

Lesson C1–4

Managing the Nursery Business

Unit C. Nursery, Landscaping, and Gardening

Problem Area I. Nursery Production

Lesson 4. Managing the Nursery Business

New Mexico Content Standard:

Pathway Strand: Agribusiness Systems

Standard: I: Employ leadership skills to accomplish goals and objectives in an AFNR business environment.

Benchmark: I-C: Apply management skills to accomplish general business activities from production to public relations.

Performance Standard: 1. Identify management types. 2. Identify organizational structures. 3. Identify time management techniques. 4. Make business agreements. 5. Follow local, state, and federal regulations and appreciate the consequences of not following them. 6. Recruit, train and evaluate human resources. 7. Make business presentation.

Student Learning Objectives. Instruction in this lesson should result in students achieving the following objectives:

1. Describe the desirable work traits of a nursery worker.
2. Describe common tasks performed by a nursery worker.
3. Describe a common business organizational chart.
4. Describe the types of business records kept by a nursery.
5. Describe the ways nurseries advertise their stock.

List of Resources. The following resources may be useful in teaching this lesson:

Recommended Resources. One of the following resources should be selected to accompany the lesson:

Schroeder, Charles B., et al. *Introduction to Horticulture*, Third Edition. Danville, Illinois: Interstate Publishers, Inc., 2000.

Other Resources. The following resources will be useful to students and teachers:

Some professional organizations include:

American Association of Nurserymen
1250 I Street NW Suite 500
Washington, D.C. 20005-3994
Phone 202-789-2900
Fax 202-789-1893

American Horticultural Society
P.O. Box 0105
Mt. Vernon, VA 22121-0105
Phone 703-768-5700

The Garden Council
500 N. Michigan Ave. #1400
Chicago, IL 60611
Phone 312-661-1700

List of Equipment, Tools, Supplies and Facilities

- Writing surface
- Overhead projector
- Transparencies from attached masters
- Copies of student lab sheets
- Rulers
- Nursery catalogs—both for equipment and for plant material
- Plant resource books
- Art supplies
- Access to research materials—including plant references
- A poster board

Terms. The following terms are presented in this lesson (shown in bold italics):

- Advertising
- Crew leader
- Crew members
- Invoices
- Marketing
- Merchandising
- Supervisor

Interest Approach. Use an interest approach that will prepare the students for the lesson. Teachers often develop approaches for their unique class and student situations. A possible approach is included here.

Poll the class as to which students have jobs. Ask them to describe the traits that make them desirable employees. Let this lead to a discussion of the types of traits needed for workers in the nursery industry. Are there similarities between the desirable traits of nursery and non-nursery workers? Note: This lesson would be a good opportunity to incorporate the Gaining Employment lessons covered in Unit D.

Summary of Content and Teaching Strategies

Objective I: Describe the desirable work traits of a nursery worker.

Anticipated Problem: What are some of the desirable work traits of a nursery worker?

- I. Desirable work traits of a nursery worker include the following:
 - A. Likes plants and working with plants.
 - B. Enjoys working outdoors.
 - C. Enjoys working with people.
 - D. Willingness to work hard.
 - E. Willingness to assume responsibility.
 - F. Shows initiative and is self motivated.
 - G. Has sales ability and good communication skills.
 - H. Can work with hand tools and machinery.
 - I. Has technical horticulture skills.

Begin this lesson by creating a list of desirable student work traits. Some will overlap, stress those and use TM: C1–4A to show some of the more common desirable work traits. The students could also generate their own personal list.

Objective 2: Describe common tasks performed by a nursery worker.

Anticipated Problem: What are some common tasks performed by a nursery worker?

- II. A nursery worker is a person who performs the tasks required to grow, harvest, and market trees, shrubs, and/or herbaceous or woody perennials.
 - A. Common characteristics of the job
 1. Most of the work is done outside or in nursery facilities.
 2. The work is sometimes seasonal and the busy seasons are spring and fall.
 3. There are many ways to gain training for this job.
 - a. Junior college or trade school
 - b. Four year college or university
 - c. On the job training
 - B. Common tasks of the job
 1. Plant propagation
 2. Soil preparation
 3. Potting/transplanting
 4. Watering and fertilizing
 5. Pest control
 6. Pruning
 7. Harvesting and storing
 8. Grading
 9. Packaging and shipping

Use TM: C1–4B to discuss the common tasks of a nursery worker. Have the students explain why these tasks are important to the business of running a nursery. To review, the students can read the appropriate sections in the Introduction to Horticulture textbook that list some of the many occupations and what those jobs encompass.

Objective 3: Describe a common business organizational chart.

Anticipated Problem: How are nurseries organized? What occupations are there?

- III. What are some occupations found in nurseries and what do they do?
 - A. President/owner—Responsible for all aspects of the business.
 - B. Vice-president—This person or people make decisions about the operation of the nursery—including personnel, facilities, finances, etc. They are usually in charge of marketing, production, or management.
 - C. **Supervisor**—This is the plant production decision maker. Supervisors may specialize in propagation, pest control, equipment, pruning, sales, planting, harvesting, or shipping.

