GROWERTALKS

GT in Brief

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Drone School for Professional Horticulturists

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If you're a professional horticulturist in need of some training on the latest technology and regulations, then the University of Maryland is providing a training that you could certainly benefit from. The goal of the program is to provide information on practical use of drones in horticulture and how drones can be applied in horticultural crop systems.

In this entry level course, University of Maryland staff will cover the types of drones commonly used in agriculture, what's involved with obtaining a commercial drone pilot license, FAA requirements, insurance requirements and state pesticide certification process. Staff will show students how to map out an area for a drone application. Hands-on experience in flying small drones will be provided.

The use of drones in Integrated Pest Management (IPM) will also be a focus, with the goal of teaching participants how to progress towards greater efficiency, including pest and disease control, and plant stress management. It's economically vital for ornamental nursery operations to improve early detection of plant problems including insects, disease, nutrient deficiencies and water stress. Once a problem is identified, there's advanced and practical technology that can be adapted to greatly improve methods of applying control materials, including agro-chemicals and bio-pesticides.

This is a three-part training to be held in Maryland on July 28, August 4 and August 11, 2022. Due to demand, it's limited to one person per company and the first 16 people to sign up. Send an email to Sklick@umd.edu for sign-up information and a complete schedule. **GT**