

Within two weeks the azalea buds will begin to swell and another problem arises. The azaleas not only bloom but they grow vegetatively. Sideshoots start growing around the bud. With many cultivars this is no problem, but on some the shoots grow so fast that they blow out the bud — it turns brown and dies. These shoots have to be removed by hand, a very costly operation. We have found that spraying with B-Nine will slow down the growth of sideshoots. B-Nine does not burn flower petals and we have found no adverse effects from its use. We apply B-Nine when the sideshoots are about ¼ in in length. This is a very economical way of stopping sideshoots.

In summary, the parts of the operation that are very important are: Plants must be drenched with water before being put into the cooler, and a temperature of 36° to 38°F must be maintained for 28 days. If these procedures are followed, azaleas stay on a schedule for flowering very well. We are able to grade flowering azaleas the third week out of the cooler and they will all be flowering by the sixth week.

Some azalea cultivars that perform well for us are: Rhododendron 'Red Ruffles', R. 'Gloria Gish', R. 'Dorothy Gish', R. 'Road Runner', and R. 'Alaska'.

## **COMPUTERIZED PRODUCTION RECORDS**

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At Mobjack Nurseries we have approximately 7 acres of container production and approximately 50 acres of field production. Our nursery is small but still needs good records. In our nursery production records are maintained on a micro-computer which uses dBase II. Our production records consist of 3 separate but closely related inventories. They are:

1. New Plant Inventory
  - A. All seedlings and cuttings we produce
  - B. All liners or plants we buy to grow on to larger sizes
2. Production Inventory
  - A. All plants planted in the fields
  - B. All plants planted in the container in which they will be sold

### 3. Salable Plants Inventory

#### A. All plants deemed ready for sale

Each of these three inventories is maintained in a separate data-base file. Each data-base file consists of individual data-base records for groups of plants of the same cultivar, size, container size, and location.

In Table 1 we see a data-base record from the New Plant inventory (NP.DBF). Each bit of information (compno, vendno, quant, cost) is a data-base field within a data-base record.

The first 3 digits of the computer number denote the cultivar of the plants in the group. The next 2 digits denote the size of the plant. The last 2 digits tell the type of container the plants are in.

**Table 1.** Data base record from the New Plant Inventory (NP.DBF).

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RECORD #	00058
COMPNO	: 0183'BR :
VENDNO	: 22:
QUANT	: 100:
COST	: 7.00:
ADATE	:F84 :
PDATE	:1184:
NAME	:ACER palmatum 'Atropurpureum'
SIZE	:3-4' :
SCODE	:18:
PACK	:BR :
PCODE	: 2:
YDATE	:SP88
YLD	: 35.00:
DEST1	:F :
DEST2	: :
DEST3	: :
TCOST	: 700.00:
TYLD	: 3500.00:
STATUS	:P:

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The Vendno field tells the computer number of the supplier of the plants. The Quant and Cost fields are obvious. The ADate field tells when the plant will be available, whether we propagate it ourselves, or whether it is purchased. Name, size and packing are obvious. SCode and PCode facilitate sorting and listing in various reports. YDate and Yld tell us when we have projected that this group of plants will be salable and an anticipated sales price. Dest 1, 2, and 3 are used if this plant will be processed (stepped up to larger containers, or planted in fields before it becomes salable). Total Cost and Total Yld are obvious. Status is another field we use to select this record for various reports.

As indicated above, if one group of plants has reached its final growing destination, it is moved from the New Plant Inventory to the Production Inventory (PR.DBF).

In Table 2, we see a record from the Production Inventory. Most of the fields are identical, some have been dropped and a Field Data Base showing the location of this group of plants has been added. More about this later.

**Table 2.** Record from the Production Inventory

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RECORD #	00001
COMPNO	: 0183'BB :
QUANT	: 100:
PRICE	: 10.00:
YDATE	:SP88:
YLD	: 35.00:
LOCATION	WHB :
DEST	:B/B :
NAME	:Acer palmatum 'Atropurpureum'
SIZE	:3-4'
SCODE	:18:
PACK	:BB :
PCODE	:21:
TPRICE	: 1000.00:
TYLD	: 3500.00:
STATUS	: :

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The Salable Plant Inventory is made up of those records from the Production Inventory where the Y(ield) Date Field indicates that these plants are now salable. Salable plant inventory for spring, 1985, would contain all Production records with Y(ield) Date = S 85.

