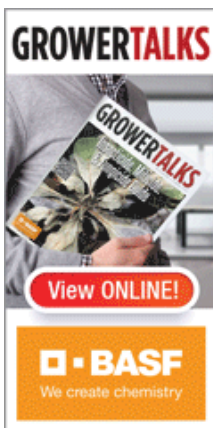
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News and commentary for the nursery & landscape market



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Nursery & LANDSCAPE INSIDER

News and Commentary for the landscape and nursery market

COMING UP THIS WEEK:

New to the Market Forum is Back!
Greenhouse 101
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WorryFree Barberry
Lemon Glow Barberry
Bloomin' Easy is Going Postal
Notes From the Edge of Sanity



New to the Market Forum is Back!

In what I think is outstanding news, the Perennial Plant Association's very popular New to the Market Forum will return once again during the [2022 PPA National Symposium](#) taking place August 1 to August 5 at the Lancaster Marriott in Penn Square in Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

This forum is an invaluable opportunity for breeders and plant dealers from around the world to present their best and brightest in the industry. In addition to plants, there's an opportunity to present new products at the Forum. Attendees look forward to seeing the lineup of latest plant material and innovative goods featured during this session! New to the Market Forum will be held live during the National Symposium on Thursday, August 4 at 12:45 p.m. Eastern.



This year, entries to the Forum quickly sold out, featuring these companies: DeVroomen Garden Products; Plants Nouveau; Pacific Plug and Liner; Darwin Perennials; Peace Tree Farm; Walters Gardens; Emerald Coast Growers; North Creek Nurseries; and the feature sponsor, Pleasant Run Nursery.

Are you afraid you may miss important information given during the New to the Market Forum? All companies presenting at the Forum will also be featured in an upcoming PPA newsletter and

on PPA's website following the National Symposium. Make sure to join as a PPA member in order to receive this excellent New to the Market information. Join at perennialplant.org/page/Join.



Greenhouse 101

Finding trained growers is a major challenge for our industry. Your best investment is to upskill your own workers to make better crop management decisions by learning the underlying horticultural science of plant growth.

Greenhouse 101 is a great introduction to the Greenhouse Training Online program offered by the University of Florida IFAS Extension. It's designed for people with no formal training in horticulture that work in the greenhouse or nursery industry, or those that wish to join the horticulture industry. Topics covered are plant parts and functions, photosynthesis and growth, greenhouse technology, flowering, compactness and branching, irrigation, nutrition, and plant health. The course is offered in English and Spanish.



Good overview of greenhouse operations. As a relatively new grower, I had very little training in plant health and fertility management. My employer found this series of classes to help get me up to speed.

The course runs from May 30 to June 25, 2021. The cost is \$249 per participant, with a 20% discount if you register five or more. All course material is completely online and available at any time of the day, and includes pre-recorded videos, an interactive discussion board with Ph.D. professors, and quizzes.

Two new modules are activated each week during the course for a total of eight learning modules. Instruction is at your own pace and time within the four weeks of the course, with a typical time commitment of about five hours per week.

Students praise this methodology: "The ability to do coursework at your own pace was new to me and was much appreciated."

[Click here to register.](#)



Intrinsa Webinar

As both a plant geek and plant breeder myself, I'm very much looking forward to this webinar! Titled "Intrinsa: Plants Powered for a Greener Future," it will focus on new technology being employed at the Dümmer Orange breeding technology center that has led to "Intrinsa breeding." This process leverages natural genetics within its collection for advance disease resistance, better plant performance and more economical (and sustainable) crops for the future.

Date: Tuesday, May 24, 2022

Time: 1:00 p.m. Eastern/Noon Central

Presenters Stephanie Whitehouse (Regional Product Manager—Decorative Annuals) and QiuXia Chen (Regional Product Manager—Garden Mums) will discuss how this breakthrough in breeding will benefit you, the grower. You can [register for the event here](#).

Moderated by Chris Beytes, editor, *GrowerTalks/Green Profit* and *Acres Online* and sponsored by Dümmer Orange.

WorryFree Barberry—PA Exemption

I was notified a few weeks ago about an exciting new development for the folks in Pennsylvania. In late March, the State of Pennsylvania exempted all four Japanese barberry varieties in the WorryFree series (Crimson Cutie, Lemon Cutie, Lemon Glow and Mr. Green Genes) from their list of banned invasive plants, and approved their sale and use in the nursery and landscape trade.

These barberries were developed by Dr. Mark Brand at the University of Connecticut.

"The key reason for any breeding is to try to create plants that are better than what is currently available or that can solve a key problem. That thought process for barberry was put squarely in focus for me after a meeting in 2000 with nursery industry officials where it was made clear that bans were coming across the northeast U.S. on this staple genus," said Dr. Brand.

His research was recently published in the peer-reviewed journal *HortScience* and can be read in full [HERE](#).

