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The **MAYFLOWER**

Massachusetts Flower Growers' Association

Growers of Quality Plants and Flowers

2006-2007

No. 3 of 6

President

Fred Dabney
794 Horseneck Road
S. Dartmouth, MA 02748
508.636.6931

Vice President

David Volante
226 Brookside Road
Needham, MA
781-444-2351

Secretary/Treasurer

Robert Luczai
8 Gould Road
Bedford, MA 01730
781.275.4811

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Paul Lopes
508.295.2212 x 24
Tina Smith
413.545.5306

Douglas Gillespie Honored by Association

The Massachusetts Commissioner of Agriculture was presented with the Outstanding Service to Agriculture Award on January 23, 2007 at the Massachusetts Flower Growers' Association Winter Meeting. The meeting was hosted by J.P. Bartlett Co., Inc. in Sudbury.

Bob Luczai presenting Award for Outstanding Service to Douglas Gillespie

The meeting was attended by 165 growers from Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Connecticut and Rhode Island. Attendees were able to visit Open Houses at nearby growers, Paul Cavicchio Greenhouses, Russell's Garden Center and Stow Greenhouses.

Speakers included Alfred Sorensen, University of Massachusetts, Environmental Health and Safety; Don Campbell, Donald Campbell Associates, Northfield; Dr. William Fonteno, North Carolina State University and Judy Sharpton, Growing Places Marketing.

Awards were also given to J.P. Bartlett Company for Excellence in the Floriculture industry, and Karen Randall for Distinguished Service.

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EQIP helps farmers improve production while protecting environmental quality by addressing such concerns as soil quality, grazing land conservation, irrigation efficiency and comprehensive nutrient management. With financial and technical assistance from NRCS, farmers will promote environmental quality on farmland, address water quality and quantity challenges, and protect valuable fish and wildlife habitat.

In Massachusetts, NRCS offers special pilot initiatives for greenhouse irrigation efficiency projects in Essex, Middlesex, Norfolk and Bristol counties and shellfish aquaculture management in Barnstable County.

Karen Randall, Randall Farm, Ludlow receiving Distinguished Service Award

“USDA is committed to providing conservation tools and resources to help Massachusetts farmers ensure that their land remains healthy and productive,” said State Conservationist Christine S. Clarke. “NRCS field staff are available to help farmers develop a conservation plan to address their resource concerns.”

The Natural Resources Conservation Service is an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture that provides leadership in a partnership effort to help people conserve, maintain, and improve our natural resources and environment. NRCS has seven Massachusetts field offices in Greenfield, Hadley, Holden, Hyannis, Pittsfield, Westford, and West Wareham, which work with local conservation districts and other partners to serve farmers and landowners throughout the commonwealth.

Laura Abrams and Martha Keighley, J.P Bartlett, Co. Inc, Sudbury receiving Award of Excellence

BARNSTABLE FIELD OFFICE
270 Communications Way, 1G
Hyannis, MA 02601
508-771-6476
Serving Cape Cod and the Islands

Federal conservation cost-share assistance available to Massachusetts farmers

Massachusetts farmers who would like to address soil and water conservation concerns on their land may apply for federal cost-share assistance.

A total of \$4 million in financial assistance is available statewide this year through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

Farmers are encouraged to call or visit their local USDA service center to schedule a time to complete the necessary paperwork and begin the conservation planning process. USDA service center locations are listed on-line at <http://offices.usda.gov> or in the phone book under Federal Government, U.S. Department of Agriculture. General program information is available on the NRCS Massachusetts website at www.ma.nrcs.usda.gov.

GREENFIELD FIELD OFFICE
55 Federal Street, Room 290
Greenfield, MA 01301
413-772-0384 x 3
Serving Franklin County

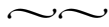
HADLEY FIELD OFFICE
195 Russell Street, Suite B6
Hadley, MA 01035
413-585-1000 x 3
Serving Hampden and Hampshire counties

HOLDEN FIELD OFFICE
52 Boyden Road, Room 10
Holden, MA 01520
508-829-4477 x 3
Serving Worcester County

PITTSFIELD FIELD OFFICE
78 Center Street, Suite 206
Pittsfield, MA 01201
413-443-1776 x 3
Serving Berkshire County

