



North West Study tour visit to Stuart Halman in Cheshire

# Conference 2019 Plugs & Prop

Following the Technical Committee meeting in June, it was decided to focus the agenda for next year's Conference on the many issues surrounding plug production and cuttings propagation. The conference will take place at the NFU Conference Centre at the head offices in Stoneleigh Park, Kenilworth on Tuesday 15th January.



Many developments, seen in the recent past in study tours and work from BPPC will be combined with input from international industry speakers to make this an **unmissable event!**

Starting with recent trends in the US market the agenda follows on

with plant physiology that is central to understanding what we are trying to do in plant propagation and will also cover lighting of cuttings and mother stock as well as the soil environment and nutrition and automation of the plant handling processes.

After lunch the speakers will tackle the use of 30 MHz sensing tech-



nology for the improvement of environmental control, biopesticides in propagation and techniques for management of the aerial environ-

*(Continued on page 4)*

**BPOA wishes all its members and their families and colleagues a Happy Christmas!**



**Growing together™**

**December 2018**

## NW Study Tour

The BPPC planned a Study Tour of some of the North West's premier production nurseries to see how growers are responding to the range of challenges this season. The tour began in bright sunshine in the nurseries of Stuart Halman in Cheshire (above) and his near neighbour Trevor Lawrence, one of the last, large-scale producers of chrysanthemum blooms for supermarket sales and moving further north on the second day to see Ambrose, Florna and Lovania in Lancashire. You can read a fuller report on the website and see some of the nurseries at <https://www.homegrownplants.org.uk/blog/bppc-north-west-study-tour/> and on BPOA Facebook.

## Recycling

The technical committee has drawn attention to the need for a clear policy on plastics and recycling during its recent meeting. / This was a subject often raised during the NW tour and Graeme Edwards, chair of the TC wrote "The main concern is that council/waste recyclers still won't accept pots in kerb-side collections as on their website its states no-plant pots regardless of colour or what they are made from. This is a massive issue in which growers will be investing huge amounts of money."



# Chairman's Note

Dear Members

Its has been a rollercoaster year both politically and environmental-ly.

While we continue to assess how Britain will look post Brexit and how we will engage with Europe to allow our industry to continue to thrive we look internally to how we



can shape the BPOA for you.

The season started strong with good weather and sales before we stalled for a short period and regained any losses towards the end of a long hot summer. As always Christmas brings with it its own challenges but renewed positivity is showing despite the challenges,

sell through is strong and we prepare for a good spring 2019.

Industry challenges have been aplenty and rest assured alongside the NFU - we are busy lobbying, achieving and striving for improvements and clearer paths to ensuring our businesses are in the best possible position for the future - Seasonal Workers/ Labour shortage -

The association, with other horticulture interests in the NFU, made strong representation to the government to retain the SAWS since 2014, Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme. This scheme which gave time limited licensed contracts to overseas workers, with a return to country of origin at the end has been abandoned in favour of an open EU labour market. Recent announcements thanks to NFU lobbying has had this type of scheme reintroduced on a trial basis and we are pleased one of our own members is helping lead this scheme together with the Home Office.

Xylella -

This continues to be top of the agenda in many meetings on biose-

curity. There is no hard solution other than to continue to source our plant material responsibly and ethically.

Brexit -

While we lead in to Christmas with a PM in place at least and a date that the UK exits the EU, there is still so much uncertainty. The NFU are working hard on the industries behalf to secure our policies, strengthen our position and ensure our voices are heard in our concerns for imports, the volatility of the Pound and labour shortages.

The BPOA continues to be active in supporting the ornamentals sector and participating in action to promote the interests of growers; we will continue to inform both advisory and legislative bodies of our concerns. The BPOA continues its policy that our events offer members great value for money and will endeavour to maintain this position.

Thank you for your continued membership and support.

*Kersten Catella*

## Ball Colegrave

Ball Colegrave recently launched its **2019 Spring Additions** brochure, featuring a further 30 exciting new varieties to its plant range following successful trials over this past summer. "Local trialling remains a core activity for us, as we endeavour to source and offer the very best genetics to help our customers personalise their programmes" says Stuart Lowen. "As part of this process our product managers ensure that all potential new varieties are 'tried & tested' for many aspects of plant performance.....as well as listening to the 3,500 visiting Growers etc..."

## Geater's Flowers use Home Grown™

Geater's Flowers of Leiston in Suffolk, the renowned cut flower producer of Lisianthus, Aster, Solidago, Dianthus, Delphinium, Chrysanthemum and Alstroemeria are now using Home Grown



to enhance their packing for their all UK grown flowers. They have incorporated the mono-

chrome Home Grown logo into their flower box design (shown here).



