East Texas Nursery & Greenhouse Newsletter

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Meeting Announcement

The 2007 East Texas Nursery and Greenhouse Conference will be held in conjunction with the Southwest Growers Conference. The meeting will be held October 24th at the Harvey Convention Center in Tyler. The greenhouse and nursery tour traditionally held as part of the Southwest Growers Conference will be held on October 23rd. Registration and tour information will be available shortly.

Presentations will include:

- **TBA**: Charlie Hall
- **Diagnosing Plant Diseases in Texas**: Larry Barnes
- **Understanding Physiological Disorders: Their Causes and Cures**: Kimberly Williams
- **Top 20 Growing Media Questions**: Mike Evans
- **IPM Update & Bio-Rationals for Insect and Disease Control:** Scott Ludwig
- **Plant Pathology Update:** Karl Steddom

Dr. Carlos Bogran will again be providing a day long Hispanic worker IPM workshop!

Efficacy of TriStar & Safari Against Crepe Myrtle Aphids

Methods. TriStar 30SC was evaluated against Safari to control crepe myrtle aphids on container grown crepe myrtles. The trial was conducted at the Texas A&M University Systems Agricultural Research and Extension Center at Overton, TX. Treatments were applied using an R & D® CO_2 sprayer with an 8002VS tee-jet flat spray nozzle at 60 psi. Treatments were applied on days 0 and 14. The number of aphids were counted on the first five leaves of two randomly selected branches.

Results. All chemical treatments resulted in lower aphid populations compared to the untreated control on all dates. There were no significant differences in aphid population between the two TriStar rates after the day one count. These results may be slightly biased due to the high aphid population on the untreated plants. The winged aphids leaving the untreated plants were constantly invading treated plants. Under normal insect pressure, the insect pressure on the plants would have probably remained near zero during the duration of the study.

Acknowledgments: I would like to thank Cleary Chemical Corporation for providing financial support. I would also like to thank Ran-Pro Farms for the crepe myrtles. (Scott Ludwig)

Mean number of crepe myrtle aphids per 10 crepe myrtle leaves

		Days after treatment						
Product	Rate (/100gal)	0	1	7	14	15	21	28
TriStar 30SG	2.7 oz	83.0a	0.0c	0.2b	3.7b	0.0b	0.7c	0.5c
TriStar 30SG	5.3 oz	101.8a	3.8b	0.0b	2.2b	0.0b	0.8bc	0.2c
Safari 20SG	4 oz	106.5a	8.3b	0.3b	10.5b	0.0b	6.2b	4.3b
Untreated		94.3a	93.1a	105.1a	211.7a	338.2a	420.3a	672.7a

Means within columns with the same are not significantly different (P>0.05, LSD).

The Camphor Shot Borer: A New Ambrosia Beetle Pest in Texas

The camphor shot borer, *Xylosandrus mutilatus*, is one of the latest ambrosia beetle species to be introduced into the US. Ambrosia beetles are named after a fungus (Ambrosiella) which is carried by adult females and grown inside wood galleries as food for their larvae. Ambrosia beetles do not feed on wood but can cause damage to apparently healthy trees in nurseries and landscapes by severing the plant's vascular system and introducing plant pathogens.

The Camphor shot borer is a relatively large ambrosia beetle, averaging a little more than 1/8th of an inch (3.5 mm) in length. It is black in color, with reddish legs and antennae. It can be distinguished from other ambrosia and bark beetles due to its unusual body shape; its elytra (hardened forewings) are shorter than its thorax.

Photo: Doug Stone, Mississippi State University, www.insectimages.org

Photo: Michael C. Thomas, Florida DOACS, www.insectimages.org

Native to Southeast Asia, it was first detected in the US in Mississippi in August 1999. It was first detected in Texas in 2005. Its current US distribution also includes Alabama and Florida. *Xylosandrus mutilatus* has been recorded from a large number of hosts in Asia but until recently it was only caught on insect traps. Recent findings suggest it may attack living trees including shumard oaks (*Quercus shumardii*) and sugar maples (*Acer saccharum*) among others.