- D. Assistant supervisors—They may be responsible for a specific job, crop, or nursery area. They normally report to a supervisor.
- E. **Crew leaders**—They are usually in charge of a group of workers and/or a specific crop. They also may be responsible for the training of the crew.
- F. **Crew members**—Entry level positions—These workers work directly with production of plants.

This lesson should stress that different sizes of nurseries have different personnel needs. In a small nursery there may only be two people working with a seasonal staff of laborers. Display TM: C1–4C and use it to summarize how a nursery is organized.

Objective 4: Describe the types of business records kept by a nursery.

Anticipated Problem: What kinds of business records are important in a nursery?

IV. Guidelines of nursery business records.

- A. Inventory of stock—Usually this is taken annually, and verified through sales and dump records. It can also be used for tax and ordering purposes.
- B. Sales, shipping, and delivery receipts—These records keep track of where the money goes and comes from. They are usually referred to as *invoices*.
- C. Local, Federal and State Business forms
 - 1. Payroll records—Tax forms, W2's, work permits, and employment records.
 - 2. Licenses—Pesticide certification, vehicle registration, and business.
 - 3. Insurance—Workmen's compensation, liability, and premium payments.
 - 4. OSHA information and regulation dealing with worker safety.
- D. Pesticide records—This includes an inventory of chemicals and material safety data sheets, quarantine, nursery inspection, and training program records.

Stress in this lesson that nurserymen must comply with all local, state and federal laws and regulations, as well as those that specifically deal with the growing and selling of plant stock. Records have been briefly described here as legislation is constantly changing. Use TM: C1–4D to explain these records.

Objective 5: Describe the ways nurseries advertise their stock.

Anticipated Problem: How do nurseries advertise their product?

- ### V. Nurseries use advertising to sell their products. The process of advertising involves several elements and forms.
- A. Goals of advertising
 - 1. Sell products
 - 2. Get customers into the store
 - 3. Introduce new products

4. Create an interest or demand for a product
 5. Create public awareness of a product or company
- B. Elements of advertising
1. Advertising—**Advertising** is describing a product in order to entice the customer to buy it. Advertising can be a large cost in running a nursery business, but its importance cannot be overlooked. Money spent on effective advertising is money well spent. This can be considered “educating” the consumer. Considering the number of “new” plants introduced each year advertising needs to be current and understandable to the consumer.
 2. Marketing—**Marketing** means all functions involved in the buying or selling of goods or services.
 3. Merchandising—**Merchandising** is planning, advertising, and other activities involved in promoting the sale of a product.
 4. Image—This is the impression your business gives to consumers. It can be good, bad, or indifferent. Advertising and marketing should strive to make it a good image.
- C. Types of advertising
1. Print and visual—These ads are available in our society’s media venues. Magazine ads, newspapers, flyers, brochures, billboards, direct mail, in store ads, bumper stickers, plant tags, etc. Radio, T.V., and Internet ads are popular forms of electronic advertising.
 2. Business materials—These ads have a main goal of getting the name of the company out to the customer, but they may also be used to advertise a product. Signs in front of the store, business cards, yellow page ads, Internet web sites, employee uniforms, signs on equipment, etc.

It would be helpful if the teacher began this section by passing out nursery ads and talking about generalities of advertising. Use TM: C1–4E to show the characteristics of a good ad. Classroom discussion and overhead notes can be used to impart this information.

Review/Summary. Focus the review and summary of the lesson around the learning objectives. Call on students to explain the content and particularly the vocabulary associated with each objective. Use their responses as the basis for determining any areas that need re-teaching. Teacher generated questions may also be used as review.

Application

LS: C1–4A—Create a Display About Nursery Jobs

LS: C1–4B—Interview a Nursery Worker

LS: C1–4C—Create a Small Nursery Catalog

Evaluation. Sample Test and Lab Sheet responses and products produced.

Answers to Sample Test:

Part One: Matching

1=b, 2=e, 3=c, 4=a, 5=d, 6=f, 7=g, 8=h

Part Two: Completion

1. Good, bad, or indifferent
2. Work hard and assume responsibility
3. Radio, T.V., and Internet
4. Outdoors, people and plants

Part Three: Short Answer

1. Advertising is describing a product in order to entice the customer to buy it. Marketing means all functions involved in buying or selling of goods or services. Merchandising is planning, advertising and other activities involved in promoting the sale of a product.
2. Answers can include any of the following: plant propagation, soil preparation, potting/transplanting, watering and fertilizing, pest control, pruning, harvesting and storing, grading, packaging and shipping.

Sample Test

Name _____

Test

Lesson C1–4: Managing the Nursery Business

Part One: Matching

Instructions. Match the term with the correct response. Write the letter of the term by the definition.

- | | | |
|----------------|------------------|----------------|
| a. invoices | d. marketing | g. image |
| b. advertising | e. merchandising | h. supervisors |
| c. inventory | f. crew member | |

- _____ 1. Describing a product in order to entice the customer to buy it.
- _____ 2. Planning, advertising and other activities involved in promoting the sale of a product.
- _____ 3. A list of plant materials on hand.
- _____ 4. Forms used to record sales.
- _____ 5. All functions involved in buying or selling of goods or services.
- _____ 6. An entry level position in a nursery.
- _____ 7. The impression your business gives to consumers.
- _____ 8. The plant production decision makers.

