**Now is the Time**

As we move into February, several of you are starting plugs and placing cuttings under mist systems. If you want to get a jump on thrips control, now is the time to start your program. For cuttings you can apply BotaniGard, an entomopathogenic fungus called *Beauveria bassiana*, to the foliage once a week for 3 weeks in a row. The moist environment of your mist house allows the fungal spores to grow into any thrips present in the crop. Another choice is to use the fungus *Metarhizium anisopliae* sold as Met-52 from Novozymes Company. Also, apply beneficial nematodes, *Steinernemafeltiae*, as a foliar spray once a week for three weeks in a row. The nematodes will enter larval stages of thrips and kill the thrips by excreting waste containing a *Xenorhabditis* bacteria into the insect’s blood stream. The nematodes do well under high moisture situations found in mist houses.

If you are starting with seed plugs use the predaceous mite, *Amblyseius cucumeris*. These mites come mixed in a grain product and are sprinkled over the surface of the plug tray. The predaceous mites will colonize the undersides of the foliage where they wait for 1st instar larvae of thrips to wander across the leaf. When a thrips’ larva is detected the predaceous mite will use its chelicerae to pierce the thrips and drain the fluids from the insect. Death is about 100% once a thrips is pierced.

**View the Webinar: Biological Control for Greenhouse Production**

If you missed the webinar on biological control for production greenhouses you can still view this program at the e-Gro web site. The webinar will be available at [http://egro.org/webinars.php](http://egro.org/webinars.php) in mid-February.

*Hippodamia convergens* is a lady bird beetle species sold for control of aphids in greenhouses; the beetles also feed on scale insects, thrips and small caterpillars.
New Chemicals for Use in Greenhouses
Bayer just announced the release of a new chemical called Sivanto with an active ingredient called butenolide. This material is a new class of chemistry. It is listed as a translaminar material applied as a foliar spray. The label states that it is a xylem systemic active material. They have obtained a federal label for ornamentals, fruit and vegetables. It still has to receive Maryland registration. We have not tested this product yet, but other researchers are reporting it to be very effective on sucking insects. We’re not sure on the price yet, but you can be pretty assured that it will not be cheap. This product will provide another alternative to neonicotinoids.

Greenhouse Lectures and Tour
August 5 and 6, 2015
The MNLGA and the University of Maryland Extension are working together to develop a conference on alternative crops for greenhouse growers with an emphasis on hydroponic production. The conference will be held in central Maryland on August 5. On August 6, the tentative plan is to tour operations on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. We will provide more details on the topics and location in March, but meanwhile, enter these dates on your tablet or smartphone.

New Break Through in Medical Marijuana
Maryland is still working out the details on how it will administer the production of medical marijuana growing in the state. Meanwhile, Israeli scientists in Safed, Israel have bred a marijuana that does not produce the high, but does work on medical conditions of people afflicted with epileptic seizures. Israel is considered one of the leading countries to conduct research on medical marijuana. On February 5, Israeli producers will hold a Jaffa investors conference, called Canna Tech Israel. One of the Israeli companies, Syqe Medical, has developed a metered dose cannabis inhaler used to treat people with epilepsy. They are also looking at marijuana to treat skin disorders, migraine headaches, asthma, some forms of cancer, and post-traumatic stress disorder. A Canadian company, MedReleaf, is setting up partnerships with Israeli researchers to develop new medical products. It is off in the future, but these developments may eventually lead to new crops for Maryland greenhouse growers to investigate. The Natalie M. LaPrade Maryland Medical Marijuana Commission posts information on the current medical marijuana program in Maryland at http://mmc.maryland.gov/

Chesapeake Green 2015
February 19 and 20, 2015
Location: Maritime Institute, Linthicum, MD
Feburary 19th will include topics on downy mildews, issues regarding use of neonicotinoids (panel discussion), new options for insect control strategies, a look and new trends and varieties for market, how to promote your business, new design ideas for interiorscapes and using beneficials in interiorscapes. February 20th will include topics on biopesticide options and sanitation in greenhouse disease control.

Pesticide recertification credit approval has been received by Maryland and D.C.

For program details, go to http://www.mnlaonline.org/content.asp?contentid=78