WESTFORD FIELD OFFICE
319 Littleton Road, Suite 205
Westford, MA 01886
978-692-1904 x 3
Serving Essex, Middlesex and Suffolk counties

WEST WAREHAM FIELD OFFICE
15 Cranberry Highway
West Wareham, MA 02576
508-295-5151 x 2
Serving Bristol, Norfolk and Plymouth counties



Waste not: Cranberry leftovers get new life

by Adam Gorlick, Associated Press Writer

AMHERST, Mass. (AP) -They're a favorite Thanksgiving side dish, praised for their health benefits and the source of a roughly \$70 million industry. Now, Massachusetts cranberries are being lauded for something far less glamorous: their waste.

Confronted with mounting piles of cranberry skins left over from Ocean Spray's juice processing facility in Middleborough, the man who manages and hauls away the fruity remains turned to University of Massachusetts researchers to see if the scraps could be put to use rather than being dumped in landfills.

The scientists realized the shredded skins –called pomace – have a lot in common with peat moss. After composting the pink sawdust-like material into an earthy brown substance that smells like dirt and has the consistency of pipe tobacco, the researchers began adding it in place of peat moss to potting mixtures for petunias, poinsettias and mums.

“Nobody ever looked into this before because it was just a lot easier and cheaper to throw the pomace out in the dump,” said Paul Lopes, one of the researchers with the UMass extension program.

And Ocean Spray - which spends more than \$100,000 to have five thousand tons of pomace hauled away each year - is curious to see if the researchers' continued experiments will prove marketable.

“If somebody would pay to take it from us, that would be good economics,” said company spokesman Chris Phillips.

The pomace could also make better financial sense for commercial flower growers. While peat moss grows in abundance in Canadian bogs, its price fluctuates against the strength of the American dollar and the weather during harvesting season.

The idea of adding agricultural waste products to potting mixes isn't new. Pine bark, coconut husks and peanut shells have all mingled with peat moss and served growers well.

And this isn't the first time cranberry waste has been recycled. Some of Ocean Spray's fresh pomace has been finding its way to mulch producers in southeastern Massachusetts for a few years, although it hasn't been a big moneymaker for the company.

“I had this idea that maybe this stuff might be useful,” said Scott McLane, the recycling manager for Plymouth-based Howland Disposal, which has been carting away Ocean Spray's pomace since 2001.

After helping broker deals between wholesale mulch producers and Ocean Spray, a friend of McLane's in the nursery business suggested he investigate whether the pomace had potential in the gardening industry.

“It showed promise, but nursery people can't use large quantities of this and find out later that it's spawning diseases and creating problems and making them lose money,” McLane said. “We needed to research this and show it was safe and beneficial.”

Enter Lopes and his fellow UMass researchers, Tina Smith and Douglas Cox. The team began working with a handful of Massachusetts flower growers, who agreed to experiment with the composted pomace.

So far, the stuff seems to work best when it's added in a 50-50 mixture with peat moss. Too much pomace hurts a growing plant's root system and seems to prevent flowers from blooming properly, most likely because of the cranberry's high acidity.

While the UMass researchers are still trying to create the best concoction before it can be marketed, the pomace is so far getting good reviews from the commercial flower growers they've been working with.

Terry Lyons, a greenhouse owner in Foxborough, said he used a 50-50 pomace mix to grow a few dozen garden mums and hanging petunias.

“There's no difference at all between using that and straight peat moss,” he said. “If pomace were part of a commercial mix I was buying, I'd have no problem with that.”

State seeks employment opportunities for refugee farmers

Do you need farm labor? Want to help others explore careers in agriculture? If so, the Massachusetts Office for Refugees and Immigrants (MORI) would like to hear from you.

MORI is partnering with the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR) and the Massachusetts Nursery and Landscape Association (MNLA) to help refugees with farming experience get jobs in agriculture in Massachusetts. One to four farms near Springfield and Worcester will be selected for a pilot project to work with up to 30 refugees.

MORI is looking for farm, greenhouse, and other agriculture entrepreneurs that have labor needs and are interested in employing refugees. The goal is to help refugees get jobs on farms so they can learn about agriculture in Massachusetts and decide if they want to pursue it as a career.

