IPPS
Sharing Plant Production Knowledge Globally
Eastern Region of North America

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Top Ten Reasons to Join us for the 2026 Eastern Region Annual Conference in Grand Rapids September 22-25th!

This year's Annual Conference is one of the best I have seen in recent years! There is so much packed into this Conference it is one you do not want to miss!!! Here are the **TOP 10 THINGS** I am most looking forward to this year!

10 **The Silent Auction –** This is an opportunity to bid on plants I can guarantee you have never seen or heard of before! Always one of my favorite parts of the Conference.

9 **Grand Rapids –** An incredibly beautiful, clean city that is very walkable. There is something for everyone to enjoy with great museums, nightlife, restaurants, and a beautiful riverfront.

8 **Frederik Meijer Gardens and Sculpture Park –** A beautiful Garden combining Horticulture and Art. If you ever wanted to see Chihuly, the famous artwork made of glass, this will be a fantastic opportunity to see it. Other features include a Japanese Garden, Children's Garden, Sculpture Garden, and a Conservatory. There is something for everyone to enjoy!

7 **The International Tour Guests –** We have the distinct pleasure of hosting the International Tour this year. What an opportunity to interact with some of the most prominent Horticulturists from across the Country and around the World! We will also have a few presentations from our distinguished guests!

6 **Mast Young Plants (MYP) –** Tour the trial gardens at one of the best Annual producers in Michigan. MYP grows over 1500 varieties of annuals supplying growers around the country with quality liners.

5 **Innovations in Plant Selection, Production and Propagation** – Dr. Mark Bridgen, 2025 Award of Merit winner and long-time member of IPPS has put together one of the best programs I have seen! Topics like *"Using Generative AI for Nursery Growers"*, *"Transplant Success of Container-Grown Trees"*, *"Applications of Drones in the Nursery"* and so much more!

4 **Walters Gardens –** One of the Premier Perennial Nurseries in the country! Walters Gardens features some of the best Perennial plant breeding in the world. Just when you think you know something…you are already behind. If you want to see what improvements are coming down the road join us on the pre-conference tour to Walters Gardens. This will be a stop you do not want to miss!

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3 **Dr. Tom Ranney** - Need I say more! One of the World's Top Breeders of Ornamental Plants from North Carolina State University. His breeding program will blow your mind! This is a rare opportunity to hear from Dr. Tom Ranney so please take advantage of this special Keynote Presentation on Wednesday.

It is unbelievable to also have other speakers that morning including the most travelled, and best plantsman I know, Tim Wood, General Manager of Spring Meadow Nursery giving a presentation on *"The Golden Age of Plant Breeding."* This will be followed by Dr. Judson LeCompte, also from Spring Meadow with his presentation on *"Around the World in Search of Shrubs."* I cannot wait to hear these presentations!

2 **Spring Meadow Nursery –** The chance to visit Spring Meadow Nursery is always a treat. The technology in production in such a smooth operation coupled with such rigorous plant breeding, research and trialing will be worth the price of admission. Spring Meadow has mastered liner production of plants that the public wants backed up by the promotions of the Proven Winners Brand. It does not get much better than this!

1 **Dinner with all our Friends Thursday Night at Dale Deppe's –** the only way to top off the Tour is to have dinner and special garden tour with all of our attendees at the garden of Dale Deppe's.

So, you can see why I am so excited to share the Top Ten Reasons to come to this year's IPPS Eastern Region Annual Conference in Grand Rapids, MI. To get the best rate **sign up before September 2nd.** If you are not a member yet, please consider becoming a member. Whatever you do, you do not want to miss this outstanding combination of tours and speakers. I can promise you will not be disappointed!!!

REGISTER FOR THE CONFERENCE TODAY

Thank You!

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