



Dr. John Dole talks about his work with growing cut flowers in the greenhouse and how growers can benefit from the research.



Ed and his son Justin Weaver from Weavers Orchard in Morgantown come to the Convention primarily for education. The seminars keep them updated on what's happening in the industry from new products to chemical uses. The Weavers grow about 100 acres of mostly tree fruit with some small fruit and vegetables. They also own a farm market where they sell about half of their produce.



Miriam Cooper of Cooper's Mill said their homemade apple butter is still made in a copper kettle over a wood-burning fire.



The Heilers from Bainbridge, N.Y., have been coming to the Convention ever since it started. "We've been here through the renovations and all." Parents Joshua and Wilma and their son and daughter-in-law, Seth and Debble, are vegetable and small fruit growers. They come to the convention to learn about new chemicals and vegetable varieties. "We learn as much from the other growers who attend as we do from the exhibitors," said Wilma.

## Members, Growers, Exhibitors 'Plant For The New Millennium'

**LOU ANN GOOD**  
Lancaster Farming Staff  
HERSHEY (Dauphin Co.) — Many farm families are capitalizing on cut flowers' appeal to consumers.

Some families sowed a few extra seeds and sold the blooms at roadside stands. The flowers sold so well, that the following year, the families planted many more. Now some of these farm families have erected a greenhouse around a section of field.

But the demand for some varieties didn't appeal to the masses the following year.

"One thing I've learned. You can't trust your own opinion. Some flowers that I think will sell well — don't, and others that I don't expect to sell well — do," said John Dole, Oklahoma State University.

Dole led one of several sessions on cut flowers at the Mid-Atlantic Fruit and Vegetable Convention conducted in Hershey last week.

Dole runs trials every year on greenhouse cuts. He and his staff experiment with new varieties and new methods of growing compared with the tried and proven.

Because many field-cut growers are getting into greenhouses, Dole showed slides to demonstrate how simply-erected greenhouses can evolve over the years to become better and more efficient.

Dole recommends planting in six to eight inch raised beds, using treated wood sides or concrete. While a grower can start out with ground walkways, concrete can be added later to keep walkways cleaner.

Another method that works well is to use bulb crates. These can easily be moved and even put in the cooler if needed when blooming. Cuts can also be grown in pots. Because labor costs are higher, pots work better used as fill ins for additional product.

Keep in mind that crops can be damaged by personnel walking up and down walkways to care for the plants.

Drip irrigation works best for watering.

"Do not allow plants to wilt. They may come back but with a kink — they won't be straight," Dole said of the stems.

"Netting must go on immediately, something that first-time

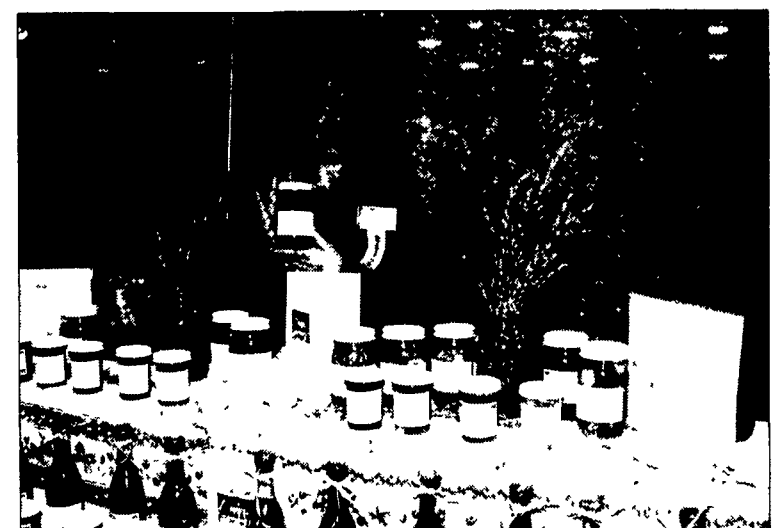
growers often learn the hard way," Dole said. "If you wait until the plants need the netting to keep them growing straight, it's too late."

While some growers plant the flowers they like and are accurately, something that first-time

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Ralph and Edna Styer from Muncy come each year to keep up with the new things. They own five acres of pick-your-own blueberries. The Styers have been coming to the Convention for about 20 years and now consider it their yearly vacation.



A Lancaster County Amish family grows herbs to make jellies and vinegars. Here Patricia McAlevey representing Lower Valley Gardens, Christiana, offers samples to visitors at the convention.