With farmers' input, MORI will train refugees to work on their farms. The agency will facilitate the process, develop basic agriculture and language training based on agriculture-employer needs, place refugees on farms, work closely with refugees and farm-employers to solve problems as they arise, hold trainings to ensure refugees understand the operations they work for, and facilitate mentorship relationships.

If you are in need of farm labor and are interested in learning more, contact Larry Dixon for more information at 617-727-7888, x330 or larry.dixon@state.ma.us.



State seeks mentors for refugee farmers

Do you want to learn about agriculture in other countries? Do you want to help others learn about farming in Massachusetts? Would you like to mentor refugee farmers? If so, the Massachusetts Office for Refugees and Immigrants (MORI) needs your help and wants to hear from you.

MORI and the USDA Risk Management Agency (USDA/RMA) are partnering in a project that will provide mentorship opportunities for refugee farmers. MORI is looking for farm, greenhouse, and other agriculture entrepreneurs in the Springfield and Worcester areas that are interested in mentoring refugees, many of whom have agricultural experience in their native lands.

The Commonwealth receives about 2000 refugees through the US Refugee Resettlement Program each year. About half of them worked in agriculture in their home countries. The project aims to train those interested in learning about agriculture in Massachusetts and develop mentor relationships so they can learn agriculture firsthand from successful farmers here.

MORI will coordinate, develop basic agriculture and language training based on mentor farmer input and needs, work closely with refugees and farm mentors to solve problems as they arise, and facilitate the relationships. They hope to pilot the project on one to four farms near Springfield and Worcester with up to 30 refugees. Possibilities may also exist in the Merrimack Valley.



Legal Status of Greenhouse Businesses in Massachusetts

At various times the issue of the legal status of greenhouse businesses operating in Massachusetts will arise. Often the question presents itself when the issue of sales, property and excise taxes arise. The following language appears in the State Laws of Massachusetts.

Chapter 128: Section 1A. Farming, agriculture, farmer; definitions.

Section 1A. "Farming" or "agriculture" shall include farming in all of its branches and the cultivation and tillage of the soil, dairying, the production, cultivation, growing and harvesting of any agricultural, aquacultural, floricultural or horticultural commodities, the growing and harvesting of forest products upon forest land, the raising of livestock including horses, the keeping of horses as a commercial enterprise, the keeping and raising of poultry, swine, cattle and other domesticated animals used for food purposes, bees, fur-bearing animals, and any forestry or lumbering operations, performed by a farmer, who is hereby defined as one engaged in agriculture or farming as herein defined, or on a farm as an incident to or in conjunction with such farming operations, including preparations for market, delivery to storage or to market or to carriers for transportation to market.

Greenhouse Grower Position Available

at Southern Massachusetts Wholesale Greenhouse and Nursery business. Position requires propagation knowledge as well as ability to schedule a wide variety of crops and oversee production team. Depending upon level of experience benefits may include housing and health care. All inquiries confidential. Please call 508-636-6931 for additional information.

number of ornamental plants for commercial use and conducted basic plant research on breeding other plants that paved the way for their development. Thomas released a number of Holiday Cactus cultivars, 'Jim Crockett' Boltonia, and 'Purple Knight' Alternanthera. He also conducted basic research on Zinnias which ultimately helped make the 'Profusion' series possible. Thomas also worked at one time or another on Coreopsis, Cosmos, Liatris (Blazing Star), Lobelia, Impatiens (current work), Parancanda, Amaryllis, Rosemary, Coleus, Baptisia, Pennisetum, Blue Fescue and Ageratum. At the time of his death, Thomas was working with Ball Horticultural Company.

In addition, he authored or co-authored many scholarly articles and book chapters. Thomas was an inspiring mentor to his students and colleagues, and treated every co-worker with respect. He was also a very good University "citizen," deeply involved in Departmental affairs and in service to the University. He will be missed by the University community and by the entire Department, especially in French Hall and in the French Hall Greenhouses.

Thomas was very committed to his profession and to his chosen scientific field. He was always willing to share his knowledge and expertise with others. In addition to his activities at the University, Thomas was a member and active participant in professional organizations, most notably for The American Society for Horticultural Sciences and the USDA Ornamental Germplasm Center. Also, he was often called upon to review articles for publication in professional science journals including HortScience, HortTechnology, Journal for the American Society for Horticultural Science, Annals of Botany, etc. He was recently asked to review chapters in "Life: The Science of Biology" 8th edition, Sinauer Associates, Sunderland, MA.

