**CGE Speaker Bio’s**

**Levi Newswanger** – Levi and his wife, Jennifer operate Stonewall Greenhouse near Shippensburg, PA. , where they are a wholesale grower for C.V.P.A. In addition to their 34,000 Sq. Ft. greenhouse, they also grow 12 acres of produce. Two of their seven children, along with three employees, help them with spring annuals and pumpkins, mums, sweetcorn, field tomatoes and cauliflower.

**Elton Horning** – Along with his wife, Delores, six part time employees and several of his thirteen children, Elton operates a retail greenhouse. Located near Middleburg, Pa., Horning’s Greenhouse currently consists of 16,000 Sq. Ft. with another 10,000 under construction. Starting most of their plants from plugs, they grow annuals, vegetables, perennials and succulents. Horning’s also sells mulch and decorative stone, as well as shrubs, trees and concrete statuary.

**Wilmer Oberholtzer –** Located near Ephrata, Pa. Wilmer and Ella Mae Oberholtzer operate Farmstead Flowers in a 25,000 Sq. Ft. greenhouse. Along with 2 of their five children and ten employees, their main crop is bedding plants. Their Retail Greenhouse specializes in bedding plants, succulents, tropical plants and house plants.

**Janice Zimmerman** – Serenity Ridge Greenhouses, located near Ephrata, Pa., is operated by Janice, with a lot of support from her husband, Lloyd. They grow flowers, herbs, and veggie starts in their 10,000 Sq. Ft. Greenhouse. Along with the help of their two children and three or four employees, they manage the retail operation with an emphasis on quality and customer service.

**Earl Hurst** – Conestoga Nursery is a true “family business” that started over forty years ago near East Earl, Pa. Earl and Eileen currently operate the nursery garden center, along with many family members. In addition to their 20,000 Sq. Ft. Greenhouse, they grow shade and flowering trees, shrubs and perennials on twelve acres. Conestoga sells retail and also supplies a number of landscape contractors.

**Marian Fisher** – Along with her husband, Omar, Marian operates Sunny Spot Nursery, which is located near Ronks, Pa. Their 11,800 Sq. Ft. Greenhouse is open year-round, and they grow annuals, perennials, hanging baskets, vegetables, mums, succulents, and house plants. Omar and Marian are very family oriented, and have eight children, two of which help with the business, along with six employees.

**Nathaniel Burkholder** – Short Lane Farm, near Fleetwood, Pa. consists of sixty acres of produce, 6000 Sq. Ft. Greenhouse, and 80,000 Sq. Ft. Hy Tunnels. Nathaniel and Rebecca grow winter squash, asparagus, strawberries, tomatoes, cucumbers, onions, sweet corn, tomatoes, cauliflower, broccoli, brussels sprouts, and roma beans. Harvest workers are from Mexico, and great emphasis is placed on soil health and no-till practices. Some of their produce is sold at the auction next door and some through LVF Coop.

**Jesse Smucker** – Along with his wife Amanda, Jesse started a roadside market nine years ago under a small canopy. Today their market consists of a 1000 Sq/ Ft. building with lots of outside displays. Along with 28 part-time employees, they operate a 9,400 Sq Ft. Greenhouse, a 13,000 Sq. Ft. Hy Tunnel, and 28 acres of produce. 90% of the produce they grow is sold through their retail operation, Smucker’s Farm Market, which is located near Lancaster, Pa.

**Judson Reid** - Judson conducts research on cover crops in high tunnels and their contribution to soil health and crop yield. Judson began his agricultural experience working on his family's farm in Northern New York and studied at Cornell University.  He has worked with farmers throughout North and Central America on improving nutrient and pest management in vegetable crops.

**Matt Kohan** – Matt is the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture’s (PDA) Pesticide Certification Education Specialist. Matt is responsible for managing PA’s pesticide certification/licensing and Worker Protection Standard programs. Matt has been working with PDA for over ten years, first working as a field tech in the noxious weed program to spray and survey giant hogweed and goats rue, and then as an Agronomic Products Inspector working with feed, seed, fertilizer, lime, and pesticides.

**Ed Weaver** and his wife Anne own and operate Weaver’s Orchard Inc. This 3rd generation 141-acre Berks County farm is in Morgantown, Pa. and grows a variety of tree fruit, small fruits and vegetables. Most of the produce is direct marketed through the Farm Market and Pick Your Own. The wholesale division sells produce to a variety of farm markets and CSA businesses in southeast Pa. Weaver’s Orchard is well known for its award-winning apple cider Ed and Anne have 4 children and 9 grandchildren. Their two daughters work in the business. Janell, the oldest daughter and her husband plan to move into ownership, and are currently involved in management roles. Kim, their youngest daughter, is the Café manager. Weaver’s Orchard has a strong vision to provide opportunities for visitors to experience how fruit is grown through Pick Your Own, school tours, Read N Pick Storytime, and various other activities.

