The passing of the pen and the trowel.

The passing of the pen and the trowel: changing times in commercial urban horticulture.

During September our new agent, Henry Mayer, for commercial urban horticulture (landscape design, installation, maintenance, and related commercial areas) started. Henry can be reached at Ext 231. He prepared for us a short self-introduction:

“I was born in Caracas, Venezuela, many years ago...... it was there that I graduated from the Central University in 1982 with a B.S. in Agriculture.

After that it seems as if my life has been all work. I spent six years in (the) Extension Service working with farmers in the production of pineapples, avocados, papayas, etc. After that I worked in the private sector doing landscape maintenance, design, and nursery production.

“In 1999 due to the deterioration of the country, my family and I emigrated to South Florida. Once in Florida I started doing some volunteer work and taking some classes at UF towards my Masters Degree. I worked as Assistant Commercial Horticulture Extension Agent in Broward County.

“At the beginning of 2002 I changed to a commercial landscape company where I was Quality Control Manager. Now I am here with the Miami-Dade Extension Service working for you as an Urban Commercial Horticultural Extension Agent with the goal of helping and supporting this community.”

The second annual workshop on “Staying competitive...understanding your market.”

Thursday, October 9, 2003, 8 a.m. - 12 noon. At the CES Auditorium, Homestead. This seminar is FREE of charge; coffee & pastelitos will be provided. NO lunch. Agenda available at the Extension Office.

Featuring Drs. Robert Degner, & Allen Wysocki, Univ. of Florida; Nelson Pugh, FDACS; Omar Gonzalez, Caribbean Basin Ag. Trade office; Heidi McIntyre, McIntyre Marketing Group. The target audience is producers (ornamentals, tropical fruits, vegetables), but the information covered is useful for landscape maint. people.

Aquatic plant production & maintenance.

Friday, November 14, 2003, 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m., at the Extension Service Auditorium, Homestead. We will cover both production and maintenance topics.

Cost for this seminar is $12.50, which includes pastelitos, coffee, and lunch. A flier with a registration form is available at the Extension office.

Dr. Ken Langland (U.F.-Gainesville) will teach us how to identify aquatic plants, Dr. Dave Sutton (U.F.-FLREC) will cover native plant culture and propagation, + much more. 5 CEUs requested. Call 248-3311 for more information.

ISA grades and standards.

November 19, 2003, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m., at the Extension Service Auditorium in Broward County, 3245 College Avenue, Davie.

This training is sponsored and conducted by the Florida Chapter ISA. Price varies from $95 to $150. See the flier on the web at:

http://www.floridaisa.org/pdf/grades+standards(final2)

ISA arborist certification reviews & exams.

Many have asked about this. Well, we have one scheduled for Nov.. The review classes are one day each, from 8:30 am-4:30 pm: Thur, Nov 20 in Spanish, & Fri, Nov 21 in English. The exam is Sat, Nov 22, at the CES Auditorium, Homestead. Topics include tree id & selection, fertilization, installation, diagnosis & treatment of problems, cabling, bracing, pruning, climbing & more.

Pesticide training for Oct - Dec in Spanish:

Call 248-3311 x 242 for info. on pesticide training.

8-hr training for limited-certification in comm landscape maint, in Spanish. (exam is in English.)

NOTE: THIS IS THE “LIMITED LICENSE” EVERYBODY TALKS ABOUT--THE ONE YOU NEED TO SPRAY ROUNDUP.

This class has been postponed twice this year--we must have 20 persons registered no later than five (5) days before the class ... if we have less than 20, we must cancel the class.

If you need this certification, call today for a registration packet. Complete the forms and return them to our office. This training will be scheduled on a Saturday in late October or November, 7 am - 7 pm, if 20 persons pre-register.

At the CES Auditorium, Homestead. Cost for the class only is $12.50, & includes coffee, pastelitos, & lunch. A flier with a registration form is available at the CES office.

The cost for the EXAM is $150.00, check made out to FDACS. You must bring your check, + the completed set of forms, or you cannot take the exam. If you wish, you may attend the class ($12.50) but not take the exam. The forms will be needed only if you plan to take the exam.

General Standards (Core) in Spanish.

Fri, Oct 24, 8 am - 5 pm. The class will be taught by Dr. Carlos Balderi, Henry Mayer & Ruben Regalado from our office, & Cesar Asuaje from the Palm Beach CES office. The instruction will be in Spanish, but remember that the exam is in English.

The instructors have prepared a vocabulary in Eng & Span to help participants, plus thorough reviews & sample questions for each topic. A flier is available at the office.
Private applicator review in Spanish.

