

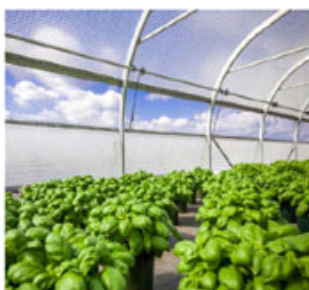
# GROWERTALKS

## GT in Brief

10/26/2012

### A New Poly Film Hits the U.S. Market

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Here's something you may have missed at OFA Short Course: The SolaWrap from JC Brighton. For the past 30 years, European growers have used the Polydress LP-Keder greenhouse film from German company RKW, but it wasn't available in the U.S. For the first time, JC Brighton—an importer and distributor of greenhouse coverings based in Kentucky—is introducing the film to the hort industry in America.

Named SolaWrap in the U.S., Steve Mercer of JC Brighton said growers got to see it for the first time at this year's OFA Short Course. On first glance, it looks like bubble wrap, but as Steve went on to explain the benefits, it's anything but the stuff you use to pack your china.

Comprised of one layer of 16 mil worth of polyethylene instead of a double layer of 6 mil, the honey-comb design captures energy and allows 83% of natural sunlight to diffuse throughout the greenhouse, eliminating "burn spots" and shadows. The diffused light scatters more evenly than direct sunlight does through traditional structure films and other materials. And not only do the air "burls" allow for the light diffusion, but they act as insulation, which can reduce the need to significantly increase temperature control because there's less heat loss, Steve said.

It's also easy to install. According to Steve, SolaWrap doesn't install like regular poly—you put it on crossways on a retractable curtain using the PVC KederLock System, which is currently awaiting a patent.

According to JC Brighton, the SolaWrap can last up to 25 years. Steve said that greenhouses in Europe still have the original covering after 25 years of use. And the SolaWrap withstood 25 years in the hot desert climate of a greenhouse in Kuwait, which was used as an experimental site for the product before the greenhouse was bombed during the recent war.

Steve said the reason why it took so long for the SolaWrap to make its debut in the States was because the product was passed from company to company four times during the last 30 years. It was also only available as a package with a greenhouse structure. JC Brighton "was in the right place at the right time," said Steve, and is now the sole distributor of SolaWrap in the U.S., which will come out of a production plant in Kentucky that RKW has purchased.

For more information about the SolaWrap, visit [www.jcbrighton.com](http://www.jcbrighton.com). **GT**