PANELISTS & SPEAKERS

Andy Brown
Andy is now retired after 45 years with the Ball company and 38 years as a Ball sales representative covering parts of Pennsylvania, Maryland and West Virginia. He has been involved in the Penn State flower trials from the very first year and has been on the advisory board for the past 25 years. He currently resides in Harrisburg.

Chris Powell
Chris and Cindy Powell are proud owners of Good Harvest Farms, sustainably growing fruits, vegetables and flowers in Strasburg Pa. for the last 35 years. They specialize in providing fresh produce and hydroponic greens to the community. Dedicated to the true farm to table experience they love connecting with their customers at the Lancaster County Farmers Market in Wayne Pa.

Emanuel Fisher
Emanuel Fisher is the second-generation part owner of Lurgan Greenhouse in Orrstown Pa. Where he manages their mum crop. While briefly covering the planning, growing and selling aspect of mums, his presentation will also focus on how plant growth regulators and fertilizer can help get the most out of each variety.

Ethan Weber
Ethan and Janel started Sunny Meadows Garden Center in 2001. Located in Boonsboro Md. they started out with flowers , vegetables and added landscape supplies, trees and shrubs over the next 10 years. They are open year-round with up to 35 workers seasonally.

Gilles Mamane
Gilles Mamane has been involved in the plastic industry for over 25 years. During the past six years at Invera Flexibles (formerly PolyExpert) he has been crossing the country promoting regular and biodegradable mulch. He holds the profound belief that agricultural producers serve as the foundation of our society and merit our respect.

Kelly Vance
Kelly has worked in pest management since 1999, with experience in turf, landscape, greenhouse and biological pest control. He later served as Head Grower at a large wholesale nursery in Oregon where he implemented biological control programs across a wide range of greenhouse crops. Kelly joined Beneficial Insectary in 2016 based in Central Florida and serves the southeast region.

Marian Nolt
Marlin and Marian Nolt of M&M Greenhouse have been wholesale flower growers for over 30 years. They specialized in mixed hanging baskets and patio pots but have recently cut back on spring production and now focus on growing over 7 acres of garden mums and other fall ornamental crops.

Marshall Greene
Marshall is the fourth-generation owner and dedicated nursery manager at Primex Garden Center in Glenside Pa. As the woody plants buyer, Marshall is well attuned to current plant trends and is always looking for the next "it " plant. You can easily spot him in the nursery with his wide brimmed straw hat, eager to help and share his knowledge.

Troy Buehl
Troy has been a team member at Premier Tech since 1995. Located in Quakertown PA, Troy is responsible for technical support of Promix professional growing media. Troy assists customers with questions concerning crop production, fertilizer and water quality issues. He has written numerous articles in several greenhouse magazines and has given numerous presentations at trade organizations.

Seth Oberholtzer
Seth and his wife Janet own Pine View Greenhouse in Lebanon PA. Five children and 7 workers provide customer service in the 12,000 square ft. greenhouse. They are open year-round and love hosting workshops and events throughout the year.

Michelle Opela
Michelle is a Biological Solutions Adviser with Bioworks, supporting growers throughout the southeast with biological crop protection and pest management options. Before joining Bioworks she spent 12 years at Costa Farms where she managed IPM programs for ornamental production. She is passionate about helping growers develop effective and sustainable approaches to managing pests and diseases.

David Bower
David was born and raised on a dairy farm. He is married with four children. Still operating a dairy today with 120 A2 cows. They also sell A2 heifers. At age 15 they started landscaping which they continue to this day.

Luke Burkholder
Luke and Kathleen Burkholder from Shippensburg live on a 40-acre farm where they raise cantaloupes , watermelon, pumpkins and sweet corn. Early sweet corn is a big hit at the local produce auction and Luke is constantly pushing the limits in earliness and yield.

Steve Groff
Steve and his family farm two hundred acres of crops, pumpkins, hemp and heirloom tomatoes in Lancaster County Pa. Some of his fields have been continuously no tilled for over 40 years. For the past 20 years he has pursued how to make nutrient dense food a reality on his farm. He has written a book, " The Future Proof Farm: Changing Mindsets in a Changing World".

Judy Sharpton
Judy is the owner of Growing Places Marketing. She has provided store development services exclusively for independent garden centers and farm markets. She publishes a free monthly newsletter titled " Success Stories" that include retail insights from outside the garden center segment and case studies of real garden center successes. Judy operates a personal retreat at the edge of eighty-five acres of salt marsh in Savannah GA.

Levi Stoltzfus
Levi Stoltzfus grows a wide variety of produce crops pretty much year-round which he sells at the Oxford Produce Auction.

Tom Butzler
Tom is a Horticulture Extension Educator in Central PA. Tom has worked for 29 years with Extensions in North Carolina and Pennsylvania, with vegetable growers and green energy professionals in production and pest management.

Heather Grab
Heather is an Entomologist and Extension Specialist at Penn State, responsible for vegetables and small fruit. Her program focuses on applied research and provides evidence-based best management recommendations for economically important arthropods.

Tim Elkner
Tim is the Penn State horticulture extension educator in Lancaster County PA. His main areas of responsibility are commercial vegetables and fruit. He conducts applied research in vegetable and small fruit production at the Penn

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State Southeast Research and Extension Center, primarily in variety evaluations and pumpkin disease control.