Friday, November 7, 8 am - 5 pm, at Miami-Dade CES Auditorium, Homestead. Cost for is $12.50, which includes coffee, pastelitos, and lunch. A flier with a registration form is available at the Extension office.

The category Private Applicator is for nursery, fruit, and vegetable personnel. The class will be taught by Dr. Carlos Balerdi & Ruben Regalado from our office; Cézar Asuaje from the Belle Glade CES office. The instruction will be in Spanish, but the exam is in English.


Ornamental and turf review & exam.

Wednesday, December 4, 2003, 8:15 a.m. - 5 p.m.. At the CES Auditorium, Homestead. Cost is $15.00 ($20.00 after Nov 24); includes coffee, donuts, & lunch. A flier with a registration form is available at the office.

Good for 7 CEUs in Ornamental & Turf (Chapter 487), or 2 CEUs in Lawn & Ornamental (Chapter 482). Call 248-3311 x 242 for information.

Worker Protection Standard in Spanish.

Friday, December 5, 8:30 - 10:30 am. At the CES Auditorium, Homestead. Cost is $5.00, which includes coffee & pastelitos. This training is for nursery, fruit, & vegetable personnel & anyone who needs CEUs. A flier with a registration form is available at the office.

Good for 2 CEUs in Gen Stand/Core. Call 248-3311 x 242 for information.

Pesticide training for Oct - Dec in English:

The following classes (in Eng) require pre-registration. Call 248-3311 x 242 for info. on pesticide training.

Right-of-way review & exam.

Wednesday, Oct 28, 2003, 8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.. At the CES Auditorium, Homestead. Cost is $15.00 ($20.00 after Oct 6 at noon); includes coffee, donuts, & lunch. A flier with a registration form is available at the office.

Good for 4 CEUs (ROW or Private Applicator).

General standards / core review & exam.

Wednesday, Nov 19, 2003, 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.. At the South Dade Gov Center on Cutler Ridge, 10710 SW 211th St., Rm 203. Cost is $15.00 ($20.00 after Nov 10); includes coffee, donuts, & lunch. A flier with a registration form is available at the office.

Good for 5.5 CEUs in General Standards/Core.

Several new fact-sheets are available:

These fact-sheets have been completed or nearly completed since the last newsletter. We call them “In Writing” because so many of you have requested information “in writing” on the various topics. This quarter we are offering Spanish translations of several fact-sheets. They are also available in electronic form at our website:


1. La deficiencia de potasio en las palmas. In Writing fact-sheet no. 92. (Potassium deficiency in palms.)
2. La pudricion de la yema por Phytophthora en palmas del sur de Florida. In Writing fact-sheet no. 91. (Phytophthora bud-rot of palms in South Florida.)
3. Cultivo de la verdadeira palma datilera en el sur de Florida. In Writing fact-sheet no. 90. (Growing true date palms in South Florida.)
4. La “copia encrespada” en palmas y la deficiencia de manganeso. In Writing fact no. 89. (Mn deficiency in palms “frizzle-top.”)
5. La poda de formación reduce los daños causados por huracanes. In Writing fact-sheet no. 88. (Pruning trees for strength reduces hurricane damage.)
Removing trees safely.
(from Rutgers (NJ) CES. By R.J. Samulis, Burlington Co. ed. by H. Mayer.)

Safety is an important issue when you provide a tree trimming service. Common sense is the rule, but in this type of activity we cannot always fulfill it.

In April the N.J. agric. community lost two prominent members due to separate accidents while removing trees. Last summer in South Florida one man lost an eye. Could these events have been prevented? The reality is that we will never know. But proper planning, preparation & precautions are in everybody’s best interests.

Basic rules for work with a chainsaw include: 1. never work alone; try to work as a team so help is available immediately. 2. make sure not to operate chain saws when you are very tired or where the saw is above your shoulder. 3. make sure the saw is sharp & that the operator is wearing ear and eye protection.

Kickback can occur when the moving blade at the tip of the saw contacts the tree, resulting in a jumping-back of the saw toward your face. Proper maintenance of the brake is very important. Tree trimming is dangerous & will continue to be dangerous. Not all accidents can be avoided, but we can work to change this by keeping safety in mind at all times.

Nail in the coffin ... environment & chemicals.

[From Chemically Speaking, Sept, 2003. (They got it from: CropLife America Spotlight, 8/29/03) Ultimately from AMAP, Norway. ed. by jg.)]

Some pesticides & other chemicals used around the world have been detected in arctic seawater, a finding that could lead to stricter international controls.

In comments at a recent conference devoted to Arctic area persistent organic pollutants, a member of the Canada Meteorological Service said, "The appearance of a new chemical in the arctic is a nail in the coffin when it comes to international regulations and controls."