Outside of work, Thomas enjoyed international travel, sampling and cooking new foods, and had a deep appreciation for history and other cultures. He was always eager to embark on new adventures with Nancy, his wife of over 14 years, and their son Samuel, 8 years old at the time of his father's death. Thomas was an accomplished drummer, accordion and harmonica player, and loved listening to a wide array of music. He had a quick wit and liked to tell a good joke. Thomas was an excellent mix of humor and dignity. He leaves his beloved family and several other relatives, as well as a multitude of friends, colleagues, students, and co-workers.

Thomas Henry Boyle III will always be remembered as a loving husband, a devoted father, a good friend, a dedicated teacher and scientist, and, as the phrase was so aptly coined, "a gentleman and a scholar."

Thomas Henry Boyle III

Professor of Plant, Soil and Insect Science at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst for 20 years died on December 19, 2006 at age 53.

After a long and heroic struggle with cancer, the Department's beloved and highly respected Professor Thomas H. Boyle III died peacefully in his wife's arms in their Amherst home on Tuesday December 19, 2006.

Thomas, a native of Norfolk, Virginia, received a B.S. degree in Horticulture from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in 1977. He earned his M.S. degree in 1981 and his Ph.D. in 1986, both at the University of Maryland.

Thomas became an Assistant Professor in the Department of Plant and Soil Sciences at the University of Massachusetts Amherst in 1986. He was promoted to Associate Professor in 1991, and to full Professor in 1999. At the time of his death, he was an active employee in the Department of Plant, Soil and Insect Sciences. He was also an active participant in the Plant Biology Graduate Program at UMass Amherst, serving as their Graduate Program Director. In addition, he was a Faculty member in the Graduate Program in Organismic and Evolutionary Biology at UMass Amherst. He taught undergraduate and graduate courses in plant genetics and in greenhouse management. He acted as Faculty Advisor to many successful M.S. and PH.D. students, and served on several other graduate student committees.

His research interests included genetics and reproductive biology of plants, crop adaptation and evolution, and the collection, evaluation and utilization of crop germplasm. Through his research, Thomas developed and patented a

Bill Randall
A Grower, A Leader and A Friend

William Randall, 51 of Five Acre Farm Greenhouses died on February 1, 2007 in Jonquiere Quebec as a result of a snowmobile accident.

Bill was born in Ludlow on August 2, 1955, the son of William H and Elsie (Bracci) Randall.

Bill was educated in Ludlow schools and was a 1973 graduate of Ludlow High School. He then attended Stockbridge School of Agriculture at UMass. In 1979 he became the owner, operator of Five Acre Farm Greenhouses in Northfield. He was past president of the Massachusetts Flower Growers Association and had received the Distinguished Service Award and Award of Excellence from the Association.

Bill was an avid outdoorsman, enjoying hunting and snowmobiling and he loved his second home at Maidstone Lake in Vermont. He attended all of his children's sporting events and he coached Pop Warner Football in Greenfield and Keene, New Hampshire and he was a member of the Greenfield Elks Lodge. He was a dedicated music fan and follower of the Grateful Dead. He supported his local school and community events through his business. His three children were the focus of his life.

In 1979 Bill purchased the property in Northfield where FAF Growers now exists. The location had a retail vegetable farm stand located on the property. With Bill's leadership, FAF Growers has evolved into a wholesale-retail greenhouse operation growing annual and perennial plugs and liners, prefinished items and finished annuals and perennials. FAF Growers is now the largest wholesale plug producer in Massachusetts

He is survived by his three children: William H., Valerie,

and Stephanie all at home. He is also survived by his mother, Elsie Randall of Ludlow, three sisters, Karen Randall of Ludlow, Tammy Marquis and her husband David of Greenfield, Anna Arciszewski and her husband John of Ludlow and his former wife Suzanne (Dias) Randall, the mother of his children, and many nieces and nephews.



Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources Grant Programs

Farm Viability Enhancement Program

The Farm Viability Enhancement Program helps farmers keep their families on the land and keep sprawl from consuming their farms. The program involves strengthening the business skills of farmers and combining diversification and environmental integrity. Over the past ten years many farmers have found that the Farm Viability Enhancement Program helpful. Could the Farm Viability Program be right for your farm? Contact Craig Richov, craig.richov@state.ma.us, 617-626-1725, <http://www.mass.gov/agr/programs/farmviability>

Massachusetts Agricultural Environmental Enhancement Program (AEEP)

Application are usually posted in the Springtime with a deadline around mid-June with rolling applications until the fall. The purpose of AEEP is to provide support to agricultural operations in Massachusetts for the mitigation and/ or prevention of impacts on natural resources, including water and air, that may result from agricultural practices. Funding up to \$25K for the purchase of materials, in combination with requisite labor, in order to implement agricultural conservation practices which improve water quality, conserve water, reduce greenhouse gas emissions or conserve energy. Contact: Gerard Kennedy, 617-626-1773, gerard.kennedy@state.ma.us, <http://www.mass.gov/agr/programs/aEEP>



Respiratory Protection

by Alfred Sorensen, University of Massachusetts-Amherst, Environmental Health and Safety

One of the first questions you should ask yourself before applying pesticides is "What personal protection equipment (PPE) do I need and where do I look for this information?"

There are two places you can immediately access information on PPE. The first is the pesticide label and the second source of information is the Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS). Check the MSDS in the section titled PERSONAL PROTECTION EQUIPMENT for respirator recommendations and types of cartridges to be used. MSDSs can be obtained from the pesticide supplier or the manufacturer as well as on the web.

Once you have determined that you need a respirator then you must choose the proper respirator, the proper cartridges, and have a respirator fit test. In addition you must know how to properly wear a respirator and how to maintain and store it properly.

The type of respirator most likely to be listed on the label or MSDS for your pesticide application will be a negative pressure air purifying respirator. These respirators come in different sizes and styles so you must choose the one that fits the contours of your face best. Next you must choose the appropriate cartridge to give you the necessary protection against the contaminant from which you are trying to protect yourself. Once again, this information should be on the label and/or MSDS. If the information is not there, call the manufacturer and ask for the safety office.

Keep in mind that negative pressure air purifying respirators do have limitations:

- They cannot be used in an oxygen deficient environment.
- Exposure cannot exceed high contaminant concentrations.
- Requires a fit test. Must use proper cartridge.
- Respirator parts are not interchangeable between brands.

Once you have chosen the respirator to be worn you must get a *fit test* to assure that it fits properly and there is no leakage around the face piece. A record of this testing should be maintained with the following information: name of the subject, agent used, date, tester, manufacturer, model and approval number.

Once in the field you must be able to properly field check the fit of the respirator using the negative and positive *fit checks*.

Respirators must be maintained and properly washed after each use and stored, in a zip lock bag. Each time a respirator is used it should be inspected for broken/worn parts. You should read and understand the instructions that come with your respirator.

This is just a brief outline of respirator protection. For a complete understanding of a respiratory program, you can check on the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Respiratory Protection standard: 29CFR1910.134 at the web address: WWW.OSHA.GOV.

Remember that contaminants can enter your lungs and then be absorbed by your body. The lungs have a huge surface area for the transfer of contaminants into your body. If the human lung were dissected and laid out on a flat surface it would cover the area of a tennis court.

Association Announces Annual Scholarship

The Massachusetts Flower Growers' Association will sponsor a scholarship award of up to \$4000.00 depending on length of study. Applicant must major in a course of study in Floriculture, horticulture or related agricultural sciences and must be a resident of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for a minimum of one year prior to submitting an application. Completed applications must be submitted by May 15, 2007.

Award

1. Payment of \$1,000.00 annually will be made following receipt of transcripts depending on duration of scholarship.
2. One year, two year, three year or four year students will be awarded scholarships proportionately to the number of semesters successfully completed; that is, a one year scholarship or two semesters equals \$1,000.00; a two year scholarship equals \$2,000.00; a three year scholarship equals \$3,000.00; and a four year scholarship equals \$4,000.00 to a possible maximum of \$4,000.00.
3. The first payment will be made to the college in August prior to the first semester in the name of the successful applicant. Succeeding payments will be made upon receipt of a transcript from the college at the end of each academic year. Applicants are responsible for having transcript forwarded to the Massachusetts Flower Growers' Association Scholarship Committee.

