

British Bedding & Pot Plant Association

Agriculture House Knightsbridge London SWIK 7NJ

Tel No: 071-235 5077 Fax: 071-235 3526

Secretary: Jane Connor

CHANGE OF ADDRESS
Please note that from 1 September 1992
British Bedding & Pot Plant Association will be located at 22 LONG ACRE, LONDON WC2E 9LY
Telephone No: as shown left Fax No: 071-331 7382
with the extra telephone number
071-331 7200

The Telex No & Service is discontinued.

Dear Grower

THE FUTURE OF THE BEDDING AND POTPLANT INDUSTRY

You will probably have seen from press reports that the British Bedding and Potplant Association is investigating the possibility of setting up a central extension unit to strengthen the links between Research & Development and the Industry, and to provide total information and advisory services specifically for bedding and potplant growers. This service will be available to <u>all</u> growers at a very competitive price, but it is planned to offer advantageous terms to members of the BBPA and to Horticultural Development Council Levy payers.

The reduction in Government funding of Research & Development in the commercial horticulture sector contrasts with the efforts made in countries exporting to the UK who have aggressively developed the production of specialist crops and have, in many cases, almost totally eroded the traditional growing of these crops in the UK.

The aim is to provide and maintain the highest standards of Research and Advisory services that the bedding and potplant industry can afford. This is absolutely vital to ensure that British growers have the level of support at their disposal to enable them to continue to produce products of unchallenged quality.

At this stage the BBPA needs to accurately assess the requirements of bedding and potplant growers for information and advice. With the object of determining, this the Horticultural Development Council have agreed to fund this survey.

Therefore your co-operation in completing the questionnaire will be most valued, since the greater the response the more positive the conclusions, which could concern the well-being of your individual interests as well as the industry as a whole.

Yours sincerely

Maidolm Joyce CHAIRMAN PROPRESE TO STREET STORY

NOTES FOR YOUR GUIDANCE

Please make your contribution by giving careful consideration to the completion of this questionnaire.

If you strongly agree put a tick in box number '5'.

If you strongly disagree put a tick in box number '1'.

If your feelings are somewhere in between, put a tick in a box between '1' and '5' which reflects the strength of your feeling.

It is important to us to have your opinion on the items covered. The questionnaire is totally anonymous and once information has been processed individual forms will be destroyed. A summary of the major findings will ultimately be made available, via the media/trade press.

Please seal and return the completed questionnaire in the envelope provided, on or before the 28th October 1992.

Thank you for your time and your help.

	GROWER SERVICES STUDY		I	PAG	E 1	
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2.	MANAGEMENT					
	My business would benefit from professional advice / specialist services in the following areas:-					
2a.	General Management					
2b.	Accounting / Cost Control					
2c.	Marketing / Promotional Material					
2d.	Distribution) afference of the second			
2e.	Training					

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3b.	Disease Prevention / Control	İ				
3c.	Compost / Growing Media			:		
] 3d.	Water Management					
] 3e.	Environmental Matters					
] 3f.	Marketing			·		
4.	INFORMATION / SERVICES					
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4b.	Direct access to information / services via fax / computer / telephone would be beneficial to my business.		3	:		
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1 d.	Training and Seminars specific to this sector would benefit my business.					
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	GROWER SERVICES S	TUDY	Page 3
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5.	TURNOVER		
	Please indicate which of the followith regards to turnover in tray	wing categories represen bedding and pot plants.	it your organisation
	(£s in thousands)		
	£0 - 100		
	£100 - 300		
	£300 - and over	·	
6.	COMMENTS		
	Please add any comments which your specific requirements.	you believe would be of h	nelp in establishing
	Thank you for completeing this treated with complete confident In order to facilitate the feedback below. (in block capitals)	iality and destroyed once	analysed.
	COMPANY NAME:		••••
	DATE:		••••••
 	COMPLETED BY:		•••••
•	POSITION IN COMPANY:		
:	Please return in the envelope pr	ovided to P.O. Box Telfor	rd by 28.10.92.

