

BRUCE BRIGGS: Can you feed fertilizer through the mist lines to the unrooted cuttings and help rooting?

HAROLD TUKEY: We did not use nutrient mist in these studies but Dr. John Wott, now the Secretary of this Society, did a considerable amount of this work when he was a graduate student at Cornell. The results of his work have been published in previous Proceedings. Specifically, yes you can increase the rootability of cuttings by correct additions of nutrients during the rooting period. Those cuttings which are growing the most, particularly softwood cuttings, respond best whereas the more mature cuttings which are not making a great deal of growth during the rooting period, do not respond particularly well.

MODERATOR FLEMER: Several years ago our Society became interested in the finding and introduction of new plants on a commercial scale. A committee under the able chairmanship of Jim Wells was appointed to look into this question and report back to the Society. This report will now be presented to you by Jim Wells.

REPORT OF THE PLANT EVALUATION COMMITTEE

Composed of:

WILLIAM FLEMER III
WILLIAM SNYDER

PETER VERMUELEN
JAMES S. WELLS—CHAIRMAN

Presented by

JAMES S. WELLS

Your Plant Evaluation Committee met four times and I am glad to say that substantial progress was achieved. At our first meeting held November 29, 1970 we first considered whether we needed a scheme for plant evaluation and introduction. It was unanimously agreed that we did. Next followed the consideration of what form it ought to take. Possibilities considered were as follows:

1. A strictly commercial plan for testing, selecting and ultimately introducing first class plants.
2. A non-commercial evaluation system similar to the Royal Horticultural Society in England, the introducing then to be left to the originator.
3. A combination of 1 and 2.
4. A survey type such as the evaluation of hybrid French lilacs carried out by John Wister and published by the Arthur Hoyt Scott Horticultural Foundation.

Careful consideration of these possibilities led us to the conclusion that in these times and in this country the only acceptable organization should be commercial, discriminating and profit-oriented.

Having come to this decision it was clear that the sponsoring body should not be the International Plant Propagators' Society and that a separate organization would have to be established. We then went onto consider ways and means for establishing such a group and an outline of a proposed scheme was developed.

A second meeting was held on December 29, 1970 in which all these suggestions were considered in more detail. Proposals were then drawn up in the form of a simple document which members of this committee used to discuss the idea with other interested people at various winter meetings. There was mixed reception. Some felt that the idea was excellent, others felt that they would like to wait and see; a few felt that, "there hasn't been a plant worth introducing in the last 20 years". In other words, the response was entirely typical of any broad group of people.

We consulted a law firm in Washington, D.C. in regard to possible implication of anti-trust laws and obtained suggestions as to proper forms of organization. The committee was particularly interested in the development and operation of the Canadian Ornamental Plant Foundation. William Flemer attended their 1971 annual meeting and learned that their operation is proceeding well, that it is achieving the purposes outlined for the Foundation, and they would welcome an opportunity to cooperate with a similar organization in this country. We also investigated the operation of the All-American Rose Selections and the All-American Seed Selections and, with this information before us at our third meeting, we were able to come to the following conclusions:

1. There is a real need for such an organization.
2. Similar organizations are operating successfully and there is an immediate willingness to cooperate.
3. The operation should be simple and entirely commercial.
4. Your committee should now present this report which presumably would complete its work under the aegis of the I.P.P.S.
5. A steering committee outside I.P.P.S. should be formed and widened to include interested people with the intent of setting up a foundation in this country to accomplish the objectives proposed in the attached outline.

REASONS FOR A PROMOTIONAL ORGANIZATION

The American nursery industry has not evolved a successful formula for the selection, introduction, and promotion of superior new woody plants, except for isolated and specialized groups like roses. The present method is piecemeal and haphazard. Individual firms with new varieties of merit describe them in their catalogues or a few advertisements are put in trade journals and they gradually seep into the trade and thence to the public. If a new plant proves to be commercially important, by the time large sales develop it is widely disseminated and the introducer does not benefit much from his innovation.

