

Madison Final Tour Day

By Matt Palmieri

This year's annual conference in Madison, Wisconsin included several days of engaging lectures, inspiring tours, and opportunity to put into practice the IPPS mission of seeking and sharing passionate horticultural knowledge.

During the Friday Tours, attendees visited McKay Nursery, J.W. Jung Seed Company and Olbrich Botanical Gardens for a chance to experience their operations and see firsthand how some of the industry's finest do what they do.

McKay Nursery, founded in 1897, is Wisconsin's oldest and largest nursery with over 1500 acres of growing fields. They are a 100% employee owned company with the mission to grow the highest quality product in the most eco-friendly way possible. Their staff of knowledgeable, enthusiastic horticulturalists showed attendees around their fields and facilities to show them firsthand the work they are doing in the landscaping, propagation and container growing space.



*McKay Nursery Seedling Supervisor
Bryan Addison*



*Mike Gates welcomes the tour group to McKay
Nursery Company.*

At J.W. Jung Seed Co. attendees got a chance to tour through both the garden center and seed packaging operation of another long-standing Wisconsin business. With its roots as a one-man operation run from a spare bedroom in 1909 hoping to earn enough money to support a family, J.W Jung Seed co is now a large business supporting hundreds of families and prints over 8 million seed catalogues annually.



*Seed Counter at Jung's,
right*



Olbrich botanical gardens offered a change for attendees to wander 16 acres of outdoor gardens to enjoy curated landscapes featuring Midwest-hardy plants as well as tropical collections inside the Bolz Conservatory. After a long and engaging day learning about production and diving deep into the operations aspects of the horticulture world, the chance to tour a botanical garden is a refreshing diversion into the passion that brings attendees from all corners of the horticulture industry together: plants. To walk the paths of the botanical garden and drop in on the dozens of individual conversations admiring nature and simply connecting over the shared love of horticulture is a wonderful way to conclude a day packed full of learning and celebrating everything the IPPS has to offer. *Below l to r: Mike Gates, Marian French, Ben French, Shelby French*



Mike Gates, Propagator at McKay Nursery may have said it best when summing up his IPPS experience: **"Through IPPS I have a had the opportunity to connect with some of the best and brightest in the green industry. I have sought and found, as well as shared and been heard. "**