Cultural and chemical controls of this pest are similar to that of other ambrosia beetles. To reduce the likelihood of attack, limit plant stress such as freeze damage, sun scald and wind burn. Stimulate healthy growth through proper irrigation and fertilization, too much or too little can increase susceptibility to attack. Time any insecticide sprays to coincide with insect activity and growth stage. Although many ambrosia beetles are active year round, attacks on trees are usually more common during late February, March and April, right before or during bud break. Insecticides containing bifenthrin & permethrin have shown effectiveness against bark and ambrosia beetles. (Carlos Bográn, Texas Cooperative Extension)

Charlie Hall Named Ellison International Floriculture Chairholder at Texas A&M

Dr. Charlie Hall has been named holder of the Ellen and Jim Ellison Chair in International Floriculture at Texas A&M University's department of horticultural sciences. Hall, who for the past five years has been professor of agricultural economics at the University of Tennessee, previously was a Texas Cooperative Extension specialist.

The international floriculture chair was created in 2004 after the Texas floriculture and greenhouse industry pooled $500,000 which was then matched by Texas A&M to endow the $1 million chair. The program aims at ensuring that floriculture and greenhouse research and education will be a permanent part of the horticulture program within The Texas A&M University System. The Texas nursery and greenhouse industry brings in about $9 billion a year, to the state economy, according to Ellen Ellison, who with her husband Jim, led the effort to establish the chair.

Dr. Ed Hiler, former vice chancellor and dean of agriculture at Texas A&M, was the first chairholder in floriculture until his retirement at the end of 2006. “Hall is the perfect person for this job. He is a bridge builder, a person who is admired by everyone, “ said Hiler. “People in the industry as well as his peers think the world of him. He is exactly the person who is needed to carry out our strategic plan. I’m very pleased he was selected.” Hiler said Hall is a natural at one of the position’s key criteria – bringing people together toward common goals.

Hall said the chair position "offers a great opportunity to develop an educational program in floriculture that accentuates the great work that the Texas A&M faculty are already doing in this area. “It is our goal to continue to build on the already stellar reputation of Texas A&M so that it will be recognized as one of the premier programs in floriculture in the United States and internationally," he said. Hall said he is a bit of a "hybrid" himself with degrees in both agricultural economics and horticulture. He also grew up in the plant industry, and is admittedly passionate about the industry. "I look forward to challenges associated with this chair for several reasons, but mainly because I believe it provides an opportunity to make a difference in the livelihood of floricultural firms not only in Texas but domestically and abroad." he said. (Kathleen Phillips, Texas A&M University)

Hundreds of Flowering Bedding Plants to be Showcased on June 28th at Hort Field Day

On June 28, nursery growers, greenhouse managers and gardening enthusiasts can view field tests of flowering bedding plant varieties at the annual Overton Horticultural Field Day. "We have over 800 varieties this year and that includes 180 varieties in the container trials," said Dr. Brent Pemberton, research horticulturist with the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station. The field day will begin at 8:30 a.m. at the Texas A&M University Systems Agricultural and Research Center's North Farm site. The tour will continue at the North Farm site until about 10:30, then move to the Overton Center's headquarters building where a demonstration garden is located. Lunch will be served at about 11:30 a.m.

Pemberton began trials of bedding plants at the Texas A&M University System Agricultural Research and Extension Center at Overton to serve the commercial greenhouse and bedding plant industry. Before Pemberton began his trials, there were few if any tests under East Texas conditions of the many new varieties released by seed company each year, he said.

Since the first field day with less than 100 varieties, the event has grown to include vinca, ornamental peppers, trailing petunias, verbenas, begonias, portulaca, zinnias, geraniums and ageratum. This year, there will be an emphasis on impatiens, including regular impatiens, New Guinea varieties and some miniature types, Pemberton said."There's also a good selection this year of angelonia and cuphea," he said.

Registration is free and will include a lunch. The Overton center is located 1 mile north of downtown Overton on State Highway 3053. Coming from south of Overton, take State Highway 135 into town. At Overton's single red stop light, take a left, go across the railroad tracks and turn right immediately after the Brookshire's Supermarket. Look for the large white sign on the right side of the road identifying the Overton center.

The North Farm site is about 4 miles north of the center on 3053. For more information, go to http://overton.tamu.edu/flowers/. (Robert Burns, Texas Cooperative Extension)

East Texas IPM Program

Providing Science-based solutions to pest problems using methods that minimize health, environmental, and economic risks.

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