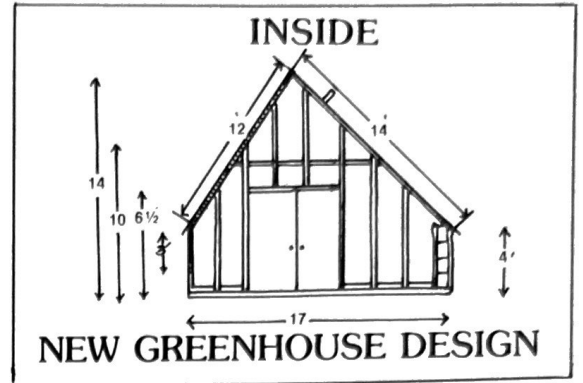


Louisiana's Nurserymen



The official publication of the Louisiana Association of Nurserymen, Inc.

Volume 4

Number 1

February 1981

LAN PRESIDENT GROWS IN HIS ROLE!



Application for L.A.N. Certified Nurseryman's Examination*

Name: _____

Address: _____

Nursery: _____

Nursery Affiliation Owner _____ Employee _____

*This application must be accompanied by a \$25.00 check or money order made payable to L.A.N. An additional charge of \$10.00 will be made for re-examination of those sections failed.

Mail to: L.A.N., Box 44492, USL, Lafayette, LA 70504

Louisiana Association of Nurserymen, Inc. Application For Membership

Officers and Members
Louisiana Association of Nurserymen, Inc.

Gentlemen:

I hereby make application for membership in your association, subject to the approval of my application by your Membership Committee. I also agree that the decision of the Membership Committee shall be considered final by myself without any appeal.

Enclosed herewith is the sum of \$____ covering my membership for the year ending January 1, 19____

DUES SCHEDULE (REGULAR MEMBERS)

\$000,000 — \$100,000 **\$35.00**

\$100,000 — \$250,000 **\$50.00**

\$250,000 — up **\$100.00**

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS: **\$35.00**

I agree that should I wish to cancel my membership at any time in the future that I must do so in writing to the secretary no later than the last day of December of the current fiscal year. Failing to do this I acknowledge my liability to your organization of the current year's dues.

Applicant's signature _____

Firm's name _____

Affiliation _____

Address _____

City, state & zip _____

Recommended by _____

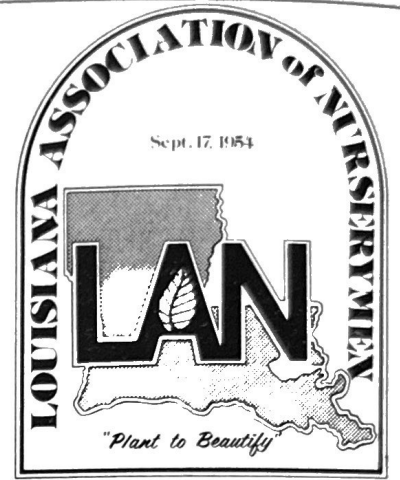
Firm's Name _____

Address _____

City, state & zip _____

Mail application blank and check to:

J. A. Foret, Secretary
USL Box 44492
Lafayette, La. 70504
Phone: (318) 235-4366



Louisiana's Nurserymen

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USL OPENS SEMINAR TO LAN

All LAN members are invited to sit in on a weekly Horticulture Business Seminar at USL. The class will include some outstanding speakers, is free to LAN members, and will give nurserymen the opportunity to meet the cream of the crop of senior horticulture students at USL. Dates, topics and speakers are listed below. For more information, contact Jane

Green at the Ira Nelson horticulture Center, (318) 264-6064. All classes will meet from 3-5 p.m. at the Nelson Center, except for Warren Purdy's 7 p.m. talk.

