

EVERYTHING UNDER THE SUN



The Monthly Newsletter of the San Diego County
Flower & Plant Association

SEPTEMBER 2009

ARE HEALTH CARE CO-OPS THE SOLUTION TO A PUBLIC PLAN?

By: Bill Goodrich, President of United Agribusiness League.

Congressional Budget Office cost estimates of the Senate health bill have caused the Democrats to cut back proposals. Despite the fact that a majority of Americans support a public health plan as an alternative to private insurance, Republicans stand opposed to any government option.

The approach that is emerging on Capitol Hill as an alternative to a public plan is through non-profit, consumer-run health-insurance cooperatives, a concept proposed by Senator Kent Conrad, the Democratic Finance Committee member.

Conrad's plan calls for the creation of 50 separate co-ops, one for each state. Each co-op would be non-profit, run by a board of directors elected from within the ranks of co-op members.

Co-ops can offer health insurance at lower costs for individuals and small businesses because they would create larger risk pools. States with smaller populations could join with nearby ones to form regional alliances. State or regional co-ops would ultimately be self-sustaining.

The cooperatives would also allow consumers to review and choose from various plan options.

Two existing, large-scale, non-profit health-care cooperatives were used as models: Group Health and Health Partners, non-profit HMOs based in Seattle and the Twin Cities. Both co-ops have solid reputations in the health-care-policy world, offering high-quality care at costs lower than those on the commercial market. They do this by offering both health insurance and health services - each HMO has its own network of staff physicians and free-standing hospitals and clinics. This allows Group Health and Health Partners to integrate and better control costs.

"The principle of eliminating some of the profit motive and placing it with the motive to get value out of care is a good principle," says Karen Davis, president of the Commonwealth Fund, a nonpar-

tisan health-policy think tank.

Last month, I led a delegation of UAL representatives to visit Washington D.C. We met with over 20 Congress members to inform them about the difference between insurance companies and health care cooperatives and explained how UABT's health plan is a true non-profit health care co-op. The information was well-received, and during our visit, President Barack Obama announced that the vote on the health care system overhaul will be postponed to September 1st, 2009, from the August 1st deadline. As a result of these visits, UABT has been featured in the Los Angeles Times and Fox News as a model for non-profit health care co-ops.

UAL-sponsored non-profit health plan, United Agricultural Benefit Trust, has been providing health benefits for over 25 years and has become Agribusiness' most successful health care co-op.

Since 1983, UABT has had approximately 755,000 participants and has paid more than \$430,000,000 in health, life, dental and vision claims. On an annual basis, UABT receives, processes and pays over 175,000 claims. UABT is managed by a Board of Trustees made up of Agribusiness leaders who are all active participants of the Trust.

Bill Goodrich, President of United Agribusiness League

United Agribusiness League and the San Diego County Flower and Plant Association are committed to providing members with current news and information that will have an impact on our industry. For more information about non-profit health care co-ops or UABT's health plan, please feel free to contact Spencer Merritt at 714-542-6881 or email at spencermerritt@gmail.com.



Why Do I Have To Have A Marketing Plan?

By: Brenda Vaughn Marketing Assistant for the John Henry Company

Hands down the number one form of successful marketing is word-of-mouth. That being said, what does that have to do with Marketing? How is your product offering? How is your service? Have you asked your customers about either lately? If you provide great, fast service and have a product that is a good performer your customers are talking about it! However, your customers will

talk a lot more about your product if you offer them help at retail. The end consumer is the one that needs to spread the word!

Today's consumer is all about Instant Gratification and Time Savings....are you helping your retailer do those things for their customers.

