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Paige Worthy  
Managing Editor

## Congratulations!

Not to kill the momentum leading up to the feature in our August issue, but I just couldn't wait. So let me take this first opportunity to congratulate our three finalists for the 2008 Merchandiser of the Year competition: Hillermann Nursery & Florist in Washington, Mo.; DeWayne's Home & Garden Showplace in Selma, N.C.; and Beaver Bark Gift & Garden Center in Richland, Wash.

We were thrilled with the number of entries we received — and I think the wonderful examples of merchandising we received are testament to the dedication and creativity of everyone in this industry. Thanks to everyone who sent in their photos.

I hope you've been taking pictures all spring of your best displays and have stuck them in a folder somewhere for your 2009 entries; it's sure to be an even more challenging decision next time around!

Keep your eye out for the August issue of *Lawn & Garden Retailer* to read all about the finalists, and prepare to cast your ballot in November (well, two — one for us, and one for that other election).

— [Paige](#)

Sponsored By:

An advertisement for hortica. It features a man in a blue shirt sitting at a desk with a laptop, looking thoughtful. The background is a light green gradient. Below the image, the text reads 'To guide and provide' in a large, white, sans-serif font. At the bottom, the hortica logo is displayed, consisting of a green leaf icon above the word 'hortica' in a bold, lowercase, sans-serif font. Below the logo, it says 'INSURANCE &amp; EMPLOYEE BENEFITS' in a smaller, uppercase, sans-serif font. At the very bottom, the phone number '800-851-7740' is written in a bold, black, sans-serif font.



### **Success at 2008 OFA Short Course**

OFA Short Course turned out a satisfied crowd from this year's event. Bringing back old favorites and introducing new ideas, Short Course provided a plethora of learning and networking experiences for retailers.

[Back to top](#)



### **Metrolina Earns VeriFlora Certification**

Metrolina Greenhouses, Inc. has proven through the years that they are committed to running a sustainable business that makes a quality product and provides an amiable working environment. Scientific Certification

Systems has recognized Metrolina's achievements and awarded them the VeriFlora certification.

[Back to top](#)

### **Get Team Training at VT's "Store School"**

Growing Places Marketing has teamed up with Virginia Tech to provide a four-day workshop for independent garden centers. The workshop will be based on programs developed for industry and trade groups over the past ten years.

[Back to top](#)

### **Around the Industry**

Check out the latest from Horticultural Identification Products, OFA — an Association of Floriculture Professionals, W. Atlee Burpee & Co., Proven Winners and Hortica.

[Back to top](#)

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## Around the Industry

July 22, 2008

### HIP Meets Global Standards for Biodegradable Labels

Horticultural Identification Products (HIP) — a customized tag and labeling products company for the horticulture industry — recently announced it had met the standard specification set by ASTM International for its sustainable BioTag labeling products.

The ASTM specification establishes if products made from plastics will compost satisfactorily, including biodegrading at a rate comparable to known compostable materials. Meeting this specification is a sustainability breakthrough for HIP because it means the companies' BioTag product can be officially considered fully "compostable" based upon the composition of the product.

"Meeting ASTM's standard specification criteria further emphasizes HIP's commitment to conservation and environmental awareness," says Bob Lovejoy, president/CEO of HIP. "We understand the critical need for businesses to have a positive environmental impact and offering BioTag is a way for us to support growers in their sustainability efforts."

For more information, visit <http://www.hiplabels.com>.

### OFA Announces New Officials

OFA — an Association of Floriculture Professionals — announced at its July 12 annual business meeting, during the OFA Short Course, the election of its OFA president and vice president, as well as the election of five new members and three appointments to the OFA board of directors.

- **Bobby Barnitz** of Bob's Market & Greenhouses Inc., Mason, W.Va., was re-elected as president.
- **Danny Takao** of Takao Nursery, Fresno, Calif., was re-elected as vice president.

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