3/20 Retail marketing and advertising. Mary Allbritton, Beau Soleil
 3/27 Wholesale marketing. Bill Nunnally, Hines Wholesale Nurseries
 4/3 Wholesale/retail florist and grower. Donald and Cricket Heumann, Heumann Greenhouses
 4/10 Financing. Kent Langlais, Kent's Nursery
 4/24 Life insurance and tax shelters. Bob Theriot, New York Life. Workmen's compensation and liability. Nelson Knox, Knox Insurance Agency
 5/1 Supervision of personnel. Dr. Roland Cousins USL management department

2/20 Estimating costs and revenues; record-keeping. Frank Evans, Evans Garden Center
 2/27 How to make a market survey. Dr. Jim Carroll, chairman, USL marketing department. Licensing your business. Dan Davenport, director of horticultural licensing, State of Louisiana
 3/5 Managing a horticultural business. Warren Purdy, horticultural management consultant, 7:00 p.m.
 3/13 Purchasing and pricing strategies. Walter Imahara, Imahara's Nursery and Landscape Co.

ADVERTISING RATES

The following advertising rates may be tailored to specific ad sizes and dates of appearance:

Back cover.....	\$125
Inside cover.....	110
Full Page.....	100
2/3 Page.....	80
1/2 Page.....	70
1/3 Page.....	60
1/6 Page.....	35
1/12 Page.....	25

HAMMOND'S NURSERY SUPPLY DISTRIBUTOR FOR:

Chicopee shade cloth and ground cover. **Osmocote** and **Sierrablen** controlled-release fertilizers. **Pronto Gro** and **Peter's** water soluble fertilizers. **Plastic pots** from 2" to 10 gallons. **Metal cans** from 10 gallons to 45 gallons. **L.R. Nelson** sprinklers, controllers, solenoid valves, and underground systems. **Foster Grant** bedding plant containers (cell-paks and flats) **Growing Systems** growing trays. **Chloromone** rooting hormone. **West Coast** bark. **Perfect-A-Feed** fertilizer dispensers. **Sunshine** peat moss and potting mix. **Intermatic** time clocks. **Western Fiber** nursery containers. **Curtis Wagner** clear vinyl saucers. **Perky-Pet** saucers. **Deli-Dolis** and **Planters** by Hines Mfg. **Hanging Baskets** from 5 1/2" to 12". **Wire Baskets** from 8" to 30". **GreenLight** and **Wonder Gro** products. **Corona** clippers and shears. **Pine Bark** mulch and nuggets. **Tube-Lock** plastic fastener. **Dramm** nozzles and watering accessories. **Jiffy** peat pots and pellets. **Spray Doc** sprayers. **Polydress** long-life UVR plastic sheeting. **ARCO** clear and black plastic sheeting. **Chapin** spray-tubes. **Georgia Marble**. **Chipco Ronstar G** herbicide. **Sure Grow** plant bags. **Benlate**, **Banrot**, **Truban**, and **Daconil** fungicides. **FA-5 Fire Ant** insecticide. **Spray Stay** and **Wilt Prof.** **Terra-Sorb** super soil moisturizer.



CALL OR WRITE FOR LATEST CATALOG
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SCIONS OF THE TIMES

The **Louisiana** chapter of the **American Association of Nurserymen (AAN)** achieved the **greatest percentage growth** of any state chapter in the U.S. last year. To join, contact Frank Akin, AAN governor for Louisiana, at Akin's Nursery, Box 5155, Shreveport, LA 71105. The 1981 AAN convention will be held the second week of July in Cincinnati. Hawaii will host the 1982 event.

Frank Akin is still threatening to give **himself** the AAN Governor's Trophy for the most outstanding landscape job in the state, unless he receives other entries. He needs a description of the job and photos. Contact him at the above address.

William H. Kraak, former LAN president and board member, died January 15, 1981, in Ochsner Hospital, New Orleans, after an extended illness. He was owner-operator of Henry Kraak Florist and Nursery, Metairie. He was a member of the Louisiana Horticultural Commission and the New Orleans Horticultural Society.

"The **New Orleans FBI** tells me they see tractors being loaded onto ships every day—**tractors** they know are **stolen** but which they have no means of proving are stolen," said Ken Rabolet at the LAN convention. A state and national theft prevention program is now underway to combat this. To protect your equipment, you need a special stamping die set. For further information, contact Rabolet at the Baton Rouge Farm Bureau.

