

TNLA GREEN

MAR-APR 2014

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE TEXAS NURSERY & LANDSCAPE ASSOCIATION



Meet Paul Tomaso

Paul Tomaso has been an active TNLA member for since 1999 and hopes to use his experience to guide TNLA towards continued success. Learn about his experience in the industry and his views about tomorrow's leaders. **PAGE 6**

TNLA Year in Review

Take a look back at 2013 and see how TNLA helped its members float above the fray!

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The Economy and Texas' Green Industry

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How to Conquer the Internet

And Tame the To-Do List

PAGE 26

PLUS:

32 Issues Watch: Ozone

35 GreenVi\$ion

37 Notes from SFA Gardens

42 Classified Ads

45 Calendar of Events



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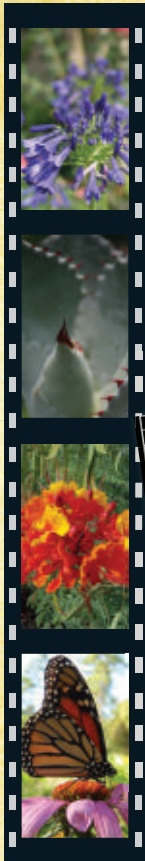
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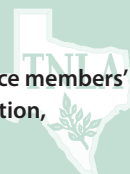


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The Texas Nursery & Landscape Association's mission is to enhance members' business success through legislative/regulatory advocacy, education, networking, and promotion of professionalism.



Meet Paul Tomaso

Thinking Ahead for TNLA's Future

Paul Tomaso is no newcomer to TNLA or the Green Industry. He has been actively involved in both for decades, making him not only a valued member but a tremendous resource. Upon graduating Texas A&M in 1984, earning a B.S. in Chemistry, he went on to study at the University of Texas at Austin where he earned an MBA in 1986. After graduation, he promptly returned to the Dallas area where he was born and raised and still lives today. Early in his career he cofounded Harwood Lumber Company and then Dallas Organic Products, the Dallas area predecessor to Living Earth. In 1990, earning his Texas Certified Nursery Professional (TCNP) certification along the way. It was at Living Earth where he laid down roots and really began to grow in his love of our industry. "As General Manager, I was responsible for all aspects of operations, sales, and planning of a landscape materials manufacturing and distribution company." He held the position of General Manager for

more than 20 years before taking on the role of Outside Sales and Consulting. He says he loves his current position – it allows him to interact with clients and industry professionals, "I enjoy finding new customers, discovering new products to sell and new ways to sell them, working closely with existing clients as a partner to make us both successful, and assisting Landscape Architects to develop the best specification for a specific project." While his current role affords him a somewhat calmer day-to-day life, he still finds ways to keep busy not only at work but also with TNLA.

Service to TNLA

Paul joined TAN and TALC both in 1989. He held many positions within TALC's Dallas Chapter, including Vice President of Education (1992-93), Vice President of Finance (1993-1994), and President (1997). He joined TNLA and became the TNLA Region IV Treasurer (1999 – 2002). In 2000 he joined the TNLA Board of Directors as Director, Region IV – a position he held until

2004. As a Board member, Paul has been highly influential, enthusiastic, collaborative and committed to the TNLA mission and vision.

Building the TNLA of the Future

In the year ahead, Paul will help guide TNLA towards a stronger tomorrow by encouraging the younger generations in the Industry to be more involved. If associations like TNLA are to stay relevant, they need to attract the leaders of tomorrow. Paul says, "The long term viability of our whole industry is dependent on the younger generation taking a keen interest, actively participating and taking leadership in moving us ahead through quickly changing times." It is projected that by the end of 2014 almost 40% of the population of Texas will be under 40 years old. For TNLA to continue to grow, it needs to tap into this population. But the younger professionals are not necessarily enticed by the same things that the previous generations was. Paul believes that TNLA needs to find ways to make itself appealing to these up and coming industry members. "New leaders from the next generation with new ideas and energy to address our constantly changing supply chains, customer needs, and environmental and political problems are key toward keeping this industry healthy"

Being Water Wise

Making Smart Moves Today to Save for Tomorrow

Another area that Paul believes TNLA needs to focus on is the water shortage in Texas and how it affects the entire





You Gotta Love Texas!

When asked what his favorite part of Texas was, Paul said, "That is a loaded question! We are in the most beautiful and diverse state in the nation. If you want it, you can find it in Texas...except maybe snow skiing, which I love. I absolutely love the outdoors so all of Texas is my favorite playground. From the piney woods of East Texas to the magnificent hill country and its awesome lakes and state parks like Enchanted Rock, to the Gulf Coast beaches. Just put me outside anywhere in Texas and it's my favorite place. Oh yes! My backyard is a pretty awesome place to hang out too!"

Green Industry. But how do we make an impact long term? Paul knows: "Education, education, education!!! Our general public is grossly unaware of our serious water situation. Since everyone has not been affected to the point where they can feel the pain, most homeowners just don't know that there is either a water supply problem on the horizon or what they can do to make a difference."

The importance of awareness stretches way beyond the home and way beyond the immediate drought situation. This is a long term problem for not only the individual but for Green businesses across Texas. It will require actions today and planning for tomorrow. "It is vital that we change habits toward our water use, especially in our urban landscape setting. Our plants can thrive with so much less water use, and people will need to learn not to depend on a simple automatic timer to decide when to water. Seasonal water needs change drastically also. And most don't

realize just how critically important mulching is to water conservation!! If everyone only properly mulched all their plantings and watered when it was needed, our lakes would be full and I really don't believe that we would currently have a problem."

While some parts of the state have seen some drought relief, many are still in major water restrictions. Texas can no longer think of the water shortage as a temporary situation, but rather as something that we will likely face for years to come. There is a limited amount of water in the world, and droughts are no longer anomalies. For TNLA this means not only being conscious of our personal water usage, but how we can do business better. "We need to stop the waste before it becomes a critical emergency. I'm afraid that this may not hit home until we don't have enough water to flush the toilet. We need to effectively educate the public and drastically change habits.

We need to conserve and we need to mulch per plantings." He plans to work closely with TNLA President Amy Graham, TNLA Staff and the rest of the Board of Directors to help increase awareness around this issue.

At Home in the Outdoors

In addition to his involvement with TNLA, Paul enjoys being active in his church and his children's schools over the years in various capacities. He enjoys spending time with his family and being outdoors – soccer and skiing are among his favorite sports, but he also loves hiking, fishing and gardening. "Anything that lets me be outside," he says "is joy." And you can also count his family among the greatest joys of his life. He has three sons and a daughter – all of whom are excelling in life – and has been married almost 27 years to his wonderful wife Patty.

Paul will start his tenure as TNLA Board Chair on March 1, 2014 until February 28, 2015. ☺

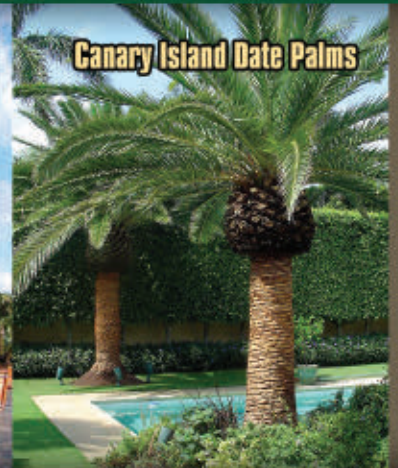
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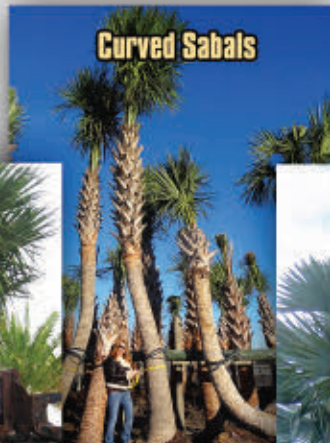
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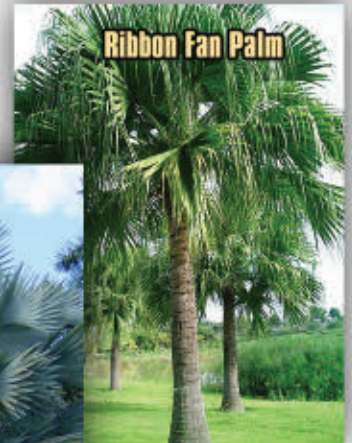
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TNLA'S YEAR IN REVIEW

Leading the Way for Our Members to Float Above the Fray!



