

Learning Retail Realities

(Continued from Page A21)

addition to the poinsettia trial, the college runs a pansy trial in the fall.

In the fall, if students haven't already requested to help out at the stand, the financial aid office assigns students to the stand. This arrangement helps with tuition payments but also allows students to work toward the 900-960 hours that they need in their major.

Marianne Petrino, a junior and part-time employee at the stand this summer, comes from Franklin Lakes, N.J. She chose to stay at the school and work over the summer since "it's an opportunity that I can't really get (at home)," she said.

She plans to work part-time at the stand and part-time in the fields over the summer months. This is her second summer working at the stand.

One of the things that Petrino has had to learn is the water and sun requirements of plants, in addition to learning seasons of fruit. "That information has become very relevant" as she fields customer questions, said Petrino.

Ornamentals.

Leslie Cole serves as ornamentals production manager at the college.

Besides learning basic supply and demand principles, students learn about seasons and varieties of plants as they experiment with new and improved varieties to market at the stand, according to Cole.

Additionally, "the fact that the students are learning to grow the highest quality product that they can is certainly educational," said Cole.

In addition, "without the farm market, we wouldn't have a need to grow these things — it is a business," she said. "It's good clean fun and you can make money doing it," she said.

Most of the plants grown in the greenhouses go to the stand. "At this time of year, 80 percent of what we produce is for the farm

market," Cole said.

During the school year, however, student projects, and plants used as teaching tools, find their homes in the greenhouses. Rarer varieties of plants are grown for the campus' garden gazebo, for example, which provides another teaching opportunity.

Approximately 2,200 flats of annuals come from the greenhouse to the market. Moreover 400 10-inch hanging baskets, "a big seller for us," are produced in the greenhouses.

Also, "within the last couple of years, combination planters have become popular," she said. The 10-inch planters may include "something trailing, something with height, and different textures and colors."

Cole keeps the variety of sizes of pots to a minimum for simplicity in growing and pricing at the market. "Plus consumers are not overwhelmed," she said.

Cole herself has learned several lessons in marketing. She cited the example of the year they planted flowers in white pots and saw lagging sales. The next year the plastic terra-cotta pots helped sales to pick up, she said.

Four separate state-of-the-art houses are joined by several other different types of greenhouses stationed on campus.

Although the other greenhouses provide an opportunity for students to become familiar with a variety of greenhouses, the newer models "are what the students are

going to see when they get out into the workplace," she said.

The modern greenhouses allow Cole and the student to grow a variety of plants. A computer-controlled heating and cooling system makes it possible for "each house to be set for a specific temperature range," she said.

The houses are set for cool weather to "almost tropical" plant varieties.

By June the houses are emptied, allowing for cleaning and maintenance work. "The students do a lot of repairs as well" — another learning opportunity, according to Cole.

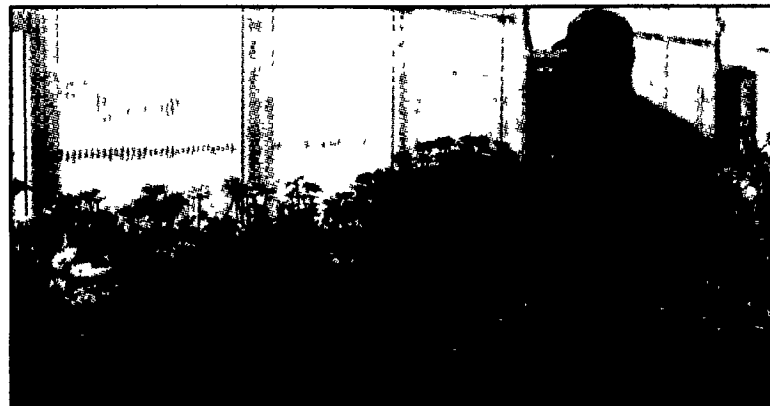
Learning responsibility is one of the key elements of working at the stand, according to Moran. "Students without prior job experience learn what it is to have a job," he said.

Moran, who had prior experience in the corporate world, believes that it is important for the students to operate as though the stand is a corporate organization.

Plans for a new, larger market are under development, with more details to be decided in the coming weeks.



Marianne Petrino, a junior and part-time employee at the stand this summer, restocks shelves.



Kirby Snyder, a senior ornamental horticulture/landscape contracting student, will work full-time in the greenhouse and nursery this summer.

Pennsylvania Gets \$600,000 For Johne's Program

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — Pennsylvania Agriculture Secretary Dennis C. Wolff recently announced that the state has received \$628,108 in funding from the USDA for efforts to research and control Johne's disease in the commonwealth.

Recognizing the significant financial and herd health impact of Johne's on the cattle industry, USDA has launched a major funding effort to encourage states to conduct more research, industry education, and industry participation in state Johne's disease programs. Pennsylvania's strong history of efforts to control the disease has resulted in an immediate \$628,108, with an additional \$600,000 in funding available in October.

"These funds will be used to enhance our laboratory testing capability, provide incentives for cattle owners and veterinarians to participate in our Johne's Disease Program, and conduct further research in testing and control techniques," said Dr. Paul Knepley, chief of the Animal and Poultry Health Division at the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture (PDA).

"Pennsylvania has long been considered a leader among states regarding Johne's disease research and control efforts," Wolff said. "These funds will enable Pennsylvania to continue our tradition of excellence in Johne's disease efforts."

Currently, PDA administers one of the longest standing voluntary control programs in the country. The new National Johne's Disease Program Standards were developed in large part based on Pennsylvania's experience.

Johne's Disease is a chronic, progressive, bacterial disease affecting cattle and other ruminant animals. There is no cure or protective vaccine for Johne's Disease.

For more information, please contact Knepley at (717) 783-8300.



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