

Ornamental Horticulture

Sector Consultation

A research priority list was originally generated from input provided at a broad industry consultation with the floriculture and nursery-landscape sectors held in January 2015. The list was updated and ranked in 2017 during a small group meeting of Landscape Ontario (LO) and Flowers Canada (Ontario) (FCO) representatives. In 2018, the LO and FCO research chairs reviewed the priority list and agreed to move the labour issue up to a higher ranking. For the current report, LO priorities have not changed from the 2022 report.

Prioritization Criteria

- Size of opportunity or problem: What is the size or the reach of the research problem or opportunity for discovery? e.g. How much of the sector does it relate to?
- How many growers/businesses are affected and stand to benefit from the solution? How much potential uptake will it have?
- Economic impact: To what degree does research in this area improve the sector's market share, growth and enterprise profitability? e.g. Does it create a superior product, increase yields or reduce production costs in a significant way? To what extent will it improve the competitiveness of Ontario's sector?
- Socio-environmental impact: How will this research benefit the environment and/or broader society? e.g. Will it enable sector businesses to reduce their environmental footprint? Will it create jobs, reduce pollution or meet other societal needs?
- Probability of success: How likely is this area of research to succeed relative to the investments required? How do the risks weigh up against the possible returns?

Ontario Ornamental Horticulture Research Priority List

(ranked)

1. Reduce water use by 20 per cent - Utilize water more efficiently in ornamental plant production with strategies that are economically viable and commercially practical.
2. Optimize nutrient use - Develop strategies to optimize the use of nutrients in plant production to reduce input costs, promote plant health and eliminate nutrient runoff.
3. Improve irrigation water quality - Develop strategies to improve irrigation water quality e.g. by optimizing source water, irrigation systems and/or storage and recirculation systems, managing algae growth.
4. Reduce labour costs - Identify issues and opportunities for driving down labour costs in the sector.
5. Improve energy efficiency - Strategies to reduce electrical, energy and fuel use that are economically viable and commercially practical.
6. Pest control - Research for more effective and sustainable control of insects, weeds and diseases in ornamental plant production and landscape maintenance. In greenhouse

floriculture the primary focus should be on biocontrol strategies.

7. Improve plant establishment and survival - Understand and improve plant establishment and survival in challenging environments, including: root growth in container nursery production and compacted soils; reducing low temperature injury; and soil amendments using wastes from other industries.
8. Supplemental lighting - Strategies to improve plant production with supplemental lighting.
9. Consumer research - Understand market trends, quantify environmental benefits, identify which plants to grow, when to supply them and how to present and market them.

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