TNLA members are part of a community, a support group of over 1,200 nursery/landscape businesses. Members stay connected by attending region meetings, serving on a regional committee or task force and enjoying both education and networking events like the Nursery/Landscape EXPO and the Business Management Workshop events. Members also can connect with TNLA and each other through social networks by joining TNLA's LinkedIn page, becoming a fan on Facebook and following TNLA on Twitter, as well as subscribing to Green Matters weekly e-newsletter and Green Magazine!

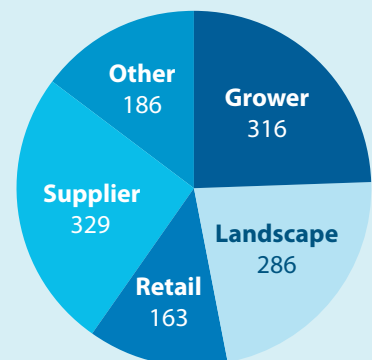
This Was an Extraordinary Year for TNLA and its members. Join us as we take a look back at 2013, which rushed by like a fast-flowing river! You can also check out the video online by scanning this QR code.



Members by Region

	Jan-13
Region I	127
Region II	268
Region III	81
Region IV	246
Region V	156
Region VI	47
Region VII	34
Region VIII	122
Out of State	199
Total	1280

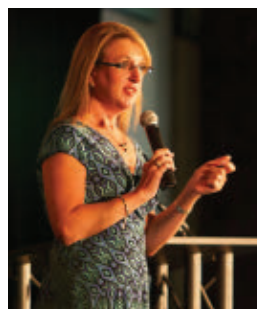
Members by Category



TNLA EDUCATION

Sent Ripples of Knowledge Through the Industry

- ▶ 3 Days of education at the 2013 EXPO with nearly 200 attendees each day
- ▶ 3 amazing Keynotes, 4 different tracks and more than 140 CEU credits offered
- ▶ 9 monthly webinars from professional industry leaders
- ▶ More than 8,000 Best of Texas Landscape Guides sold



CERTIFICATION

Created a Downpour of Certified Professionals!



- ▶ New Texas Certified Landscape Associate certification created
- ▶ More than 800 Certified Professionals throughout the state



COMMUNICATIONS

Kept Information and Ideas Flowing!



- ▶ GREEN Magazine back in print 6 times a year
- ▶ Green Matters weekly eNewsletter to more than 5,000 subscribers
- ▶ TNLAONLINE.org had 2,000 + unique visits each month
- ▶ Fully charged Social Media keeps members connected and informed

2013 EXPO

Really Rocked the Boat!

- ▶ New Thursday – Saturday format was a big hit
- ▶ The Welcome to Dallas Party was a blast that drew a huge crowd
- ▶ Parks and Patio volunteers created a stunning entrance with stone, lights, plants and water features
- ▶ Tradeshow floor was packed with booths AND attendees



LEGISLATIVE & REGULATORY ACTIVITIES

Steered the Advocacy Ship in the Right Direction



- ▶ Represented member businesses at the Capitol every day of the 83rd Session
- ▶ Successfully lobbied for Prop 6 passage
- ▶ Helped secure \$1 million for public water conservation education
- ▶ Successfully helped to create Citrus Greening compromise that protects Growers
- ▶ Supported the right of homeowners to plant the landscape they desire – including drought tolerant landscapes

WINNERS

at the TNLA Awards Dinner Made a Big Splash!

- ▶ ARP Award Winner:
Dr. Steve George
- ▶ Summit Award Winner:
Calloway's Nursery
- ▶ Young Leader Award:
Clayton Leonard
- ▶ Honorary Lifetime
Award Winner:
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Helped TNLA Brave the Rapids

- ▶ Horticulture Synergy Council and ASLA partnerships brought mutual success
- ▶ A new lineup of endorsed service providers and member discount partners offered high impact savings and support
- ▶ Worked with several partners to educate the public state-wide about Water Conservation through Texas Water Smart



2013 WAS AMAZING

Just Wait and See What 2014 Showers Us With!

TNLA MISSION

The Texas Nursery & Landscape Association's mission is to enhance members' business success through Legislative/Regulatory Advocacy, Education, Networking, and Promotion of Professionalism.



This year, we have helped member companies do business better and stay connected through a wide range of products and services. In addition to member services, TNLA was a market leader by hosting Nursery/Landscape EXPO Education, Networking and Tradeshow. Have a look at our year in review to learn of the value offered to our members and the Texas Green Industry at large.



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ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTIONS of the Green Industry TO THE TEXAS ECONOMY

BY MARCO A. PALMA AND CHARLES R. HALL

REPORT TO THE TEXAS
NURSERY AND LANDSCAPE
ASSOCIATION 2013

Acknowledgements

This report was made possible by a grant from the Texas Nursery and Landscape Association (TNLA). The data was obtained from the Texas Comptrollers of Public Accounts (TCPA), and baseline data from the Green Industry Research Consortium National Nursery Survey. Others who contributed with this report include Carmen Escalante (TCPA), Dan Hanselka, Dean McCorkle, (Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service) and Alan Hodges (University of Florida). This report complies with the terms of the TNLA contract. The authors welcome comments or information about the usefulness and implications of these findings.

Introduction

The baseline sales figures for the nursery and greenhouse sector were updated to the latest National Nursery

Survey data from the Green Industry Research Consortium. This year's report shows an overall increase in green industry sales to nearly \$17 billion in total sales. Product and manufacturing sales decreased almost 5% for a total of \$1.84 billion in 2012, down from an all-time high of \$1.93 billion in 2011. The landscaping sector experienced the largest growth that it has seen in sales in the last several years. Total landscaping sales were up 13.3% to \$4.1 billion. Retail sales also increased almost 6% to a total of \$11 billion in 2012. The net margins attributed to the retail sector accounted for \$3.3 billion. This study will evaluate green industry sales in Texas by sector and then estimate economic contributions to the Texas Economy in terms of output, employment and value added.

Background trends

There are so many factors contributing to the overall health of an industry that it's shortsighted to focus solely on one specific element. For the green industry, marketplace

(continued on page 18)

TABLE 1.
**NAICS Codes for Green
Industry Sectors**

Industry Sector	NAICS Code
Nursery & Greenhouse	1,114
Lawn & Garden Equipment Mfg	333,112
Greenhouse Manufacturing (Prefab. Metal Buildings)*	332,311
Landscaping Services	561,730
Landscape Architectural Services	541,320
Flower, Nursery Stock And Florist Supplies Wholesalers	424,930
Lawn & Garden Equipment & Supplies Stores	4,442
Florists	4,531
Building Material & Supplies Dealers*	4,441
Food & Beverage Stores*	445
General Merchandise Stores*	452
Farm & Garden Machinery & Equipment Wholesalers*	423,820

* Green industry represents a portion of overall business activity (Sectors not included in Previous Scope reports).

(continued from page 17)

trends encompass consumer spending and confidence in general, as well as how and where plants are purchased. At present, independent garden centers (IGCs) are holding their own in most markets and even increasing sales for the better stores, if adequate attention to merchandising, customer service and consumer trends is given. However, many firms that are using the “grow it and they will come” approach are struggling, and many IGCs are looking to complement their business with other non-plant lines.

Supply chain trends have a significant influence on the vitality of the industry, and vice versa. We continue to see a number of structural changes occurring in the green industry. The shakeout that started with the Great Recession has slowed, but nonetheless continues at all levels of the supply chain. Several more reputable growers, landscape service providers, and retailers have gone out of business since last year. Not all of this productive capacity has exited the industry, however; consolidation activity through mergers and acquisitions continues to shrink the number of industry participants, but some of the capacity is simply being operated under a different name.