TOTAL

BUSINESS

IMPROVEMENT LTD

Valley Business Centre, 67 Church Rd, Newtownabbey, Co. Antrim BT 36 7LS. Tel. (0232) 365356 Fax: (0232) 851791

GROWER SERVICES STUDY

CARRIED OUT ON BEHALF OF

CONTENTS

- 1. PREFACE
- 2. OBJECTIVES
- 3. METHODOLOGY
- 4. GRAPHIC ILLUSTRATION & ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS
- 5. GROWERS COMMENTS
- 6. APPENDICES:
 - QUESTIONNAIRE
 - LIST OF RESPONDENTS

PREFACE

The overall impression gained from the British Bedding & Pot Plant Association Grower Services Study, is that of a group of growers who are generally enthusiastic with regard to utilising the services of a Central Information and Advisory Body, who will develop, implement and maintain suitable strategies to improve the quality of services offered.

They need an Information and Advisory Service with an effective communication strategy and operation at an affordable cost.

If such a system were developed there needs to be a planned approach to promote awareness of the benefits of this service.

GROWER SERVICES STUDY

OBJECTIVES:

- 1. To determine the level of grower satisfaction with current information and advisory services.
- 2. To assess the requirements of Bedding and Pot Plant Growers for information and advice.
- 3. To provide objective evidence regarding the need for developing a specialist advisory service to Bedding & Pot Plant Growers.



THE PROCEDURE

QUESTIONNAIRE FORMAT

The questionnaire style and format was agreed between B.B.P.P.A. and TBILTD.

CONTACT METHOD

A market research survey was carried out by means of a postal questionnaire.

SAMPLE UNIT

Members / non-members of the British Bedding & Pot Plant Association in three geographically defined areas and in three company sizes defined by turnover in £'s - thousands.

SAMPLE SIZE

Twelve hundred and eleven people/organisations were contacted by means of a postal questionnaire.

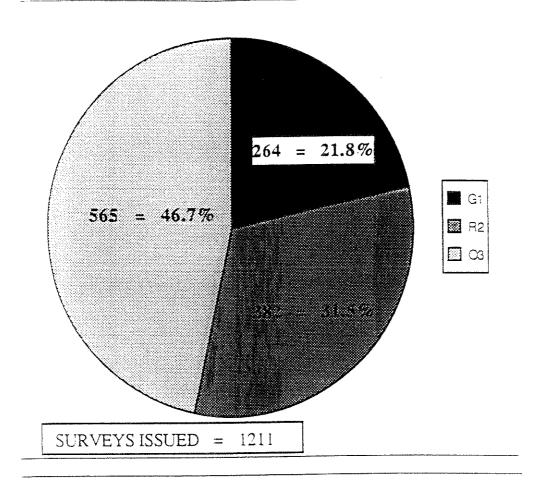
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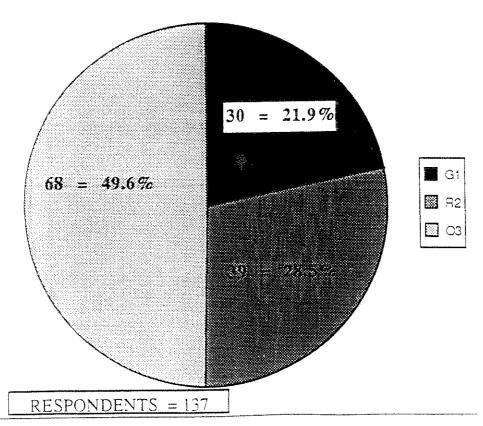
Surveys were returned to a P.O. Box In Telford and forwarded to TBI LTD for analysis.