An excellent **guide** to the care and handling of **214 commonly retailed plant varieties** is available free from Sierra Chemical Company, 1001 Yosemite Drive, Milipitas, CA 95035. The guide lists basic light requirements, water requirements, plant size and appeal (flower, fruit, foliage).

The next regularly-scheduled LAN **Certified Nurseryman's Exam** will be Thursday, May 21 at the USL Ira Nelson Horticulture Center in Lafayette. The test begins at 8:30

a.m. and ends around 3:30 p.m. See the application form on the inside cover of this magazine for further information. If any group of 10 or more wants to schedule a special date for the test, contact LAN secretary Dr. James Foret at USL Box 44492, Lafayette, LA 70504.

Some booth space is still available for the **Spring Garden Show**, to be held April 25-26 at Delgado College. The show brings out hundreds of New Orleans gardeners and garden societies, and is intended to give them access to gardening products and services like what you offer.

The Cooperative Extension Service asks that no sales transpire during the show, however. For more information or to reserve an eight-by-eight foot booth, contact Severn Doughty at (504) 486-3736.

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WRITE FOR LISTINGS!!

PEOPLE

No rain and bad economic conditions made 1980 a below-average year for Forest Hill nurseryman **Murphy Johnson**.

A wholesale grower, Johnson operates two 30 x 96 foot greenhouses, and about an acre of container plant growing area. Four gallon potted azaleas and potted liners are staple items.

Johnson is ruminating about going to wood heat for his greenhouses; propane prices burn up too much profit.



Jimmy Mullet serves mostly commercial and industrial clients with landscaping and interior horticulture work. Much of his work is in New Orleans, but his crews go anywhere within a day's drive of home base, Covington. He employs eight. His clients include such auspicious establishments as the New Orleans Hilton.

He operates three 35 x 100 foot greenhouses, mostly to grow foliage plants for his own use. He's beginning to grow exterior plants such as jasmine and euonymus, even ginko trees.

"1980 was not quite as good for us as the previous years; we're starting to feel some competition from interior plant maintenance services in New Orleans. We'll be going more to outside landscaping, and we'll try to save some money by doing our own repair and maintenance work on equipment."



Lafayette's phenomenal building boom has done no harm to Cooper's Landscaping. **Mike Cooper** began the business with brother Mark in late 1978; most of their work is residential.

"We did better in 1980 than in 1979. We're taking a small salary and investing profits in the business. We're acquiring land, an office, greenhouses, an irrigation pump, trucks, tillers, a tractor, and other equipment. We'd like to open a retail outlet, but you need \$30-\$40,000 to get started."



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Monday

Two serious heart attacks forced LAN member **Douglas Cormier** to discover that he not only had a green thumb, but the Midas touch as well.

Five years ago he was an oil company foreman. Two bouts with open heart surgery made him a retiree from the oil patch. His doctor advised him to take up something, just to keep active.

He erected a 20 x 30 foot greenhouse, and began selling vegetable plants in his home town, Buras, which is down the Mississippi from New Orleans about 50 miles.

"The first year I wasn't making much, but people kept coming in. The next year I opened a little garden center, Delta Greenhouse. For the first three years, I didn't even have a truck. I picked up supplies and delivered plants by taking the back seat out of my car.

"Every year business picked up. My family got involved. My daughter Helen got a degree in horticulture from Nicholls State, and she went to work for me. I opened a florist shop, a small one. Area funeral homes began buying flowers from me."

The garden center grew, and Cormier even bought a neighbor's snow-

ball stand, made it pay for itself within a month, and eventually made \$10,000 sales in one summer, just in snowballs!

He still specializes in vegetable plants, but is expanding his florist operation and acquiring a 40 x 60 foot greenhouse. He'll begin raising some ornamentals and flowers, and is now in the process of hiring his first non-family workers.

Cormier's main problems come from his location. It's hard to dodge hurricanes in Buras, 'way down in the very tip-toe of the Louisiana boot. It's also hard to get anyone to ship anything there.

"I do my own trucking; no one delivers down to Buras. I've had a problem finding sources of plants, fertilizers, supplies — that's one reason I went to the LAN convention. Frank Evans has been a tremendous help in giving advice and direction; I'm successful today because of him.

