

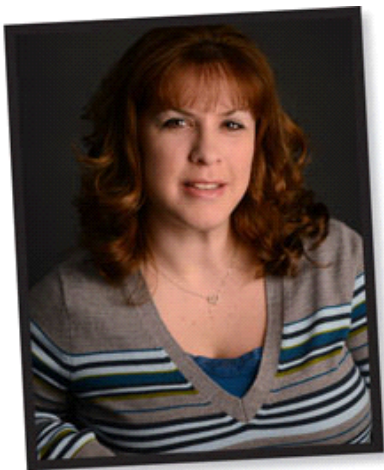
GROWERTALKS

Columns

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Keep That Grease Coming

Jennifer Zurko



JENNIFER ZURKO

Everyone's heard the saying, "The squeaky wheel gets the grease," which means that the most noticeable or talked-about problems get the most attention.

The origin of this particular saying is not really known, but many believe it came from a poem called "The Kicker" from the late 1800s. It went like this:

*"I hate to be a kicker,
I always long for peace,
But the wheel that does the squeaking,
Is the one that gets the grease."*

Think about the problems you have in your business—they range from small potatoes to huge issues, right? How do you know which ones to tackle first? By what can be resolved easily and quickly, of course, but also by the ones that get the most attention. Whether it's because of continuous complaints from your staff or because you're repeatedly dealing with it, or both, you know you have to take care of that squeaky wheel.

Could pest issues be put into the squeaky wheel category? You bet. If you're constantly dealing with insect and/or disease problems, you try to come up with new or improved ways to minimize those instances. If pest issues weren't a squeaky wheel, there wouldn't be workshops, conferences and educational sessions on them at every industry event.

April is our Pest Management Issue, so we've got tons of information to help you deal with bugs, mildew and more:

- Experts try to predict what you may see this year
- Preventing problems before they start
- Avoiding whiteflies on your poinsettias by dipping your cuttings first
- Building an agronomic prevention program

- New research on using fertilizers to control aphids
- Where to buy biocontrols

In other squeaky wheel news, Jen White—our resident sustainability/environmental expert—tackles the touchy subject of WOTUS regulations, better known as “Waters of the United States.” The new administration wants the EPA to revisit the Clean Water Rule and they should—it’s caused a lot of confusion for many businesses. But there’s also a lot of concern over complete de-regulation.

Also, I got to be one of the grease requesters at my first Congressional Action Days in March, which is a two-day event organized by the Society of American Florists. This was the 37th year in a row that SAF members came together in Washington, D.C., to meet with their local representatives to be sure they know the concerns of their small business constituents. Tax and immigration reform, plus a small increase for research funding, were the “wheels” we wanted them to hear loud and clear. Check out a few of the photos and read more about my experience.

Whatever your squeaky wheel happens to be, whether it’s in the greenhouse or with your local legislator, I hope that it soon becomes a well-oiled machine. **GT**