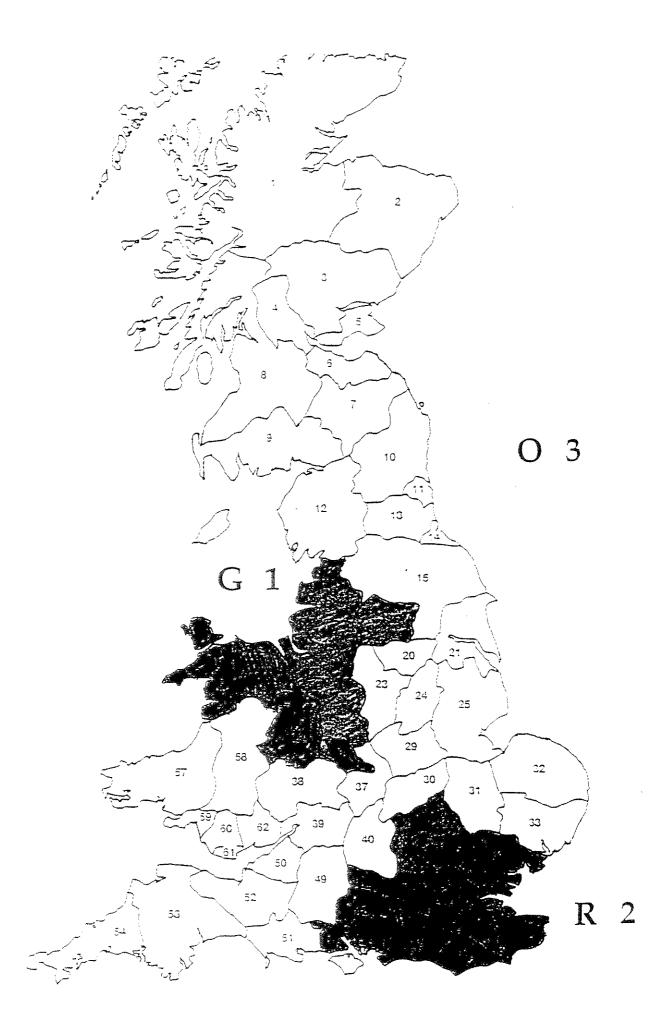
SCOPE

To provide consolidated results only at this stage. If requested survey findings can be analysed according to geographical areas or company size and the survey is designed to facilitate this requirement.

GROWER SERVICES STUDY







GROWER SERVICES STUDY

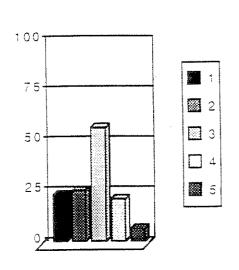
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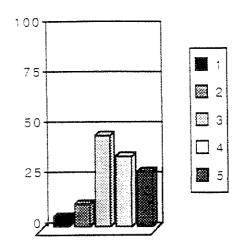
- GENERAL
- MANAGEMENT
- PROBLEM SOLVING
- INFORMATION/ SERVICES
- TURNOVER
- COMMENTS

GRAPHIC ILLUSTRATIONS AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

GROWER SERVICES STUDY - CONSOLIDATED RESULTS

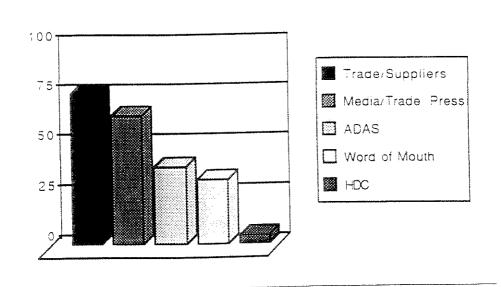
SECTION 1 - GENERAL





1a. The current advisory services meet my business needs.

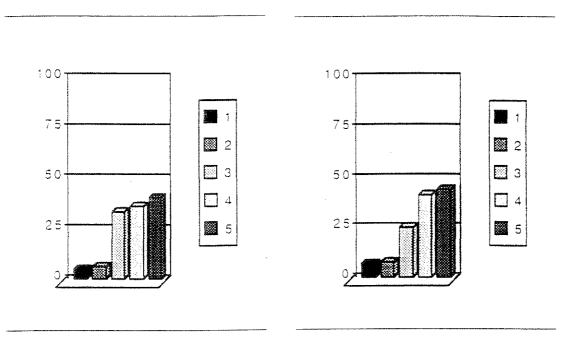
lb. I feel that the information provided from various sources is useful to my business.



Ic. I receive most of my information from:-

GROWER SERVICES STUDY - CONSOLIDATED RESULTS

SECTION 1 - GENERAL

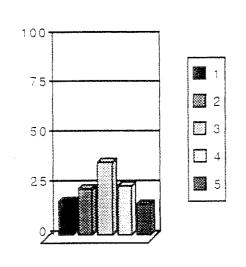


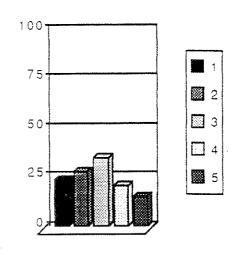
- ld. My business would benefit from an improved specialist advisory service.
- le. If this service was provided from a new source I would consider using it.