"I'm in better shape now that I've ever been in my life. I'm enjoying nursery work so much, and I'm seeing how good it is for my family, the only thing I regret is that I should have started in the business as a younger man."

PEOPLE



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LAN CONFERENCE

THE OLDEST PROFESSION



The South's biggest nurseryman both amused and alarmed.

"Only a dumb Texan could stand here in the middle of the French Quarter and tell you that the oldest profession was nurseryman," said R. C. Aldridge, von Ormy nurseryman who runs the largest wholesale general nursery stock operation in the South.

Aldridge, whose Sunday School cadence complemented his Biblical allusions, said that Adam was the first nurseryman. "You and I are prone to believe our industry is a modern phenomenon," Aldridge said. He proceeded to show it was not, citing the rose gardens of the Palace of Knossos, Crete; the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, tended by 3,000 of Neb-

uchadnezzar's slaves; and a 3,000 year old mist system discovered by archeologists.

"Horticulture has always been important, and it will continue to be. The demand for our product is a drop in the bucket compared to future years."

Aldridge urged nurserymen to be as professional as possible in all areas, to pay employees a maximum rather than minimum wage, to produce the best possible product for the best possible price, and to ask a profit sufficient to sustain and improve operations.

Migrant Labor

Aldridge alarmed some Louisiana nurserymen by discussing the Farm Labor Contract Registration Act, a law which requires employers to register as farm labor contractors if they employ or transport migrant labor.

What is migrant labor? According to Aldridge, the definition is so broad that virtually every person engaged in agriculture is a migrant worker. Aldridge distinguished migrant laborers from "undocumented aliens," non-citizens who are illegally in this country.

So far, only Florida, California and Texas employers are under pressure to comply with the terms of the act, but compliance officers will soon be in Louisiana, Aldridge felt. "The Reagan administration may slow down the enforcement of this law, but we don't know that yet."

Farm labor contractors must comply with state and federal guidelines on housing for migrant labor; they must also file employee fingerprints, and provide employees with written guidelines on insurance, wages and other benefits.

Fines and criminal charges are the teeth in the Farm Labor Contract law. Aldridge advised Louisiana nurserymen to find out if they're exempt from having to register as a farm labor contractor, because they'll need to document their exemption to complicity officers.

Over 150 attended the 27th LAN held in the New Orleans Morphe random sampling of convention

PROFITABLE LESSONS

When nursery business expert Warren Purdy talked, people listened.

"The problem with the nursery industry is low net profits," Warren Purdy told his audience. "Nationally, nurserymen make an average 4% net profit. With the first bad season or bad weather a lot of operators go under."

Purdy proceeded to show how nurserymen, particularly landscape contractors, could arrive at estimating procedures so accurate that they

KNOW YOUR WEAKNESSES

Jim Johnson, Ferti-Lome representative, outlines the strengths and disadvantages of typical nursery store operations. The competitive nurseryman must identify and minimize his weaknesses.

	Nurseryman
Expertise	Knowledgeable in pesticides, growing
Product	Best looking plants, specimen plants
Advertising	Capital and skills
Margins	Full except for pro
Image	Place for expert service.
National Brand Name Products	Less important v. natural skills are av
Inventory	Full range of plants through the year
Displays	Poor to excellent

ERENCE RECAP

AN Short Course and Convention, telephone Jan 9-11. Following is a speakers, events and participants.

SSONS

could fine-tune their profit margin to exactly what the market would bear. He related a story of a nursery which, under his consultation, saw sales increases monthly despite monthly profit increments of 10%. When profit markups got to 65%, sales slumped a bit and the nursery re-trenched profitably to 62%.

With stories like that, he had a captive audience.