Even if the new plant is protected by a patent, it is very difficult for an individual firm (especially a small one) to promote it effectively. The merit of a novelty is accredited only by the unsupported opinion of the innovator, who has a special interest in it. Thus it is difficult for him or his firm to secure enough licensees to achieve the royalty income and production adequate to support effective promotion to the consuming public. On the contrary, if a number of firms have a vested interest in a new variety, their combined individual promotions and their joint participation in retail advertising can insure success.

National programs for the promotion of new woody ornamentals have been proposed and considered on several occasions. In a country as large as the U.S.A. with subtropical, temperate, and very cold areas, no woody garden plants exist which are of universal use. Therefore, the only practical solution would appear to be a trial program confined to the temperate zones (USDA Hardiness Zones 5, 6, and 7) in which a majority of the gardening public live. A major portion of the American nurseries producing ornamental plants who could support such a program are also located in these zones. A logical starting place is in the northeast because reasonably close proximity would make communication and coordination less difficult. However, membership should be open to any reputable firm growing plants or selling in these zones.

The International Plant Propagators' Society at its last annual meeting appointed a small committee to prepare and submit a recommended plan for the introduction and promotion of new plants. After careful consideration the committee proposes the formation of a corporation tentatively to be called the "American Ornamental Plant Foundation, Inc.". Its stated purposes would be;

1. To encourage the breeding, finding, evaluation, selection and introduction of new ornamental plants for the benefit of the gardening public.

2. To provide the originator or finder with a suitable monetary return through an efficient and businesslike method of propagation, growing and distribution of the selected plants.
3. To provide a means of cooperation with similar foundations, both domestic and foreign.

It would perform five services for its member firms, serving as ;

1. An agency to gather for commercial consideration as many as possible of the new plants appearing each year.
2. A disinterested and respected tribunal to judge their horticultural and commercial value, whose endorsement would carry weight with the consuming public.
3. A means of assembling funds sufficient for effective promotion at all levels.
4. An experienced agency to arrange production licenses and collect royalties for originators.
5. A knowledgeable agency to locate and develop sales outlets for new plants and enlarge their market.

Thus originators could find a market for their innovations, growers who are not originators could find commercially profitable new products to grow, and retail merchandizers could find profitable new plants to increase their sales.

HOW THE FOUNDATION WOULD OPERATE

Step No.

1. Solicitation to all breeders, commercial and amateur for new plants to be screened. Originator must submit 10 specimens for examination, or color pictures where more practical.
2. Screening Committee meets and indicates preliminary interest or disinterest in a plant.
3. If a plant is accepted for preliminary trial, propagating wood or young plants are sent to official testing stations. Scions or cuttings would go to a nurseryman for propagating and later distribution to the testing stations. Statement of intent binding originator and organization is signed. The naming of a plant would be done by consultation with the originator, but at the final say of the organization.
4. Screening Committee meets and evaluates material, choosing acceptable material and rejecting unuseable clones. If accepted, originator applies for a patent and assigns it to the organization. If not accepted, trial plants are returned to the originator at his expense or, at his option, he receives a cer-

- tificate of destruction issued by the Screening Committee through the President. Directors negotiate with the originator and determine what the royalty will be and when it will be due.
5. Directors plan entire introduction program considering;
 - a. Potential sale quantities likely.
 - b. Potential outlets—mail order, etc.
 - c. Speed of acceptance—how much per year.
 - d. Promotional efforts—direct ads, articles, slides for talks, flower shows.
 - e. Name and form of special identification.
 6. Directors draw up propagation schedule. How many will be grown and the minimum size which will be sold at retail.
 7. Directors send out invitations to produce the introduction.
 - a. First, to the membership.
 - b. Second, if undersubscribed, to a selected list of potential members.
 8. Letting of propagation contracts, with notification of the royalty rate and when it is due.
 9. Activate promotional plans, keyed in with Step 8.
 10. Collect royalties, and distribute to the originator his own share (possibly 60 to 80 percent).

This is a summation of the committee's work and is presented as a report only.