GROWER SERVICES STUDY - CONSOLIDATED RESULTS

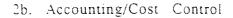
SECTION 2 - MANAGEMENT

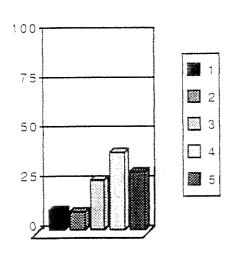
2. My business would benefit from professional advice/specialist services in the following areas:-

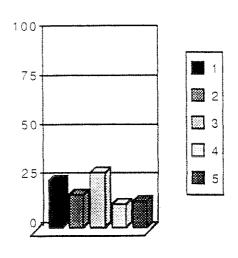




2a. General Management







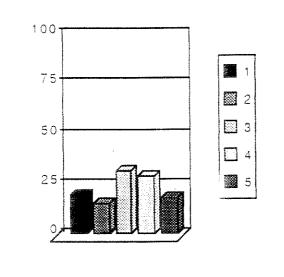
2c. Marketing/Promotional Material

2d. Distribution

BRITISH BEDDING & POT PLANT ASSOCIATION GROWER SERVICES STUDY - CONSOLIDATED RESULTS

SECTION 2 - MANAGEMENT

2. My business would benefit from professional advice/specialist services in the following areas:-

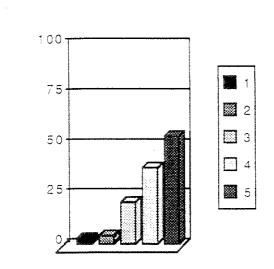


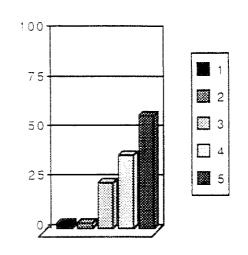
2e. Training

GROWER SERVICES STUDY - CONSOLIDATED RESULTS

SECTION 3 - PROBLEM SOLVING

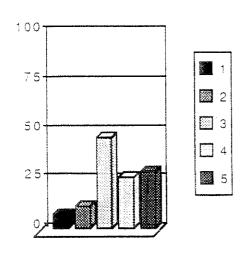
3. My business would benefit from improved advice/specialist services in the following areas:-





3a. Pest Control

3b. Disease Prevention/Control



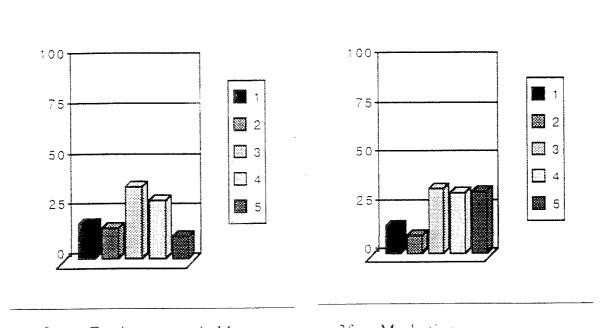
3c. Compost/Growing Media

3d. Water Management

BRITISH BEDDING & POT PLANT ASSOCIATION GROWER SERVICES STUDY - CONSOLIDATED RESULTS

SECTION 3 - PROBLEM SOLVING

3. My business would benefit from improved advice/specialist services in the following areas:-

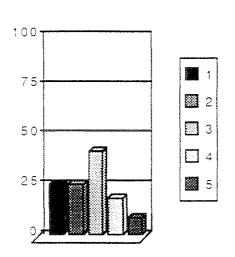


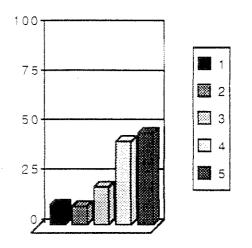
3e. Environmental Matters

3f. Marketing

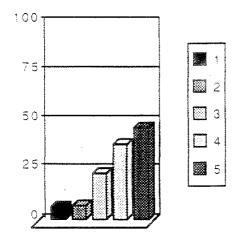
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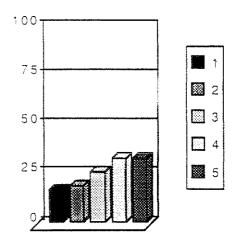
SECTION 4 - INFORMATION / SERVICES





- 4a. Information on research & development reaches me speedily and efficiently.
- 4b. Direct access to information/ services via fax/computer/phone would be beneficial to my business.