"Why don't nurserymen make sufficient profit? It's not because of competition, it's not from free enterprise lethargy, it's not from cheap bidders — they'll be gone after a year

R STRENGTHS

itive from Bonham, Texas, compared advan- sery operations versus typical chain discount ryman will maximize his advantages and mini-

	Discount Store
in plants, ing practices	Less knowledgeable
nts, bigger	Poorer quality.
s limited	Professional agencies produce large ads; nursery products tied to other departments; garden products prices cut to get traffic for other areas of the store
romotions	Reduced prices, high volume
advice, good	Poor service, good prices
hen horticul- available	Important with unskilled sales people
nts in stock	Less diversity; seasonal inventory to skim volume.
	Usually well done

or two — and it's not from lack of technical skills.

"It could be a lack of salesmanship," Purdy admitted. "Too often nurserymen merely order-take, they don't sell. Too often they take a job just because it's a nice job. And too often they negotiate away profits.

"But the main problem is that nurserymen and landscapers don't cover costs in their bid."

Purdy displayed a detailed system of profit and loss accounting that took into consideration the hidden production costs — things like small tools, uniforms, communications, equipment operation and maintenance, employee benefits, amortization of leasehold improvements, commission expenses, and many other items.

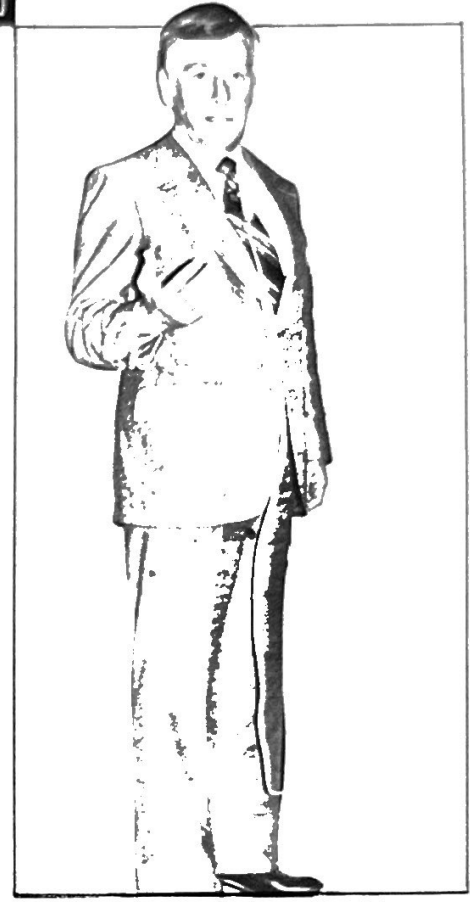
Administrative expenses often overlooked include indirect promotional items such as chamber of commerce membership, payroll taxes, auto expenses, company travel, bad debts, and so forth. Bonus expenses and profit sharing with employees are often overlooked in calculating job charges, and eventually eat up what the nurseryman thought were profits.

"I found one California nursery that lost 2% on a cost-plus arrangement," Purdy said. "They ignored production costs. Production costs can run from 35%-65% of labor costs."

Labor costs are often underestimated, Purdy showed. A foreman who ostensibly is making \$6 an hour is actually costing his employer \$17.50 an hour, when paid vacation, social security, unemployment benefits and other costs are added up. A laborer making \$4 an hour actually costs about \$11.50 an hour.

One intriguing aspect of the Purdy system for estimating landscape jobs was his frequency tables. He displayed a large chart which itemized the time required to install hundreds of different plants.

The estimator's task is made incredibly easier by these tables. He need only figure 17 trees at one



hour/tree; 25 five-gallon potted vines at 1/5 hour/vine, and so forth.

This system not only eases the estimator's job; it assists the foreman in knowing what is expected of him in accomplishing a job. "It's amazing how your foremen will zero in on those hourly estimates and beat them every time," Purdy said.

Purdy also detailed an estimator's contact report, which took into consideration the contractor, the project lender and other items crucial to many landscape jobs. His estimator's site report included such items as soil type, drainage, slope, possibility of flooding, presence of trenches, holes or obstructions — even the potential for vandalism at the site.

Purdy is the author of *Profits from Successful Management*, a book which presents his entire system in detail. It is available only through his special management seminars for nurserymen. For more information, contact the Warren Purdy Company, 2537 South Gessler, Suite 114, Houston, Texas 77063.