Part Two: Completion

Instructions. Provide the word or words to complete the following statements.

1. Image can be _____, _____, or _____.
 2. Two important job traits are the willingness to _____ and _____.
 3. _____, _____, and _____ are three forms of electronic advertising.
 4. A nursery worker should enjoy working _____ and working with _____ and _____.
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Part Three: Short Answer

Instructions. Provide information to answer the following questions.

1. Define advertising, marketing, and merchandising.

2. List the five common tasks of nursery workers.

DESIRABLE WORK TRAITS OF A NURSERY WORKER

- Likes plants and working with them
- Enjoys working outdoors
- Enjoys working with people
- Willingness to work hard
- Willingness to assume responsibility
- Shows initiative
- Has sales ability—good communication skills
- Can work with hand tools and machinery
- Has technical horticulture skills

COMMON TASKS OF A NURSERY WORKER

- **Plant Propagation**
- **Soil Preparation**
- **Potting/Transplanting**
- **Watering and Fertilizing**
- **Pest Control**
- **Pruning**
- **Harvesting and Storing**
- **Grading**
- **Packaging and Shipping**

NURSERY ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

President/Owner

Vice-President—Makes decisions about the overall operation of the nursery—including personnel, facilities, finances, etc. Usually in charge of marketing, production, or management.

Supervisor—Plant production decision makers. May specialize in propagation, pest control, equipment, pruning, sales, planting, harvesting, or shipping.

Assistant Supervisors—May be responsible for a specific job, crop, or nursery area.

Crew Leaders—Usually in charge of a group of workers and/or a specific crop, may be responsible for training of the crew.

Crew Members—Entry level positions—works directly with production of plants.

GUIDELINES OF NURSERY BUSINESS RECORDS

- A. Inventory of stock—Usually this is taken annually, and verified through sales and dump records. It can also be used for tax and ordering purposes.**
- B. Sales, shipping, and delivery receipts—These records keep track of where the money goes and comes from. They are usually referred to as invoices.**
- C. Local, Federal and State Business forms**
 - 1. Payroll records—Tax forms, W2's, work permits, and employment records.**
 - 2. Licenses—Pesticide certification, vehicle registration, and business.**
 - 3. Insurance—Workmen's compensation, Liability, and worker's.**
 - 4. OSHA information and regulation**
- D. Pesticide records—This includes an inventory of chemicals and material safety data sheets, quarantine, nursery inspection, and training program records.**

QUALITIES OF A GOOD SALES AD

- **Captures consumers attention**
- **Identifies and fills a consumer need**
- **Explains key features clearly and concisely**
- **Is easily understandable—Has included price and eliminated objections to purchase**
- **Generates consumer action**
- **Business information included—Name, address, phone, hours, directions, etc.**

Lab Sheet

Create a Display About Nursery Jobs

Objective:

To allow the student to research, organize, and present nursery career information.

Materials needed:

paper
pen or pencil
access to research materials
a poster board
art supplies

Procedure:

1. Given time to research the student should gather information about the nursery as a career.
2. The student should then organize the information and fill in any missing areas.
3. The student should put the information on a poster board in a creative, organized and attractive manner.
4. The student should be given the opportunity to share their information either with the class or the teacher.

Questions:

1. What were three things you learned about this career that surprised you?
2. What is the salary range for this career?
3. What are some job benefits for this career?
4. Who are some common local employers for this career?

Lab Sheet

Interview a Nursery Employee

Objective:

To prepare for a nurseryman's visit and to be able to generate a more thorough interview and understanding of nursery practices.

Materials:

this lab sheet
paper
pen or pencil

Procedures:

1. Students should look over notes for the nursery unit.
2. Given time, students should individually or in pairs generate a list of questions.
3. The guest speaker should arrive and begin presenting.
4. At the appropriate time, or at the end of the presentation, the students should ask their questions and record the answers given.
5. Record your questions, and the answers given, below or on the back of this lab sheet.

Teachers can arrange for a guest speaker from the professional organizations at the beginning of this unit, local junior colleges, personal resource people, or through a local nursery. This can also be an assignment where the students must secure an individual interview with a nursery employee.

Lab Sheet

Create a Small Nursery Catalog

Objective:

The student will prepare a mini-nursery “catalog” with the appropriate information and presentation.

Materials needed:

paper
pen or pencil
art supplies
Access to research materials—including plant references

Procedure:

1. The teacher and the students should agree to the information that must be presented about each plant.
2. As a way to better manage limited plant references it is recommended that the teacher assign a plant type to each student or pair of students. i.e. deciduous trees or deciduous shrubs, etc.
3. Given time to research, the student should gather information about their plant material.
4. The student should then organize the information and fill in any missing areas.
5. The student should put the information on a paper in a creative, organized and attractive manner.
6. The student should be given the opportunity to share their information either with the class or the teacher.
7. These “catalogs” can be three-hole punched and turned into a classroom reference.