**Minutes of Plant Select® Marketing Committee
September 7, 2016**

**Shelly’s Garden Center**

 **Broomfield, CO**

**Present:** Colorado State University: Jim Klett and David Staats; Denver Botanic Gardens: Mark Jordan and Sonya Anderson; Echter’s Greenhouse: Harriett McMillan; Gulley Greenhouse: Gene Pielin; Tagawa Gardens: Ginger Jennings; Sturtz and Copeland: Carolyn Corbett Toole; Plant Select®: Pat Hayward; City Floral: Susan Ferguson; Shelly’s Garden Country: Shelly Breitenbach and Dan Buelow; and Scott Skogerboe and Ross Shiley from Fort Collins Wholesale Nursery.

Minutes of the July 27, 2016 joint meeting of Propagation and Marketing Committee Meetings were approved as written.

Two new members of the Committee were introduced including Mark Jordan from Denver Botanic Gardens and Susan Ferguson from City Floral.

“Habitat Benefits” was discussed as a potential selection criteria to add to existing seven criteria to examine before a plant is introduced into the Plant Select® program. It was asked if all Plant Select® plants needed to be “Habitat” beneficial and it was stated that not all plants would need to meet the criteria but strongly encouraged them to fit that category as well. The committee agreed that it should be added to lists of criteria.

Jim Klett next discussed that the Colorado Garden and Home Show will be the same week as ProGreen in February, 2017. Several members noted that their customers mention plants and ideas displayed at Garden and Home Show. Pat Hayward stated it is difficult to force some of Plant Select® plants in bloom for both of these shows. It was suggested to have good graphics in our displays if we cannot have blooming plants. Themes for the Garden and Home Display were discussed and it was stated we should promote the theme Plant Smarter with Plant Select®. We should also promote that 2017 is Plant Select®’s 20th anniversary. However, committee felt that one consolidated image about our anniversary should be used throughout the year. The committee overwhelmingly thought that Plant Select® should have one of the corner gardens on the Educational Garden at Garden and Home Show.

Pat Hayward then asked for ideas for the 20th anniversary of Plant Select®. Susan Ferguson from City Floral discussed some ideas that have been successful at City Floral. She stated they have a Pinterest account and that has increased Facebook postings and social media audience. Pat commented that Pinterest is good for sales but doesn’t sell directly. Mark Jordan said finding out about Plant Select®- is difficult on the website. Caroline stated she felt Plant Select® is reaching the 25-45 year-old age groups. Shelly felt younger people like that local is important and Plant Select® should promote that more. Another suggestion was to develop gardens of Plant Select® for Spring, Mid-summer, and Autumn. Possibly create a mosaic of 5-6 Plant Select® plants with some bullet points. Many committee members felt the message is more important than individual plants. It is important to bring the environmental theme into our promotions, especially that most of our plants are good habitat plants and bee friendly. It was also discussed to possibly create a “Garden in a box” with all Plant Select® plants. Another possible suggestion was a Historic theme and Susan and Harriett had suggestions for sites and people to contact about a historic theme. Some were suggesting to show how gardening in Colorado has changed over the past 20 years and how Plant Select® has played a major role in these changes. Another suggestion was to improve our plant search feature on our website and make it easier to use on mobile devices. Pat Hayward also announced we will have our Plan Select® book launch in early 2017.

Two talks will be given at ProGreen concerning Plant Select®. The design talk will be about pollinators in general and will then have three landscape designers talk about real landscape situations utilizing Plant Select® plants as good for habitat-friendly landscapes. The second talk will be a Plant Select® update but will also promote our 20th anniversary. There will be a panel talking about history, the future and the 2017 Plant Select® plants. It was announced Plant Select® will play a major role in national Perennial Plant Association meeting in Denver from July 24-28, 2017. It was suggested that the same theme should be used for our September 6, 2017 demonstration garden meeting: to specifically discuss Plant Select® plants as good pollinators.

Pat Hayward reported the Dog Tuff™ sales are going very well. It was suggested we should ask Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District to plant some ‘Dog Tuff’ in their plots. Kelly Grummons has agreed to continue to give talks about Dog Tuff™ grass.

Scott Skogerboe discussed Sucker Punch® red chokecherry. He will write the promotional piece about the plant. Scott said it is a seedling off a Canada red chokecherry. Ross Shrigley felt landscapers need to know it is different than Canada red chokecherry and we should not mention “Canada Red” in promotion. Pat is going to work with a graphic designer to create a logo and promotional piece about this plant. It should be available in 2018. Plants is really Prunus spp. not Prunus virginiana.

With no further business, meeting concluded around 3:00 p.m.

Next propagation meeting is October 19 at Denver Botanic Gardens at 1:00 p.m.

Next marketing meeting is December 7 - location yet to be determined.