

VNA Horticulture Research Foundation Inc.
Beautiful Gardens™ Minutes
Virginia Plant Introduction Program Committee Meeting

June 13, 2006, Claytor NSC, Bedford, VA

Time: 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM, Tuesday, June 13 2006

Place: Claytor Nature Study Center, Bedford, VA

10:20 am Call to Order – Fred Duis, Chairman, Virginia Plant Introduction Committee called the meeting to order with the following people present: Rick Baker, Rumen Conev, Jerzy Nowak, Alex Niemiera, Linda Pinkham, Clare Robertson, Dick Tyler, Judith Tyler, Bill McCaleb, John Ayers, Don Hyatt, Doug Hensel, Barry Flinn, Lee Hipp, Steve Burruss, Jeff Miller and Don Hyatt.

Term Reports:

Executive Director's Report: Rumen Conev reported on April-June activities, work in progress; and noted that they have almost finished established the infrastructure including the weather stations in Halifax and Bedford. Drip irrigation has been installed in Bedford and Halifax and will be installed in Glade Springs. Germplasm agreements have been developed and have been signed for several plants. A group is still planning a trip to the Ornamental Herbaceous Germplasm Center in Columbus and a trip is planned to visit Dr. Michael Dirr and the hydrangea program in Georgia. There will be germplasm available from the National Arboretum on planned visit in September. The program was successful in getting another Tobacco Commission grant for \$145,000, which will carry through October 2007.

. Marketing and promotion: Rick Backer reported on the Beautiful Gardens™ marketing activities:

- Reported on development and installation of site signs with the first sign at the Bedford test site.
- Need to get info out to retails and potential growers about the 2008 introductions.
 - Need info brochures for retails and growers
 - Do we need a quality control person to check growers
- Need to establish production and sales numbers for the introduction plants
- Need to design a financial sustainability plan

Research update: Barry Flinn reported on rsearch in progress at the Institute for Advanced Learning and Research (IALR) in Danville:

- Deciduous, Native Azalea Propagation with 3 of Don Hyatt's genotypes growing, and the proliferation in culture and another native azalea genotype from Butch Gaddy to establish propagation protocol.
- Helleborus Propagation to break seed dormancy breakage and shoot proliferation.
- ISRR lab and personnel expansion plans – additional lab space is being developed and a 60x72' greenhouse will be constructed soon.
- Work is progressing on daylily triploid embryo rescue. Triploids are sterile which will prevent seed production and hopefully extend them bloom season.

Facilities update: Bill McCaleb/Rumen Conev reported:

- Weed control & other site maintenance issues: fertilizer and lime should be applied to provide normal sustainable plant growth; weeds need to be controlled. Bill and Rumen will develop a plan for weed control, fertilization and general maintenance.
- Irrigation, weather stations;
- Need to invite public and provide tours and info on site.
- Need to provide recognition of Master Gardeners with t-shirts and/or polo shirts

Plant Selection: Linda Pinkham provided a plant list (copy attached) and discussed plant availability, new potential germplasm sources and noted that we need info in the VNLA Newsletter on plant nominations for future introductions

Oregon Green Industry - Dr. Alex Niemiera reported on his recent trip to the Pacific Northwest and showed slides of new plants the were in the “pipeline” for the market in the near future.

12:00 a.m. Lunch

1:00 pm - Individual sessions of specialized committees

3:00 pm - Reconciliation. Committees’ chairs’ reports on decisions made.

Wrap-up Reports:

Promotion, finish signs, prepare inserts for brochures, thank you plaque/t-shirt for each site, starting to work on shirts for volunteers with the BG and VNLA logo, and some polo shirts. Start to contact growers and retailers by sending a letter to contact Fred for more information. Participate in southside producer events, host events at the test sites and the VNLA Field Day with BG info, a prototype tag and 2008 plant samples. Send a letter to retailers and develop a notebook of how-to program kit.

Plant Selection Committee: 2007 promotion plant list of plants to be planted this fall (see attached)

2008 plantings decided by 8/30/06

2009 promotion list by 8/30/06

Next meeting will be in early September in the Tidewater area for 2 days at NBG, HRAREC, Linda Pinkham’s gardens. Linda will coordinate with Mark Weathington; morning tour Linda’s 1-6 meeting at NBG, the next morning a tour NBG and HRAREC

Adjourned at 4:20 pm.

Respectively submitted, Jeff Miller