**Jesse Barrett -** Jesse spent over fifteen years as a high-volume kitchen and farm-to-table, fine-dining restaurant manager. His experiences as a restaurant manager led him to the realization that there were major flaws in how our food system operates. Passionate to make a change, Jesse is currently a Farm Innovations Team Specialist at Rodale Institute and looks forward to improving our local and national food system through regenerative organic agriculture. Most recently, Jesse has been training as a compost production specialist for Rodale Institute. This includes the management of the compost yard and maintaining the compost production in accordance with the National Organic Program standards.

**Tom Gunther** – Tom has been a part of Lucas Greenhouses for the past ten years, and he has a long history of horticulture experience with various organizations, including Walebe Farms and Gro-N-Sell. Tom contends that most of his experience comes from operating his own retail growing operation in Montgomery County for twenty-eight years, along with his wife and four daughters.

**Melvin King** – With the help of his wife and six children, Melvin owns and operates King’s Farm Market. Located near Leola, Pa., they grow strawberries, sweet corn, cut flowers and spring annuals.

**Daniel King** – Along with his wife and four children, Daniel operates Campus Ridge Farm Market near Elizabethtown, Pa. They grow strawberries, tomatoes, sweet corn, string beans and mums. All of their produce is sold through their retail farm market.

**Gideon Stoltzfus** – After years of operating a dairy and produce farm, Gid and his wife Barbie started Pequea Planter in 1977. More recently, two of Gid’s sons joined the business as partners. Since retiring from the business, Gid has a passion for helping young people to make wise financial decisions.

**Benuel Glick** – Benuel owns and operates State Line Flowers, a retail flower operation in York County. With the help of his wife, four children and his wife’s parents, they run 18,000 Sq. Ft. of Greenhouses and a large outdoor growing area. Benuel has a passion for passing along valuable information that has been passed on to him over the years.

**Amos Fisher** – Amos and his family started White Oak Nursery in 1988. The second generation is now involved in the Nursery and Farm Market. Along with fruit trees and grapes, they sell thousands of blueberry plants each year. They like to share helpful information about caring for blueberry plants.

**Henry Esh** – Henry and his wife Mary transitioned from dairy farming ten years ago and never looked back. In their early years they sold their produce at the auction, but they are now focused on increasing retail sales at their own farm stand. Henry has interest in using sea minerals in an effort to reduce usage of synthetic fertilizer and chemicals.

**Elwood Roberts** -  member of Griffin Greenhouse Supplies’ GGS Pro technical team, Elwood worked as an ornamentals grower for thirteen seasons, where he became an early adopter of the use of beneficial insects in the greenhouse. He returned to studies at the University of Rhode Island where he earned a Masters in Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems while working in the Biological Control Lab, a USDA approved Quarantine Facility. After graduation, he joined Biobest Group NV as a Biological Crop Specialist and participated as a member of the Biobest North America technical team and International Core Crop Groups.

**Jeff Stoltzfus** - Jeff has worked as a Farm Food Safety educator with Penn State since 2016. Prior to that he spent 23 years with the ELANCO school district as an adult ag educator working with vegetable and crop production, marketing, and eventually food safety in eastern Lancaster county. He lives on a small beef, vegetable and crop farm and grows an acre and a half of strawberries and 5 acres of pumpkins 95% of which are sold retail.

**Patrick Owens** - Pat Owens is currently the regional sales manager for Miller Chemical, though he has also worked as agronomist and as a territory manager for Miller. He received his bachelors degree in crops and soil sciences, and has advised both farmers and fertilizer/biostimulant companies since. Focusing on plant physiology and nutrition, Pat works to help growers overcome obstacles and grow consistent, high quality crops.

**Brecknock Orchards – Daryl Martin** leads the team at Brecknock Orchard as they serve others with the blessings of fruits and vegetables. He appreciates working alongside family and employees to provide an excellent customer experience. **Ben Martin** manages the retail team. He thrives on the challenge of developing new marketing opportunities such as: online sales, events, and perfecting personal and team interactions with customers. **Charity Martin** manages the production team. She works alongside the team to coordinate events that meet our goals of excellence, education, and efficiency. **Elizabeth Martin** focuses on team care and employee relations. She also teaches 3rd grade at Shalom Mennonite School. She enjoys the opportunity to support employees and assist them to provide excellent customer service.

**Dave Delbo –** Dave owns and operates Dave’s Flowers, a four acre specialty cut flower farm in Catawissa, Pa. Dave’s Flowers currently supplies over forty florists in a nine county

**Kenny Fetherolf –** Kenny is a seasoned designer and owner of Forget-Me-Not Florist. In Orwigsburg, Pa. For the past fifteen years, he has dedicated himself to creating stunning floral arrangements and providing exceptional service. Kenny’s passion for flowers and design continues to flourish making Forget-Me-Not Florist a beloved destination for all things floral.

