

Profit  
Growth  
Problems  
New Technology  
Legislation

## Tree Industry Outlook

# OPTIMISM AND

Chadwick



Nickel



Rae



Goodall

**M**Y THOUGHTS relative to the shade and ornamental tree industry can best be summed up by two words — Optimism and concern.

The tendency toward an increase in population and urbanization, accompanied by demands for home construction, industrial development, highway construction, and for an improved quality environment will all bring about heavy demand for landscape plantings and aboriginal maintenance practices.

This is the optimistic side of the coin.

Our changing environment will bring about new concepts in city planning. The development of new "Town Centers" and the revitalization of existing downtown city areas will create a need for new tree cultivars to better tolerate environmental conditions and changes.

Development of buffer strips and roadside plantings to screen unsightly objects, deaden noises and enhance beauty; the development of close-in mini-parks; the requirements needed to improve air quality . . . all these will bring a greater demand for the selection and use of the right cultivar to "fit" the environmental demands of the area.

My concern? Will the industry be ready to furnish "the right trees"? — DR. L. C. CHADWICK, landscape consultant and past executive secretary of the International Shade Tree Conference.

**N**EVER WAS THE OPPORTUNITY for profits better. Minimum wages in agriculture have put most nursery stock producers on more equal labor cost basis. Production supplies and maintenance materials, while steadily increasing in cost, are a reminder that the increases must constantly be considered in pricing plant material at both wholesale and retail levels. With

more equal labor costs, most producers should be able to price their product nearer its true worth.

Growth will be tremendous in industrial plantings, highway beautification, and domestic complexes, such as retirement villages, and even complete new cities.

Labor is, and will continue to be, our most important problem. Product prices in the future must allow us to upgrade the jobs we have to offer to attract more and better equipped personnel.

Many innovations will appear in both the growing and marketing of nursery plants in the near future. The container-grown plant is no longer an experiment, but for some climates has become a new way. Chemicals will no doubt show us undreamed ways of future growing or handling of stock.

How will legislation affect us? Even now there is much legislation that is law, or pending, that is of vital interest. Collective bargaining, pesticide use, and pollution of air and water are but a few. There will be more, and it will be our place to help our legislators in guiding this important action.

The American Association of Nurserymen theme of "Green Survival" should, and most probably will, be the guideline for good anti-pollution measures in the future.

The outlook for the nursery business was never brighter; it can be every bit as good as we nurserymen want to make it. — HAROLD R. NICKEL, Park Hill, Okla., Greenleaf Nursery Co., and president of the American Association of Nurserymen.

**W**ITH TIGHT MONEY and the unemployment rate in New England, especially in Massachusetts, the profit picture will not improve in the near future.

We cannot continue to increase

# CONCERN

our rates to offset the increase in cost of labor, equipment and materials. We must analyze our company, operate more efficiently, utilize equipment as much as possible, educate and train our employees to increase their knowledge, skills and productivity.

Professional tree-care companies have a bright future; the increasing concern in environmental controls should benefit us all.

The shorter work week, more leisure time and the growing interest in conservation means additional business.

Labor has been a chronic problem and will continue to be. Our industry must improve its public relations and its image. We must tell our prospective client and employee more about our profession. There are many opportunities and benefits for the qualified and interested man.

Disposal of wood and brush is a serious problem in our area. The time could come when an arborist might refuse a tree-removal because he cannot dispose of the brush.

New equipment that will dispose of wood will be developed. New methods for controlling insects and diseases will come. New chemicals to replace the insecticides banned will come. Research on Dutch Elm Disease will produce controls for the future.

Legislation that has curtailed dumps, restricted spraying and prohibited burning will continue to affect our business. —WILLIAM A. RAE, president, Frost & Higgins Co., Burlington, Mass., and president of the National Arborist Association.

**T**HE TREE INDUSTRY, as in any business, is sensitive from a profit standpoint to the rise and fall of the economic market.

To stabilize the profit margin, most economists feel it is necessary

for businessmen to make every effort to cut operating costs, that labor achieve higher productivity and restrain wage increase demands, and that voters reduce the number of services they ask from government.

Our government has no magic wand it can wave to stop prices from rising. All of the above facets compete for and reflect in the profit picture we hope to obtain.

John R. Hansel, executive director of the Elm Research Institute, feels new technology will produce a breakthrough in combatting Dutch Elm Disease. This seems to be coming closest to reality in the field of repellants and attractants, especially in developing a reliable sex attractant. One university, using an E.R.I. grant, is cooperating with an eastern nursery hoping for an early breakthrough on a resistant elm tree.

The tree industry is relatively new. It has had major problems and will continue to have them. A few are the chestnut blight, DED, the Japanese beetle, gypsy moth saddle prominent, elm leaf beetle, and elm bark beetle.

Legislation restricting insecticides, and solid waste disposal will have definite impact on our business.

Despite the hazards, never in my more than 40 years in the tree-service field has the future looked brighter.

There are still fields to conquer in the battle to save our trees. Let's give them the starring part on the stage of life, as they grow along the corridors of time, building bridges of beauty and dignity between the past and the present. Lest we forget —It is not the community that graces trees, it is trees that grace communities. —GEORGE W. GOODALL, chairman of the board, Goodall Tree Expert Co., Portland Maine, and president-elect of the American Society of Consulting Arborists.



Thousands of acres of woodlands suffered unsightly, if not fatal, injury this summer from swarms of the 17-year cicada. The female "locust" slit twigs and small branches to lay her eggs. Branch tips died leaving whole forests of green trees mottled with brown-tipped branches. Some smaller trees under heavy locust attack were killed.