

Ohio State University Extension 2003 Buckeye Yard and Garden Line Evaluation Survey

Amy K. Stone and James A. Chatfield

Summary

One hundred fifty-two respondents completed and returned the 2003 *Buckeye Yard & Garden Line (BYGL)* Survey. From their subscriptions, information from *BYGL* is then further disseminated to more than 800,000 additional persons through radio programs, newspaper columns and articles, Master Gardener volunteers, students, and other green-industry employees.

Some 91% of the survey respondents agreed that *BYGL* was useful to their job and business. Of the individuals who responded to the survey, *BYGL* has had an estimated economic impact of \$267,000. This is a significant under-representation of the economic impact, since no attempt was made to translate the reported impact to the overall *BYGL* audience.

Introduction

The *Buckeye Yard & Garden Line (BYGL)* is one of the key ways through which Ohio State University Extension and the Extension Nursery Landscape and Turf (ENLT) Team provide ornamental plant and plant problem information to the

green industry, Extension offices, and the general public. This article answers some questions about *BYGL* and provides the results of the 2003 *BYGL* Evaluation Survey.

What Is *BYGL*?

The *Buckeye Yard & Garden Line (BYGL)* is a weekly update in the form of a horticultural related newsletter. It is written by OSU Extension agents and specialists, from a conference call held every Tuesday from April – September, with special editions throughout the late fall and winter as needed. *BYGL* is funded by the Ohio Nursery and Landscape Association (ONLA) and OSU Extension, with additional contributions from the Ohio Chapter of the International Society of Arboriculture (Ohio-ISA).

Who Is *BYGL*'s Audience?

BYGL is written for green-industry professionals, Extension agents, Master Gardener volunteers, and other horticulturists in Ohio and throughout the United States, especially the Midwest.

Some of those receiving *BYGL* are members of the following: ONLA; ISA; Ohio Turfgrass Foundation (OTF); Ohio Florists Association (OFA); Ohio Fruit Growers; Ohio Vegetable and Potato Growers Association; Ohio Christmas Tree

Amy K. Stone, Ohio State University Extension, Lucas County; and James A. Chatfield, Ohio State University Extension, North District/Department of Horticulture and Crop Science.

Association; Ohio Lawn Care Association (OLCA); Ohio Association of Garden Clubs; Ohio Sod Producers Association; American Association of Botanical Gardens and Arboreta (AABGA); American Horticultural Society (AHS); Associated Landscape Contractors of America (ALCA); American Community Gardening Association (ACGA); Perennial Plant Association (PPA); and Professional Grounds Management Society (PGMS).

How Do You Receive *BYGL*?

There are three ways to receive *BYGL* — by e-mail, by fax subscription, and by going directly on the World Wide Web. Here's how:

- By e-mail: Simply send your e-mail address to Jim Chatfield:
chatfield.1@osu.edu
- On the World Wide Web: Access *Buckeye Yard and Garden onLine* on Ohio State University's Horticulture and Crop Science in Virtual Perspective
<http://bygl.osu.edu/>
- For fax newsletter subscriptions: Contact one of these Ohio State University Extension offices:

Clark County
Pam Bennett
937-328-4607

Clermont County
Gary Gao
513-732-7070

Cuyahoga County
Tim Malinich
216-397-6000

Franklin County
Jane Martin
614-247-6046

Hamilton County
Joe Boggs
513-946-8993

Lake County
Randy Zondag
440-350-2269

Lucas County
Amy Stone
419-578-6783

Montgomery County
Pete Lane
937-224-9654

Putnam County
Glen Arnold
419-523-6294

Is There a Cost for *BYGL*?

Fax subscriptions have a \$40 fee to cover phone line costs.

If you are a member of the Ohio Nursery and Landscape Association (ONLA), the Ohio Chapter of the International Society of Arboriculture (Ohio-ISA), or the Ohio Turfgrass Foundation (OTF), this fee is waived as part of your membership benefits.

Where Can You Find the Time for *BYGL*?

Reading time during the growing season comes at a premium, and that is why *BYGL* is formatted in short bytes — one to two paragraphs — of the most relevant information on a particular topic.

We also strive for a lively, user-friendly, and humorous style.

What Is *Buckeye Yard and Garden onLine*?

This is the World Wide Web version of *BYGL*, and it comes not only with the text of *BYGL* available but also with hot links to color images of pests and plants referenced in *BYGL* and to more than 260,000 pages of information from Ohio State University and other land-grant universities.

What is *BYGLive!*?

BYGLive! is a series of informal programs held at arboreta in Ohio. The participants have a chance to see plants and plant and pest development throughout the season, to do some diagnostic troubleshooting, and to provide observations and insights that will add to *BYGL*.