Garden center trends are dependent upon a number of influences, including seasonality, climate, weather, region, competition from mass merchandisers and home centers, and consumer spending in general. The demand in the U.S. for lawn and garden plants and supplies is regional and highly dependent on climate and growing conditions. The good news is that retail sales for building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers, a potential corollary measure of garden supply demand, increased 3.7 percent in the first two months of 2013 compared to the same period in 2012.

TABLE 2. Total Green Industry Gross Sales in 2012.

Sector (NAICS code)	Sales	Establishments
Production/Manufacturing	\$1,835,750,045	788
Nursery & Greenhouse (1,114) ^	\$1,256,813,934,694	
Lawn & Garden Equipment Manufacturing (333,112) ^	\$548,451,502,83	
Prefabricated metal buildings (332,311) (Greenhouses) ^*	\$30,484,608,11	
Horticultural Services	\$4,117,368,730	14,857
Landscaping Services (561,730)	\$3,898,816,573,14,255	
Landscape Architectural Services (541,320)	\$218,552,157,602	
Wholesale & Retail Trade Horticulture Products (Gross)	\$11,003,313,316	19,093
Flower, Nursery Stock and Florist Supplies Wholesalers (424,930)	\$637,051,072,435	
Lawn & Garden Equipment & Supplies Stores (4,442)	\$5,051,478,526,285	
Florists (4,531)	\$986,079,513,518	
Building Material & Supplies Dealers (4,441)*	\$1,585,082,005,1,850	
Food & Beverage Stores (445)*	\$393,743,370,2,614	
General Merchandise Stores (452)*	\$1,626,356,583,8,149	
Farm & Garden Equipment Wholesalers (423,820)*	\$723,522,247,243	
Total All Sectors	\$16,956,432,091	\$34,738

^ Estimated from baseline data from National Nursery Survey, and Texas Comptroller's Office Data.

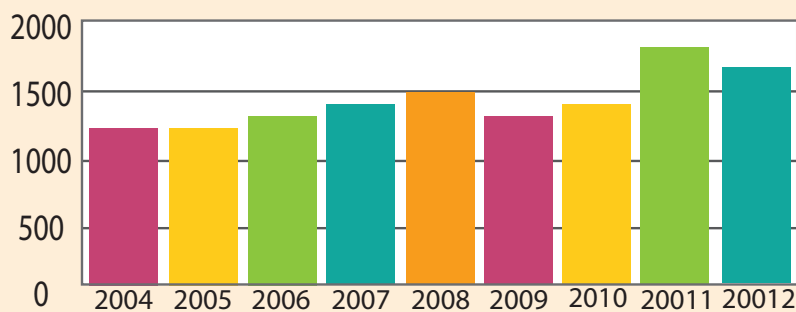
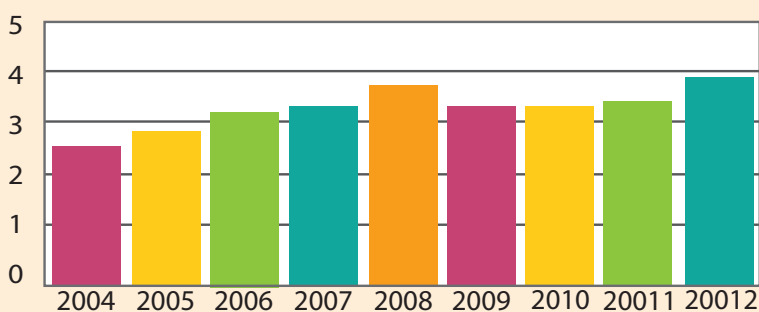
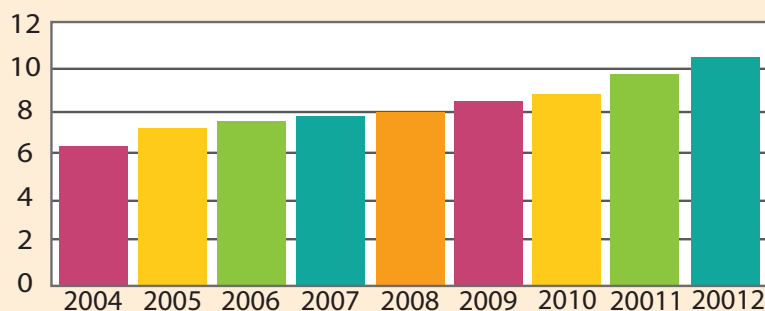
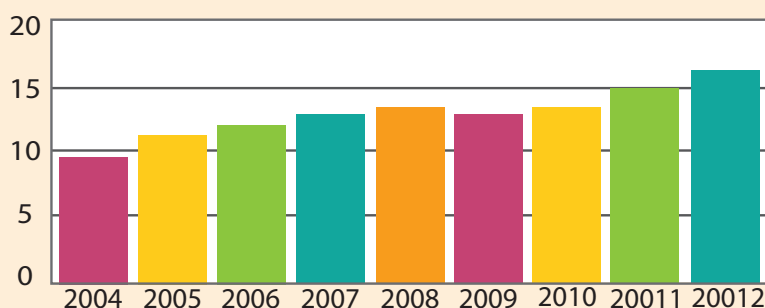
* NAICS represents a portion of Total Green Industry Sales

TABLE 3. Total Green Industry Sales 2007-2012 .

	Grower	Landscape	Retail (Gross)	Retail (Net)	Total
2012	\$1,835,750,045	\$4,117,368,730	\$11,003,313,316	\$3,332,098,812	\$9,285,217,586
2011	\$1,927,144,158	\$3,567,557,981	\$10,351,246,386	\$3,134,635,431	\$8,629,337,571
2010	\$1,537,061,928	\$3,390,016,982	\$9,351,749,314	\$2,831,960,872	\$7,759,039,782
2009	\$1,336,866,584	\$3,414,177,793	\$9,039,697,678	\$2,737,463,255	\$7,488,507,632
2008	\$1,575,251,701	\$3,903,651,168	\$8,599,018,918	\$2,604,013,890	\$8,082,916,760
2007	\$1,498,509,647	\$3,567,729,013	\$8,431,798,582	\$2,553,375,081	\$7,619,613,741

TABLE 4. Total Green Industry Sales by Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), 2012 .

MSA	Grower	Landscape	Retail (Gross)	Total	% of Total
Austin	59,111,380	476,092,181	577,424,050	1,112,627,610	6.56%
Dallas	149,594,018	915,422,566	1,494,648,554	2,559,665,137	15.10%
Ft Worth	154,739,170	292,148,062	739,893,268	1,186,780,500	7.00%
Houston	191,413,094	1,223,031,161	1,831,940,185	3,246,384,440	19.15%
San Antonio	133,184,749	312,110,497	761,661,759	1,206,957,005	7.12%
Other	1,147,707,634	898,564,263	5,597,745,501	7,644,017,398	45.08%
Total	1,835,750,045	4,117,368,730	11,003,313,316	16,956,432,091	100.00%

FIGURE 1. Grower Sales 2004-2012 (Millions)**FIGURE 2. Landscaping Sales 2004-2012** (Billions)**FIGURE 3. Retailing Sales 2004-2012** (Billions)**FIGURE 4. Total Sales 2004-2012** (Billions)

Personal consumption expenditures of flowers, seeds and potted plants, a major driver for garden centers, are forecast to grow at an annual compounded rate of 5 percent between 2013 and 2017, according to data published by First Research, a provider of industry intelligence.

Consumer desire to spend time at home and extend living space outdoors should drive sales for outdoor patio products. Demand for decorative outdoor products, such as lighting, pavers and fountains, will achieve double-digit growth each year through 2015, according to the Freedonia Group. As the housing industry rebounds and the economy improves, consumers will unleash pent-up demand for landscaping renovations and updates that may have been put off during the recession.

Landscape service trends appear to be improving; in fact, according to First Research, the output of the U.S. landscaping industry is forecast to grow about 5 percent in 2013 compared to 2012. The outlook also calls for industry output to increase at a compounded annual rate of 4 percent through 2016, indicating steady growth in the longer term. The value of nonresidential construction spending, a driver for landscaping services demand, rose 1.3 percent year-to-date in January 2013 compared to the same period in 2012. The value of residential construction spending, which impacts demand for landscaping services, rose 22.2 percent year-to-date in January 2013 compared to the same period in 2012. Which brings us to a significant driving force: the housing market.

