
Beautiful Gardens Meeting, MANTS 2008, January 9, 2008

Present: Doug Hensel, Fred Duis, Rick Baker, Holly Scoggins, Barry Flinn, Neal Beasley, Don Hyatt, John Wise, Rumen Conev, Lisa Lipsey, Karen Kelly, Jack Campbell, and Ralph Booth (left early).

No comments on Minutes of Oct 23 meeting

Treasurer's Report- (Rumen) see attached "Financial Sustainability".

Executive Director's Report-(Rumen) See attached.

Need to get the Callistemon into production at JSRCC facility.

Jeff was contacted by PDSI in Alabama regarding an arrangement for them to use BG test sites for their plants for fee. Discussion concluded that if we cannot grow, sell, or promote their plants, we should not pursue the idea at this time. The list of plants to be planted at test sites in the Spring of 08 was reviewed. See attached. Lisa indicated that 'Robin' Holly is a PDSI plant, and it was suggested to drop it from the list. Discussion on the production timetable for these plants called for liner production to begin on these choices in 2 years, evaluation in 3 years and introduction in 5 years. Lisa elaborated on the state of the current trial plants (see attached) and provided photos. The list of Promotion Plants for 2010 (see attached) was reviewed. Comments included discussion of the possible production schedule of the Helleborus. Since Barry just received good material from the Tyler's this fall, estimates of readiness for market was 2012. Don suggested substituting 'Ivory Prince' for promotion in the 2010 time frame, since it is already in production. John indicated that the Adina would be easily propagated from seed, and might be ready for market in 2011. Doug said the Plant Selection committee was slated to meet again shortly.

Marketing Committee report- (Rick) See 'BG Marketing Plan for 2009' attached.

The agreement and survey forms for growers are done. Grower contacts have netted 15 interested so far. There is an current apparent shortage of the Ilex Virginia, the agapanthus and the banana for 2009 sale.

Retail garden centers have been contacted. See attached list. All BG members should review for their areas and contact Rick with any others they feel would be a good fit.

The posters and banners are done (paid with VDACS money). Plant tag design will be completed in the next 2 months, since they are needed for fall 08.

The meeting concluded with the urgent need to resolve questions about plant selection and how plants move from selection to production for sale. How will liner production be accomplished? Barry reported that Jerzy, Rumen and he were already planning a 1 day workshop for growers.

It was concluded that a meeting would be arranged as soon as possible, most likely at the JSRCC site.

Notes by Rumen Conev.

Beautiful Gardens™ Grower Participation Survey – 2009

Company Name _____

Contact _____

Address _____

Phone _____ FAX _____

E-mail Address _____

Web Site Address _____

2009 Plants of Merit	Size(s)	Quantity
'Don Egolf' Chinese Redbud	_____	_____
Pine Knot Strains Lenten Rose	_____	_____
'Virginia' Holly	_____	_____
Midnight Blue Agapanthus	_____	_____
'Snowflake' Oakleaf Hydrangea	_____	_____
'Steeple Chase' Arborvitae	_____	_____
'Green Velvet' Boxwood	_____	_____
'Peachie's Pick' Stokes' Aster	_____	_____
Hardy Banana – Musa basjoo	_____	_____

Please return to:
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Beautiful Gardens™ Retailer Fact Sheet – 2009

Background

Beautiful Gardens™ is a project of the Virginia Nursery and Landscape Association designed for the introduction of new plants and the designation of plants of merit.

New plants are selected for evaluation at test sites located in different climatic areas of Virginia. Plants exhibiting the characteristics of hardiness, resistance and beauty are chosen for propagation by Virginia producers. These “locally” grown plants are then made available to participating retail garden centers for sale. The Beautiful Gardens™ program is currently testing perennials, shrubs and trees.

Plants for 2009

The Beautiful Gardens™ program will begin selling plants in the spring of 2009. These first plants to wear the BG label will include: Don Egolf Chinese Redbud, Pine Knot Stains Lenten Rose, Virginia Holly, Midnight Blue Agapanthus, Snowflake Oakleaf Hydrangea, Steeple Chase Arborvitae, Green Velvet Boxwood, Peachie’s Pick Stokes’ Aster and Hardy Banana. These first selections are all plants of merit – plants currently on the market – that the Beautiful Gardens™ committee feels are underutilized and have great potential in the landscape.

Why Participate

We can help you sell these plants! Each one of these plants will look great in a residential or commercial landscape. These plants are grown in Virginia to help reduce transplant stress. All Beautiful Garden™ plants will be of top quality and uniformity. The Beautiful Gardens™ program will provide banners and posters for your store and media releases beginning in the fall of 2008. All Beautiful Garden™ plants will be identified with a Beautiful Gardens™ tag. New plants will be added to the program each year and include plants of merit and new introductions.

You must be, or become, a member of VNLA to participate.

Contact Us – Visit Us

Members of the Beautiful Gardens™ committee will be calling to introduce you to our project and encourage you to participate in 2009.

You may direct your questions to:

Rick Baker rick.baker@vdacs.virginia.gov 301-776-7147

Doug Hensel doug@greatbiggreenhouse.com 804-320-1317

Plan to visit us at MANTS in Baltimore – Exhibit #14 – Jan 9-11, 2008

Please join us for a Beautiful Gardens™ reception at MANTS on January 9 from 3-5 PM in Room 334 of the Baltimore Convention Center

BG Timeline for 2009 Sales

- Continue to contact growers through fall, winter and spring for 2009 and beyond
- I'll be making selected contacts with tobacco growers
- Start making contacts with independent Virginia retail garden centers this fall and winter
- Final design and pricing for BG plant tags – print summer 2008 – a separate tag design for each plant = 9 set up charges
- Design, price and consider POP (point of purchase) materials for participating garden Centers
- Arrange for “free” advertising and promotion of BG going to market in spring 2009
- Work with growers to make sure they have sources of plant material
- Work with growers to make sure we have adequate inventory of each plant
- Quality control – discuss
- Fall 2008 – finalize list of participating garden centers – do we allow sales beyond this group i.e. established grower retail buyers
- Media push spring 2009
- Spring 2009 – encourage “BG Displays” in participating garden centers
- Winter / Spring 2009 – sell tags to growers
- Spring 2009 – oversee delivery and set up of BG plants at garden centers
- Spring 2009 – Wish us good planning and a little luck!
- 2008 – 2009 – Continue to work on 2010 list and work toward great “new plant” introductions in the years ahead

Provided by Rick Baker