Instant Gratification....For many years we have come to rely on the beautiful plants selling themselves, but is that enough today? When packaged nicely consumers can't resist. Getting them over to your product and picking it up is key for the sale. A plant in a plain old black pot...one the customer has seen for the past bazillion years is not thrilling anymore. But that plant featured in an eye-appealing container surrounded by eye-appealing signage is key. Retailers have been doing this for years! Our industry retailers have resisted branded plants for fear of losing their brand... nonsense. CVS Pharmacy has their brand with a red logo and on display side by side are Revlon, Maybelline, Cover Girl and Almay! What sells those products is good marketing....great packaging.... great performance. Kroger has their brand with a blue logo however, Budweiser, Miller and Coors sit side by side. What sells those products...great marketing! Do you think they spend money on their packaging? You bet ya! Now these examples could be thought of as your Big Box merchandising, for the Independent Garden Centers think about Macy's where Hilfiger and Ralph Lauren are displayed differently than other labels on fashionable tables, on a slate wall with nicer sign holders...just an overall more professional looking display.

Many successful marketing programs, Proven Winners being one of those, does something called team marketing with their growers. If you have a relationship with a marketing company that understands your customer, then get with them to design a brand around your product offering. A program is much more than just a tag. Many of the larger growers are teaming up with marketing/supplier companies and showing off their programs at Pack Trails, Trade Shows and in trade publications. Some are even going as far as the end consumer! I know we all do not have the funds for this but even upgrading your tag could help your plant stand out from another. An extra few cents can mean a lot at retail.

As for Time Savings.....

A few ideas to consider are handles, large six-packs and Combination Planters can be awesome time savers. A marketing plan does not have to be set in stone, but you need a focus and have a roadmap. Without it you are aimlessly drifting



President's Message

It has been a tough year and sometimes I feel like it's hard to keep struggling through day after day

with all the issues we are facing. That is why I look forward to Association meetings. I can sit with other owners and industry related members and try to work on solutions and ideas to deal with these issues. I know I am not alone.

We just had our annual strategic planning meeting with Donnie Dabbs at the helm and it was extremely productive and invigorating. With his daughter Rachel Dabbs writing, we filled our poster board with all kinds of new and inventive ways to help our membership. Even though we are a non-profit organization we are still like any other business. If we are not a benefit to our membership we aren't justifiable. We want you to feel that when you write that membership renewal check you know it's the best investment you can make. Weather it's because of the advertisement opportunities, the educational programs, the intermingling at the social events or the littlest thing like the e-mail broadcast making you aware of things immediately going on that you need to know now. We want you to know that this association cares about you. Jan Berry works her little fingers to the bone so you have another resource of help that's just a phone call away.

The strategic meeting is my favorite because over the past 5 years I have been able to watch ideas that were once just words on paper come to life. Those great ideas won't benefit you though unless you take advantage of them, so when you get your renewal packages take a second to really look at what you might have missed that's new. Or check out the Web site more often and make sure you don't miss out on the monthly educational programs. Jim Bethke our farm advisor makes a comfortable afternoon in the classroom truly enlightening. The social meetings are also posted so you can save the dates. If you didn't make the Annual Dinner you missed a really fun evening. I wish there had been video with Janet Kister and Todd Ingham trying to win votes for their floral arrangements. In the end the prize went to Megan McGregor's table. Megan also gracefully accepted the Outstanding Person of the Year award on behalf of her father Tom McGregor. In true McGregor form she was delightfully charming.

With the fantastic new board we have I am sure this will be an exciting and productive year. It will be an even more enjoyable year if the new board gives all the speeches and I don't have to!!! Enjoy the rest of your summer and make the most out of your days.

Susan MacFarland
Valley View Nursery, SDCF&PA Cheerleader



Annual Sponsor

John Henry



Pest Advisor

Every now and then a Senior Agricultural Inspector gives me a call and we take time to review our thoughts and issues regarding Growers and their compliance efforts. I love this call – it affords an interesting view of how growers are doing with their site inspections. And of course, I take the opportunity to seek clarification of various issues. Because logical perception, from a growers perspective, doesn't rule.

Worker safety is important to inspectors. And on top of the list sits those REIs (Restrictive Entry Intervals). Especially important to note are workers going to work in the morning after an evening application of smelly pesticides. There have been worker complaints of headaches and general discomfort when entering and working in areas that haven't been ventilated after the application. Sure the REI time has passed, but note part of the whole REI thing is an air exchange. What do you think? Have you forgotten this small inconvenience?