Methodology

In order to estimate economic contributions of the Green Industry to the Texas economy, sales by

(continued on page 21)



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(continued from page 19)

each green industry sector need to be measured. The North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) was used to gather data on total green industry sales, including all sectors related to the green industry. The data used in this report were provided by the State Comptrollers Office, and baseline data from the Green Industry Research Consortium National Nursery Survey, and includes industry sales through the end of fiscal year 2012. Every business in the state and the country is now classified by North American Industry Classification System (NAICS), which replaced the old Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) system. NAICS was developed jointly by the United States, Canada and Mexico to provide new comparability in statistics about business activity across North America. Green industry firms fall within one of the AICS codes:

Green Industry Sales in Texas

When reporting sales to the State Comptroller's office, each firm must report all sales, including those sales in which sale taxes are collected and those that are not collected (wholesale). This reporting system has an area of potential slippage. For example, since wholesale growers do not collect any sales tax (for the state), some small and medium size growers are unaware of their reporting responsibilities. Not all of these firms realize that their services are subject to sale taxes. Therefore, unintended non-compliance has been a source of under reporting, which would underestimate green industry sales in Texas. Because of this potential slippage problem, additional data were used to supplement this report's methodology. Table 2 shows Total Green Industry Gross Sales in 2012, and Table 3 shows sales from

(continued on page 23)

FIGURE 5. Total Green Industry Sales in Texas by MSA in 2012.

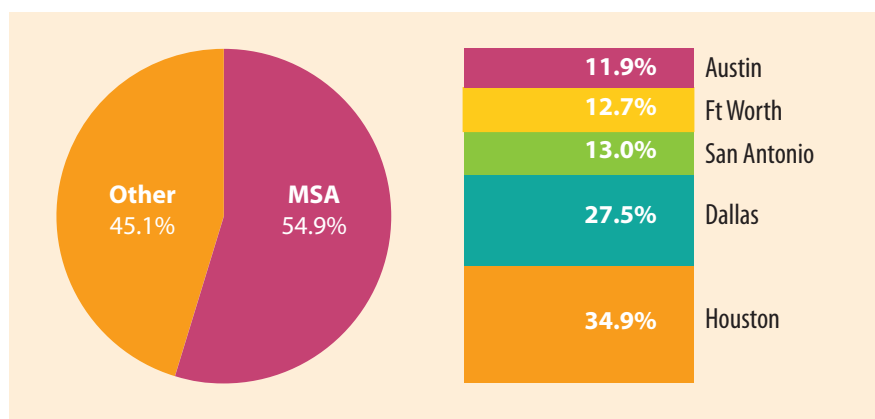


FIGURE 6. Number of Jobs Created by the Green Industry in Texas 2012

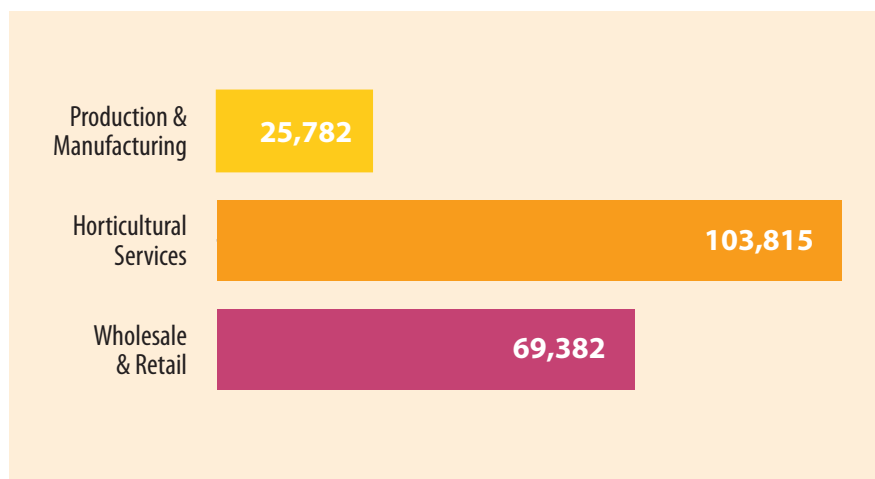


TABLE 5. Economic Impact Contributions of the Green Industry in Texas by MSA 2012

	Output (\$Mn)	Employment (jobs)	Value Added (\$Mn)
Austin	1,202	13,056	708
Dallas	2,766	30,037	1,629
Ft. Worth	1,282	13,926	755
Houston	3,507	38,095	2,066
San Antonio	1,304	14,163	768
Other	8,259	89,700	4,864
Total	18,320	198,978	10,790

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(continued from page 21)

2007-2012 for each green industry sector. Table 3 shows sales for the retail industry including gross sales, and also net sales. Net sales represent the margin sales that correspond to the retail sector only.

Total industry sales, including grower, landscaping and retailing sales increased 6.55% in 2012 for a total of \$16.9 billion in gross sales. The grower sector experienced a decrease of 4.98% to a total of \$1.8 billion. The landscaping sector experienced the largest growth in sales since 2005. Total landscaping sales were up 13.3% in 2012 for total sales over \$4.1 billion. Gross retail sales increased 5.9% to a total of \$11.0 billion in 2012. Figures 1, 2, 3 and 4 represent industry sales for growers, landscaping, retailing (gross) and total gross industry sales respectively.

Table 4 presents green industry sales by sector and by major Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). There are 27 MSAs in Texas. The major MSAs are, Austin, Dallas, Ft. Worth, Houston, El Paso, and San Antonio. The economic scope reports sales in five of the major MSAs; together, the five major MSAs included in this report represent more than half of the total industry sales as shown in Figure 5. Houston and Dallas hold the largest share of green industry sales in 2012 with 19.15 and 15.10 percent respectively.

Economic Contributions of the Green Industry to the Texas Economy

The net sales data from the previous section was used to estimate total economic contributions of the Green Industry to the Texas Economy. To evaluate the economic impact contributions of the green industry to the Texas economy,

economic models were developed using the Implan software system and associated Texas datasets (MIG, 2010). The Implan system includes more than 500 industries. Input-Output models represent the structure of a regional economy in terms of transactions, employees, households, and government institutions (Miller & Blair, 1985).

The economic multipliers derived from the Implan model were used to estimate the total economic activity generated in the state by sales (output) to final demand or exports. This includes the effects of intermediate purchases by green industry firms from other economic sectors (indirect effects) and the effects of green industry employee household consumer spending (induced effects), in addition to direct sales by industry firms. The wholesale and retail sectors use products from the production/manufacturing and horticultural services sectors; therefore, when calculating the impacts for the wholesale and retail trade horticulture products, output (retail sales) are reduced to reflect only the gross margin on sales to those sectors, otherwise we would be double counting the economic impact stemming from those products.

Total economic contributions of the Green Industry in Texas were estimated at \$18.3 billion in output; 198,978 jobs, and \$10.8 billion in value added as shown in Table 5. For the production and manufacturing sectors, including nursery and greenhouse, lawn and garden equipment manufacturing, and metal building manufacturers, total output impacts were down from 2011 to a total of \$3.2 billion; employment impacts were 25,782 jobs; and value added impacts were \$1.7 billion. For the horticultural services sectors, including landscaping services and landscape architecture services, total

output impacts were \$8.7 billion; employment impacts were 103,815 jobs; and value added impacts were \$4.9 billion. For the wholesale and retail trade sectors, total output impacts were \$6.4 billion; employment impacts were 69,382 jobs; and value added impacts were \$4.2 billion. The largest economic impact contributions for individual sectors were landscaping services, lawn and garden stores and nursery and greenhouse.

Economic impact results are also reported by major metropolitan statistical area (MSA) as summarized in Figure 5. The MSAs with the greatest economic impact contributions to the State's economy are Houston and Dallas.

Measures of economic activity.

Sales or output is the dollar volume of a good or service produced or sold. Final Demand is sales to final consumers, including households, governments, and exports.