Such detection means that a chemical has traveled great distances by air, water, or animals to locations where there are few, if any, local sources. The chemicals named include the pesticides endosulfan, lindane and trifluralin. This research is part of the Arctic Monitoring & Assessment Program (AMAP). For more information, you can access the report at http://www.amap.no

FDACS BEPC–recent disciplinary actions:
The BEPC reported on disciplinary actions taken April-June, 2003. Six fines totaling $12,000 (That’s an average of $2,000) were issued for the following violations - use inconsistent with the label (4), faulty fumigation procedures (1), and deficient pretreatment (1). The Bureau issued 16 warning letters for the following violations - faulty wood destroying organism report (8), use inconsistent with the label (5), faulty fumigation procedures (1), uninsured operations (1), and failure to issue contract (1). The Bureau also issued 97 cease and desist orders to unlicensed pest control operators.

Fungicides for control of southern blight.
(From Something to grow on, Alabama CES internet newsletter. A.K. Hagan & J.W. Olive.)

In Alabama (and Florida) southern blight has seriously damaged container & field-grown butterfly bush, & viburnums, & many other plants. Southern blight does its damage during hot, wet weather. It is also seen in home landscapes on many species. The disease, caused by the fungus *Scherotium rolfsii*, causes a sudden wilting of leaves & roots, ultimately killing the plant. Clusters of tiny round, brown sceloria (spores) can be seen on the ground at the base of the dying plant, along with a growth of fungal mycelium that resembles webbing if viewed from a distance. In Irises, this disease is called “mustard-seed rot,” which is a good descriptive name.

Terraclor (also Terrazole and Defend), until recently, has been the industry's standard solution. It’s effectiveness for the control of southern blight on trees & shrubs has...
never been extensively tested. A three year study was conducted in Alabama to compare several new-ish fungicides: Lynx 3.6F, Fluazinam 500F, ProStar 50W, Terraguard 50W and Curalan DF with Terraclor 75W for the control of southern blight on the woody shrub Aucuba. One goal of the study was to determine the optimum application rate of these fungicides.

During the general screening trial Fluazinam 500F & ProStar 50W, when applied as a drench prior to the onset of symptoms, provided better disease control than Terraclor 75W. Over the three-year test period Fluazinam 500F & ProStar 50W gave complete control of southern blight. Terraguard 50W and Curalan DF showed little to no activity at the rates tested against southern blight. Terraclor 75W, which was applied at twice the full label rate proved surprisingly ineffective against southern blight on Aucuba.

To summarize, ProStar 50W and Fluazinam 500F, at all rates tested, gave significantly better southern blight control than Terraclor 75W. Lynx 3.6F was as effective as ProStar 50W and Fluazinam 500F in controlling this disease only at the highest drench rate. At the rates tested, Terraguard 50W and Curalan DF failed to prevent the development of southern blight on aucuba.

12 most frequent diseases in landscapes.

Guess how many are also problems in Florida!!! (D.Ogata, Plant Disease Clinic, Univ. Hawaii. ed by jg.)

The CTAHR (University of Hawaii) Plant Disease Clinic identifies diseases brought in by homeowners, growers, and landscape professionals. The following are 12 of the most frequent diseases encountered in the Plant Disease Clinic, in no particular order. You may want to consider this when selecting plants for production & landscape use.

1. Periwinkle (Catharanthus roseus)–leaf blight caused by Phytophthora nicotianae. Excessive moisture, splashing water, infected bedding plants, promote disease outbreaks. (I've read in other sources that once you introduce this fungus into a bed, it's there forever. Think of that the next time you're tempted to buy those bedding plants with moldy lower leaves. jg.)

2. Oyster plant (Rhoeo spathaceae)–crown rot caused by Phytophthora nicotianae. Plants melt out from center outward. Spread by excessive moisture & splashing water.

3. Dwarf Mondograss (Ophiopogon japonicus)–root-rot caused by Pythium splendens. The dw. selection is more susceptible than the longer-leaved version. Begins as tip burn, followed by gradual yellowing & browning.

Eventually the crown easily separates from the base when pulled. Heavy soils & poor drainage promote outbreaks.


5. Hemigraphis (Hemigraphis colorata)–nematode damage caused by the Rootknot nematode. Obvious signs are the galling of the roots. Above-ground symptoms range from stunting, declining growth, to thinning-out.

6. Spathiphyllum sp.–root & crown rot caused by Cylindrocladium spathiphylli. Older leaves droop & yellow from base. By this time, roots may be completely rotted. Widespread plant death results when the fungus becomes established in planting beds. Fungus may come in with infected nursery stock.


