First Stop 9:30 AM – Pleasant Run Nursery

Pleasant Run Nursery Inc. is a 15 acre container nursery which has recently been selected as the first nursery enterprise to be recognized as a New Jersey Sustainable Business. This Registry is a component of a larger initiative between Rutgers' New Jersey Small Business Development Centers (NJSBDC) and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP).

Started by Richard and Heidi Hesselein in 1998, Pleasant Run has grown from 9 bow houses and 1 propagation structure to a current facility including 95 houses, a large potting and storage barn and 2 pump houses.

The nursery produces woody ornamentals, vines, perennials, grasses and ferns, all grown in containers ranging from 1 gallon to 30 gallons. Our focus is on hard-to-find and cutting-edge plants, with a particular emphasis on natives and plants which solve specific site challenges or problems. We also now offer the ability to contract/custom grow plant material for your specific job needs.

The property contains multiple display gardens (which are ever-changing and highlight some of the unique plants grown at the nursery), 2 extensive bio-swales (used for bio filtration of the run-off), and numerous wildlife habitats placed throughout the nursery.

Our belief is that Landscape Architects and Nurserymen would both gain from a close working relationship, where we can share our separate areas of experience and expertise to each other's mutual benefit. Among the nursery management team there are 5 Certified Nursery Landscape Professionals (CNLP). We look forward to sharing with you what we are excited about in the plant world and our production methods, and we hope to hear what you are particularly looking for to get the most out of this experience.

Breakfast will be provided by Pleasant Run at Fernbrook during registration. Tours of the nursery will be given by PRN owners Richard and Heidi Hesselein and PRN Production Managers Carl Hesselein and Trevor Probost.

Learning Objectives:

1) What determines a well-grown container plant: liner quality and root structure, potting medium, fertilizer and pesticide regimen, canopy or structure formation, production cycle or longevity of time in the container.

2) Research through use of display gardens in determining the value of new cultivars. Examples of display beds include bio swales, xeric locations, shade areas and native perennial and woody beds. Are the new cultivars potential improvements or flops?

3) Experimentation with groups of genera and species to determine what can solve specific site problems: deer resistance, compacted soils, shade sites, dry or wet conditions, drainage and water filtering plants, road salt.

4) Plant options for sustainable landscapes which combine habitat and food for native animals with aesthetic rewards: i.e., landscape-worthy natives that can handle our changed conditions, while providing significant benefits for wildlife and visual appeal.

Expected Outcomes which attendees should take back with them:

1) Knowledge of what containerized plant material can do successfully and effectively when installed in landscapes. Some issues to be covered would be adaptability to site conditions, success and speed of post-transplant growth, and the minimizing of post-transplant maintenance needed.

2) Information about what new work is going on in cultivar selections and breeding. Areas in which problem issues are being addressed through plant breeding (sterility bred into potentially invasive but valuable plants, size and shape selections in cultivars, transpiration rate and filtration effectiveness of selections for water run-off problem areas, planting densities for optimal weed control.)

3) Information about the relationships between plants and difficult sites – which plants are already adapted naturally to handle issues such as soil conditions, light issues, site challenges, hardiness issues, deer damage, etc. Information provided by the study of plant ecosystems including wetlands, flood plains, upland soil profiles.

4) A better grasp of the interactions of sustainability, wildlife support, storm water management, pest damage reduction and increased aesthetic appeal, all enhanced by appropriate plant selection.

Second Stop 11:00 AM – Pinelands Nursery & Supply

Pinelands Nursery was established in 1983 by Don and Suzanne Knezick. Originally, we marketed container grown blueberries, raspberries and grapes to garden centers in the Mid-Atlantic States. While that business proved to be successful, our interest was really in the propagation of native species. With the adoption of federal and state environmental legislation, such as the Pinelands Protection Act, the Clean Water Act and most recently, NPDES Phase II storm water regulations, we were able to completely shift the focus of Pinelands Nursery to the production of indigenous trees, shrubs and herbs.

Today, Pinelands Nursery is one of the largest native plant nurseries in the US, supplying millions of plants for environmental restorations throughout the Mid-Atlantic States. With operations in New Jersey and New York, along with seed collection in Virginia we are proud to be able to propagate plants from regional seed sources that are genetically adapted to local conditions.