For more details and/or a complete application form contact the Association office at 781-275-4811 or Paul Lopes at 508-295-2212 x24 /lopes@umext.umass.edu.



New England Grows Announces a \$50,000 Commitment to Benefit the Boston Schoolyard Initiative: 2007 Show Breaks Attendance Record

BOSTON, Mass.—New England Grows, the Northeast's largest Green Industry exposition and educational conference, announced it has committed \$50,000 to the Boston Schoolyard Funders Collaborative (BSFC) in support of the Boston Schoolyard Initiative (BSI), a public/private partnership between the BSFC and the City of Boston dedicated to revitalizing the City's schoolyards and neighborhoods.

New England Grows' five-year commitment to benefit the BSI was highlighted at this year's 15th annual show, which took place February 6 through February 8 at the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center (BCEC).

A record-breaking crowd of more than 15,000 attended the event, taking part in the award-winning tradeshow's world-class learning opportunities for Green Industry professionals.

“The BSI is doing great things for kids and horticulture in Boston, and New England Grows is honored to make this commitment in support of an organization that is so vital to the fabric of Boston’s communities,” said Cricket Vlass, president of New England Grows.

At the Landmark Luncheon held at New England Grows on February 8 to mark the tradeshow’s 15th anniversary, Ms. Vlass presented a check for \$10,000 to the Honorable Mayor Thomas M. Menino. The mayor accepted New England Grows’ first year commitment on behalf of the City of Boston and the BSI.

“I am delighted to accept this generous gift on behalf of the BSI and the City of Boston,” said Mayor Menino at the luncheon. “The redesigned schoolyards created by the BSI have improved the quality of life for children and have made our neighborhoods a better place to live. We welcome the Green Industry’s commitment to help realize our goal of environmental sustainability for the future of our city.”

New England Grows’ contribution will help maintain the significant green spaces included in the 61 schoolyards BSI has worked to revitalize. The funds will be used to implement programs aimed at teaching students how to care for the plantings and hardscape features of their schoolyards and, ultimately, how to become stewards of these urban green areas. Funds from New England Grows will also be used to research and design a program to encourage school-to-career opportunities within the Green Industry.

“New England Grows’ generous commitment gives us an opportunity to work with the Green Industry to positively affect urban schools and neighborhoods,” said Kirk Meyer, executive director of the Boston Schoolyard Funders Collaborative. “We believe the students’ bond with nature developed in outdoor classrooms can have an enduring effect on their lives and on their communities.”

Positions Available

Five Acre Farm Greenhouses FAF Growers

a modern Wholesale/Retail Greenhouse operation located in Western Massachusetts. We are seeking hardworking, energetic personnel to join our team.

Seed Technician

Responsible for buying, sowing and maintaining seed production. Experience with operating a drum seeder helpful but not required, computer experience is necessary.

Grower/Assistant Grower

Grow and maintain a large variety of annual and perennial crops. Horticultural background and greenhouse experience preferred.

Garden Center Manager

Supervise our 25,000 sq. ft. Retail Garden Center. Retail experience required, as well as strong customer service skills and weekend availability. Knowledge of annuals, perennials and nursery stock preferred, as well as greenhouse or nursery experience.

Please apply in person or send resume and references to:

**Five Acre Farm Greenhouses
108 Hinsdale Road
Northfield, MA 01360
Fax 413-498-2051**

For Sale

Challenger wood chip fired hot water heating system. 2 MBtu output. Burns green chips, etc.

Used one-plus heating season. Fully automatic system includes fuel storage bin, feed screw, vertical tube heat exchanger, combustion air blowers, auto ash removal, induction fan, dust collector, and complete control panel. \$120K new, selling for \$100K, FOB Stow. Available late March.

**Stow Greenhouses, Stow, MA
978-568-1189. Extensive operational
assistance provided at no charge.**

Volunteers Needed!

MFGA will once again participate in the New England Flowers Show.

Volunteers are needed in the days leading up to the Flower Show to assist in the construction of the Association Display.

If you are interested contact the Association office at 781.275.4811