



## ALASKA PEONY GROWERS ASSOCIATION, INC.

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### APGA Data

- We have 98 members as of Dec 2011. Of those, 17 have marketable quantities of peonies (over 500 plants in the ground).
- Member farms are located from Homer to North Pole
- Peonies bloom in Alaska in July, August, and September and nowhere else in the world during this time.
- In 2011, approximately 10,000 cut stems were sold for an average price of \$4.00 per stem.
- Peony stems were shipped to Oregon, Rhode Island, Florida, California, Texas, Iowa, Colorado, New York, Pennsylvania, Hawaii, Canada, & Japan and numerous other locations
- In the US, cut flowers are a multi-million dollar industry. In 2009, The United States wholesale cut flower and foliage production was a \$433 million business. No data was available for US peony cut flower production. In 2008, 50 million stems of fresh cut peonies were sold through Dutch floral auctions, and the number is expected to exceed 100 million stems by 2012.
- There are over 50,000 peony roots in the ground on peony farms in Alaska and farmers are continuing to add roots at over 10,000 roots per year.
- Standard production figures are for 10 cuts per plant. With 50,000 roots, 500,000 cuts per year are expected by 2015. This equates to between 1 and 2 million dollars a year in sales at a conservative estimate of \$2-\$4 per stem.
- Value per acre: 2500-5000 plants per acre x 10 cuts per stem x \$2 to \$4 per stem equals \$50,000 to \$100,000 production value per acre
- Worldwide, buyers have indicated strong interest including a buyer in London who has a standing order for 100,000 stems per week as soon as we can start providing them.

### *Results of USDA Agricultural Research Service loss to Alaska*

- Alaska is losing \$5.4 million of agriculture and fish research
- 10 scientists and 32.5 FTE (full-time equivalent) positions including
  - A geneticist and support technician
  - A horticulturist and support technician
  - A research plant pathologist and support technicians (2)
- Impacted agricultural research includes potato, peony, currants, raspberry, rhubarb, and blueberry.

- As a result, Alaska will no longer have any horticultural entomologist, weed scientists, geneticists, or virologists in the entire state.

*Results of UAF School of Natural Resources and Agricultural Sciences internal restructuring*

- Two faculty members are currently working on peonies in SNRAS. Both positions have been cut to  $\frac{3}{4}$  time. All peony research conducted by these faculty members will be impacted, delayed, or eliminated except for the USDA funded phenology study.

*How can you, the public official, support this growing industry*

- Provide funding and support for focused research and marketing
  1. Marketing
    - Include information about the Alaskan peony industry in all state marketing efforts
    - Small business development planning assistance
  2. Research
    - Crop Improvement
      - Season extension and season uncertainty, ie, winter survival
      - Plant breeding, ie, cultivar identification, diversity determination, winter hardiness
      - Soils & nutrition, ie, soils nutrient deficiencies, symptoms in plants, fertilizer recommendations, nutrient uptake.
      - Disease management, ie, Botrytis and viruses
      - Pest management, ie pest identification, pest control determinations, and pesticide certifications
      - Weed control, ie, weed surveys with control recommendations and herbicide certifications
      - Plant phenology, ie, plant and bud development, bud maturity to accurately predict product availability
    - Post harvest
      - Post harvest storage guidelines
      - Storage life extension

There is no need for additional facilities as they are already available