Intermediate sales are sales to other industrial sectors. Income is the money earned within the region from production and sales. Total income includes personal income (wage and salary income, including income of sole proprietor's profits and rents). Jobs or employment is a measure of the number of jobs required to produce a given volume of sales/production, expressed as full time equivalents, or as the total number including part time and seasonal positions. Value Added is the sum of total income and indirect business taxes. ☞

by Marco A. Palma and Charles R. Hall
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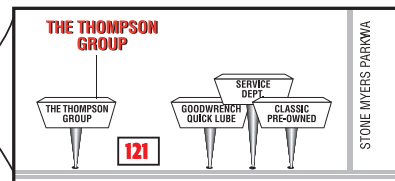
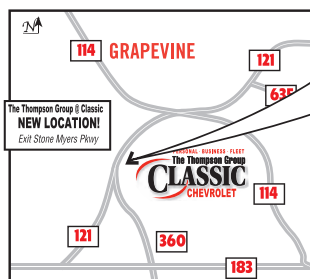


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Technology may be man-made, but it revolutionizes industries like a force of nature. Businesses that embrace the force and use it to their advantage can create more cost-effective and efficient business practices. Business owners that put their business online and utilize web-based tools see more customers, better reputations, higher profits, less stress, increased organization and other benefits.

Anyone can use the Internet, but there are a few tricks for using it well that successful business owners employ and many a buried treasure just waiting to be found.



GREEN INDUSTRY

part three of a
three part series

ER the Internet O-DO LIST

BY J. ZAC TOLBERT,
RLA, LEED AP

Browsing for a Browser

In many ways, a person's Internet experience is dependent on the Internet browser he or she uses. Various Internet browsers — Google Chrome, Safari, Firefox, Internet Explorer — will have different user interfaces and will sometimes interact differently with websites or elements within a website.

Choosing a browser is partly based on personal preference, as well as what types of devices are being used. Safari, for instance, was designed to work best with Apple products, though Windows users can download a version as well. Whichever browser is selected, the most important thing to remember is that it, like all computer software, must be updated regularly to protect the computer from outside security threats. Maintaining an updated browser is generally simple. On Macs, click on the apple icon in the upper left corner of the screen, then on "Software Update" and "Show Details." That will provide a list of all necessary software updates,

including browser updates. On PCs, a user can go to their browser's website to download the latest version. Smart phones generally notify users when software needs updated.

Another trick is to use the same browser on each Internet-capable device you use, including your desk top, lap top, smart phone or tablet. Otherwise, using different browsers may make it more difficult to find the same information from different devices. For instance, say you have a meeting with a prospective client and you want to show them a product listing from a website you found yesterday. Easy enough, if you remember the link, but if not, different browsers may return different search results. Google Chrome has gone to extra lengths to avoid this problem, allowing users to access recent searches from all their devices — in other words, a search for something from your desktop will show up on your smart phone, if both have Chrome installed.

Keeping a device's browser current is just the first trick to smart and responsible Internet usage. More

tricks to using the Internet are to never publish something you might want to delete, exercising caution when visiting new websites and using complex passwords that are changed regularly. It's important to remember that once something has been published on the Internet, traces of it can and will remain accessible forever. The same is true of your browser history; while the websites you view are tracked and stored for your own convenience, they are not necessarily private. Don't click on links sent by unknown or suspicious sources, as they may direct visitors to malicious sites designed to hurt computer systems. And regularly updating passwords makes them less susceptible to hacking.

Web-based and Digital Solutions

Do you take notes in a Word document and then forget where you saved the document or where you put that notepad? There are digital solutions and web-based programs available to help many of the challenges a person might face just for being human. "Software as

(continued on page 29)



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(continued from page 27)

a Service” (SaaS) applications and programs can help small business owners with time management, project management, idea

development, document sharing, list tracking and more.

For instance, Evernote is a free digital notebook (with some

premium paid-for services) that has helped millions organize notes and information. Users can easily create notes for different meetings or topics, then organize them within easily searchable notebooks. The free version has minimal advertising that is not intrusive. The notebooks even remain synced between multiple devices. One of the more powerful features is the Evernote Web Clipper, which becomes part of your Chrome Browser. Once installed, it allows users to save ideas and information found online to a particular folder with one click.

Many software companies are focused on meeting the needs of business owners, such as helping busy people keep track of daily tasks and manage their time more effectively. Task list software like Trello, Teambox and Basecamp (see screenshots) can come in handy for on-going lists and project management. Some programs will allow users to share task lists with colleagues and friends so that more than one person can work on the lists at a time. The lists are updated in real time so others can see the status of items.

Trello is a straight-forward program that allows users to create digital note cards and organize those note cards into lists and digital boards. The cards can be dragged to other lists, and the lists can be reordered within each board, allowing tremendous flexibility. Within each card exists the ability to upload documents, add due dates, share with co-workers and drag and drop them to new lists with ease. Trello offers both free and paid membership levels.

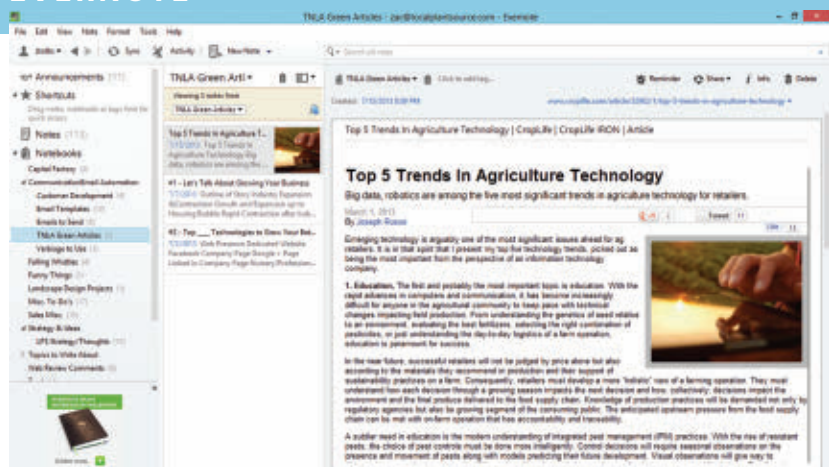
Business owners looking for more structure can also check out Basecamp and Teambox,

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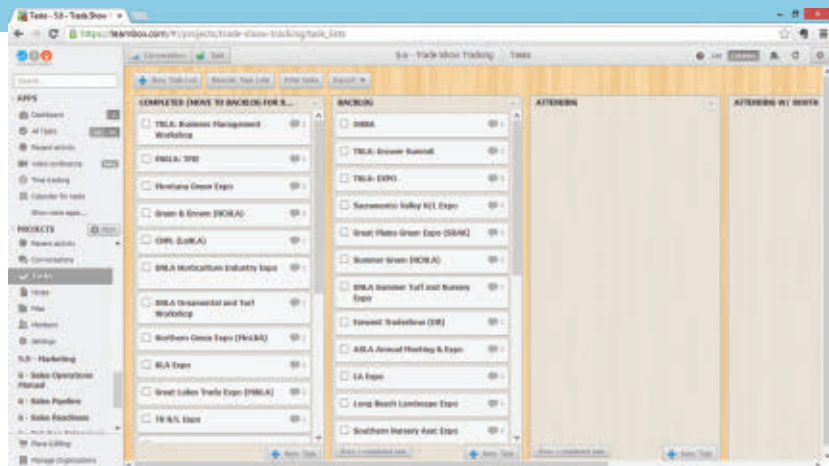
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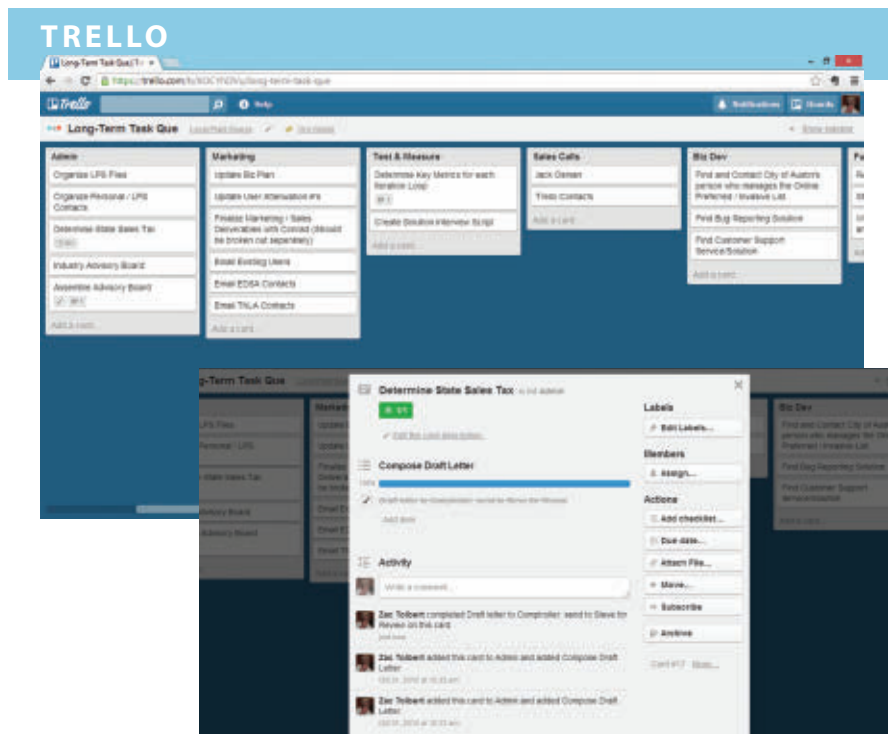
both of which are designed for task management within organizations. Each has its own unique benefits and feature-sets along with completely different pricing structures. Basecamp is great for collaborative teams with a lot of back and forth communication, especially with design work, and it's easy to loop in clients for approval and to manage what messages they can or cannot see. Basecamp offers a 60-day free trial and then charges based on the number of projects and cloud storage needs within your organization. Teambox is great for an organizations' task management, time-tracking, collaboration and file sharing needs. Getting started with Teambox is easy, and free for small teams, with a modest monthly license fee per seat to grow with your team.