CONFERENCE RECAP

Warren Purdy Says:

- Don't do business with less than 35% gross profit (profit before administrative expenses).
- You *never* pay for a piece of equipment on one job.

•If you have a nursery along with a landscape service, and you import plants from other nurseries as well, add 25% to your cost for unloading and watering imported plants in your greenhouse. It's much better to ship them directly to the job.

•The minute you drop your job rate to cost plus administrative overhead, you become the employee, not the employer.

•Figure plant replacement costs separately over the year, not with the original jobs.

•If a general contractor won't tell you who the project lender is, don't go any further with the conversation.

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**CONFERENCE
RECAP**



Andrew Jackson looked the other way, as fellow politician Bob Odom, Louisiana Commissioner of Agriculture, told LAN members that agriculturists would have to feed a rapidly growing world population. Beyond the usual political niceties, Odom did voice approval of President Reagan's choice of John Block as Secretary of Agriculture.



I COULD JUST SHIT

Some pictures are worth a thousand words; this picture is worth eight words. Frank Evans was indeed just that happy, as the LAN board overruled his objections to the LAN stand on the Horticulture Act.




Dennis McCloskey, left, congratulates Rene Casadaban, Abita Springs nurseryman, on being named winner of the James A. Foret Award. McCloskey called Casadaban "the best nurseryman this state has seen or ever will see." Casadaban's Nursery was listed by Nursery Business magazine as the second-largest in the state. Casadaban is a past president of LAN, and holds a plant patent.



President Imahara affixes lifetime LAN membership pins on three pillars of the profession: Wiley "Grandpa" Roach, Dr. James Foret, and Rene Casadaban.

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A NEW GENERATION OF GREENHOUSES COMES TO LOUISIANA

Go out and take a picture of your greenhouse, making sure to show the view from north to south. Wait 25 years or so — probably less — and show that photo to someone young in your household.

"Why does it have plastic on both sides?" they will ask. If they are young, they will view the totally plastic-covered greenhouse with the same bemusement we feel when we look at an ice box, a slide rule, an Edsel, a horse-and-buggy, or any of the myriad other relics of days gone by, outmoded items that have made the endangered species list of technology.

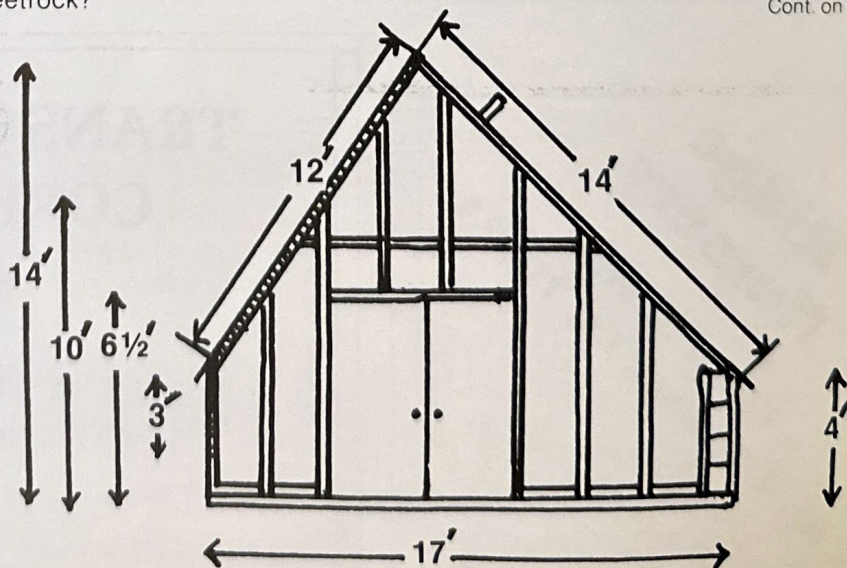
All-plastic greenhouses are simply not energy-efficient enough to survive the economics of escalating energy prices. The next generation of greenhouses will almost surely have an opaque, insulated north wall.

