



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

2015 International Trials Conference

2015 International Trials Conference Announces Stops on Tour Scheduled for Wednesday, August 26 in Portland Area

Wilsonville, Oregon (July 9, 2015) – The International Trials Conference, held this year in Portland, Oregon, has announced its schedule of stops for this year's conference tour of area sites playing vital roles in plant research, testing, and production. The day long excursion takes place on the next to last day of the prestigious biennial conference held August 24- 27, 2015.

Tour stops include:

International Rose Test Garden

The International Rose Test Garden was founded in 1917 and is now the oldest publicly operated rose test garden in the United States. Operated by Portland Parks and Recreation, the 4.5 acre garden features several collections and annually evaluates hundreds of cultivars. It is one of 11 test sites for the American Garden Rose Selections as well as breeders such as Weeks Roses, Star Roses and David Austin Roses.

OSU North Willamette Research and Extension Center (NWREC)

NWREC serves growers in the northern Willamette Valley with research and education on the diverse crops of the region. The stop will focus on evaluations of woody plants including a multi-year evaluation of *Arctostaphylos* (manzanita) and the brand-new OAN woody plant research trial. The site includes the world-renowned OSU/USDA berry crop breeding and evaluation program and the OSU small farms program with trials of tomato and leek cultivars, over-wintering vegetables, and a trial modeling vegetable development with Crop Time.

Fessler's Nursery

With 550,000 square feet of enclosed greenhouse space, Fessler's specializes in bedding plants and annuals such as fuchsias, geraniums, and hanging baskets, as well as poinsettias and tropical foliage plants. Ongoing trials for 2015 include 900 pots including the Selecta North America vegetative annual line and the Ball FloraPlant vegetative line.

Terra Nova Nurseries

Terra Nova Nurseries is an innovative plant production company developing, introducing and producing new, hardy perennials for the international marketplace. The company has created a niche of premium perennials, the majority unavailable at any other nursery in the world. Visitors will see ongoing evaluations of a wide array of perennials and shrubs, including selections of *Coreopsis*, *Dicentra*, *Echinacea*, *Nepeta*, *Tiarella*, *Tradescantia*, *Heuchera* and *Heucherella*, among others.

Swan Island Dahlias

In business over 88 years, Swan Island is the largest dahlia grower in the United States. Over 360 cultivars are grown over 40 acres for both retail mail order and wholesale customers. In addition, the company hybridizes its own cultivars, planting over 10,000 seedlings each year and introducing 5 to 15 new cultivars each season. The tour will visit the farm in peak flowering season.

The International Trials Conference dovetails into the 2015 Farwest Show, scheduled for August 27-29. The trials conference, attended by plant professionals and industry leaders from around the world, convenes biannually to share ideas on evaluation strategies, develop trialing standards, and explore the plant characteristics demanded by plant buyers and growers. Its ongoing mission is to encourage the creation of universal evaluation criteria and collaboration among plant trial locations, resulting in more meaningful trial data.

Over the course of four days, industry experts with first hand perspectives will cover a range of plant trialing topics touching on trial gardens, data collection, edibles breeding, quality issues, trials in Asia, trial impacts on plant marketing, and more. A complete list of schedules, speakers, and topics is available at www.FarwestShow.com. In addition to the speakers agenda, the Conference includes an opening reception, tours of area nurseries and trial sites, and educational sessions.

“Visiting trial sites is a very important part of continuing education for all horticulturists,” said Diane Blazek, Executive Director All-America Selections (National Plant Trials Database). “As much as we’d like to think we know about current market varieties, there are always new introductions and seeing them side-by-side in trials is the only way to really judge which one is best for you or your business’ purpose.”

The tour and conference is open to all industry professionals who have interest in plant trialing. Registration is required and available at www.farwestshow.com/trials. For questions and immediate information, email TrialsConference@oan.org. High-visibility corporate sponsorship packages are available to support the 2015 International Trials Conference. Contact Allan Niemi at Farwest, aniemi@oan.org, for details.

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The Oregon Association of Nurseries (OAN), based in Wilsonville, represents more than 900 wholesale growers, retailers, landscapers and suppliers. Oregon’s ornamental horticulture industry is the state’s largest agricultural commodity, with annual sales of \$745 million. Oregon’s nursery industry is a traded sector; nearly 75 percent of the nursery plants grown in Oregon are shipped out of state. For information, visit www.oan.org or call 503-682-5089.

The Farwest Show, the largest green industry show in the West, is produced by the OAN, a trade organization that represents and serves the interests of the ornamental horticulture industry. Any revenue realized by the OAN is reinvested into the industry through education, research, marketing support and government relations. For more information about the 2015 Farwest Show, visit www.FarwestShow.com or call 503-682-5089.

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