A huge problem at some locations is an apparently simple chemical, high in salts, tough on the nose, and definitely an inhalation hazard, bleach. One of our friends uses it in their cooling pads to help control algae. What is the REI or air exchange? There are three or four products that easily work superior to bleach, last way longer, and do an all around better job without the inhalation issue. When the Agricultural Department gets enough complaints – perhaps one more, you can be assured the ticket price will be high – like possibly in the thousands. Who wants to be first?

Products at hand to do the job may be, but not limited to: KleenGrow, Physan 20, Naccosan, or Green-Shield. All are Quaternary Ammonium type products and, like bleach, have signal word "DANGER" on their labels. Life is like that, dangerous when concentrated but safe enough if used properly and diluted. And remember bleach and the Quads are not cleaners but disinfectants. Again I've come across workers using Physan 20 as a cleaner- power washing greenhouses. It should be applied after cleaning and left to dry... Talk about economics. Anyone remember the half-life of Bleach? Not long, I'd say something about 1-2 hours. Still smells though. The quads can stay effective, depending on which one, up to 28 days. Hard choices here...

What will I have to talk about with the inspector next time? Perhaps it will be a boring summary of how well it's all happily growing in harmony...

David Pattison, PCA, CaCCA
Crop Production Services





“Ask the Advisor”

The Glassy-winged Sharpshooter

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I just noticed that Caltrans is removing oleander along the 15 Freeway in Escondido, and it reminded me of when I saw the same thing along the 10 Freeway in Redlands years ago. The oleander in Redlands was infected with oleander leaf scorch disease transmitted by the glassy-winged sharpshooter. Caltrans tried to hack the oleander back using a huge brush hog. The plants looked horrible for a while, but the idea was that the oleander would come back strong and would no longer show oleander leaf scorch symptoms. Unfortunately, the xylem-limiting bacteria that causes oleander leaf scorch is ultimately fatal to the oleander no matter what you do, and you will not find oleander along the 10 Freeway out in Redlands anymore. I’m getting calls about oleander death here in San Diego County, and oleander leaf scorch has been confirmed in samples brought to our office.

We now know a lot more about the xylem-limiting bacterial diseases and the efficient insect vector that carries it, the glassy-winged sharpshooter, *Homalodisca vitripennis* (formerly known as *H. coagulata*). The glassy-winged sharpshooter is an invasive insect from the southeast U.S. that entered the state in the early 1990s, but it was not perceived as a problem until the late 1990s when both oleander and grapes began to die in great numbers in southern California. Unfortunately, the xylem-limiting diseases were widely spread by then. The disease has many strains that attack many different plant types, but the one that is the most pressing for the ornamental industry is Pierce’s Disease of grapes. Why is it pressing? Because, the grape industry made it so. They would rather not see Pierce’s Disease in the Napa Sonoma wine growing area in northern California, and to avoid it, the CDFA has put restrictions on plant movement from infested areas south of Kern County.

Research that I have been involved with since the late 90s has answered a lot of the questions about how we can successfully treat and move plants without moving the sharpshooter, but recently, there are new questions that the grape industry and the CDFA are asking about the persistence of the pesticides on treated plants following transport. Therefore, we are now conducting more studies at UC Riverside against this pest. The manpower investment in the project is great, with my staff joining Dr. Rick Redak’s staff from UC Riverside, and Dr. David Morgan’s staff from the CDFA. We collected sharpshooters to expose to plants, and moved and treated plant material. I might

add, that the ornamental industry has been very generous with plant material for our project. Growers like Hines, Pardees, Village, and Weidner's Gardens have contributed a very significant number of plants to this project. Bravo!

Why do I bring this up? Because in the last few years, sharpshooters were very difficult to find in any great numbers for research purposes. The numbers in the Temecula area were also exceptionally low, which was a good thing from the grape industries perspective. We suspect that diligent treatment applications and heavy parasitism was the reason for the lack of sharpshooters. The numbers this year, however, are incredible everywhere. We are not sure why.

