Michigan Greenhouse Growers Council

October 2018

Michigan Greenhouse Growers 2018 Election

Michigan Greenhouse Growers to elect three members to the Council and select appointees:

Three positions are open for the upcoming Michigan Greenhouse Growers Council election set for November 2018. President Bill Tuinier and member Ken Tuinier are term limited and their seats are up for re-election. Kevin Sportel completes his first term and may opt to run again as his seat is open this year. The MGGC meets three or four times a year and conducts additional MGGC business via email or conference calls. Please contact the MGGC office or council member if you are interested in running for a council position.

Appointed positions are also made yearly. The following positions are appointed: one representing the education community, one representing of the West Michigan Flower Growers, one representing the Metro Detroit Flower Growers and two representing allied trades. Please contact the MGGC office or a council member if you are interested in one of the appointed positions.

Please let your candidate wishes be known no later than October 26, 2018.

The membership of MGGC appreciates the time and effort of all who volunteer to serve this industry.

MGGC office phone is 517-367-2033 or email val@julianvail.com**.**

APHIS Announces

Schedule for Certifying Offshore Greenhouses That Will Ship Geranium Cuttings to the United States

APHIS announced today that it will conduct annual certification visits in November and December to offshore facilities that wish to ship geranium (Pelargonium spp.) cuttings to the United States during the 2018-2019 season. During these visits, APHIS will confirm that the offshore facilities meet or exceed the “Minimum Sanitation Protocols for Offshore Geranium Cutting Production.”

APHIS must physically visit and certify all interested offshore facilities before December 31, 2018. Participating facilities must cover the full cost of these certification visits, including travel, salary, benefits, and overtime. The facilities will provide these funds through a trust fund established through a signed cooperative services agreement.

APHIS established minimum sanitation protocols for offshore greenhouse facilities to keep Ralstonia solanacearum race 3 biovar 2 out of the United States.USDA’s Agricultural Bioterrorism Protection Act of 2002 lists R. solanacearum race 3 biovar 2 as a select agent because it could pose a severe threat to plant health. It causes brown rot of potato, Southern wilt of geranium, and bacterial wilt of tomato and eggplant. The pathogen can be transmitted by contaminated soil, water, equipment, and people who have come in contact with it. It can also spread when infected plants, tubers, or cuttings are moved from one place and planted in another. By ensuring that all offshore facilities meet or exceed minimum standards for greenhouse construction, sanitation, production, and pest management, APHIS can mitigate the risk of R. solanacearum before plant cuttings reach our shores.

If you are interested in scheduling a certification visit or would like more information about the protocols, please send an email to Kara Spofford, Offshore Certification Specialist (Kara.L.Spofford@aphis.usda.gov), and Craig Regelbrugge (craigr@americanhort.org), Senior Vice President of AmericanHort, by November 13, 2018.

Upcoming Meeting:

Board Meeting - Thursday, December 13 in East Lansing

USDA Seeks Applications for Renewable Energy, Energy Efficiency Loans and Grants

The Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) has published a Notice of Solicitation of Applications for Federal Fiscal Year 2019 in the Federal Register. Due Dates are rapidly approaching. See the Stakeholder Announcement below.

Eligible Applicants for the program are Agricultural Producers and Rural Small Businesses.

Anticipated Mandatory Funding for FY2019 is $50 million.

Rural Small Business Projects must be located in a rural area with populations of 50,000 or less. The Agricultural Producer Projects can be located in rural or non-rural areas.

The Application Templates and Forms are available at USDA Rural Development Offices or the National REAP Website at: www.rd.usda.gov/reap, under Forms and Resources.

STAKEHOLDER ANNOUNCEMENT

WASHINGTON, Aug. 14, 2018 – Assistant to the Secretary for Rural Development Anne Hazlett today invited applications for loan guarantees and grants for renewable energy systems and energy efficiency improvement projects.