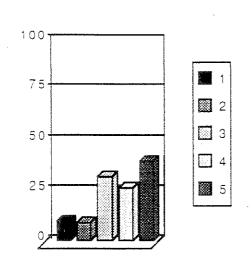




- 4c. I would use this information via fax/computer/phone from a new source if available.
- 4d. Training & Seminars specific to this sector would benefit my business.

BRITISH BEDDING & POT PLANT ASSOCIATION GROWER SERVICES STUDY - CONSOLIDATED RESULTS

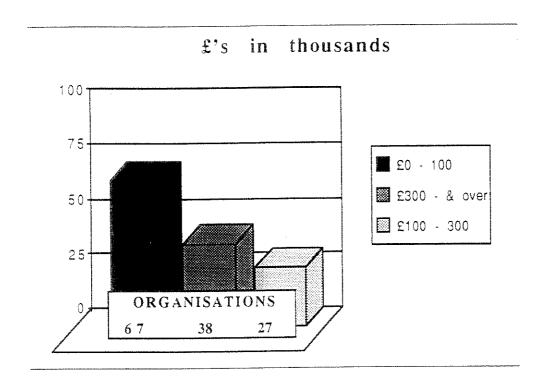
SECTION 4 - INFORMATION / SERVICES



4e. I would benefit from the availability of marketing/promotional material.

BRITISH BEDDING & POT PLANT ASSOCIATION GROWER SERVICES STUDY - CONSOLIDATED RESULTS

SECTION 5 - TURNOVER



5. Please indicate which of the following categories represent your organisation with regards to turnover in tray bedding & pot plants.

GROWER SERVICES STUDY

SECTION 1 - GENERAL

It would appear from the responses to this section that growers fall into three categories - satisfied, indecisive or dissatisfied - with current advisory services as they relate to existing and future business needs.

Respondents indicate an appreciation for the dissemination of information and value the applicability to company/organisational needs. However there are growers who may be questioning the relevancy of current information to specific business needs.

Sources of information to growers is mainly provided by non-advisory bodies i.e. Trade/Suppliers and Media/Trade Press with ADAS and Word of Mouth having a lesser but still significant role in the communication process.

It is quite clear that the majority of respondents are strongly in favour of an improved specialist advisory service. Although it is apparent that there needs to be an awareness promoted by B.B.P.P.A regarding the benefits of this service.

SECTION 2 - MANAGEMENT

It is clear that if professional advice/specialist services were offered in each of the specified areas of management, there would be growers interested in availing themselves of this facility.

Growers have expressed a strong preference for support and advice in Marketing & Promotional Material.

SECTION 3 - PROBLEM-SOLVING

Although advice would be beneficial in all areas of Production Management and Technical Control, strong interest has been shown in the specific areas of Pest Control and Disease Prevention/Control.

The area of marketing has been identified as a service which would considerably benefit growers.

SECTION 4 - INFORMATION - SERVICES

There is a high degree of dissatisfaction amongst growers with the way in which information is dispatched to them. Their perceptions would suggest that information is not processed competently or efficiently and would indicate a need for the implementation of effective communication systems.

Respondents are strongly in favour of having direct access to information via fax / computer / telephone / and express interest in the use of a new information service if available.

Although there are growers who demonstrate a positive interest and commitment to the continuous up-dating of knowledge and techniques and would most likely avail of training programmes if provided. There are those however who require encouragement and direction regarding the benefits of knowledge and advice to business activities.

Preferences are strongly in favour for the provision of a service aimed at helping growers to market their products with the aid of promotional material.

SECTION 5 - TURNOVER

Over half the respondents represent small companies with the remainder of growers divided between medium and large companies.

The results generated by this survey in relation to company size as defined by \pounds 's in thousands, is very significant and has implications for post-survey follow-up.



GROWER SERVICES STUDY

SUMMARY OF QUESTIONNAIRE COMMENTS

32.12% of respondents took the opportunity to respond with personal comments at the end of the grower survey services study.

This should be seen in a positive light as it provides considerable insight with regard to the views and values of growers generally, country wide.

KEY ISSUES:

* COST OF SERVICE

* QUALITY SERVICE

* CUSTOMER ORIENTATED

* AVAILABILITY AND DELIVERY OF SERVICE

Specific Requirements:

Growers have requested help in the following areas:-

- * Marketing & Promotional material:-
 - Industry Wide
 - Company Orientated
- * Information on:-
 - Pest Control
 - Disease Prevention
 - P&D
 - Off label approval of relevant chemicals
 - Plug production techniques
 - Handling systems in nursery for box / pot movement
 - Factors of Growth Control
 - Legal developments, tax pitfalls
- * Training

GENERAL COMMENTS

The greatest need in the future is the promotion of bedding plants nationwide - a painless method of raising the funds for doing this should be exercising the minds of B.B.P.P.A.

