GROWERTALKS

GT in Brief

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New Research Projects Funded by AFE for 2021-2022

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For 60 years, the American Floral Endowment's (AFE) research has provided generations of advances and will continue to do so, sharing knowledge that helps the industry grow stronger. In 2021-2022, AFE will support seven new research projects and six continuing projects totaling over $660,000 in funding from both the Endowment and the Thrips & Botrytis Research Fund.

"This research addresses industry-wide challenges and supports the continued advancement of floriculture. The findings from these projects will create new best practices, solve critical issues and increase both productivity and profitability for floral businesses," said Terril Nell, Ph.D., AFE Research Coordinator.

AFE's research projects focus on efficiency, labor-saving practices and improved crop quality while increasing overall industry profitability. AFE-funded university researchers work directly with industry members to understand challenges and critical needs. These researchers, along with the help of highly talented graduate students, continue to identify solutions and provide guidelines for all segments of the floral industry to prepare for our future in the present day. In many areas, AFE research has transformed industry practices resulting in costs and labor savings.

Newly funded projects for 2021-2022 include:

• **Advancing Nighttime Lighting to Control Flowering of Photoperiodic Floriculture Crops** (Qingwu Meng, University of Delaware)

• **Can Western Flower Thrips Be Managed in Commercial Greenhouses with UV Light?** (Bruce Parker, University of Vermont)

• **Engineering Floral Fragrance to New Heights Using a Synthetic Biology Approach** (Thomas Colquhoun, University of Florida)

• **Fluorescence Imaging: A Low-Cost Method for Early Stress Detection** (Marc Van Iersel, University of Georgia)

• **Optimizing the Efficacy of Beneficial Bacteria Against Botrytis Blight in Greenhouse Crops** (Michelle Jones, The Ohio State University)

• **Tulipalins: A Natural Fungicide for Cut Flowers from a Tulip Bulb Waste Stream** (Thomas Gianfagna,

Rutgers—The State University of New Jersey)

• **Using Sub-Zero Temperatures for Long-Term Storage of Cut Flowers** (John Dole, North Carolina State University)

To see a full list of AFE's currently funded projects, go to endowment.org/currently-funded-research. **GT**