
Australian Region Celebrated Its 25th Anniversary

The Australian Region of the I.P.P.S. celebrated its 25th Anniversary at this Conference. The first technical session was a reflection by a group of our founding members on 25 years of plant propagation developments and how they have helped my business. It was a privilege to listen to some of the history of our Society recounted by these elder statesmen who have been inspirational mentors to many of the current membership.

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Fogging and Misting

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INTRODUCTION

The importance of water to a plant is self evident to all of us who live and work in the Plant Kingdom. This importance is multiplied a thousand fold when cuttings are taken and we expect them to root. With leafy and softwood cuttings it is critical that we maintain an atmosphere supercharged with moisture to keep the cuttings in a turgid condition. By using mist and fog to hold humidity at desired levels a modern plant nursery maintains cuttings in a turgid condition to prevent wilting. This enhances rooting.

What is the history and background to our use of fog and mist? In preparing this paper I found in Volume 1 of the I.P.P.S. Proceedings from 1951, 46 years ago, a paper presented by Professor L.C. Chadwick of Ohio State University titled *Controlling Humidification as an Aid to Vegetative Propagation*. From the way this paper reads mist as a tool in propagation was still new in commercial applications but had been used in research at Ohio State. The paper outlines systems available at that time. The first commercial application is outlined by James S. Wells in his book *Plant Propagation Practices* published in 1955. He also outlines early work at Rutgers and Michigan State as well as Ohio State Universities.

The first mention of fog in commercial use in I.P.P.S. Proceedings is in Volume 8 in 1958 and was titled *The Propagation of Softwood Cuttings in a Fog House* by E. Stroombeck of Warner Nursery, Ohio. In this paper he mentions seeing a fogging device which he found in use in Holland in 1957. This machine had been designed for industrial purposes. Before these advances a predominance of cuttings were hardwood taken when the plants were dormant. They were often covered with bell jars or grown in Dutch lights. The advent of mist and fog saw a surge in the range of plants grown through the use of softwood cuttings.

Therefore there is little need to address the benefits of fog and/or mist. There are many technical papers in the I.P.P.S. Proceedings already. These are case histories of the day-to-day experiences of propagators with specific plants. They are an invaluable resource.