

MUTUAL BENEFITS

John F. Gerber and Robert C. Kramer¹

Joe and Bill, two local businessmen, face bankruptcy. After discussing their plight, they decide to begin a new business together. The new business is a smashing success! What was the difference? The reason the businesses were failing was that each did part of the business superbly and the other part terribly. Together they managed a superbly run business. This demonstrates that together it is possible to accomplish things that alone may be impossible. Mutual benefit extends beyond business to relations between institutions, organizations, and individuals. Such shared responsibility or partnership is underused and under appreciated. IFAS of the University of Florida is interested in building these partnerships whereby successes can be built where failures might otherwise occur.

The ornamental horticulture industry and the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences promote cooperation. Sometimes it is difficult for IFAS alone or the industry alone to find the necessary resources and expertise to solve problems. Even though cooperation does not offer the sheer exhilaration of intense competition, with cooperation all benefit, and like the rising tides raise all ships. If through cooperation, the market for foliage products can be expanded, the quality improved, the production costs reduced, everyone including the purchasers will benefit.

The production of plants from cuttings, from clonings, and cell culture, disease resistance, insect management, the climatization of plants, introduction of genetic material — all are closely related to basic research, some of it performed years ago, some of it performed recently.

IFAS is multifaceted. Everyone comes to the University for basically the same reason. Students come to short-circuit experience and to learn from the experience of others. Scientists come to the University to perform research, structure experience in search of information, producers and lay people seek assistance from the University through the extension of knowledge and experience via the cooperative extension service. *These are three of the facets of IFAS: to provide (1) the basic science and technology, (2) the education needed by the leaders of science and industry, and (3) to extend this knowledge in a free-flowing open forum to everyone in need of technology.*

When a business or industry thrives, the benefits flow back immediately as profits. When a research, teaching or extension program thrives, the benefits flow to those businesses which are served. Funds, for additional research and teaching, or extra buildings, are not automati-



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cally generated. Therefore, it is mutually beneficial for your industry, as it thrives and benefits, to assign a portion of these profits to support the needs of the institution that helped make this partnership successful. It is individual scientists who discover things — not the institution. The support is not for the institution per se but for the support of those individuals who supply the creativity and the ideas that build the partnership.

Creative individuals are usually ahead of their time. By being ahead of their time, they lay the basis for new industries, such as the basis that was laid for the ornamental industry. Funds for creative programs are always limited. Institutions and trade associations are formed only in response to thriving industries. An important investment in this partnership is funding to support new, innovative, creative and sometimes what appear to be far-out or blue sky ideas. But these are the ideas that are the guideposts for the pioneers in research. Columbus' trip to the New World was not funded by the "Flat Earth Society," but rather by a daring and innovative queen who did not know what lay beyond the horizon. Ideas and work on those concepts which lay over the horizon and will become tomorrow's technology are an essential part of support to IFAS-SHARE. This is a commitment to the future — faith in the new ideas that entrepreneurial scientists visualize not only as ideas, but concepts; flowers that bloom out of season, genetic resistance to diseases, and plant materials now common to Florida which were once a botanical curiosity.

Prior investments in IFAS enabled the industry to take off and succeed in many areas. There are IFAS faculty

members who have provided important nurture and helped lead and develop the ornamental horticulture industry in Florida. There are many others who have played significant, important roles. All of these people were once students and graduate students. They helped make the partnership profitable and helped build the synergisms that built this industry.

Research is a powerful teacher. Especially for students who will become managers, technicians, and innovators who are the backbone of any industry. Without research and graduate students, teaching is stagnant, stereotyped, and out of touch with the reality of changing technology in industry. To attract the brightest and the best students to the horticulture industry, it is necessary to attract the brightest and best students to IFAS. These students are quick to grasp where the best salaries are and the best opportunities for economic and professional advancement. Industry in this area has a responsibility to provide good economic opportunities, nurturing, and encouragement during student careers. Graduate students constitute an intellectual resource for the industry that forms the basis of the technology for expansion and development of the industry. These students need assistance and encouragement. Graduate careers are not high-paying careers, but are very rewarding in terms of satisfaction and service.

Gifts or grants which flow to students, especially graduate students, create an environment that demonstrates the regard in which they are held, encourage their careers, and benefits them economically. Perhaps other incentives to attract these "cream of the crop" students to the Uni-

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versity could be the payment of fees or the provision of special scholarships and assistantships. The return on this investment is graduate students doing research and designing experiments to be conducted in Florida nurseries, green houses, and production sites.

All institutions, including universities, are hampered with "rules of the road" that make up bureaucracies. However, "where there is a will, there is a way," and industry can help IFAS do it!

An investment in a partnership with IFAS made in the form of a gift, is made to SHARE. Entering into a partnership to conduct a specific project with mutual benefits to the partners in a specific way, is made as a contract or a grant. Both gifts to IFAS-SHARE and contracts and grants to IFAS-Grants are investment opportunities for businesses and individuals to build cooperation successes just as Joe and Bill did when they pooled their individual strengths to avoid bankruptcy. ■

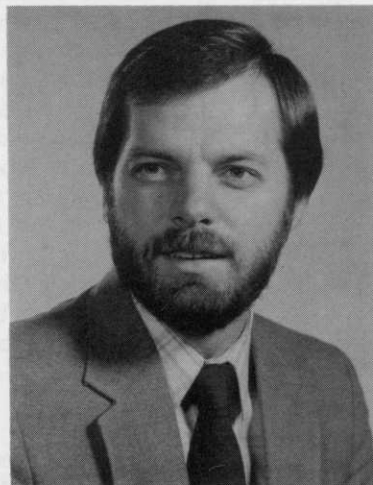
¹Dr. John F. Gerber is the Director of the IFAS Grants office and Dr. Robert C. Kramer is the Director of Sponsored Programs and Development in IFAS at the University of Florida.

DE MATTEO JOINS LOFTS AS TECH SERVICE AGRONOMIST

Lofts Inc. recently appointed John De Matteo Technical Service Agronomist. Mr. De Matteo's responsibilities will include technical aid to Lofts professional clients, including golf course superintendents and architects, as well as athletic turf superintendents.

Mr. De Matteo's experience includes his most recent position as Regional Golf Course Superintendent for the American Golf Corporation. Prior to that, his position as Golf Course Superintendent at three major country clubs, included golf course construction and renovation. While at Pinehurst, De Matteo prepared the golf course for several prestigious tournaments, including the PGA Tour's Hall of Fame Golf Classic and the USGA-sponsored Men's World Team Amateur Tournament.

A graduate of Pennsylvania's Delaware Valley College of Science and Agriculture, Mr. De Matteo is a certified Golf Course Superintendent. He is a member of the American Society of Agronomy as well as *Who's Who in American Colleges and Universities*. ■



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