

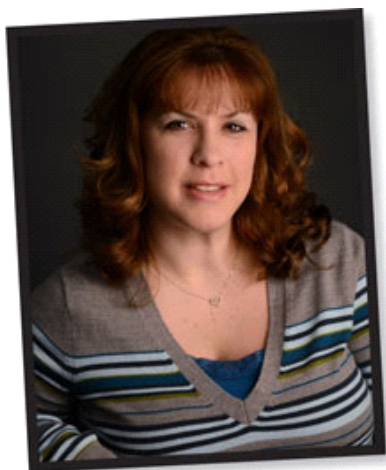
GROWERTALKS

Columns

1/31/2017

Miss Doesn't-Know-It-All

Jennifer Zurko



JENNIFER ZURKO

Being the planner that I am, for most of the articles I write, I start working on them weeks—sometimes months—in advance. And this month's cover story was no different.

Once we decided which articles were going in this issue and I knew I had to write one on mycorrhizae, I started my planning right before Christmas. Seriously! I've literally been working on this story for at least a month.

Now, I don't want you to think that I'm a slow worker or a procrastinator (I'm for sure not that!). When it comes to writing articles on topics that aren't in my wheelhouse, I take the extra effort to learn as much as I can about it. One of my worst fears (besides heights and spiders) is coming across like I know what I'm talking about when, really, it's plain that I'm totally clueless.

A piece of advice that Chris Beytes gave me when I first started at Ball Publishing was to never act or assume like you know it all. Ask a lot of questions, even if you think they're dumb or obvious. People will respect you more for it. An editor just starting out in this industry shouldn't go to one Spring Trials and pretend to know everything about the industry. (And yes—we know a couple who have done that.)

When I was talking to my sources for this month's cover story, I must have asked the same questions over and over. I mean, it's on mycorrhizae—I kind of knew what it was, but I didn't really know how to pronounce it, let alone speak with any knowledge on it. Thankfully, my experts helped me to better understand what it is, what it does and how it benefits the plants ... which also benefits you.

We also got a lot of help from other experts to offer you tons of info on topics that focus on our theme this month: fertilizer, irrigation and growing media. When I was working on the table of contents, I realized that almost all of our feature article contributors have Ph.Ds.

A few things from the doctors: Current and future thoughts on fertilizers by Dr. Neil Mattson; research trials on wood substrates by Dr. Brian Jackson; a primer on VPD by Dr. Jim Faust; maintaining water quality by Dr.

Dustin Meador; using low-volume sprayers with biopesticides by Dr. Michael Brownbridge; and how silicon can help fight leafminers by Dr. Danny Klittich.

I was going to put "Dr." in front of my name because I was feeling a little left out, but then thought that would be borderline coo-coo. Plus, next thing you know, people would start asking me to write a paper on mycorrhizae or to speak at grower events ... best to just stick to what I know. **GT**