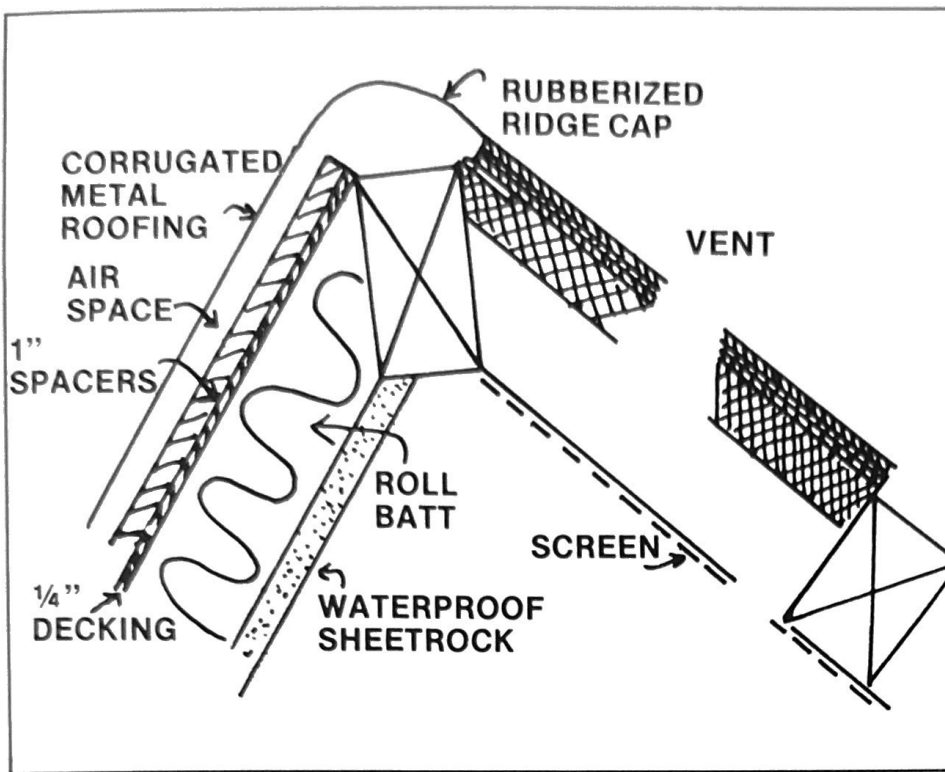
It makes perfect sense: no winter sunlight is lost by having a solid north

wall. So why have four or six thousandths of an inch of clear plastic on that north wall, when you can have six inches of R-19 fiberglass insulation sandwiched between plywood and sheetrock?

This is the powerful logic of the next generation of greenhouses. Louisiana has very few second-generation greenhouses. One currently being tested in Franklin incorporates

Cont. on p. 13





The solar greenhouse is a modified A-frame with an insulated north wall and a fiberglass south wall. Two-by-four construction (below left) makes building such a structure quick and easy. The only unconventional structural detail is a rubberized roof cap (above) which allows the hinged vent to open and close (note the open vents in the photo at left).

Greenhouse cont from p 12

design features to capture both solar and ground heat, and to utilize convection currents for summer cooling.

The greenhouse was designed by Frank Neelis, Lafayette solar designer and chairman of the Louisiana Energy Council. It was constructed by METLA, a cooperative, and is now being managed by Jake Klassen, Canadian horticulturist who operated a second-generation greenhouse in Manitoba.

Neelis' greenhouse looks like a miniature of the Air Force Academy Chapel. Its cathedral roof orients on an east-west axis, so that the south wall catches maximum winter sunlight. The south wall is clear fiberglass, laid as a double wall on both sides of two-by-fours.

The north wall is first waterproof sheetrock on the interior, white to reflect sunlight onto growing plants. Then comes R-11 fiberglass insulation stapled to two-by-fours, then quarter-inch plywood, then vertical furring strips, then corrugated tin. The furring strips are vertical to allow air to circulate between the tin and the

Cont on p 15

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The METLA cooperative will use its greenhouse for growing in-the-ground vegetable crops and bedding plants. The enclosure is probably not big enough to interest the commercial grower. No

commercial-sized greenhouses with the insulated north wall feature are yet on the market, according to a Stuppy Greenhouse Supplies spokesman.