8. Canna sp.–rust caused by Puccinia sp–orange pustules on lower leaf surface. Damage ranges from isolated spots to severe. Spores spread by splashing water.

9. Plumeria sp.–rust caused by Coleosporium plumeriae. Bright orange pustules on lower leaf surface. Rubra hybrids are more susceptible than Singapore hybrids. Can cause premature defoliation. The damage is seasonal, appearing mostly during wetter months.

10. Hearts and Flowers (Aptenia cordifolia)–root-rot caused by Pythium splendens. Causes a melting-out in heavy or compacted soils, especially if over-irrigated.

11. Leea (Leea coccinea)–stem & foliar blight caused by Phytophthora nicotianae. Splashing water & crowding promote infection.

12. Roses (Rosa sp.)–two major foliar problems: black spot, caused by Diplocarpon rosae, begins as yellow spots, eventually darkening to almost black; & powdery mildew, caused by Oidium sp., covers leaves with a powdery mat. Both disease cause leaf drop during wet & humid periods.

Functional uses of plants in the landscape.

(T. Davis Sydnor, The Ohio State Univ. ed by jg)

Considering the functional use of plants is a new approach to solving landscape problems. Traditionally, plants have been used for beautification due to their aesthetic qualities. The expression “functional use of
“plants” helps to explain that plants can perform other functions in the landscape and still be beautiful.

Plants have horticultural characteristics such as height and spread, branching habit, flowers, fruit, and foliage; they have design qualities such as form, color, texture, and mass; and they have cultural requirements for growth in the landscape. In recent years, the functional characteristics of plants have been increasingly recognized.

Plants can be used functionally to solve some of the environmental problems the homeowner may have on the property. This may include the need for privacy, protection from glare or direct sunlight into windows, or shade on a patio. A thick row of high shrubs bordering a road can reduce noise and prevent litter from entering a yard, or perhaps screen an unpleasant view.

The contemporary approach to planning a residential landscape incorporates a design process. In the process, the needs and goals of the owner and conditions of the building site are identified. An analysis of these goals and conditions reveals needs and suggests ways to enhance the landscape.

Recognize that not all landscape problems can be solved with plant materials alone; pavements and structures are equally important. Fences and walls are as functional and provide as much privacy as woody plants—and they may require less maintenance.

Let’s consider just three “functional uses” of plants: architectural, engineering, climate control and aesthetic.

Architectural Uses of Plants.

Plants can be used to form walls, canopies, or floors by taking advantage of their different growth habits and foliage characteristics. A stand of trees or shrubs can create walls to filter or block views, or a canopy of tree branches can provide a sense of shelter. Ground-covering plants, including lawngrasses and other groundcovers, with uniform foliage and textural characteristics can present the feeling of an architectural floor. Somewhat taller and less uniform groundcovers can also serve this purpose—these are more like shaggy carpets. Plants can also form boundaries just as definitively as a concrete wall.

Engineering Uses of Plants.

Trees can stop or diffuse light before it reaches the ground. Engineering functions of plants include using them to screen or soften the sun’s glare on the water or on smooth shiny surfaces like pavement, or to block car lights or street lights.

Trees to provide shade and foundation plantings can also block glare from entering the house through windows, and they can prevent walkways and driveways from absorbing heat during the day and re-radiating it after nightfall.

An edging of ground cover plants along an entranceway or at corners of a walk helps direct attention and movement of people. (This works especially well if the plants chosen are covered with thorns, spines or prickles.) Traffic movement along walks and drives can be controlled with shrubs or trees.

Plants can add, absorb and deflect sound by the presence and movement of their foliage and branches. Plants are particularly useful in noise control when joined with landforms. (Notice how shrubs and trees are used for this purpose along expressways that cross residential areas.)

Climate Control Uses of Plants.

For climate control, deciduous shade trees might be used to screen the hot Summer sun, then in Winter permit the sun to strike the ground, walls and windows of a building. Large shrubs can serve as windbreaks to reduce wind velocities.

Aesthetic Uses of Plants.

The aesthetic functions of plants are the easiest to understand. Plants traditionally have been used for beautification; unfortunately, most people think this is the only reason to landscape with plants.

Aesthetically, plants can become a piece of living sculpture. When placed against a plain wall or fence, they create an interesting shadow pattern of branches and leaves. Large plants can be used as background for smaller plantings. Repeating a species in several parts of the landscape will help tie the parts together, giving the landscape a coherence so often lacking. They can also provide suitable environments for birds and other wildlife.

Plants may be used for diverse purposes in the modern landscape. Rarely should plants be simply ornamental; rather, they should serve multiple roles, making the modern landscape both attractive and functional.