General Session III: Question and Answer Session©

Nevin Smith: I've heard anecdotally about the toxic effects of nursery soil when it's relatively fresh because of the phenols in the various barks and in our case, redwood sawdust, on mycorrhizae, and I wonder whether you've found it pays to delay mycorrhizae inoculation for weeks or months or have you found no effect with the VAM8?

Lea Corkidi: It's a complicated situation with the different mycorrhiza, the types of fertilizer being used, etc. and all of them can have an effect, but I don't know of any general effect that any particular container medium can have.

Charles Heuser: I have a question about disease transmission. I only thought about it when you made an off-hand comment and that was that one mychorrizal organism can infect more than one plant. Yesterday, we heard how viruses could be translocated throughout the plant. Is there any work on the transmission of viruses from one plant to another plant where there was one mycorrhizal agent on both of them?

Lea Corkidi: Mycorrhizae are very funny organisms. The hyphae are not septate so the nuclei of the fungus are traveling around in the hyphae, and therefore, there are many mycorrhizal fungi in one plant, particularly with vesicular arbuscular types. They found this only by molecular techniques. It's difficult to separate species, but you can separate genera because some form vesicles and some don't. I've not heard of viruses being transmitted via mycorrhizae.

Dale Pollock: Are there organic fertilizers in the soil mix?

John Keller: It contained inorganic, coated-type, slow-release fertilizer. It had compost in it which has quite a bit of nutrition as well.

Richard Criley: Have you worked with any materials that contain gibberellins and/or cytokinins that supposedly stimulate growth quite a bit?

John Keller: Yes, we have worked with some of those. Most didn't result in as much benefit as manufacturer examples had shown. However, a few did seem to have some beneficial effect, but we're currently not using any of them.