

# School Shows Ways To Improve Your Garden Center

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**CENTERVILLE** (Lancaster Co.) — "This year, the cold spring we've been having will probably damage a lot of fruit trees," said Jay Stauffer, from Stauffer's of Kissel Hill, at the 1990 Capital Region Garden Center School last week.

Stauffer was one of four who spoke on the panel, "1989 In Review: A Look Back On Last Season's Insect And Disease Problems," at the two-day conference. The conference was attended by about 55 gardeners, nursery managers, and garden center professionals.

"Our biggest problem by far was peach leaf curl on things we didn't expect it on," said Stauffer. "Who would expect to find peach leaf curl on an apple tree? But if you see it, it's already too late."

Anthracnose, which includes lesions on sugar and silver maples, was the most common problem faced by Mt. Lakes Roadside Marketing, said Keith Pomeranie. The problems his company faced were aggravated by the 1988 draught and the wet spring of 1989, which contributed to plant stress and many plant diseases.

### Fire blight

Fire blight on mountain ash was a common problem. Pomeranie emphasized the importance of trying to find host-resistant plant varieties to help fight disease. Also, many problems can be attributed to insect bores, rather than some fungi or plant infection.

"It was a great year for grubs, and insect controls were a big seller," said Stauffer. Other common problems included black rot, scab on apples, fireblight, bag worms, webworms, root weavels, gypsy moths, scale, tip blight, and rose black spot.

For lawn growers, common problems include crabgrass and nutsedge. "It was worse last year for crabgrass than ever before," he said.

Alan Michael, multi-county extension agent, moderated the panel. While the Japanese beetle

was a common pest, he cautioned that the use of certain pesticides, particularly Sevin, were deadly to bees.

### Dormant oil

"Dormant oil is not harmful to the environment and provides another way to kill off eggs and insects on shrubbery and trees," said Tom Piper, Adams County extension agent.

Piper stressed the importance of timing when using pesticides.

Problems encountered in Adams County included scab disease, anthracnose, oak leaf blister, peach leaf curl, bag worm, leaf minor, bore (birch and dogwood), mite, gypsy moth, and galls. Piper offered ways to prevent or stop the spread of the diseases and disorders.

Piper recommended the book by Pascal Parone, "Diseases and Pests of Ornamental Plants," published by John Wiley and Sons, for helping diagnose and treat plant diseases.

### Alternative methods

H. Bruce Hellerick, horticulture extension agent, stressed the importance of using alternative methods to control weeds and pests. He urged everyone who attended the conference to become more environmentally aware when using herbicides and pesticides.

"The IPM logo will be a rubber stamp, like 'low cholesterol' or 'no cholesterol,'" said Tom Becker, York County extension agent.

Becker introduced the topic, integrated pest management (IPM), and what it would mean to garden centers in the future.

IPM includes the methods in determining when, where, and how to treat an area with a pesticide. It avoids relying exclusively on using chemical and chemical controls for pests, said Becker, and uses sound agricultural principles.

### Emphasized need

A video emphasized the need, because of increasing governmental pressure to heavily regulate the use of pesticides, for gardeners to use a combination of methods to



Plant experts take a look back on last year's insect and disease problems at the Garden Center School last week. Left to right, Tom Piper, Adams County extension agent; Jay Stauffer, Stauffer's of Kissel Hill; H. Bruce Hellerick, horticulture extension agent; and Keith Pomeranie, Mt. Lakes Roadside Market.

suppress pests, including traps, appropriate selection of plants, and habitat sanitation.

"This involves a rethinking of values," said Becker, "and ways to help get growers off the 'pesticide treadmill.'"

"Water gardening is becoming more affordable for the average person," said Virginia Crum, from Lily Ponds Water Gardens. She spoke about the burgeoning market for water gardens and how the average person can now afford a small water garden, with prices from \$500 to \$1,000.

The materials needed are PVCs, fiberglass pools, or concrete ponds.

### Various shapes

Fiberglass can be formed into various shapes and placed on an

excavated shell. "However, PVC is the most popular and the least expensive," Crum said.

But before gardeners install water gardens, sunshine must be present.

"They need 5 to 6 hours of sunshine for water lilies to bloom, as well as most other aquatic plants," she said. "In general, avoid trees."

Also, water runoff must be checked, by either creating some kind of "mote" around the garden or raising the garden a few inches from ground level.

### Two cubic feet

"As long as you have two cubic feet of water, you can have some kind of water garden," said Crum.

"By using PVC liner, you can make the garden as big as you want."

Crum explained the hardy perennial water lilies as well as the tropicals. Each water lily must have 14 quarts of clay and 18 inches of water to grow.

The average water lily needs about 12 square feet of surface area. All water lilies in the pond should fill up no more than 70 percent entire surface area.

Various types of water lilies were shown, including the Night Bloomer, which opens at about 10:00 p.m. and closes about 11:00 a.m.

"The James Bridge water lily can run \$50 and up at the retail level," Crum said.



Who's answering the phone? And what are we going to do about Mrs. Greenbottom? were some of the questions answered after a "Greenhouse Effect" skit by the Lancaster-area improvisation troupe Co-Motion, whose members include, left to right, Eric Fulmer, Camilla Schade, and Lou Ziegler.

## Consider Nature As Additional Income Source

Landowners who leased hunting rights as a source of income may have been disappointed this past year. The Canada goose population was down. If the decline continues, other sources of income will need to be investigated, according to Dean Belt, retired University of Delaware Extension renewable resources agent.

"Good planning and management can improve income from other areas," he says. "The public is looking for a variety of outdoor, environmental experiences, and they are willing to pay to use them. Camping, trail walking, bird-watching, pond fishing, nature photography, hunting preserves, spotting clay and fee hunting or day hunting are just a few of

the areas with potential."

The value of any of these will depend on the convenience, quality and the management input of the landowner, Belt says. One area with a great need and major environmental potential is habitat improvement for upland game. Much of this land has been destroyed by cultivation and development. Farmers can take advantage of this opportunity with only minor changes in their operation. Habitat enhancement can be done at various times of the year to be compatible with regular cropping practices.

"Obviously the first year or two will require the most effort and costs associated with planting, fertility and modifications," Belt says. "But in time, a blend of

perennial and annual plantings and reduced annual maintenance will modify the costs and time involved.

"High-quality habitat has the potential for attracting and holding wildlife," he notes. "The income potential can be realized from hunting, wildlife observation and photography. The sooner you start, the sooner you'll be in a position to attract those interested in your resource."

Belt recommends that persons interested in establishing wildlife habitat on their property contact the Fish and Wildlife Division of Delaware's Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control, Soil Conservation Service, Conservation Districts or Cooperative Extension



The burgeoning market of water gardens was discussed by Virginia Crum, Lily Ponds Water Gardens, last week at the Garden Center School.