Sites and key contacts for these programs are:

- Cincinnati at Spring Grove Arboretum
Joe Boggs
513-946-8993
- Kirtland at Holden Arboretum
Erik Draper
440-834-4656
- Toledo at Stranahan Arboretum or Toledo Botanical Garden
Amy Stone
419-578-6783
- Wooster at Sequest Arboretum
Ken Cochran
330-263-3761

Survey Results

Total Number of Returns: 152

I. General Background Questions

- A. What is your primary type of business, operation, or profession?

Number of Commercial or For-Profit Companies: 82

(e.g.: nursery; greenhouse; golf course; lawn-care service; contract landscape maintenance; tree care/arborist; garden center; industrial or office park/plant; landscape architect/designer; or supplier/dealer)

Number of Non-Profit Companies: 37
(e.g.: Extension; park, school, college, or university; museum; cemetery/memorial garden; or government facility)

Number of Non-Professional: 46
(e.g.: home gardener or Extension Master Gardener)

- B. Are you a member of the following (please select all that apply):

Ohio Nursery and Landscape Association: 58

International Society of Arboriculture: 24
Ohio Turfgrass Foundation: 11

- C. How do you receive *BYGL*?

E-mail – 118

Fax – 29

- D. Do you share your *BYGL* with others?

Yes – 131

No – 21

II. *BYGL* Impact and Usefulness

- A. How strongly do you agree with each of the following statements? Please write down the most appropriate response.

SA = Strongly Agree

A = Agree

N = Neutral

D = Disagree

SD = Strongly Disagree
 NA = Not Applicable

1. BYGL was useful to my job and business:

SA = 92
 A = 45
 N = 03
 D = 00
 SD = 00
 NA = 10

2. BYGL helped in answering client/customer questions:

SA = 86
 A = 45
 N = 05
 D = 00
 SD = 00
 NA = 10

3. I (we) changed some horticultural practices based on information in BYGL.

SA = 46
 A = 57
 N = 30
 D = 02
 SD = 00
 NA = 11

4. I (we) changed some pest management practices based on information in BYGL.

SA = 44
 A = 55
 N = 30
 D = 03
 SD = 00
 NA = 15

5. BYGL has resulted in improved customer service in our company or business.

SA = 50
 A = 52
 N = 09
 D = 00
 SD = 00
 NA = 21

B. What have you learned from BYGL this season? Please fill in the blank following each statement.

- | | |
|---|-------|
| 1. No. of new insects learned | 743 |
| 2. No. of new diseases learned | 316 |
| 3. No. of new cultural (non-insect, non-disease) problems learned | 299 |
| 4. No. of times pesticide use was improved | 1,267 |

C. Has the information in BYGL saved your company money or increased your net profit?

Yes = 68
 No = 40

1. If you answered Yes to question C, please check all that apply. This information will only be used for reporting the economic impacts of BYGL.

Time savings to you and your operation = 50
 Reduction of pesticide usage = 34
 Proper selection of plant material = 28
 Proper selection of pesticides = 47
 Improved customer service = 50

Selected Comments

My favorite weekly contact with the "big guns" of the industry. As always, I appreciate the humor and wonderful quotes.

— Louise Radanovich
Trees by Louise

Very informative – opens our eyes to things [that] otherwise would have gone unnoticed. As always, look forward to the next issue.

— Gregg Ellis
City of Pickerington

An excellent resource for those of us working with the public. Your informal style makes your online magazine easy to read, yet is full of scientific research-based information which serves the needs of the serious scholar and the frantic horticulture tech searching for reasonable answers to unreasonable questions.

— Carol Wilder
*University of Kentucky Extension
 Jefferson County*

I share BYGL with my clients and students, and it is an extremely valuable resource for me when I am guest "expert" on GreenScene, WOSU.

*—Deb Knapke
The Garden Sage*

BYGL is one of the most informative, entertaining, and educational material[s] I've ever read!

*—Paul Mendezoff
Petitii Garden Centers*

BYGL has been a great source of information. Keep up the good work!

*—Jerry Wolfe
North Canton City Schools*

The newsletter is a reliable source of information that is useful in dealing with local insect and disease problems. On several occasions, BYGL information has identified problems that we encounter later in the growing season in NW Ohio.

*—Jim Lopshire and Vicky Steele
OSU Extension, Paulding County*

BYGL is very helpful in diagnosing problems that our clients bring into the office, especially reminding us of what problems we may be seeing. We are located in Genesee County, Michigan, and use BYGL when we are volunteering as Diagnostic Lab Technicians at MSU Extension two days a week from May to October.

*—Ruth Simon
MSU Extension Master Gardener
Genesee County, Michigan*