

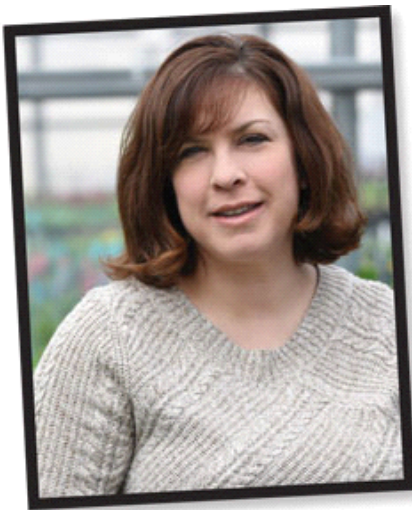
GROWERTALKS

Inside Look

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Finding Efficiency

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Every day, in almost everything you do, your goal is to be more efficient. You don't even realize that you're doing it or that you're striving toward it.

If you're like me, as you slowly stumble out of bed (I'm not an up-and-at-'em kind of person in the morning), you start thinking about all of the things you have to do that day, mentally cataloging them in order of importance, mixing personal and work tasks together for one long, comprehensive list.

Maybe I'm the only one who does that. But even if you're the type that doesn't even think about anything until you walk into the office, you're eventually faced with having to check off the things on the to-do list, regardless of your job.

And you want to accomplish those things in the most efficient way possible—which doesn't necessarily mean the fastest way possible. I've

found that, most times, efficiency takes some time investment, at least up front. Just ask the folks who've implemented Lean Flow in some aspect of their operation.

Efficiency takes some experimenting, some trial-and-error. But once you've got a system in place, what once was a burdensome task can become a smooth process.

Take our cover story, for instance—how do you decide if growing on benches or on floors is the best, most-efficient way to go for your operation? Bill Calkins digs into different aspects to think about, including labor considerations, crop types, energy and resource use, and space maximization.

The same goes for the Water by Weight system that I discussed with Dr. Will Healy (page 54). How do you decide when to water? And if you know the when, don't you want to know the why? Calculating how much your plants weigh before and after you water them can provide vital information that could help you save on labor and be more efficient.

What's the best, most-efficient way to reach out to your customers—spending the time and money to visit with them individually or holding an open house so that you can host all of them under your roof at the same time?

When I was trying to write this column, I actually scrapped it and started over twice. It may have taken more time to finish it, but it would have been far less efficient to force a thought that was going nowhere. Perhaps I can finally figure out a more efficient way to get my tookus out of bed in the morning when my first alarm goes off ... **GT**