

April 2008

NHC NEWS

A Monthly Bulletin of the Northwest Horticultural Council

Produce Executive Development Program

For the second straight year, United Fresh Produce Association partnered with Cornell University's Johnson Graduate School of Management in Ithaca, New York to provide a top flight motivational and educational experience to forty individuals from the many segments of the produce industry.

The Power of Sleep- "Everything you should know about sleep, but are too tired to ask!" was just one of the excellent presentations made during the United Fresh Produce Executive Development Program held the week of March 9th. Dr. James B. Mass informed the group about the necessity of sleep for peak business performance. Research shows that the quantity and quality of sleep is critical to physical brain function. Memory, learning, problem solving and other key performance drivers suffer when the brain does not reach certain stages of the sleep cycle.

During the course of the week, participants were immersed for nine to ten hours each day in leadership, management, finance and marketing sessions with one afternoon largely devoted to a supply chain simulation exercise. The learning environment was pleasantly interactive with a great deal of opportunity for exchanges between faculty and attendees.

Networking opportunities were not sacrificed to academic rigor. Breakfast, lunch and dinner as well as a group project (positioning Tops to better compete with retail competitors ALDI and Wegmans) provided ample time to meet with counterparts.

Guest speaker Jim Prevor, "The Perishable Pundit," presented the timely subject *Sustainability*

as a Strategic Imperative. While the Wm. Wrigley Jr. Company sent a team from corporate headquarters in Chicago to describe that firm's incredible (some might say enviable) process for developing and bringing a new breath mint product to market.

A modern day development program would not be complete without some sort of psychological analysis. Two types of confidential evaluations were conducted: the FIRO-B® (*Fundamental Interpersonal Relations Orientation-Behavior™*) and the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (TKI). Incorporating the insights gained through these assessments into a daily work routine is a challenge and the entire week could have been spent exploring the implications of these tests alone.

An abbreviated list of the companies that sent staff or owners to Ithaca for the week includes: John Deere Agri Services; River Ranch Fresh Foods, LLC; Syngenta; Duda Farm Fresh Foods, Inc.; FMC Technologies; C.H. Robinson Worldwide, Inc.; The Kroger Company; Sinclair Systems International, Inc.; Driscoll's; and, the L & M Companies. Representatives of firms from our own area--Domex Superfresh Growers; Sage Marketing; the Washington Apple Commission and the Northwest Horticultural Council (Mark Powers)--also attended.



APRIL

An evocative passage from Simon Schama's book *The Power of Art*:

"It was a shock, then, to alight from the train and find Arles deep in snow. Disconcerted but not

despondent, van Gogh took a room in a cheap hotel near the station and saw something that spoke to him of the inevitability of spring awakening: a peach tree standing in the snow, its boughs laden with blossom. He drew and painted it and dreamed of orchards, all resolutely budding in the chill. Come April and the thaw, the dreams had become reality; van Gogh filled his vision with a parade of blossoming fruit trees – almond, apricot, plum – and covered his canvases with their delicate dance of pale petals. It was his hymn of rebirth.”



April 17 - Meeting of the NHC’s Executive Committee, Yakima, Washington.

April 22 – NHC Foreign Trade Committee meeting, Yakima, Washington.

April 29 - Pacific Northwest Food Safety Committee meeting, Ellensburg, Washington.

Travel

Christian Schlect

April 7-11 – Meetings of the United Fresh Produce Association’s Government Relations Council, Washington, D.C.

Mark Powers

April 2-4 – Meeting of the USDA Agriculture Technical Advisory Committee for Fruits & Vegetables, Washington, DC.

April 23-25 - Meeting with WSDA, ODA and CDFA to discuss California cherry permits, Sacramento, California.

Mike Willett

March 31-April 5 - Azinphos-Methyl spring meeting, Washington, D.C.

Senator Byrd tended his power in the Senate as he cultivated his apple orchards, which lay blissfully productive on the beautiful acres of the Byrd estates. Both his power and his apples were ripe, fat, and shiny.

Jack Valentini

This Time, This Place:

My Life in War, the White House, and Hollywood

The Northwest Horticultural Council represents the deciduous tree fruit industry of Idaho, Oregon and Washington on national and international policy matters of interest to growers and shippers. Its members are:

- *Columbia Gorge Fruit Growers*
- *Fruit Growers League*
- *Idaho Apple Commission*
- *Oregon Sweet Cherry Commission*
- *Pacific Northwest Canned Pear Service*
- *Washington Apple Commission*
- *Washington State Fruit Commission*
- *Washington Tree Fruit Research Comm.*
- *Wenatchee Valley Traffic Assn.*
- *Yakima Valley Growers-Shippers Assn.*

The NHC also advises the Fresh Pear Committee (Portland) on certain issues related to food safety, crisis control and international trade.



- **Christian Schlect**, President
- **Mark Powers**, Vice President
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