As you are probably aware, the County is still monitoring the yellow sticky cards to determine whether selected ornamental operations are infested or not, and whether they require mandatory treatment application to maintain compliance agreements. Unfortunately, the numbers on the cards have been higher this year everywhere, and especially at facilities that have never had a problem before. I have also noticed that some facilities have good sharpshooter host plants that act as border plants and that many facilities are adjacent to citrus groves. These conditions can exacerbate the problem and may require treatment applications to suppress populations.

To be considered a glass-winged sharpshooter free facility you must be free of (viable) egg masses, live nymphs, and no more than three adults can be found in the same 1/2 acre in a two-week period. To ship to a non-infested county, the shipment must be accompanied by a Blue Tag Permit. An infested nursery, on the other hand, must follow a significant number of requirements to produce stock and ship to non-infested areas. For more information, please see the following two web sites.
www.cdffa.ca.gov/pdcp/Documents/Nursery%20Ship%20Protcols.pdf
Glassy-Winged Sharpshooter Nursery Stock Approved Treatment Manual - www.cdffa.ca.gov/pdcp/.../Nursery%20Stock%20BMP's%202008.pdf



Advertisements

New Online Videos from Syngenta Give Greenhouse Growers Employee Training Insights
Syngenta Professional Products has added five new greenhouse sprayer videos on its GreenCast Web site - www.greencastonline.com. They can be found under the "Resource" section. Syngenta developed these videos to help greenhouse grower's better train their staff on the effective and accurate use of control products. The full library of 17 nursery and greenhouse videos can be downloaded for free by GreenCast subscribers. The five new videos, which feature Syngenta ornamental technical manager Nancy Rechcigl, are titled as follows:

- Improve product efficacy
- Why apply Plant Growth Regulators (PGRs) early?
- Curb disease before it starts
- Perfect your IPM program
- Prepare with a PGR

Windermere Exclusive Properties - An out of area owner of several San Diego property management companies wants to own and thereby supply himself and businesses with nursery items and do his own landscaping and maintenance. His "sweet spot" to buy is \$500,000 to \$600,000 but may go up to \$800,000. If you are a small to medium size nursery and especially if you also do landscaping or know of a landscaping/maintenance business who would like to sell CALL ME IMMEDIATELY at 760-224-2292 or email me at stanm@windermere.com

Farm Land for Rent - 11.43 ac Twin Oaks Valley, San Marcos. No bldgs., previously farmed. There are 2-2" water meters and 1 well but no pump. Month-to-month lease at \$850/mo. Can start September 1, 2009. Contact Mary Alice Cedrone at (760) 754-5500, ext 13 or macedrone@casadeamparo.org.

Think of Gloeckner for your plant material and nursery supply needs. We are a major distributor of quality seed, bulbs, cuttings, liners and nursery equipment/supplies. I am happily providing commercial growers of bedding, perennial, pot floral and tropical plants in the central and southern CA areas. Please contact Tim Quirk for further information. (805)709-6161. tquirk@fredgloeckner.com , www.hortsupply.net

Help Wanted: Production Foreman needed for succulent division. Must have experience in potted plant propagation and in leading a crew. Bilingual. Call Thomas @ (760)535-4312.

Help Wanted: Fox Point Farms at the Trade Center in Carlsbad, CA has an immediate opening for a Wholesale Flower Buyer. We are seeking a high energy individual with prior wholesale buying experience (minimum two years.) The Buyer will be responsible for maintaining adequate inventory levels of fresh product. Buyer will manage margin goals, shrink levels and provide direction to flower processing staff. Come join our outstanding team that provides wholesale flowers to floral industry professionals. Submit resume to: Dramm & Echter, Human Resources, Dept., P.O Box 230816, Encinitas, CA 92023 or email to: eespinoza@drammechter.co or fax to (760)634-4340.

For Rent: Greenhouse 180,000 sq.ft. All houses heated with natural gas, some have additional bottom heat. Propagation area with heat & overhead mist system. Two large smith fertilizer injectors, moderate climate in Encinitas. Easy access to freeway. Available immediately. Call (760) 801-4388.