MODERATOR FLEMER: Thank you very much, Jim. This report was purposely presented as the last item on this morning's program so as to allow sufficient time for discussion, any comments you may have as to its feasibility, or if you would like, more clarification as to how it would work. Because of the mixed membership of our Society we recognize that this is something that it would not do but, rather, that it would be an independent organization with the profit motive clearly in mind. We think that universities and other public institutions which are doing plant breeding would be interested in introducing their new plants through this new proposed foundation. We think that this could be a source of revenue to support research at such institutions. At this time I'll turn the microphone back to Jim Wells and we can begin a discussion of the report.

PRESIDENT PINNEY: On behalf of the Society members I heartily thank Jim and his committee for their work. It is an excellent example of a small group in one geographical location accomplishing a tremendous task. We asked them to do this and they have fulfilled the requirements exceptionally well. I might make one further comment;

this will be brought up at the business meeting simply to ask your blessing and the Society will no longer be involved and, at that time, we will discharge the committee. From that point they may pursue it, but outside the Society's framework.

L. C. CHADWICK: At the present time what is the thinking as to the range of plant materials which would be handled?

JIM WELLS: I don't believe the committee has set any limitations at the moment.

L. C. CHADWICK: Would this then also include sports or only plants resulting from cross breeding?

JIM WELLS: I would say it would include any plant which is clearly distinctive and has merit.

MODERATOR FLEMER: And is stable.

JIM WELLS: Yes, it must be a stable plant.

LARRY CARVILLE: Was it envisioned that in the formative stages I.P.P.S. might subsidize your organization to get the ground work laid for it?

JIM WELLS: No, it did not; we had in mind soliciting, or we might in turn be solicited by people of sufficient interest and financial weight who would be prepared to support the concept by making an initial contribution or fee of, perhaps, \$500 per person, which would not be returnable. This is how we had hoped to obtain money in the beginning and the Foundation should be self-supporting relatively soon.

JOE CESARINI: Are you going to limit this to plant patents or are you going to extend it to the area of trademarks?

JIM WELLS: We did not consider trademarks; however, I see no reason why an originator should not trademark it, subject of course, to the rules of the Foundation.

PETE VERMEULEN: I would like to elaborate on the funding and trademark points. In our discussions we did consider income sources other than an initial contribution; we considered an annual dues of perhaps \$50 per year per individual. There would also be income from the plant introducer for registration and other required procedures. I also recall our discussing the areas of plant patent or trademarks which would be a cooperative agreement between the Foundation and the producer at such time as the plant is evaluated and considered worthy of introduction.

KEN REISCH: Do you envision that this would be an aid to the smaller introducer rather than the large firm that is currently investing many dollars into promotion and introduction of new plants?

JIM WELLS: We would hope that the Foundation would be worthwhile to both the small and the large producer.

KNOX HENRY: Would it be necessary for foreign companies to be members of this organization or would you arrange distribution through, for instance, our Canadian organization?

MODERATOR FLEMER: I think the distribution would be arranged through C.O.P.F. in order to get maximum distribution in Canada.

KNOX HENRY: Will it be necessary for originators to be members of the Foundation in order to utilize its services?

PETE VERMEULEN: I believe our thinking on this was that the originator would not have to become a member if he did not see fit. He would certainly be welcome to join and would be encouraged to do so, but by the payment of a registration fee for his plant he could submit it and have it evaluated by the committee. If the plant is subsequently selected it would once again be his option to join but he would not need to do so. The details do have to be refined, but to limit plant submission to members would thereby limit the number of plants submitted and it is the intention of the Foundation to test as many plants as is feasible. One further comment with respect to finances; in our committee meeting it was mentioned that it takes between \$25,000 and \$30,000 just to promote a new plant, so it is important that the Foundation have immediate funding.

JOE CESARINI: Will this be individual membership or firm membership?

JIM WELLS: It doesn't matter since we are interested in plants, not people. Whether they are submitted by an individual or a firm is inconsequential.

DAVE DUGAN: How long a testing period do you have in mind?

JIM WELLS: This will probably vary from plant to plant. Hopefully, we will have used our expertise in selecting the plant initially; the length of time that it may need to be tested would depend upon the kind of plant that it is. A tree might take as long as 10 to 12 years while an herbaceous plant might require only 1 or 2 years. Nothing would be done, however, until the plant was thoroughly tested and showed indications of being worthy of introduction.