These loan guarantees and grants are part of USDA's Rural Energy for America Program (REAP), which was created under the 2008 Farm Bill and reauthorized under the 2014 Farm Bill. This notice seeks applications for Fiscal Year 2019 funding. The deadlines to apply for grants are Oct. 31, 2018, and April 1, 2019. Applications for loan guarantees are accepted year-round.

REAP helps agricultural producers and rural small businesses reduce energy costs and consumption by purchasing and installing renewable energy systems and making energy efficiency improvements in their operations. Eligible systems may derive energy from wind, solar, hydro-electric, ocean, hydrogen, geothermal or renewable biomass (including anaerobic digesters).

Additional information about the program and how to apply for this funding is available on page 40216 of the Aug. 14, 2018, Federal Register.

The Dodder You Never Wanted

Dodder, a parasitic vining plant, is an uncommon greenhouse weed that survives off plants and can rapidly grow infesting multiple plants to whole crops.

September 10, 2018 - Authors: W. Garrett Owen, Erin Hill

Figure 1. Greenhouse-grown fall garden mums parasitize with field dodder. Field dodder has a spaghetti-like appearance with pale green, yellow, or orange tendrils that wrap around the host plant. All photos by W. Garrett Owen, MSU.

Parasitic plants are rarely found infecting greenhouse crops, however, on a recent greenhouse visit, field dodder (*Cuscuta campestris;* Fig. 1) was observed among a crop of greenhouse-grown fall garden mums (*Chrysanthemum ×morifolium*). With a wide host range, the many species of dodder (*Cuscuta* spp.) can parasitize native plants, ornamentals and agricultural crops in Michigan. Legumes, bedding plants, nursery crops and vegetables can serve as hosts for dodder.

Seed-borne, dodder germinates from contaminated soilless substrate or soil under high air temperatures (77 degrees Fahrenheit or higher). Dodder is classified as a holoparasitic plant as its minute, scale-like leaves and low photosynthetic capacity makes it reliant on a host plant to complete its life cycle. Far-red light serves as an indicator of a possible host nearby and triggers the formation of haustoria, or suckers with a saw tooth-like appearance (Fig. 2). The vining plant has a spaghetti-like appearance and grows rapidly; coiling its pale green, yellow or orange tendrils and stems around the host. The haustoria attach to the stem of the host plant and serve as a pipeline for dodder to extract water, carbohydrates and nutrients.

Figure 2. Haustoria, or suckers with a saw tooth-like appearance, attach to the stem of the host plant and serve as a pipeline for dodder to extract water, carbohydrates and nutrients.

Once dodder is united with the host, the initial stem that emerged from the substrate withers. Dodder flowers (Fig. 3) and produces seed quickly after attaching to the host, with flowers arranged in compact clusters and small seeds irregularly shaped with a rough-surface.

Figure 3. Field dodder (Cuscuta campestris) flowers are arranged in compact clusters.
Management and control of dodder infection in greenhouses is limited to prevention and host plant culling. Keep greenhouses and surrounding areas free of weeds to prevent dodder seed from moving into your production area. Frequently inspect crops. Suspicious plants can be submitted to Michigan State University's Diagnostic Services for identification.
Detaching dodder from the host plants may be difficult and therefore hand removal may be insufficient. Parasitized containers should be culled by bagging in the production area to reduce the potential of seed dispersible. Bags should be disposed of in the trash or contents burned to avoid dispersing the seed into other environments.
Dodder only reproduces by seed, so preventing further seed production is very important. Seed can remain dormant for up to five years. Seeds may be dispersed by a variety of means, such as birds, water, equipment, contaminated substrate or soil, mulch and infected plant material. Outside the greenhouse, control can be achieved by hand removal, burning, mowing or herbicide application.

This article was published by **Michigan State University Extension**. For more information, visit http://www.msue.msu.edu. To contact an expert in your area, visit http://expert.msue.msu.edu, or call 888-MSUE4MI (888-678-3464).

Membership Renewals

Renewal Letters went out. Please review your form and make changes as necessary.

Our mailing address is:

Michigan Greenhouse Growers Council

PO Box 278

Bath, MI 48808-0278