Other state bans are continuously monitored and exemptions based on this remarkable data are being sought. For example, New York State has exempted Crimson Cutie, Lemon Cutie and Lemon Glow Barberries.

For more information about Pennsylvania's Noxious, Invasive and Poisonous Plant Program, [GO HERE](#).



Lemon Glow Barberry

Since we're thinking about barberry, I figured I would highlight my favorite from the WorryFree series. They're all outstanding, but Lemon Glow is the best chartreuse-foliage colored barberry you're going to find. I very much like the compact growth (3 to 4 ft. rounded at maturity) and dense canopy, which lends it well to both landscape and container situations. Like all *Berberis thunbergii*, this cultivar prefers full sun to part shade with well drained soils and is hardy across a wide swath of the U.S./Canada and Europe (Zones 4 to 9).



Now that's a beautiful color! Photo courtesy of WorryFree.

What's most important to most folks, however, is that it doesn't seed out—at all. And the deer generally will not forage on and off the barberries unless there's little else to consume.

Well done, Dr. Brand, on these introductions!

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Bloomin' Easy is Going Postal

Bloomin' Easy may not be the first to transition to online direct sales, but it's nice to see a complete redesign of their [website](#) to better meet consumer needs.

"We're on a mission to make gardening easier and more inviting for young homeowners," said DeVonne Friesen. "Making it easy to purchase our plants online anytime fits our mission and will lift up the entire Bloomin' Easy network as we generate demand through a variety of digital strategies over the next few years."

The new site allows consumers to learn about and purchase Bloomin' Easy plants, and also offers DIY support, like easy-to-follow how-to videos. Consumers can sign up for free plant-specific Care Reminders, receiving tailored tips on how to plant, water, fertilize, mulch and prune throughout the season.

This seems to be yet another savvy move from a company that's growing rapidly and introducing excellent genetics into the market. Kudos to them!



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Our Wacky Wonderful World—Notes from the Edge of Sanity

I wanted to devote this week's finale to an organization that, as a researcher for 15 years, I've admired for their work supporting innovation in our industry. It's a bit of a long read, but I hope it will inspire you to support the Horticultural Research Institute (HRI).

Think back, if you will, to 1962:

- John Glenn became the first human to orbit the Earth
- President John F. Kennedy was dealing with the Cuban Missile Crisis
- Rachel Carson published her landmark book, "Silent Spring"

And in September 1962, a small group of forward-thinking nursery professionals established the Horticultural Research Institute to provide funds that would support ornamental industry-driven, targeted research. Starting from a combined donation of \$1,300 in the early 1960s to having supported a total of \$9.5 million in research grants and scholarships by its 60th year, HRI continues to grow—and to grow the industry.

"It's remarkable to imagine that 60 years ago, HRI was merely an idea. Today, that idea has grown into an incredible organization singularly focused on the research needs of the green industry," said Alan Jones, current president of the Horticultural Research Institute and president of Manor View Farms in Monkton, Maryland. "Sixty years later, on the shoulders of those who started the work, HRI is a strong, thriving organization with hundreds of volunteers, thousands of donors and millions of dollars invested in research."

The roots of the organization actually go back to the early 1950s, when the American Association of Nurserymen Board of Directors proposed a program to solicit financial contributions to support industry research. That early attempt laid the foundation, but it wasn't until a few years later that the AAN Board formally established HRI as an organization separate from, but related to, AAN.

Beginning in those early days in the 1960s, through AAN's change to the American Nursery and

Landscape Association, and then AmericanHort, HRI has been committed to prioritizing and funding research that addresses specific problems and challenges identified by industry professionals.

Where do those funds come from? The money is contributed by industry stakeholders—growers, landscapers, garden center retailers and other green industry professionals—through endowments they've established with HRI.

"This is a grassroots organization," explains Harvey Cotten, HRI's Ad-Hoc Development Committee Chair. "All the money has come from industry; it has been individuals or companies who have seen the wisdom in trying to solve our own problems."

All funds are invested and so the money continues to accrue interest over the years. The fund draws dividends, which can then be used to fund further research.

"I've often said that you're not giving to HRI—this is not a charitable contribution in the sense that we make a contribution to our church or even to feed the homeless," Harvey added. "This is actually an investment that is going to pay you back in dividends, i.e. problem solving, so that it isn't just a gift. And this research is what will make one profitable in one's own business."

Dale Deppe, President of Spring Meadow Nursery and member of HRI's Investment Committee, puts it this way: "HRI does things that we can't do for ourselves. You're better together than you are as an individual nursery or greenhouse person. Because you can't do the research, you can't fund it at the level that HRI does."

It's an investment in finding research solutions to your specific challenge, but it's also an investment in the future of the industry.

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Matthew Chappell
Editor-at-Large
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