These 3 data-base files then would contain all of the plants in all stages that we deal with. From the information contained in these 3 files we have developed various reports which help us to monitor production, plan purchases, and anticipate sales income. These reports are as follows:

I. *New Plants Listed by Vendor*: The report is produced from the NP.DBF. Plants purchased go into the NP.DBF as soon as we secure a confirmation from our vendor, and plants which we propagate are entered as soon as we consider a crop of cuttings or seedlings to be reasonably certain (see Table 3). Thus, this report becomes a forecasting tool. It is monitored, updated and reprinted as changes dictate. Cancellation of orders for liners, crop failures, and changes in production schemes for new plants can all be reflected at once. The report thus gives our container-production and field-planting crews an up-to-date schedule of when to expect to process such cultivars, how many, and what size the plants will be.

**Table 3.** New plants (fall spring, 1984-85) listed by vendor

VNORNO	QUANT	NAME	SIZE	PACK	COST	AMOUNT	ADT.	S	
	38	0			0 00	0.00			
	123	0			0 00	0.00			
1	198	700	Acer palmatum	'Bloodgood'	2-4"	PT	0.75	525.00	1284
1	200	150	Acer palmatum	'Bloodgood'	2-4"	RP	0.60	90.00	1284
1	188	425	Buxus sempervirens	'Fastigiata'	2-4"	RP	0.40	170.00	1284
1	207	2900	Cotoneaster dammeri	'Royal Beauty'	2-4"	PT	0.60	1740.00	1284
1	210	200	C. salicifolia	'Scarlet Leader'	2-4"	PT	0.60	120 00	1284

II. *New Plants Listed by Destination at the Nursery:* This report, very similar to the one above, will sort all new plants according to the container size they are to be planted in. This report develops our container purchase order for each season. It also lists all plants designated for field planting and assists in planning how much new ground will be needed and where.

III. *Plants Transferred Listed by Location:* This report (Table 4) is prepared from field or container planting notes, which reflect the actual count of plants processed, not the projections. We all know these two can differ for a number of reasons. The contents of this report will be integrated into the production inventory. This report is a record of these transfers.

**Table 4.** Plants transferred to fields or step-up listed by new location

RNO	QUANT	NAME	COST	TCOST	YDT	YIELD	T YIELD	LOCATION
6	360	Ilex × attenuata 'Fosteri'	2 50	900.00	F88	50 00	18000 00	NEK1
7	60	Cupressocyparis leylandi	4.00	240 00	F87	40 00	2400 00	NEK2
8	360	Ilex crenata 'Cherokee'	2 50	900 00	F88	35 00	12600 00	NEK3
9	60	× Cupressocyparis leylandi	4 00	240 00	F87	40 00	2400.00	NEL1
10	240	Ilex 'Dr Kasaab'	2.50	600.00	F89	45 00	10800 00	NEL2

IV. *Plants Listed by Location:* This report lists all plants in the production inventory by location. A copy of this report, triple spaced, is used in our physical inventory count made in December and again in June (Table 5). Changes in count, size, values or anticipated Y(ield) Date or Yield are made in the field on this report. In field growing some cultivars in a group will have too many different sizes to record on this inventory sheet, so we use an inventory form (Table 6), which is keyed by code number on the inventory sheet. When the inventory is completed, the inventory sheet and inventory are updated on the computer.

V. *Projection by Yield Date:* After each physical inventory we print this report to reflect changes and updating to give an estimate as to which plants will sell, when, and for how much (Table 5). This document is used by the field supervisor and container supervisor to monitor progress toward anticipated

goals. Before the physical inventory is taken, they have already formed opinions as to whether a particular group of plants is on schedule, how many will sell at a given time, and how many we will hold to grow to a large size. Decisions can be made as to the advisability of selling or holding from the standpoint of financial management. For convenience this report is printed with plants sorted by Y(ield) Date for each selling season.

