



## Ask the Experts [www.ohp.com](http://www.ohp.com)

OHP, Inc., formerly Olympic Horticultural Products, was founded with the goal of becoming the leading provider of technology-based solutions for the greenhouse and nursery markets. Today, OHP continues its mission with one of the largest product portfolios in professional horticulture.

OHP continues to focus on day-to-day contact with growers and professionals in the greenhouse and nursery markets to ensure outstanding service, but also to stay informed on the variety of problems and issues that growers encounter on a daily basis.

Our mission is to serve greenhouse and nursery professionals with not only effective products and exemplary service, we also want to share our knowledge. A better educated customer is a better steward for the industry and that is a goal we all share.

To that end, we are proud to introduce the OHP Ask the Experts section in *Greenhouse Grower* and *Ornamental Outlook* magazines. This monthly section will allow industry professionals with questions on insect and weed control, PGR usage or plant health issue to tap into the expertise of OHP's veteran technical staff.

Questions can be submitted via e-mail to our experts and they will answer them in a future issue of the magazine. The answers will also be featured in a special section on [www.greenhousegrower.com](http://www.greenhousegrower.com).

We hope you will send in your questions and let us help you improve the efficiency and effectiveness of your operation. Now let's meet the OHP experts who will be providing your solutions.



Dobbs

The team is lead by **Director of Technical Service Jeff Dobbs**, who has more than 30 years of experience in the chemical industry with companies such as ICI Americas and Zeneca. Dobbs has been involved in the development of over 20 new herbicide, insecticide and PGR products during his career.



Lindquist

**Senior Technical Manager Dr. Richard Lindquist** is still regarded as one of the most foremost entomologists in the ornamental industry. "Link" spent over 30 years with The Ohio State University conducting focused research aimed at solving grower pest problems with solutions such as the famous Lindquist "Thrips Cocktail." An OHP veteran of six years, Link is instrumental in developing technical positions and providing growers and partners with day-to-day solutions to their pest problems.



Barcel

**Senior Technical Manager Dave Barcel** is the newest member of our technical team. Dave joined OHP from Chemtura where he conducted research on Chemtura products including their full line of plant growth regulators (PGR). Barcel was instrumental in developing practical solutions for grower PGR needs including the development of the current paclobutrazol labeling. He continues his PGR focus with OHP.

With an average 25 years of nursery and greenhouse industry experience our technical team is uniquely qualified to provide the finest real-world advice to growers with our Prescription Solutions.

We hope you find the Ask the Experts section useful to your operation and look forward to hearing from you.

# QA AND ASK THE EXPERTS

## **Q:** How can growers incorporate wetting agents to keep product alive at retail?

**A:** Soil wetting agents are becoming very popular with growers as a means to increase uniformity in soil moisture, both for production of plants and more recently for retail qualities. Wetting agents can be incorporated into the soil mix prior to sowing/transplanting using liquid or granular formulations. Recent studies have shown benefit to treating plant material for delivery to stores with a wetting agent to maintain crop quality during the retail sales period.

Maintaining good soil moisture has many benefits such as reducing plant stress through wet and dry cycles. Weakened plants are more prone to pests, poor nutrient uptake and shorter life span. Good examples would be spider mites on dry plant material or pythium disease in overly wet conditions.

Suffusion, AquaGro, and other similar products are easily used with a chemical injector or through a tank-mix application. The application can be made in the field or at the retail store location. Users could expect several weeks of improved soil moisture qualities.

## **Q:** How do greenhouse growers adjust their programs to be “green?”

**A:** Sustainability and “Growing Green” are certainly buzz words today and mean different things to different people. We believe the way to start getting greener is to use Best Management Practices (BMP) to manage your operation.

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is a component of BMP. As an example, pest control should be done as needed. More recently green is considered “no synthetic pesticides”; but does imply the use of beneficials, and other products listed by OMRI and or through the National Organics Programs. Several companies such as OHP are recognizing the need to have products in this area. There are many to choose from but not all have proven track records to back up pest control claims and crop safety. Growers interested in going “Green” can visit the USDA and OMRI web sites for more information.

## **Q:** How do growers become involved in new product trials?

**A:** Product evaluation is extremely important for both growers and manufacturers. Product performance and crop phytotoxicity potential are keys for growers to know. Growers can initiate trials by working through their product supplier, who would contact the manufacturer. Growers can also work directly with the manufacturer. Companies like OHP and others have dedicated field researchers whose job it is to conduct applied research on new products.

Growers are indispensable with these trials by providing plant material, greenhouse space and daily care of the trial plants. The number of plants required depends on the number of treatments, replicates and various cultivars of interest to the grower. Efficacy trials can take a couple of months whereas phytotoxicity evaluations may only need a few weeks. Interested growers should start by contacting their supplier representative or manufacturing representative.

## **Q:** What is the best method for controlling downy mildews? It seems to be more of a problem in the early spring.

**A:** Downy mildew can become a serious disease when growing conditions are cool, cloudy and damp. On the other hand, downy mildew on coleus occurs during warm and damp conditions. Plants that are heavily fertilized are also prone to more infection. Remember that three conditions are needed for an infection to take place:

1. The pathogen
2. A susceptible host plant
3. Environment. Keeping a greenhouse slightly warmer and drier is one option but is not practical for outdoor nursery crops.

In the past there were few effective fungicides for control of downy mildews. This situation has changed recently and good fungicide rotation programs are available. Remember that downy mildews are best prevented, not eradicated once well-established. Fungicide applications should begin when environmental conditions are suitable for disease development. An effective rotation program can include products such as Aliette, Compass O (or another strobilurin such as Heritage), Stature, FenStop and mancozeb.



**HAVE A QUESTION FOR THE EXPERTS?**

**E-MAIL YOUR QUESTION TO  
ASKTHEEXPERTS@CLEARWINDOW.NET**

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