# Growth regulant trials

The first poinsettia discussion meetings organised by AHDB was held at Neame Lea nurseries on 22nd November with a very good turnout from the industry wanting to see the developments in the

testing. In addition to the talks in the greenhouse from Mark Else on growth control using deficit irrigation, 30Mhz and Vasile from Neame Lea on his trial.

Chloe Whiteside and Jill England



Jill England & Chloe Whiteside (ADAS) runs through the details of the growth regulant trials at Neame Lea Nurseries for the assembled poinsettia growers.

work already commenced last season to find new and better ways of regulating the size of the poinsettia crop. After a brief welcome from Andy Fuller and David Ball of Neame Lea the meeting was addressed by Neil Bragg and the growers on the 3 trial sites. This was followed by the initial scoring by the whole growers' group of the trial plants brought in for shelf life

gave an account with samples of treated plants from the growth regulant trials using a range of chemicals to replace the need for **Chlormequat** of which the **Terpal** appears to be the most useful alternative at present. More information about some of the numbered chemicals in the trial should be available soon.

# Swedish growers visit BPOA

In October a party of pot plant growers from all over Sweden visited a number of BPOA members as well as edibles producers in West Sussex. The Federation of Swedish Farmers - LRF - is an interest and business organisation for the green industry with approximately 140 000 individual members. (The equivalent of the NFU in Sweden)

They were very fortunate to see some nice crops of poinsettia as well as Vitacress Herbs and watercress farms. A photo album is available on BPOA Facebook pages where you can see their visits which included Cobbins Nursery, Roundstone Nurseries and Hill's Plants as well as RHS Wisley.



The Swedish growers group seen here with Peter Hill in Chichester.

## Dates for your diary

Spring Conference 2019— Tuesday January 15<sup>th</sup> Stratford

1. Poinsettia Discussion Meeting- Lincoln University 17th January 2019
2. IPM Essen- Messe Essen, 22rd to the 25th January 2019
3. SmartHort Conference- AHDB; Stratford upon Avon 6&7th March 2019
4. Technical Committee Meeting-Stoneleigh, 29th January 2019

We are very grateful to all the companies that opened their doors to the group.

*Simon Davenport*

## Conference (contd.)

(Continued from page 1)

ment. Altogether, a review and update of the many areas to be considered in grower managed young plant production.

In order to be able to cover this range of topics the speakers have been selected from a range of acknowledged experts from Europe and USA who will draw on their long experience of the subject and their own research in the various areas discussed.

You can read more about the event

programme on the website and see the 'potted' biographies of the speakers. The event tickets may be booked via the website or using the Eventbrite link from the booking pages. <https://www.homegrownplants.org.uk/bpoa-spring-conference-2019/>

The formal AGM will take place at 16:30 on Monday 14th January at Stratford Manor Hotel CV37 0PY followed by an informal dinner for AGM and conference attendees.



**Growing together™**



## Poinsettia Shelf life trials

**AHDB Poinsettia variety trial and continued evaluation of deficit irrigation strategies to control growth** - 17 January 2019, Lincoln University, Holbeach, Lincolnshire.

This event, the second in the series of Poinsettia Discussion Forums will include a summary of the poinsettia study tour to Italy and post-shelf life evaluations of the poinsettia varieties in trial.

From the earlier scoring at the point of entry to shelf life conducted at the day in Neamelea in November, a final assessment is now being made which will show up varietal differences in the trials and possible phytotoxicity of the new chemicals and combination treatments.

## Latina Study Tour

This autumn the study tour took the opportunity to visit the area of Lazio, south of Rome, where there is a large scale production of ornamental plants and in particular at this time of the year many poinsettia and cyclamen.

Much of the current horticultural production is under polythene structures with some glass and a large area of outdoor production for 'mediterranean plants'. The large companies that we visited, some of the 90+ producers in the area, extended to many hectares of covered and uncovered nurseries with a wide range of pot crops focusing on annual plants in the early part of the year followed by large cyclamen and even larger poinsettias. About 17M poinsettias are grown in Italy and a large percentage (3M+) in the Latina area. Many of these plants are large size and so the total turnover in the poinsettia production industry could be as much as €110M! There is some discussion about the European league status of Italy in terms of numbers of plants grown but in relation to the turnover of the trade, they must be second after

Germany.

You can read a full report of the trip and companies visited including, breeder and young plant supplier, Lazzeri on the website:

<https://www.homegrownplants.org.uk/blog/poinsettia-study-tour-latina/>



The tour, kindly lead by Harry Kitchener, was organised in Italy by Andrea Lazzeri and his staff and we extend our thanks to them for that cooperation.

*Simon Davenport*



British Protected Ornamentals Association  
PO Box 691  
Chichester  
PO19 9NA



Email [bpoa@btconnect.com](mailto:bpoa@btconnect.com)  
Web [www.bpoaonline.co.uk](http://www.bpoaonline.co.uk)  
HG [www.homegrownplants.org.uk](http://www.homegrownplants.org.uk)