In the late 1980's, Pinelands Nursery started supplying coir logs and mats for stream bank stabilization and bio-engineering projects. We now offer a full line of erosion control blankets, hydro-mulches, geotextiles and silt fence, leading us to change our name to Pinelands Nursery & Supply. In 2006 we introduced our own custom blended seed mixes for storm water management basins, construction sites and wildflower meadows. We are now truly a "one stop shop" for all of your erosion control and seeding needs.

With over 35 years of practical, on the ground experience, Pinelands Nursery & Supply is recognized as a leader in the field of environmental restoration.

A tour of the Nursery operation will be given by Pineland's owner, Suzanne Knezick and staff. Lunch will be provided.

Learning Objectives:

1) Our philosophy is that local seed sources are of paramount importance in ecological restoration projects. We will share our experiences of significant variability in native plants resulting from different provenances.

2) we will share how we match our native plants to specific site conditions by covering how we track the provenances from seed collection all the way through to the production of finished nursery stock.

3) We will discuss the importance of maintaining genetic variability so a plant species can adapt to changing environmental conditions.

Expected outcomes which Attendees should take back with them:

1) Attendees will see our complete production system including the innovative way we grow our aquatic species

2) Attendees will gain insight into how the proper selection of plants can have a profound effect on sustaining and increasing wildlife species.

3) Information regarding specific difficult site issues will be shared (salt, water inundation, pollution filtration, geese and other pests, poor or compacted soils).

Third Stop 2:00 PM – Fernbrook Nursery and Farm

Fernbrook is a diversified farm growing over 320 acres of general nursery stock and 12 acres of organic vegetables for a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) co-op. The main house (circa 1740) is run as a Bed and Breakfast, and the farm operates a summer camp and educational programs for school children throughout the year.

The nursery field-grows a general line of plants including shade and flowering trees, conifers, hollies, arborvitae, boxwoods and viburnums. Our container production, approximately 5 acres, specializes in native deciduous azaleas, rhododendron, and mountain laurels, and other native and hard-to-find plants in #5 and #7 can sizes. Our tree production

targets the 2 to 4 inch caliper sizes. Evergreen trees are sold between 7 and 15 feet, boxwoods up to 4 feet, and viburnums up to 8 feet. We dig trees year round using various techniques to dig during the summer. We ship primarily through independent trucking companies from Maine to Virginia**.**

As small growers, our challenge is to provide a diversity of plant species in multiple sizes and adequate quantities. To that end, we offer many hard–to–find and unusual plants. We are always trialing new plants. We will trial them for 4 to 6 years in the field before we list them in our catalog.

Many plants might do well in the care of our container production, but how they will hold up in your customer's landscape? Since we propagate most of the plants we grow, we have better control over their final outcome. Our use of pesticides and herbicides is minimal as we use IPM practices and mechanical weed control. Deer are always a consideration, so part of our diversity challenge is to find deer resistant plants that are hardy and have seasonal interest, such as Cephalotaxus.

Dinner will be served at the Fernbrook Bed and Breakfast. We plan on enjoying a wonderful meal with much of our food coming from the CSA at Fernbrook, as well as other local area farms. A tour of Fernbrook Nursery and Farm will be given by Fernbrook owner, Larry Kuser.

Learning Objectives:

1) A talk on soil fertility and productivity which ties in with plant nutrient needs (N, P, K, pH, minerals, etc.). Also a discussion on soil texture as it relates to water, mineral and oxygen movement.

2) A talk about plant deficiency symptoms; how to identify the causes and how to address the problems to achieve optimal results in the landscape.

3) As a result of years of production nursery experience in both field grown plants (B&B) and container production, a course on selecting quality trees. We will look at how trees grow (botany 101), cultural practices in nurseries, pruning and staking practices, ANLA standards for harvesting and grading plants and fall digging hazard plants. Special emphasis will be on proper root development and correct B&B digging procedures.

Expected Outcomes which attendees should take back with them:

1) A clear knowledge of soils from a stand point what plants need for optimal growth and long-term survival. Factors which significantly affect success will be discussed with emphasis on necessary nutrients, soil texture and absorption abilities.

2) Greater awareness of plant deficiency symptoms as a diagnostic tool to provide better growth and survival of landscapes as they mature.

3) Information about what the Landscape Architect should expect from nurseries or contractors when specifying trees for projects. Better clarity about what industry standards are and why certain plant aspects are important to look for. More information about optimal times to plant certain trees, and which times are likely to result in plant losses.