**Table 5.** Inv:Form plants listed by location.

RNO	COMPNO	QUANT	NAME	SIZE	PACK	YDATE	YIELD	LOC
668	469	3'BB	245	<i>Ilex</i> × <i>attenuata</i> 'Fosteri'	3-4'	B/B	F85	80.00 FAA
669	018	BB	26	<i>Acer palmatum</i> 'Atropurpureum'	000	B/B		150.00 FAA
STOCK								
670	733	7'BB	41	<i>Pinus parviflora</i> 'Glauca'	000	B/B	F84	60.00 FAA
			21		7-8'		F84	65.00
			20		8-10'			85.00
671	442	3'BB	5	<i>Ilex crenata</i> 'Convexa' (male)	3-4'	B/B	F84	25 00 FAA
			5		3-4'		F84	26.00 FAA
672	053	3ABB	1	<i>Acer rubrum</i> 'October Glory'	3-3½"	CAL B/B	F84	100 00 FAA
Delete								
673	730	3'BB	7	<i>Pinus cembra</i> 'Nana'	3-4'	B/B		40.00 FAA
			4		4-5'			50.00
			3		5-6'			60 00
674	541	6'BB	5	<i>Juniperus chinensis</i> 'Robust Green'	6-8'	B/B	F84	55 00 FAA
Delete								
675	503	6'BB	5	<i>Ilex pedunculosa</i> (female)	6-8"	B/B		100 00 FAA
STOCK								
676	466	8'BB	3	<i>Ilex</i> 'Dr Kasaab'	8-10'	B/B		100.00 FAA
STOCK								

**Table 6.** Inventory form

Mobjack Nurseries Inv:Form		Location: <u>FAA</u>		Page No. <u>1</u>				
RNO	COMPNO	QUANT	SIZE	PACK	YDATE	YLD	LOCATION	NOTES
668		160	4-4½'	BB	F85	40.00	FAA	1
		60	5-6'	BB	F85	50.00	FAA	1
		25	6-7'	BB	F86	60.00	FAA	1

VI. *Salable Plants Listed by Y(ield) Date:* This report lists all plants where Y(ield) date is equal to the upcoming sales season and is in fact our Salable Plant Inventory (Table 7).

**Table 7.** Salable Plants Intventory Spring 1985

RNO	COMPNO	QUANT	NAME	SIZE	PACK	YIELD	TOTAL	LOCAT
138	1134154Q	50	<i>Iris kaempferi</i> 'Gekkeikan'	15-18"	4QT	2.75	137.50	
137	1133154Q	50	<i>Iris kaempferi</i> 'Hakubotan'	15-18"	4QT	2.75	137.50	
140	1136154Q	50	<i>Iris kaempferi</i> 'Kaiohseio'	15-18"	4QT	2.75	137.50	
141	1137154Q	50	<i>Iris kaempferi</i> 'Murekorad'	15-18"	4QT	2.75	137.50	
135	1131154Q	50	<i>Iris kaempferi</i> 'Pink Lady'	15-18"	4QT	2.75	137.50	
117	1153154Q	100	<i>Iris siberica</i> (purple & yellow)	15-18"	4QT	2.75	275.00	

VII. *Price List:* The records of all the cultivars and sizes we want in our sales catalog are keyed in the Status Field, and we print our catalog using a formating program from the Sales Inventory.

VIII. *Special List:* For groups of plants too small to list in

our catalog we print a special list. As these groups usually sell out quickly this relieves some of the need to update our catalog frequently.

### SUMMARY

We are well aware that "forecasting" future sales in the nursery business is ticklish and that a wide margin of error is possible. However, we feel that this system, carefully monitored and regularly updated, provides us with a plan. We feel it is essential to know well in advance what we have in the pipeline for future sales in field and container production. Knowing well in advance affords us opportunity to decide when it is most advantageous to sell our field-grown material and to select those container-grown plants that best complement field sales to produce a predetermined gross sales income.

### EUROPEAN GEMS: WHAT LOOKS GOOD

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### BULBS

The Netherlands is noted for their bulbs, and many new hybrids are seen among amaryllis, daffodils, tulips and lilies. There is variegated foliage with stripes of white, maroon, or purple in species hybrid tulips as well as multiflowered stalks with up to 6 flowers on each. The best new daffodil seen was a dark yellow, large-cupped cultivar named 'Cyclops'. *Crocsmia masoniorum*, a bright orange-red montbrietia, blooms from June into September at Inverewe.

### HERBACEOUS MATERIAL

'Beatrix', a beautiful rose-flowered gerbera, is outstanding in the greenhouse of Keukenhof. Two excellent members of the smartweed family are *Polygonum affine* 'Donald Lowndes' and *Polygonum bistorta* 'Superbum'; both bloom over a long period of time but are most effective in late summer to early fall. They are best when given part shade and moist soil.

In spring wallflower, *Cheiranthus cheiri*, a biennial, was seen frequently, especially in England. *Astilbe* × *arendsii* hybrids from white to pink to red make a colorful display from late summer to early fall. The Venidio-Arctotis hybrid African