

THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF NURSERYMEN AND ITS GOVERNMENT NURSERY PRODUCTION COMMITTEE

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The American Association of Nurserymen was organized in 1975, and has grown steadily as the national trade organization of the nursery/landscape industry. Today it serves about 3,000 member firms involved in the nursery business - wholesale growers, garden center retailers, landscape firms, mailorder nurserymen, and allied suppliers to the horticultural community.

The Association serves its members in many ways: national representation on Capitol Hill, in Federal agencies and departments; promotion of the industry and its products to the consumer through a variety of public relations and sales aids and materials, through national public service radio and television announcements, through regular press packages to the nation's top newspapers; management services in the form of valuable reference materials and regularly scheduled clinics and workshops; news, facts, opinions, forecasts distributed regularly to member firms in the form of biweekly and quarterly periodicals and at the annual convention and trade show; consulting services available to members at reduced cost in the areas of transportation, wage-hour regulations and the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA); low-cost group insurance programs; a member bank card plan offering an attractively low discount rate to those firms which accept VISA and Master Charge credit cards.

The AAN has a distinguished history. The nation's first Secretary of Agriculture was a two-term president of the Association. The group is recognized as a pioneer in the highway beautification movement. It spearheaded the vital "Victory Garden" program during World War II. The AAN was responsible for instigating the existing commercial plant quarantine system.

Through its National Landscape Awards Program, the Association encourages active participation in community improvement by the business world. This program urges businesses, industrial, institutional and governmental organizations to improve the quality of their environment through landscape beautification. Over the years, the program has been chaired by prominent business and government leaders, including four First Ladies, and the presentation ceremony has occurred at the White House on five separate occasions.

The AAN encourages citizen action for environmental enhancement via its Green Survival Program which says that one person can take many small steps to protect and improve the quality of life in our land. Air, earth, water, sight, sound, energy, peace of mind, personal security - all depend in one way or another on green, growing trees and shrubs and grass and plants which are nature's gifts. The steps each citizen can take in using these gifts have come to be known by the name "Green Survival." The program, initiated in 1970, came into particular prominence in 1976 when it was recognized by the American Revolution Bicentennial Administration as an official Bicentennial activity.

Led by Robert F. Lederer, executive vice president, the staff of the AAN is also responsible for management of a group of "family" organizations. The Horticultural Research Institute is the non-profit research arm of the nursery industry; Wholesale Nursery Growers of America provide specific services for the wholesale grower; National Landscape Association serves the landscape community; Garden Centers of America counts among its members nursery retailers and garden center operators; National Association of Plant Patent Owners serves the specialized group of businesses which hold patents on plant materials.

In addition, the American Association of Nurserymen manages The Nursery Marketing Council, established in 1977 to supply the nursery industry with professional market research and analysis and the resulting advertising and public relations to increase the sale of plant materials and related products and services. NMC is funded solely by voluntary contributions. Its activities are performed for the benefit of the entire nursery industry and those businesses that serve to support and enhance nursery products.

The Wholesale Nursery Growers of America and the Horticulture Research Institute are two of the "Family Organization" that have a great deal in common with the forest and shelterbelt tree nursery production. Both are committed to less expensive ways of growing high quality plant material. It behooves us to seek cooperation at every opportunity.

The AAN has two kinds of committees, active and consultant. Active committees are those which meet periodically and develop programs within their area of responsibility or have continuing jobs to do. Consultant committees are a completely different story. Members of these committees have been selected because of their technical knowledge in a particular area of the business. They are not scheduled to meet on a regular basis, but are on tap when the chairman or staff needs counsel in a specific area.

One of the Active committees is the Government Nursery Production Committee. The primary function of this committee is to keep the government out of active participation in the nursery business, a task which requires constant vigilance.

Members of this committee include Steve McDonald of U.S. Forest Service; Robert MacLaughlin of the Soil Conservation Service; Robert Eastman of the Western Maine Forest Nursery Company; Esther Lawyer of Lawyer Nursery, Montana; Ted Korves, Plumfield Nurseries, Inc., Nebraska; and myself among others. This group does all in its power to dissuade the "government agency", at whatever level, from becoming involved in competition with private industry, whether this be Soil Districts, Municipal Entities, Experiment Stations, or State or Federal Nurseries.

All of us need to be on the alert that the private nurseryman receives every opportunity to provide the necessary plant material within his capability and at a quality acceptable for the use intended. The private sector should be assisted and encouraged at every opportunity.

For more information about the AAN contact:

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