Conference Calls and Webinars

Need to conduct a meeting, but the travel is either too costly or the scheduling is not logistically feasible? Virtual meeting software has come a long way in the past few years. As long as your device has built-in video-taking capabilities,

such as provided by smart phones, tablets and more recent laptops, a person can easily video chat over the Internet with something as simple as Google Hangouts. It's not ideal, especially for large business meetings and conferences, but it's effective, easy to use for up to 10 people, and is completely free.

On the opposite end of the spectrum, arguably one of the most widely recognizable brands in the space is Go To Meeting by Citrix, a powerful tool that allows for meetings and conference calls of up to 25 attendees. Beyond the benefits of being face-to-face with attendees through video chat, users can also share screens and change presenter rolls for team collaboration. It's companion program, Go To Webinar, allows companies to host even larger meetings and educational workshops for up to 1,000 attendees.



An up and comer in the market is Join.me, which offers both a free tool with screen sharing and internet calling features and monthly or yearly pricing plans with additional features, such as recording and annotation capabilities and a meeting scheduler. Join.me has focused on delivering a clean and intuitive user interface that is becoming more and more powerful, offering many of the same features as many of their established competitors. ☞

Useful Links:

- evernote.com/
- evernote.com/webclipper/
- trello.com/
- basecamp.com/one-page-project
- teambox.com/platform/features/
- google.com/+learnmore/hangouts/
- gotomeeting.com/online/meeting
- <https://secure.join.me/>



Zac Tolbert is a registered Landscape Architect and serial entrepreneur. He is President and Founder of LocalPlantSource.com, a web

platform empowering the landscape and horticulture industry with customer service solutions and supply chain insights for sustainable business growth. He is an avid traveler and live music lover who dedicates his free time to giving back. He currently serves on TNLA's Region 8 board.

What is Ozone Season and Why is It Important?

HAVE YOU EVER SEEN SMOG? Have you ever seen ground-level ozone? Smog is easily seen as the brownish fog that hangs over many Texas regions, and within the smog is the not so easily seen ground-level ozone. In fact, ground-level

ozone is a colorless gas which forms when nitrogen oxides (NO_x) and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) in the lower levels of the atmosphere combine and “cook” in the sun. Ground-level ozone has been found to be a main component in smog. Throughout this article ground-level ozone will simply be referred to as ozone.

The NO_x and VOC that contribute to the formation of ozone are commonly produced from operating vehicle engines, electric generation units, industrial facilities, and many everyday activities, including nursery and landscaping operations. Some ozone exists at all times, but ozone can reach unhealthy levels under certain conditions, like hot, sunny days with little wind. The time period when ground-level ozone levels spike in Texas is March-November and this period is typically called ozone season. Limiting NO_x and VOC emissions during ozone season is important because elevated levels of ozone impacts:

- 1) Human health, especially children, the elderly and those with lung disease,

◀ **FIGURE 1.** *What are the Effects of Ground-Level Ozone. Figure provided by Ozone Action Heroes (<http://ozoneactionheroes.com/>) a part of the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO).*



LEVELS OF HEALTH CONCERN	COLORS
Good	Green
Moderate	Yellow
Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	Orange
Unhealthy	Red
Very Unhealthy	Purple
Hazardous	Maroon

More information about the Air Quality Index can be found by visiting the Air Now website at: <http://www.airnow.gov/>

- 2) The wellbeing of ecosystems by damaging vegetation and affecting the health of wildlife, and
- 3) Degrade the exterior of structures, such as building facades and statues.

The impacts on human health are of specific concern. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) “Several groups of people are particularly sensitive to ozone, especially when they are active outdoors. This is because ozone levels are higher outdoors, and physical activity causes faster and deeper breathing, drawing more ozone into the body”. Increased levels of ozone can reduce lung function and affect the respiratory system. People most sensitive to increased ozone are active adults who work or exercise outdoors, children, older adults, and people with some form of lung disease.


Individuals can increase their awareness of air quality levels by regularly checking the Air Quality Index during ozone season. The Air Quality Index is color coded guide used nationwide that helps individuals understand the how healthy the air quality may be on a particular day. The table below shows each air quality level of health concern and the matching color indicator (see sidebar).

respiratory ailments, especially in children, the elderly, those with lung disease, such as, asthma sufferers and healthy adults working or playing outdoors. The Texas Department of State Health Services has said that “Asthma affects more children than any other chronic disease and is one of the most frequent reasons for hospital admissions among children”. This in turn leads to lost school and work days. When the ozone level is unhealthy anyone may experience health effects and individuals in the sensitive groups will experience more severe symptoms. Ozone can affect employees who work outdoors. You can help protect the health of your employees during ozone season by planning outdoor activities when ozone levels are lower (usually in the early morning or evening). For example, if you typically hold employee meetings in the early morning consider moving meetings with employees to the afternoon to reduce exposure to ozone.

According to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, Dallas-Fort Worth and Houston-Galveston-Brazoria are the two Texas regions that are not in compliance with the federal health-based ozone standard, which means the effects of elevated ozone levels

You can help protect the health of your employees during ozone season by planning outdoor activities when ozone levels are lower (usually in the early morning or evening).

are more prominent in these regions. Additionally, the following Texas regions are near non-compliance with the federal health based ozone standard - Austin-Round Rock, Beaumont-Port Arthur, Corpus Christi, El Paso, San Antonio, Tyler-Longview, Victoria. Taking into consideration the number of regions affected by ozone pollution and the impacts that ozone has on human health and the environment the nursery and landscaping industry is asked to take action to help improve air quality by taking the following steps to limit NOx and VOC emissions:

- Replace old fleet vehicles and equipment with those that run on a cleaner fuel
- Tune up gasoline and diesel powered fleet vehicles and equipment regularly
- Reduce vehicle idling to less than 5 minutes
- Encourage employees to use alternative transportation to work, such as, transit, bike, walk, or carpool
- Assign employees to travel together during the work day
- Use and store gasoline properly
- Save water 

For more information about ground-level ozone visit the following websites:

- ▶ U.S. EPA: <http://www.epa.gov/groundlevelozone/>
- ▶ Texas Commission on Environmental Quality: <http://www.tceq.texas.gov/airquality/monops/ozonefacts.html>

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The **TNLA Young Leader Award**, established by the Board of Directors in 1996, is presented annually to a deserving young leader age 41 and under who has displayed outstanding achievement and service to the Green Industry in Texas. TNLA and other community service by the nominee will be given special consideration by the selection committee.

