



Greenhouse TPM/IPM Weekly Report
University of Maryland Cooperative Extension
Central Maryland Research and Education Center

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April 6, 2007

High Tunnel Conference and Tour
May 31, 2007

Montgomery County Extension Office, Derwood
Farmhouse Flowers and Plants, Brookeville
For more information:
301-596-9413

Chesapeake Green Interiorscape Conference
May 18, 2007

Brookside Gardens, Wheaton, Maryland
For more information:
410-823-8684

Cold Weather - Expect Damage

We had a great spring last year with little frost damage and dry weather every weekend. However, it looks like we are not going to get a repeat of 2006's 'Perfect Spring'. Just when we thought that we were out of the woods, the cold weather blew in this week. Temperatures in the upper 20's to low 30's are predicted for the weekend. Garden centers that have shipped in woody plant material with tender new growth emerging can expect some dieback to show up over the next couple of weeks. If you are unable to protect your outdoor plant material with row cover you may want to consider running the irrigation from midnight until 4 am to insulate plants with a layer of ice. Fortunately, most plants will recover but you can guarantee that your customers will forget about this cold snap and call you asking why their plant has dead leaves.

Petunias

Every spring we receive petunias with symptoms of iron deficiency, and this year is no exception. We had two samples in the lab this week with the interveinal chlorosis characteristic of iron deficiency. The iron deficiency was caused by high pH. Soil tests revealed a pH of 7.0, when the recommended range for petunias is 5.8-6.2. The group of plants labeled "iron-inefficient" are prone to iron deficiency. This group includes torenia, bacopa, calibrachoa, diascia, nemesia, pansy, petunia, snapdragon and vinca. These plants are best grown at a pH below 6.2 to increase



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solubility of micronutrients. This group is often misdiagnosed as a high feed or high iron group. They do not necessarily require higher rates of fertilizer or iron, but they are especially sensitive to high pH and need adequate iron. Check your soil pH and if it is high apply iron sulfate at 2 lbs/100 gallons and water into the soil. Wash off the foliage afterwards with clear water or otherwise the iron sulfate may burn the foliage.

Scouting Reports

IPM Scouts are finding scale on bay plants, mealybug on rosemary 'Forester', and *Botrytis* on annual rudbeckia 'Toto'.

Overfertilization on Snapdragons

We received pictures of snapdragons this week that had been heavily fertilized. The high nitrogen caused the flowers to stretch and the aphid population to explode. Recent high temperatures (above 90 °F) also contributed to these problems.

Honeydew and cast skins from the aphids are evident on the plants.

Control: Tristar (Actemiprid), Marathon (imidacloprid), Aria, Endeavour

