



New Greenhouse Management & Technology Specialist Hired

By Pamela Doherty,

Program Coordinator for
UNH Cooperative Extension

UNH Cooperative Extension is looking forward to welcoming Dr. Ryan Dickson as the new Greenhouse Management and Technology specialist, starting in mid-September. Ryan will work closely with greenhouse growers and garden centers throughout the State to identify needs, conduct research and develop educational outreach programs in conjunction with other Extension faculty. Ryan will fill the position last held by Brian Krug, and prior to that, Paul Fisher. Paul was actually Ryan's advisor at the University of Florida!

NHPGA Members Matt McElroy, Chris Schlegel, and Peter van Berkum served on the search committee and all agreed that Ryan will be an excellent fit with our growers and our diverse industry. Cathy Neal, who co-chaired the committee along with Cheryl Smith, said that Ryan stood out among the candidates with his excellent credentials, experience as a grower, and an obvious love for the greenhouse and floriculture industry.

Pam Doherty, Program Coordinator, recently spoke with Ryan and wrote the following for us:

Every once in a while, we meet someone who truly impacts our lives; they may even have the ability to change our lives forever.

In this case, it was a soil chemist, named Dave Calvert.

I recently talked to Dr. Ryan Dickson. Ryan will start in September as the new Extension Floriculture Specialist for UNH Cooperative Extension. He talked about his life, career, and inspiration. I recall the admiration with which he talked about Dave Calvert. Dr. Calvert, a scientist at the University of Florida, Experimental Station, helped Ryan with his first middle school science project. Dave's passion for science and their controlled experiment growing hydroponic radishes together changed Ryan's life and fueled his love of science and agriculture.

In high school, Ryan's love of agriculture continued to flourish. While attending the University of Florida, his enthusiasm expanded to greenhouse production and floriculture. Dickson's interest in sustainability and improving production efficiencies has led to his primary Extension goals: to help greenhouse growers reduce environmental impacts, adopt leaner production practices, and remain competitive and profitable.



Dr. Ryan Dickson

As one of the head growers in the young plant division at Welby Gardens, a private Colorado company that raises bedding plants, Ryan formed relationships with Extension at the University of Florida.

Dickson, recently awarded a Ph.D. in environmental horticulture at the University of Florida, is looking forward to New England weather and working with Extension to develop the resources and knowledge necessary to positively contribute to the future success of the floriculture businesses and to the industry as a whole.

Dickson and Calvert are still friends. It's the people you meet that shape our lives. They help teach us about ourselves.



Plant Something Campaign Coming to NH

Plant Something, a grassroots, nationally established campaign designed to increase the public's support of local growers, nurseries, garden centers and landscapers through awareness of the benefits of planting specialty crops for the landscape and garden, is coming to NH.

The Plant Something NH campaign is a way to tie the individual marketing efforts of local businesses to a state wide campaign promoting NH grown plants. Information will be regularly provided to NHPGA members during this fall and winter as we roll out the program to the public in Spring of 2017.

With its adoption of the Plant Something program, NH joins 22 other US states and British Columbia, CA in this national campaign to educate consumers about the health, environmental and monetary benefits of plants.

Learn More about the
NHPGA, visit NHPGA.org
PlantSomethingNH.org



New Hampshire Horticulture Endowment Fund: 20 Years and Still Going Strong

By Ann Hilton,
Secretary for the NHHE Committee

In 1996 the New Hampshire Plant Growers Board of Directors gathered for their monthly meeting. If memory serves me right, in attendance that night was Henry Huntington, Rick Simpson, Peter Van Berkum, Tammy Hathaway, Robert Demers, Chris Robarge, Bob Parker, Nancy Adams, who was our Extension Liaison, and myself. Henry had a big question for us all: What would we think of raising \$100,000 dollars to establish an endowment to fund research that would benefit the NH Horticulture Industry? He must be kidding...\$100,000??? What in the world! We had trouble collecting the NHPGA dues every year how could we possibly raise such a huge sum of money? Henry went on to explain about working with another nonprofit group to raise money with the help of a Professional Fundraiser and could he invite her to talk to us at the next meeting. Supposing we had nothing to lose and could possibly learn something, we agreed. I know I arrived with a bit of a skeptical attitude at the next meeting (Sorry Henry!) but after the Fundraiser walked us through step by step how the money could be raised and made it sound not all that complicated, we enthusiastically jumped on board with the idea and the New Hampshire Horticulture Endowment was born. It was going to mean a lot of work but the rewards for our industry could be great so off we went. We did a phone-a-thon, sent letters, and board members personally called on businesses both in New Hampshire and nationally asking them to become partners in our quest to raise money to support research. Our goal was to raise the \$100,000 in three years. Nancy Carlisle, Doug Cole and Kirk Weyant joined us in our endeavor. We raised about \$80,000 in that time period but businesses have kept donating annually with their dues and the Endowment soil program facilitated by SunGro Horticulture keeps adding to the fund every year. With careful investing via the NH Charitable Foundation and in a mutual fund the financial statement at the end of 2015 shows the Endowment has almost \$162,000 in it. It has given out 15 grants totaling \$56,274 since 1999. A list of the research that has been funded can be found on the NHPGA website. Thank you Henry Huntington for challenging us to think big!

In 2014 the NHHE committee made the decision to start awarding grants every other year in order to give out larger amounts. For this reason, the Endowment doesn't have a project report for our members this year. Expenses have gone up at Universities and researchers are having to cobble small grants together from different sources to try and fund their projects. In 2015 \$10,000 was awarded to Roberto Lopez and Garrett Owen of Michigan State University for their research, "Optimizing Herbaceous Perennial Cutting Physiology, Morphology and Rooting." Look for the NHHE annual report next year to learn the results.

It is the committee's hope that NHPGA members will consider donating to the endowment with your dues this year and every year. Your donations are added to the investments where the money will continue to grow. This in turn will allow more money to be given out for research to benefit your businesses and our NH industry.