Professional advice services would be a great asset to the industry and would compliment Scottish Agricultural Colleges.

I am a relatively small Producer of bedding plants but for the last few years this sector has been buoyant therefore anything that helps me to be more efficient is of interest. I suppose it all comes back to value for money. We have always had a good relationship with ADAS but with retirements of key field officers I fear we will not be so well served in the future.

We grow and retail a very wide range but in such small quantities it would not be economically viable to purchase advice on any one item.

A reduction in added costs of service, i.e., ADAS charge, HDC, NFU, Plant Passport.

We find that in our area whether we use the latest methods or present the newest plants, our customers are still completely mystified. They buy and do what the television tells them whether the programme is shown in season or out. Lack of education in our schools is our main problem.

At the moment we keep paying out for research and advice with very little return seen for the cost involved.

Any advisory service would have to be cost-effective.

If membership subscriptions are kept low more small growers would join and this would be to everyone's advantage.

Thought should be given to purchasing units of both R &D and advisory time from ADAS. The energies and skills of the individuals allocated to B.B.P.P.A. members would be secured without duplicating overheads while still leaving growers with access to the totality of ADAS skills and services.

As I am only a small grower I have never been a member of B.B.P.P.A.. I would be willing to become a member if there was more help to members like myself.

ADAS should be made to work at an affordable cost and strong representation to government made. Alternative research is fine but at what cost.

An Advisory Service will increase the membership and provide a better service for the members.

Advice would be helpful, but on a small scale it would need to be fairly cheap or available in selective "chunks."

A simple reliable and most up-to-date source of information if specific to bedding & pot plant production would make funding correct and potentially profit making information a lot easier.

I have found that ADAS have been very good in the past. I also get a lot of help from suppliers.

The most helpful way of improving advisory services would be to give support to ADAS rather than go to the expense of duplicating resources.

Our business is a 1.5 person specialist growers of fuschia and cannot afford time off to gain expert knowledge and keep up with new ways.

As a college with a small production unit our requirements would be served best by a low cost technical / research update service.

As our area of production requires specialist knowledge which we already possess it is unlikely that a general horticultural advisory service would assist us in the horticultural aspect of our business. The Agricultural Training Board already provide adequate training. Whilst marketing / promotional advice might be useful, our present advertising is very cost-effective and any significant increase in our advertising budget would not be possible in the current economic climate.

As a small grower I feel that the cost of any service is an over-riding factor.

Any new service must be value for money if it is to succeed.

As a member of B.B.P.P.A. and a levy payer of HDC, I don't consider any extra charges should be considered. If all were included in paying, this new service could be offered free even the possibility of a reduced levy might be considered. I consider too few are paying too much.

Someone on the end of a phone that knows what he/she is talking about, or a speedy reply.

SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS

Regular affordable visits to the nursery by competent specialist advisors able to earn their fees through results.

Factors of growth control.

Handling systems in nursery for box/pot movement.

Promotional material for plants sold green.

Educational material for release to green.

Sub group to concentrate on the problems of hanging baskets.

What we need is expert assistance from completely outside the industry to teach us how to sell well.

We are satisfied with our present advice but would value help on the marketing side.

I am interested in specialised plug production techniques as I am thinking of setting this up in the near future.

We need more research in the control of pests and diseases and the marketing of our produce. Our industry should put a great deal more into marketing to attain greater public awareness.

Rapid response to problems, i.e. P.&.D. off - label approved of relevant chemicals.

Any service that is fast i.e. pest control.