Summit Award

The TNLA Summit Award recognizes a member firm that has made significant, exceptional contributions to the Texas Nursery & Landscape Association and its member firms. The Summit Award is the highest honor bestowed by TNLA on a member firm. The firm successful in achieving the Summit Award exemplifies the Association's ideals: innovation, service, and highly ethical behavior in the way it conducts its affairs.



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Earth-Kind® Landscape Principals II: Soil analysis and preparation

by Mengmeng Gu, Ph.D



Mengmeng Gu, Ph.D. is an Assistant Professor/Extension Specialist at TAMU. She received her BS in landscape horticulture and MS in ornamental horticulture from Beijing Forestry University

We'll focus on the second aspect of seven Earth-Kind landscape principals in this article:

- Planning and design
- **Soil analysis and preparation**
- Practical turf areas
- Appropriate plant selection
- Efficient irrigation
- Use of mulches
- Appropriate maintenance.

If you ask Dr. Tony Provin, Director of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Soil, Water and Forage Testing Laboratory (<http://soiltesting.tamu.edu/>) at College Station, TX, what is needed to help lay a foundation for managing soil at a landscape site, he'll tell you five initial steps:

- Develop a map of the site's existing features;
- Plan the land upgrades or changes;

- Determine expectations for landscape performance;
- Have the soil tested; and
- If needed, make adjustments to the soil based on the test results.

We'll skip the first three steps and talk about the 4th step: soil testing. The first question is how many soil samples are needed for a particular landscape site. Several conditions can indicate the need for multiple samples:

- The area has a variety of plants, such as a vegetable garden, annual beds, shrub beds, and/or lawn;
- The terrain changes significantly, such as a flat area shifting to a steep slope;
- The site has recognizably different soil types, such as sands, loam, or clays;
- Fertilizer use in the landscape has changed from previous practices. Consider both inorganic and organic amendments; and
- Plant growth on the site differs noticeably.

A soil probe is a must-have for landscape professionals. It is a convenient tool to collect soil samples and could give you a quick idea how uniform the soil at a landscape site is. When collecting soil samples, it probably leaves the least impact to the soil collection sites, compared to tools like a spade or a post hole digger. Within one sampling area, 5-15 subsamples could be collected and submitted for one soil test. The number of subsamples depends on the size of the sampling area and its uniformity. When sampling, walk the area in a zigzag pattern and stop occasionally to

(continued on page 36)



The area with different uses for and types of plants, such as a vegetable garden, annual beds, shrub beds, and/or lawn, may need multiple samples.

(continued from page 35)

collect soil sample. The depth of soil sample is determined by the plant grown (or to be grown) on site. Generally, soil samples for tree and shrub planting sites should have more depth than perennial and annual sites or lawn. After taking each sub-sample, remove any plant material (weeds, turfgrass, etc.) or mulch and mix the soil in the bucket to ensure it is well blended. Put about ¾ to 1 pint of the mixed soil into a labeled, resealable plastic bag or soil sample bag and send it to a soil testing laboratory.

How often do you do soil test?

Generally, landscape sites should be tested every other year unless the following conditions apply:

- Soil test indicates significant nutrient deficiencies, low pH, or salinity;

- Water with high sodium or of questionable quality is being used for irrigation;
- The land must withstand continuous heavy use, such as sports field;
- pH adjustment is done;
- The landscape aesthetics are vital.

Soil test results could include pH, salinity/conductivity, mineral nutrients and texture (the percentages of sand, silt and clay), and measures to improve soil conditions as needed based on plants grown on site. These measures could include salinity leaching, mineral nutrient application (what, when and how much), and pH adjustment.

Most fertilizers on the market are inorganic (strictly a chemistry term, not to be confused with USDA certified 'organic'; meaning

no 'carbon') fertilizers, and these fertilizers are salts, in inorganic chemists' eyes. If you excelled in Inorganic Chemistry class, you may still remember some salts are acidic (pH<7), some are neutral (pH=7), and some are basic or alkaline (pH>7). When these are applied, soil pH is changed, slightly or dramatically, which could affect nutrient availability.

Although texture could be included in the soil test, it may not have an impression on most people. But it may tell you something more important than the numbers for all those mineral nutrients and pH, the drainage. An on-site drainage test is fast and easy, according to my predecessor Dr. Don Wilkerson (http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/educ_programs/Landscape-Revival-Soil-Prep.pdf).

(continued on page 39)



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Notes from SFA Gardens

Connecting People, Plants and Plans

by David Creech and Dawn Stover



Dr. Dave Creech is Professor Emeritus and a Regents Professor of Horticulture at Stephen F. Austin State University. Dawn Stover is a Research Associate with the SFA Mast Arboretum in Nacogdoches, Texas.



Time magazine recently featured America's pest problem on its cover and in an extensive article (Time, December 9, 2013). The front page of the Daily Sentinel, our local Nacogdoches newspaper, recently dealt with the topic. The facts are clear. From deer to wild hogs to herds of small furred critters, America's urban environment is being flooded with fellow mammals trying to own the place. Nacogdoches is no different. Inside the loop we've got pigs and deer wreaking havoc on our landscapes. Add in the happy community of armadillos, possums, squirrels, rabbits, raccoons, feral cats, and beavers, and yes, we've got a real problem. In this age of animal rights, gun control and political correctness, the issue of animal population control in an urban landscape is no easy discourse. Yet, from our perch here in the garden world, we've concluded that something needs to be done.

Wild pigs in Nacogdoches are a huge issue. Sauntering in from the north and under

the cover of night, they settle into nightly raids into nearby landscapes. For those residents affected, the damage is horrible. These are large non-native animals that move in a group called a sounder. They are ruthless invaders and can deep till acres in a single night. Their wallows can swallow a tractor. Billy Higginbotham, TAMU's Extension Wildlife Extension Specialist, was quoted in Time magazine, "There are two kinds of landowners in Texas: Those with wild pigs and those who are about to have wild pigs." Some 5 million feral pigs are running amok in 48 of the 50 states. They're crafty, multiply very fast and 70% need to be killed each year just to keep the population steady. With healthy forests and streams, East Texas is perfect habitat. Wild pigs have long found the bottom land edges of LaNana creek a perfect venue for their work. The Pineywoods Native Plant Center (University property) is a nice place to hang out, bed up and camp out. Pigs are like humans - they react to consequences. When there are none, the door seems open.

Deer are a different issue. First, there's deep felt resistance by many to the killing of deer to reduce populations. They tweak our heartstrings with their form, amazing grace and wide stance eyes. They capture our soul and they're woven into our natural heritage. Unfortunately, when we allow them to pass reasonable densities per square mile of mixed forest and homes, things go terribly south. Increasing the problem of too many deer eating and not enough food, we have residents who feed deer in the city limits, attracting them, further fattening the females, further increasing the odds of good fertility and even twinning. End

(continued on page 38)



Wild hogs can cause damage to acres in a single night.

(continued from page XX)

result is more deer. For those cities who tackle the problem the goal is never zero deer. The goal is reducing the population to a level that's realistic with the urban habitat. Right now in Texas, there are many cities – particularly those with forests and plenty of cover – that find themselves with deer running amok.

Our latest battle at SFA Gardens is dealing with beavers. They have

found LaNana Creek and a few tributaries in the nearby forest a pleasant place to carve out a new home. Along the creek, we have a ½ mile stretch of Taxodium (bald cypress) genotypes under evaluation. Beaver love young bald cypress trees. We break up their dams to annoy them and over the last few years we have been forced to wrap every trunk with chicken wire. While it works, it's an aggravation and an eyesore.



Wild hogs roaming the landscape under the cloak of night.



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Finally, the smaller critters (squirrels, rabbits, possums, raccoons and armadillos) create unique problems at SFA Gardens. Squirrels gnaw and girdle the trunks and branches of maples. Armadillos kick out young plants and move drip lines here and there. In a drought, the problem is more intense. The small drip irrigated circles of moist soil are easier to dig and armadillos are quick learners. Small furry fellows gnaw drip lines to get a drink, particularly during dry spells. During the drought of 2010 and 2011, SFA Gardens was forced into creating a crew of students dedicated almost solely to daily repairs. No fun.

