

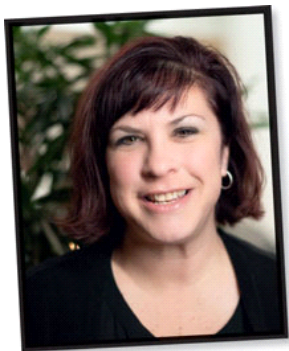
GROWERTALKS

Inside Look

4/1/2025

Taking Control of Uncertainty

Jennifer Zurko



JENNIFER ZURKO

The other night, Snapchat went down and with the way my 16-year-old daughter reacted you'd have thought the Four Horsemen were galloping down our street.

"I'm sure something's wrong with the app. Do you really need Snapchat right now?" I asked.

"Yes!!! How am I supposed to talk to my friends?!" said the teenage daughter, as she keened and pulled on her hair.

"Um ... why don't you just text them like regular people?" I asked, not taking this seriously enough.

"MOM! Nobody does that!"

Her first thought was that she got hacked, so I went on Threads to see if anyone posted about Snapchat being down, and lo and behold, the masses were asking if anyone else was having problems. Olivia had to go to bed without Snapchat, which was a tragedy, but at least she wasn't hacked. Silver linings.

I think what bothered her the most (besides not being able to talk to her friends the Gen Z way) was the uncertainty of what was happening. Once you don't know what's going on your mind goes in 20 different directions starting with, "What if ...?" Uncertainty makes you feel out of control of a situation and most of us do not like that feeling.

Friend and columnist Art Parkerson actually wrote his Growers Talk Business column this month about dealing with uncertainty. Art's words (along with the Snapchat outage kerfuffle) got me thinking that this is what we've focused on this issue, starting with Chris Beytes' cover story. We've done a lot of coverage on new growing facilities and all of the equipment that goes into them, but a lot of people are uncertain about what it actually costs to build a greenhouse. Chris asked a handful of experts and reported back.

When the state of California implemented new changes to their building codes two years ago, greenhouses were one of the things swept up into the mix with stricter regulations on energy use, which caused a lot of uncertainty for future builds. I checked in with Nadia "Dr. Greenhouse" Sabeh and Agra Tech's president and CEO Adam Pound to see how it's been going since those changes went into affect.

We also address the uncertainty—and what to do about it—on mum production, your irrigation system and redheaded flea beetles.

As a mother of a teenager, I'm often accused of not matching the same concern level as my daughter. I do truly try

to be sympathetic to her plights because I know to a 16-year-old everything is either at a 0 or a 10—there's no in between.

It's been a while, but I do remember being a teenage girl. I think one of the hardest parts of that age is constant uncertainty and those feelings that you're not totally in control. And that covered a wide range of things—school, friendships, your path in life. It's a tumultuous time.

Part of the problem is that when you're a teenager you think you know everything and you don't realize that you don't. As you grow into adulthood, you know more, but that uncertainty never really goes away. We just hope that we have better ways of coping with it and the knowledge to make the best choices that will offer us some semblance of the control we all want in our lives.

In this industry, we can be certain of one thing at least: our uncertainty about the weather. But at least we can take control in other ways, like with a well-thought-out contingency plan or creative marketing ideas. If anything, we can distract ourselves with Snapchat ... as long as it's working. **GT**