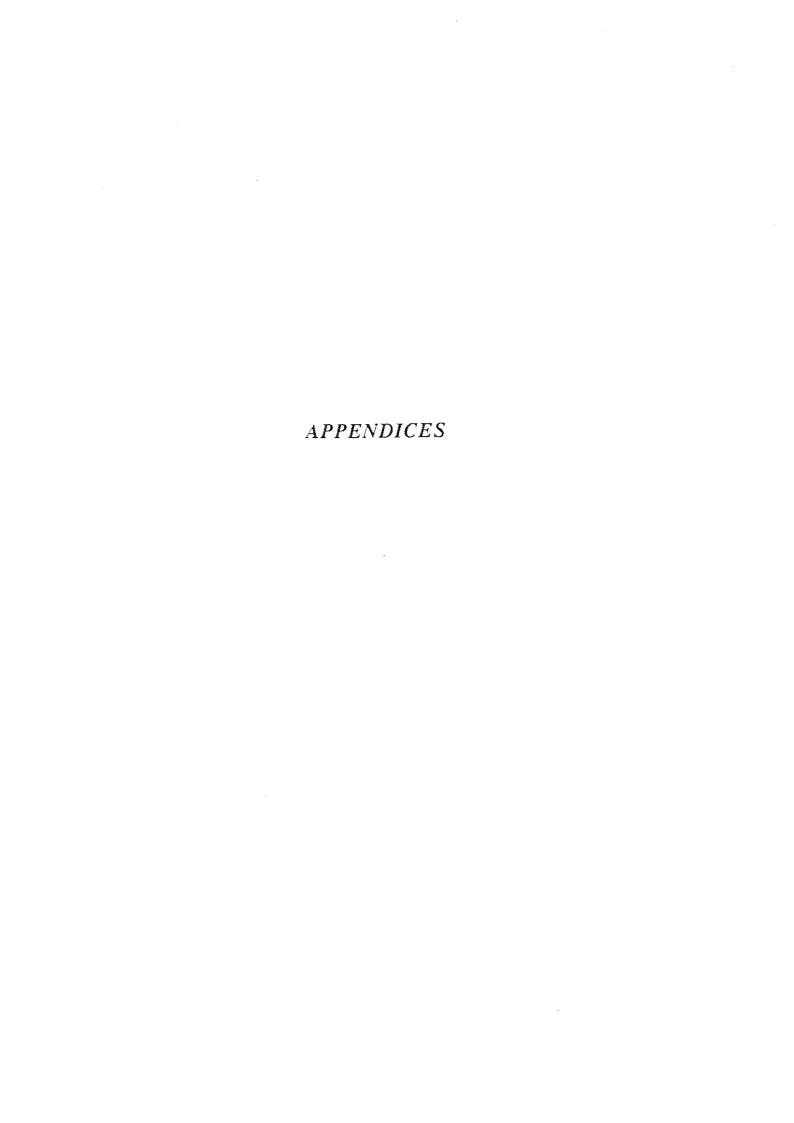
Legal developments, tax pitfalls.

A register of imported plant material so that as a grower I could approach a company who buys in finished plants from abroad to offer them a "British" alternative.

It would be nice to have seminars etc. in South Wales. If you are a small business it can be very difficult to travel to London.

OUTLINE OF RECOMMENDATIONS

- * ADVISORY SERVICE IS REQUIRED
- * POST -SURVEY FOLLOW UP
- * LEADERSHIP
- * POLICY & OBJECTIVES
- * RESOURCES



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	with regards to turnover in tray (£s in thousands) £0 - 100	bedding and pot pl	ants.
	£100 - 300 £300 - and over		
	3500 - and over		
6.	COMMENTS		
	Please add any comments which your specific requirements.	you believe would	be of help in establishing
	Thank you for completeing this treated with complete confident In order to facilitate the feedback below. (in block capitals)	iality and destroyed	i once analysed.
	COMPANY NAME:		
	DATE:	***************************************	
	COMPLETED BY:		
	POSITION IN COMPANY:		
	Please return in the envelope pr	ovided to P.O. Box	Telford by 28.10.92.

LIST OF RESPONDENTS

TO THE

GROWER SERVICES STUDY

(1	of	4)

 R.H. Higgs & Son
--

- 2. John Housby
- 3. R & M Simkin (Essington Fruit Farm)
- 4. W. Robinson & Sons
- 5. Foster Nurseries Ltd
- 6. Ashwood Nurseries
- 7. Ridgeway Nurseries
- 8. E.B. Cookson & Son Ltd
- 9. Cannock Chase Council
- 10. J.R. Jackson & Son
- 11. Eastwick Plant centre
- 12. C. Piper & Sons Ltd
- 13. W.J. Hartley & Son
- 14. Dove cote Nurseries
- 15. Peter Eastwood Plants Ltd
- 16. Fountain Place Nurseries
- 17. Cheshire View Nursery
- 18. Gordon Rigg (Nurseries) Ltd
- 19. Carwood Nurseries
- 20. Burton Nurseries
- 21. Baginton Nurseries
- 22. Newcroft Nurseries
- 23. Four Oaks Nurseries Ltd
- 24. A Wright & Sons
- 25. B Crosby's
- 26. Rvedale Nurseries
- 27. Lomax Nurseries
- 28. Bourne End Nurseries & Garden Centre
- 29. Newlands Nursery
- 30. Great Gardens of England

