

GROWERTALKS

GT in Brief

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1,000th Plug Puncher Sold to Morning Star

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In early September, *GrowerTalks* was invited to attend the official presentation of the 1,000th Plug Puncher machine ... and the lucky recipient was Morning Star Greenhouses in Spring, Texas.

Ann Longbotham, owner and founder of Morning Star, said this is the second Plug Puncher machine she's purchased for their facility. Their location right outside of Houston offers the ability to grow plants year

round—including the 120,000-plus flats Morning Star produces each year—so an extra Plug Puncher was well received by her greenhouse staff.

On hand for the unveiling of this “special” Plug Puncher (complete with unique metallic silver paint) was Randy Tagawa of Tagawa Greenhouses in Brighton, Colorado. Skip Blackmore originally developed the Plug Punching machine 25 years ago. “At the time, seed technology wasn’t that great, so the transplanter really came before the plug,” said Randy. “Since then, we’ve modified it to produce a larger seedling and made other enhancements to the system for us to use internally. We saw a huge advantage, and then we decided to make them for other growers to use.”

Ball Seed is the exclusive distributor of these systems, so Hardgoods Business Manager Dan McMahon was also there to help set up the new transplanter—which production managers Helen Linares and Marcus Longbotham couldn’t wait to use.

To see a video of the 1,000th Plug Puncher presentation and to hear more about the story behind how it came to be from Randy Tagawa, visit the *GrowerTalks* YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/growertalks.

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