Margaret Martin
Margaret and her husband Reuben own Maplewood Farm Market in Shippensburg Pa. They started selling produce in 1993 and slowly added products. Greenhouses came in 1999 and in 2008 opened their existing store and are open year-round. They raise annuals and hanging baskets and buy in perennials and houseplants and buy at the local produce auction with anything else they need. Their store consists of deli, bakery, fresh produce, gift items, bulk foods and grill where people can order ready-to-eat food.

Lloyd Shrock
Lloyd grew up on a diversified hog, dairy and crop farm which gradually transitioned to produce. In 2002 he was elected chairman of the Lincoln County Produce Auction where he is now manager. Lloyd is also lead trainer for FSMA and helps with the Food Safety Team.

Ammon Weaver
Ammon and Erma Weaver and 9 children live on the farm where Ammon grew up. cantaloupes, watermelons and pumpkins were their main crops. They added plasticulture strawberries 7 years ago. Currently growing 1.5 acres strawberries and 15 acres other produce.

Jonathon Martin
Jonathon Martin and family from Ephrata PA have been farming produce since 1993 and in 2007 put up 6 high tunnel tomato houses which quickly became 8. They have put in a lot of effort into producing high-quality produce for the local produce auction.

Steve Garman
Steve Garman and family are looking forward to the 30th anniversary of Briar Rose Greenhouse where they survived start up years, recessions and COVID years among other challenges. Steve's daily life consists of watering, disease and pest management and of course customer satisfaction. In his presentation you will get a look at the spring and summer seasons, a variety of fall crops and the ever-growing trend of winter containers and cut greens production.

Jennifer Hammer
Jennifer is the sales representative for Harris Seeds, serving customers throughout PA and northeast OH. With three years at Harris Seeds and six years elsewhere in the horticulture and agriculture industry, Jennifer enjoys building relationships with customers and helping them find the right solutions for their growing needs.

Rob Beets
For the past two decades Rob has worked with growers across the eastern US. Working with Nunhems, Syngenta currently as sale representative for Harris Seeds, He has a deep appreciation for the grower community. Rob lives in Middle Tennessee with his wife Jenny, son Parker and daughter Stella.

Amos Stoltzfus
Amos and Emma Stoltzfus own and operate Healthy Harvest. With 17 years of experience and the help of their family of 7 children and 2 sons-in-law, plus 5 additional employees, they currently raise 30 acres of organic produce with 2 acres being under hy-tunnels. The produce is all marketed through Lancaster Farm Fresh.

In addition to the produce they also raise and butcher around 100 pastured hogs annually, and also, with the help of 35 farm ponds in the community, market about 2000 pounds of large-mouthed bass per week. Their operation is located in Parkesburg, Pennsylvania.

Samuel Fisher
Samuel and Anna Mary Fisher, with their 4 children, operate Homestead Beehives on their 11 acres in central Pa. Their main occupation is beekeeping, selling nucs, treatment free queens, comb honey, liquid honey, pollen and propolis. They also manufacture and sell beehive supplies. They are located in Aaronsburg, Pennsylvania.

Jane's Flower Shop
At Jane's Flower Shop, Mary, along with her husband Christ and seven children, celebrate life's moments with cut flowers. Located in New Holland, Pa., they specialize in sending out daily orders of fresh, unique flower designs. They also operate a small retail shop and tend a small market stand on Saturdays.

Kelly Piccioni
Kelly is a Penn State Extension Coordinator specializing in Christmas trees, ornamentals, cut flowers, and specialty crops. She holds a BS in Ornamental Horticulture from Delaware Valley University and owns Events by Kelly's Florist, connecting education with industry experience.

Niki Irving
Niki is the farmer and florist of Flourish Flower Farm in Asheville, NC, where she designs for weddings and special events, hosts workshops on her farm and operates a roadside stand. Niki is the author of the best-selling book Growing Flowers: Everything You Need to Know About Planting, Tending, Harvesting and Arranging Beautiful Blooms. She serves on the board of the Association of Specialty Cut Flower Growers as the Southeast Regional Director.

Dave Dowling
Dave owned a cut flower farm in Montgomery County, Md for 20 years. Flowers were field grown seasonally, and in high tunnels and greenhouses year-round. Dave now works for Ball Seed behind the scenes to bring new cut flower items to the market. He is a lifetime member of the Association of Specialty Cut Flower Growers and served as ASCFG President for seven years.

Doug Ramer
Doug has been with Martin Appliance and Water for 45+ years, serving as HR Director/COO. Business development, interviewing potential employees, hiring, and building effective teams were a large part of his role. Doug has also served as Business Seminar Speaker, HR Workshop Instructor and Business Advisor for Anabaptist Financial. He will share his real-world experiences and explain what commitments are necessary to inspire employees to be their best.

Jessica Chase
Jessica is founder and lead florist of Sierra Flower Farm, a small-scale family farm in Northern Nevada. Together with her husband, Graham, and their two daughters, she has spent over a decade growing specialty cut flowers and building a business serving weddings, events, and wholesale customers.

Mannie King
Mannie and Susanna, along with their daughters and employees raise cut flowers on four acres of their ten acre farm, growing in fields, tunnels, and heated greenhouses with supplemental lighting. They sell their products at a market in Philadelphia, continuing a part of the family business that Mannie's parents began 21 years ago.