Here is my personal recommendation: I encourage us all to take a more proactive stance in nearby cities. Be a voice of reason. As a nurseryman, many of you have faced these same problems. Let's recognize that it's actually easier to control deer and hog populations in the countryside. In cities, deer and hog control becomes a sensitive issue. I say let's encourage a serious conversation between citizens and their local governments about what we can and should be doing. If you're running traps at your nursery, pitch in and help your city neighbors get something going. Let's find a way to deal with this intelligently. As it is, it's hard or impossible to manage herds of deer and pigs inside the city

limits of many Texas towns (no gun shots or bow hunting allowed). I'm not advocating an all out gun battle along LaNana creek. Existing City and University laws prevent that. However, other cities have chosen to thin deer and pig herds by carefully and professionally managed bow hunting. City hog trapping programs can work. Let's face facts: it's not easy to deal with the details. Most are just common sense. Property owners inside the city limits need to connect with City and wildlife officials. There are messy details that city officials and citizens must address . . . or we can simply choose to ignore the problem.

At SFA Gardens, we'll continue to wrap trees, plant deer resistant plants, and yell ugly things at wild hogs to shoo them away, but there's a reality here we shouldn't ignore. My good friend Dr. James Kroll, SFA's "Dr. Deer", one of the premier

wildlife experts in the nation, says "Daniel Boone is dead; it's all resource management now." Unless we allow mountain lions and grizzly bears to roam freely along LaNana,

there's no chance this problem will go away without city dwellers standing up and saying enough is enough. In Texas, I say that time has come. ☹

GreenVi\$ion *(continued from page 36)*

One of the best ways to determine a soils aeration, drainage and water holding capacity is to conduct a "hole test." Here are the basic steps:

- Using a post-hole digger, sharp shooter or similar instrument, dig a hole 6" – 8" in diameter and 2' deep.
 - Fill the hole approximately ½ full with water. Note the time.
 - Determine how long it takes for the water to drain from the hole
- Use the following guidelines to interpret results from the hole test:
- < 15 min = Excessive drainage. Consider adding organic matter to increase water holding capacity.

- 15 – 30 min = Adequate drainage and water holding properties. Modifications not required
- >30 min = Poor drainage. Consider raised beds or incorporating coarse textured materials to increase aeration and drainage.

Some of the content here is adopted from Chapter Three Soil Management authored by Dr. Tony Provin and John Pitt in *Earth-Kind Landscape Management* book, which just became available from AgriLife Bookstore (<http://www.agrilifebookstore.org/>; just search 'earth-kind'). Be sure to check it out. ☹

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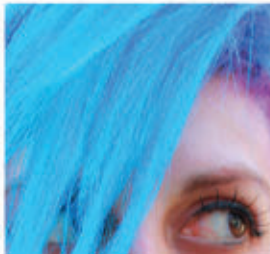
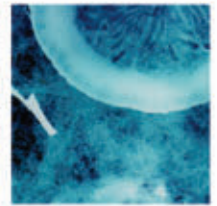
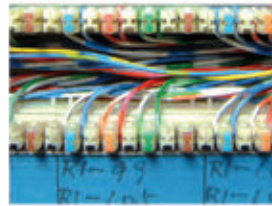
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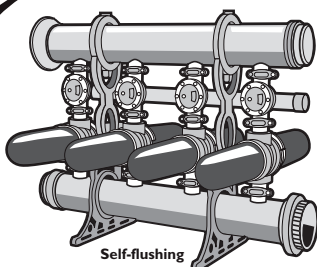
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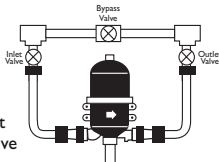
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(Application continues on next page)

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\$525	\$279	\$263	\$221	\$173	\$131	\$614
\$630	\$334	\$315	\$265	\$208	\$158	\$737
\$950	\$504	\$475	\$399	\$314	\$238	\$1112
\$1275	\$676	\$638	\$536	\$421	\$319	\$1492
\$1575	\$835	\$788	\$662	\$520	\$394	\$1843
\$325	\$172	\$163	\$137	\$107	\$81	\$380
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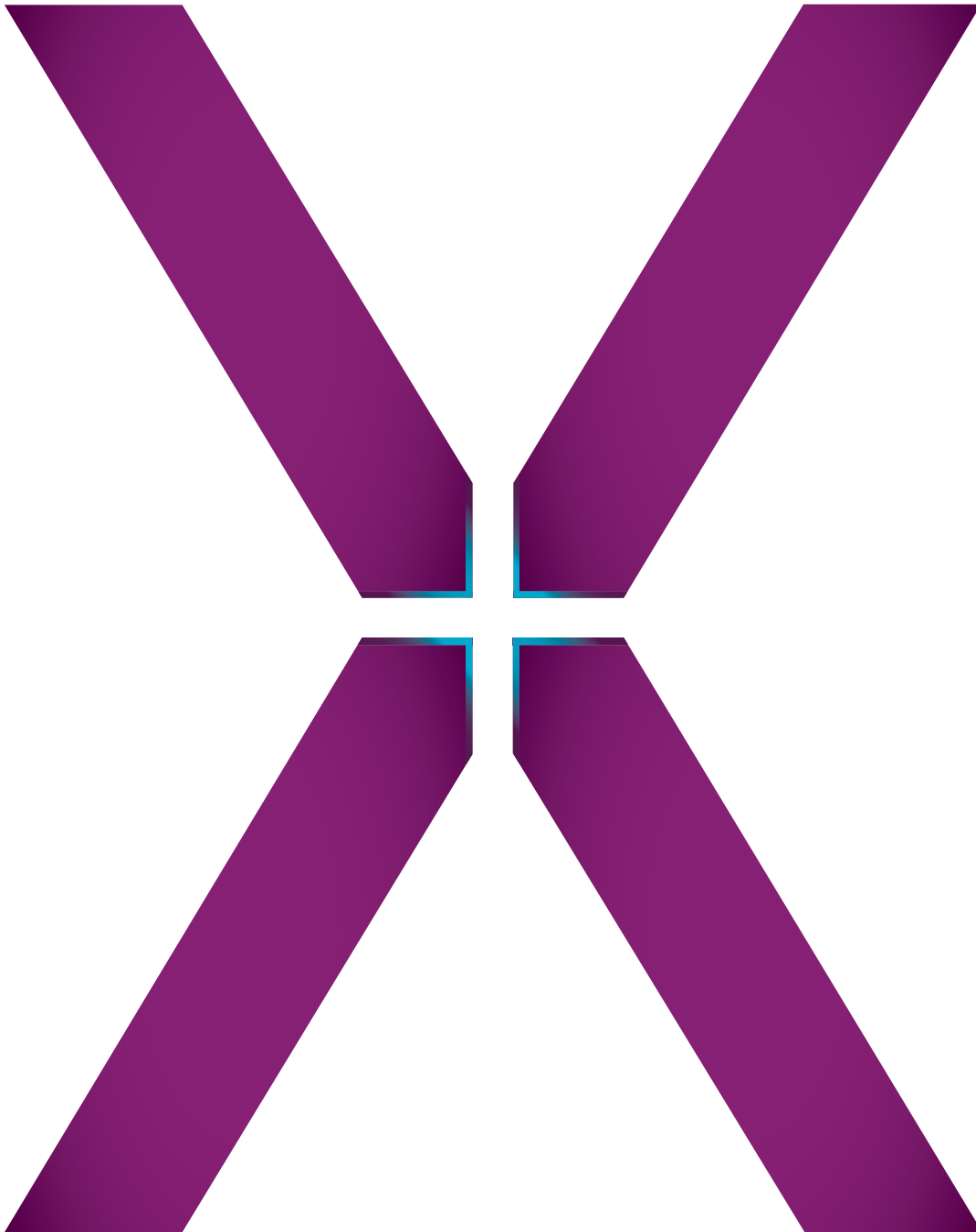
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