LIST OF RESPONDENTS (cont. - 2 of 4)

- 31. W.R. Cox Ltd
- 32. Bracknell Forest Borough Council
- 33. W.D. Smith & Son
- 34. V.R. Ashby
- 35. Rolts Bedding Plants Ltd
- 36. Barrs Bedding Plants Ltd
- 37. CBE Nurseries
- 38. Bartrop Brothers
- 39. London Borough Harrow Cannon Lane Nursery
- 40. Elite Garden Nursery
- 41. Layer Marney Nurseries
- 42. Stourton Nursery
- 43. High grove Nursery
- 44. A.P. Elite Plants
- 45. Woodlea Nurseries
- 46. Burston Nurseries Ltd
- 47. Briarwood Nurseries Ltd
- 48. Ditton Cottage Nursery
- 49. Shantock Nurseries
- 50. L.Brooles
- 51. Paddock Nurseries
- 52. Summerfield Nurseries
- 53. Helmut Gimmler Ltd
- 54. Cottage garden Plants
- 55. Newington Nurseries
- 56. J.E. Archard
- 57. Kathin Oak Nursery
- 58. Henry Street
- 59. Flowers Green Farm Nursery
- 60. Pantiles Nurseries Ltd
- 61. J.C. Plants
- 62. Barnwood Nurseries
- 63. Greenbank Fuschias
- 64. D. Hurford
- 65. Coursehill Farm Nurseries
- 66. Blossom Ridge Nurseries
- 67. "Sperrinks" Cherry Tree Nursery
- 68. Abermule Nursery Gardens
- 69. Mill Lane Nursery
- 70. Kinder Garden Plants Ltd

LIST OF RESPONDENTS (cont. - 3 of 4)

- 71. Askew (Fuschias) Nurseries
- 72. G.M. Baldwin
- 73. Broad House Farm
- 74. L.E. Geater & Sons Ltd
- 75. Richard Smith Ltd
- 76. Newton Rigg College
- 77. Chubbs Nursery
- 78. Fir Croft Nursery
- 79. Beckfield Nursery
- 80. Colourgro (was D. Beadsmore Flori Culture)
- 81. Allensmore Nurseries Ltd
- 82. Plough Penny Field Nursery
- 83. Maron Landscapes
- 84. Whitehall Cottage Nursery
- 85. Neil Scott Farm Shop Nursery
- 86. J.& D.A. Hutchinson
- 87. John Burns & Son
- 88. Bosworths Nurseries & Garden Centre
- 89. Wards Nursery Centre
- 90. Hartlepool Borough Council
- 91. Styngham Nursery
- 92. Heath Nurseries
- 93. Wellesbourne Nurseries
- 94. Park Farm Nurseries
- 95. Roundstone Nurseries
- 96. Brown Nurseries
- 97. J.B. Plants
- 98. Dr. M.J. Hill
- 99. Woolpit Nurseries
- 100. Fairview Nurseries
- 101. South Bank Nurseries
- 102. M.B. Nurseries
- 103. Dalby's Nurseries
- 104. Green Lane Garden Centre
- 105. Ravensthorpe Nursery
- 106. Brookside Nurseries Ltd
- 107. Valley Nurseries Ltd
- 108. Chota Ghar Nurseries
- 109. Ivor thompson Nurseries
- 110. High Riggs Nurseries

LIST OF RESPONDENTS (cont. - 4 of 4)

- 111. J. Beweridge
- 112. Engber Nursery & Garden Centre
- 113. Severndale Nurseries
- 114. Midge Hall Nurseries
- 115. Ashley Nurseries
- 116. Markhany Grange Nurseries
- 117. Avoncross Ornamentals
- 118. Crom Hill Nursery
- 119. R.A. Meredith & Son
- 120. Harrowly Nurseries.
- 121. Brookhouse Nurseries