**Dave Dowling** – Dave grew cut flowers in Montgomery County, Md. For twenty years. He sold his flowers at Famer’s Markets, to Florists, and Whole Foods. Dave now work for Ball Seed with the Ball ColorLink Sales Team, working behind the scenes with the Ball Seed Cut Flower Dept. Dave is a lifetime member of ASCFG and served as president for seven years.

**Dave & Sylvia Glick –** Since growing cut flowers since 1999, Dave & Slyvia established Pinewood and Posies in 2007 as a market stand in Delaware. In 2013 they switched to serving a growing demand for home delivered bouquets in the Lancaster area. In 2016 Dave left his career in construction to work full time at home as a flower farmer. Located near Paradise, Pa., the Glick’s operate a 7000 Sq. Ft. Greenhouse plus three acres, with the help of four of their six children and fifteen employees.

**Amos & Mary Stoltzfus -** Otter Hill Flowers, near Brogue, Pa. provides cut flowers for several flower shops plus a market in Philadelphia and York. Along with four of their six children and two employees, they operate a 6800 Sq. Ft. Greenhouse and a 5000 Sq. Ft. Hy Tunnel, plus a quarter acre of produce, some of which they sell at their stand at the end of their driveway.

**Michael & Rachel Esh –** Gables Run Acres is located near Kirkwood, Pa. and consists of twenty acres of produce, 16.192 Sq. Ft. Greenhouse and 8400 Sq. Ft Hy Tunnel. With four of their eight children and seven employees, they grow berries, onions, tomatoes, peppers, and flowers for the wholesale market at a coop and auction.

**William Schilder –** William grew up in the Netherlands in the bulb area and moved to America when he was twenty years old. For the past forty years William has been producing flower bulbs and perennials to garden centers and nurseries. Netherland Bulb Company is a leading supplier of quality flower bulbs.

**Chris & Rachel Stoltzfus –** Between 2019 and 2024, a tiny roadside stand with a few extra bouquets grew to a full-service flower shop, Fine Design Floral. This is where Chris & Rachel and a team of girls operate and design for walk-in customers, special events and weddings. Between 30 and 40% of the flowers are grown on the farm while the rest are purchased from neighboring farms and wholesalers. Their season runs from Valentines Day to Christmas.

**David Borkholder –** Along with his wife Miriam, their children and four employees, David operates Moonlit Waters Country Flowers, in Sigourney Iowa, The Borkholder family has joined with other families in the area to grow over 150 varieties of cut flowers for various florists. They produce six acres of cut flowers plus 6100 Sq. Ft. of heated Greenhouse and 29,000 Sq. Ft. of Hy Tunnel.

**Nelson Rohrer –** Along with his wife, Rose, Nelson grows four acres of flowers that they sell at Lancaster Central Market. Their belief is that to run a successful flower business, good quality is essential.

**Joni Davis –** Joni grew up on a farm in Colorado and studied Horticulture and Landscape Contracting at Penn State. Working in the Pennsylvania Office of Rural Health, Joni has a passion for helping growers to understand the rules and know how to stay within compliance.

**Will Brownback** is a 2nd generation Organic produce farmer in Perry County, PA.  He owns Spiral Path Farm, a 300 acre diversified Organic vegetable farm, and believes in building vibrant soils to enhance the flavor and nutritional content of his produce.  Alongside his family and 60+ employees, he grows, packs, and ships produce to local and regional outlets including Wegmans, CSA, and farmers markets.

**Chan Hood -** Chan has been with Michell’s since 1983, managing the greenhouse plant department in the home office. In 2002, he began his sales career in the central eastern Pennsylvania territory using his broad knowledge about vendors and greenhouse crops. Chan annually attends the California Spring Trials, the Michigan garden trails, Lucas Garden trials and is a member of the floriculture committee involved with the Penn State trial gardens.

**Dan Jacques -**Dan works for Sungro Soil, and will talk about which potting soil works best for different crops and situations.

**Carol Glenister -**Carol works for IPM Labs and will discuss creating habitat for your beneficials.

**Mike Deberti –** Mike is head grower for Mast Young Plants and will give a presentation on how to apply plant growth regulators via liner dip.

**Laura Robles –** Laura works for Walters Gardens and will talk about selling perennials with color.

**Dr. Saurav Das** is the director of the Farming Systems Trial at Rodale Institute in Kutztown, Pa. where he leads a study comparing organic and conventional agriculture. Dr. Das is dedicated to advancing sustainable farming practices through rigorous scientific research. His work emphasizes the role of soil health and the impact of different farming systems.

**Triple Tree Flowers** - with the help of six children and fourteen employees, Marcus & Ida King grow seven acres of cut flowers on their farm near Coatesville, Pa. They produce flowers year around for a market in Philadelphia.