For Rent: Office space available on the Dramm & Echter greenhouse property in Encinitas. Approximately 600 sq. feet with three large office rooms. Contact Rhonda Kavanaugh for more information. 760-436-0188x213 or rkavanaugh@drammechter.com



Farmers Almanac

“Ask the Advisor” Jim Bethke

Sept 10 - Guest speaker: Valerie Mellano is going to address “Water Laws and Regulations”

Oct 8 - Guest speaker: Terry Salmon will discuss control methods for rodents and other vertebrate pests.

Nov 12 - Guest speaker: Valerie Mellano is going to address “Water Quality testing: Equipment and Laboratories”. It’s going to be a workshop demonstrating various equipment.

Dec 10 - TBD

September 12th, our tenth anniversary Gala in the Gardens will take place on Saturday at 5:00 p.m. A garden party like none other in San Diego, the Gala offers the chance for over 500 guests to enjoy more than 20 professionally decorated stations featuring the area’s top restaurants and caterers in a spectacular outdoor setting complete with musical entertainment. The celebration will culminate with the presentation of the Paul Ecke Jr. Award of Excellence to television personality and lover of the great outdoors - Huell Howser. You are invited you to join the party and contribute directly to the growth of the Gardens. www.qbgardens.org

September 27, 2009 - The CCF Prep Class presented by The California State Floral Association (CSFA) & The California Certified Florist (CCF) Program. This class is to give applicants insight into how the exam will be administered, what to study, and what will be expected of them. Cost is \$100.00 for members - \$125.00 non members. The location is A to Z Wholesale Floral Supply Inc., 1511 E. McFadden Ave., Santa Ana, CA 92705. For more information call Svenja Brotz CCF (510) 693-4347 or Ann Quinn (916) 448-5266.

Sept. 30 - Oct. 2 The Plantscape Industry Alliance, will hold CalScape Expo, its national interior plantscape conference and trade show at the Flamingo in LasVegas, NV. For information on exhibiting and a list of current exhibitors, visit the Plantscape Industry Alliance’s website at www.pia-grows.org or contact PIA’s office at (707)462-2276. Information on this year’s educational programs and conference registration will be available on PIA’s website in late May.

Sept. 30 - Oct. 3 50th Anniversary Event, Western Regional Meeting of The International Plant Propagators’ Society will be held in San Diego, CA, Educational Sessions, Nursery Tours, Networking, and much more! If you have any questions contact Lee Dempsey, Secretary/Treasurer, IPPS Western Region at (530) 272-4593 or email ippswrlee@spcglobal.net.

Oct. 23, 2009 - SAVE THE DATE - An evening of entertainment culminating in a roast of Edgar Engert, industry icon and outgoing President of the California State Floral Association. Enjoy this culinary event celebrating a career of 50 years in the floral industry. Friday, Oct. 23, 2009, cost is \$45.00 per person at the Encinitas Community and Senior Center, 1140 Oakcrest Park Drive, Encinitas, 92024. Check for details www.calstatefloral.com or call Ann Quinn at (916) 448-5266.



Here's the Dirt

One hundred and forty-four golfers turned out for Target Specialty Products' 10th Annual Charity Golf tournament on Wednesday, July 15, 2009. Tustin Ranch Golf Club in Tustin, Calif. hosted this year's tournament. The event raised over \$52,000 for the American Cancer Society. Great Job Target Specialty Products!

Congratulations! John Henry was awarded the 2009 Medal of Excellence Award for Marketing this year at The Ohio Florist Association - OFA Short Course. They are the first company to receive this honor that is not a grower. John Henry has shined the spotlight on marketing by partnering with breeders throughout the California Pack Trials. Keep up the good work!

Congratulations! Michael Kent of Kent's Bromeliad Nursery, Inc. was awarded the FPFC Floral Achievement Award. This was presented to him during a luncheon on July 14, 2009 at the Fresh Produce & Floral Expo held at the Disneyland Hotel, Anaheim, California. Fantastic!



What's Growing On

Coming soon!



Just Sprouted

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Pasha Hawaii Transport Lines offers ocean transportation services between the Hawaiian Islands and the U.S. Mainland every two weeks and can deliver live plants from Hilo to San Diego in only 5 days!

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