LEN SAVELLA: How will you determine how much will be spent to promote a plant?

JIM WELLS: Once again I believe it will vary with the plant and it will vary with the media in which it is advertised.

OTTO TIMM: What is the difference between the Foundation and plant patenting?

JIM WELLS: They are complementary. Patenting is a part of the process we are proposing. We are primarily concerned with the production and promotion of the plant. Patenting the plant does not make a good plant nor does it put it on the market. We propose, first of

all, to find out if it is a good plant, then patent it, then finally promote it.

PAUL BOSLEY, SR.: I've had a great deal of parallel experience with American Rose Selections, plant patenting, etc. There are many problems which can arise in a program as extensive as the one you are envisioning. You mentioned the possibility of institutional materials which might be introduced; I think this might cause you some trouble because those institutional developments were paid for with tax dollars and, probably, can not be handled through a Foundation.

The All-American Rose Selections were well managed by good businessmen but recently they have been in near financial problems with the set-up they are using, which I feel would be hard to improve upon. Even though it is a well managed organization, there were many legal problems which arose as a result of plant patents. I would suggest that you start off on a less extensive scale; I think a good deal more study and thinking needs to be done.

KNOX HENRY: I am quite extensively involved in the Canadian Ornamental Plant Foundation and it appears that you are attempting to emulate some of our better ideas. During the past 5 or 6 years that the foundation has been operating in Canada we have not been without problems. Getting the organization off of the ground involved a lot of headaches, with conflicting interests and other problems involved. I think such an organization would work down here as well as it does in Canada. We do not have a plant patent act in Canada and are not obliged to pay royalty to anyone on plant material. Thus material in Canada is not protected but, as Canadian nurserymen, it is our intention to respect royalties or premiums that are due on plant material that has been originated by persons or companies. We are now introducing patented material into Canada through the offices of C.O.P.F. and royalties on this material will be paid to the originators in the United States or other countries. In Canada, universities and government research stations which introduce material, do so through C.O.P.F. and the royalties for these introductions are being turned back for research in Canada. I think such an organization can work and will work very well for you, and I wish you good luck.

JOHN ROLLER: How do you intend to go about policing your plant patents and trademarks?

JIM WELLS: We recognize that there will be problems and, if this organization operates as we intend it to, we will spend days in court. It would seem to me that one of the best protections we could have would be a name, trademark or some clearly defined identity which will sell the plant and which belongs to the Foundation. If someone suddenly appears with an identical plant you can take them to court but, even then, it isn't of so much value if they have to call it by, perhaps, 'Pink Cascade' while we sell ours under the name of 'Fire Glow'.

LEN SAVELLA: If an introducer feels the Foundation is not doing a satisfactory job of promoting his material could he cancel or retract his patent?

JIM WELLS: No, I wouldn't think so. A plant originator would present the plant to the Foundation, the Foundation would then critically evaluate it through the screening committee and, if they decide that the plant is worthy of introduction, then a contract would be drawn up which would bind both parties, and contracts are not readily broken.

Our time is just about up but before we leave I would like to ask that we have a show of hands, first by those of you who believe that the Foundation is a good idea, and then by those who are opposed to it. (Editor's note: The show of hands was overwhelmingly in favor of the Foundation. Only five hands indicating opposition to the Foundation). We are out of time but I would like to ask that those of you who are opposed to the Foundation make your feelings known either to the committee or, preferably, at the Business Meeting on Friday evening. I wish once again to thank the committee for their cooperation and you for listening.

MODERATOR FLEMER: We stand adjourned until 1:30 this afternoon.

THURSDAY AFTERNOON SESSION

December 2, 1971

The afternoon session convened at 1:30 p.m. in the West Ballroom. Mr. William Flemer III served as moderator.

MODERATOR FLEMER: We will begin this afternoon's session with a talk on new techniques for budding difficult plants, particularly with regard to shade and flowering trees. Many of our members are Hollanders; grafting is the main vegetative method used in Holland, while budding is a particularly American method of reproducing shade and flowering trees. Budding has reached its perfection both in speed and accuracy here in America and Harry Hopperton, who is an expert in budding, is going to tell us about some of the new techniques he is using. Harry.