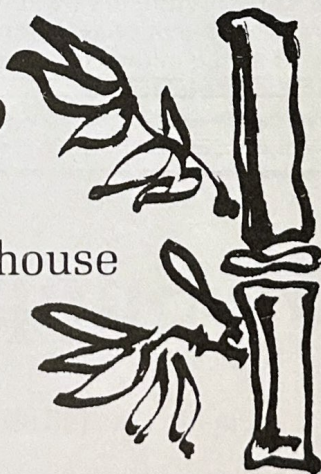
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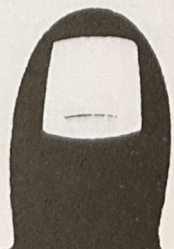
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Greenhouse cont. from p. 13

plywood, to cool the wall during the summer.

Neelis recommends using two-by-sixes on 24 inch centers, to allow six inches of R-19 insulation on the north wall.

The Franklin greenhouse is far too small to interest commercial growers — 48 by 17 feet or 816 square feet — but its principles will almost surely enter the greenhouse marketplace some day.

Other features include vents which run the length of the south wall, which

open and close automatically by means of solar pistons — devices which expand (thereby opening the vents) proportional to the heat applied to them.

The north wall is manually vented to allow summer breezes to cool the greenhouse. The south wall rests on cinder blocks which are painted black to absorb the sun's rays, and are covered with fiberglass nailed to furring strips — one more device to trap free sun-powered heat.

Beneath the cinder blocks, one-inch foam board extends one foot into

the ground. Neelis feels this will stabilize ground temperature in the greenhouse at 65 degrees with no supplemental heat.

East and west walls are plywood over two-by-four construction. Neelis feels the early morning and late afternoon sunlight lost by having opaque east and west walls is more than compensated by their insulating value.

Greenhouse manager Klassen plans to grow vegetable and bedding plants in the soil floor. Butane is available for back-up heating.

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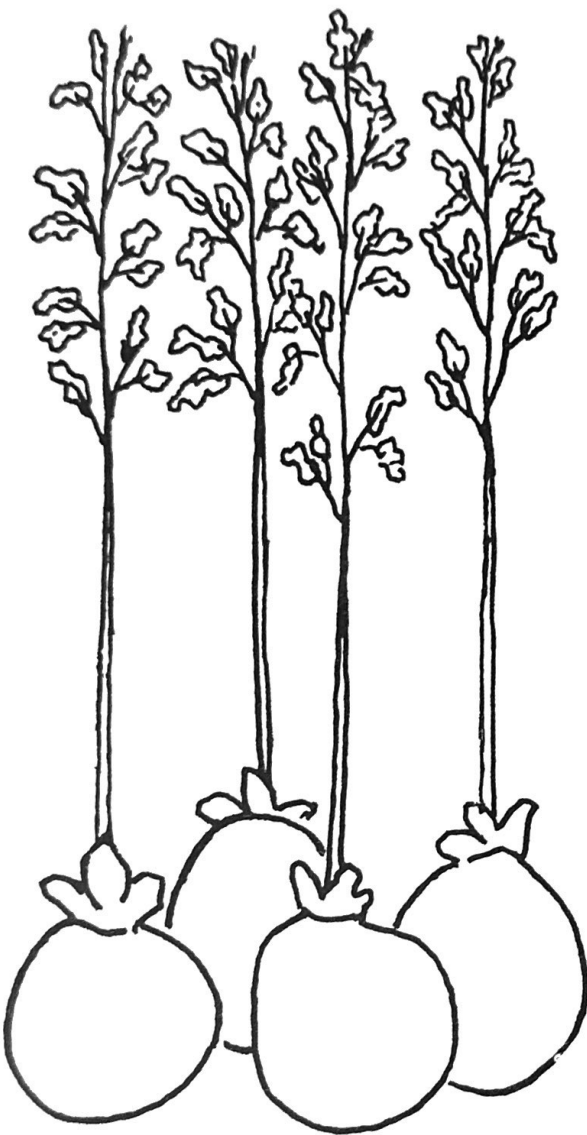
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