

they have a good root system sufficient for transfer to a plant band.

We have found in some varieties that if you allow the medium to dry a little you are able to pull the roots more easily out of the medium and transplant into a band easier. We've been experimenting a little with our transplanting. Our medium is pure peat moss; we find there is quite a variation in the commercial brands of peat moss, and we have been using coarse to the extremely fine grades. We find that tending towards the coarse type of peat moss for transplanting is the best. You find also that some types of peat moss can be too absorbent and I think this will deter the root growth. Then, of course, you go to the other extreme; there are brands of peat moss that won't take the water, and there again you find that the root growth will not penetrate because it doesn't have sufficient moisture. So it is just a matter of conditions and feeling out the peat moss to find out what is best for your particular greenhouse or for your operation, then using or sticking with that type of peat moss. We plant into plant bands (two and three-quarter inch bands). We are able to put thirty of these transplants to a flat. Now you probably say, well, why plant bands? Primarily we use bands because of the other phase of our business—shipping our finished product — so our operation is geared to bands primarily for shipping but so far none of our customers have objected to our using the bands. They actually pick them up at the time of year when they feel that the roots will fill the bands sufficiently that they can plant them out into their beds, so their timing is geared to when the plants are ready to go out by how soon the roots will fill the band. Of course, the weather here in Oregon limits how early we will be able to plant these out into a field. I imagine you would be able to plant them out a lot earlier in California than we are able to up here.

MODERATOR SNODGRASS: The next speaker is more competition, but, boy, he is healthy competition too. He grows some of the prettiest rhododendrons I have ever seen. He won't sell one until it is perfect. Bill Menke!

FIELD-GROWING RHODODENDRONS WITHOUT LATH

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Growing rhododendron liners in full sun was not a matter of choice. My lath house was never large enough, so from the start there was always stock spilling out into the sun. Then as time passed and I collected soil-borne insects and fungi, I had to fumigate. I just could not do a good job around posts, so now I have no shade on the place.

We grow all our plants in flats, 20 to a flat, and keep them in the greenhouse or plastic house until all our field work is done, generally by the 15th of June. By the time we are ready to plant, the flats are a solid mass of roots and have to be cut into squares for planting.

We line the plants out in beds 7 ft. wide with 6 plants to the width of the bed, same spacing both ways; that gives them enough space for two season's growth. After planting, we spray with Simazine, at the rate of two pounds per acre, for control of weeds.

From then on they are watered and fertilized just like large nursery stock.

Our soil is a heavy clay, not too good for growing rhododendrons, but with lots of sawdust tilled in, it seems to be all right. By lots, I mean at least six to ten inches. Any kind of sawdust is all right — cedar, fir, hemlock, or even barkdust.

Fertilizing has to be watched very closely. Plants will starve without lots of plant food. Start with enough to make you lose some sleep, then do it again in about ten days. Then watch your weeds, if *they* are happy, the nursery plants will be too.

If the weather gets hot, which it seldom does here, we water the rhododendrons right in the middle of the day even when the soil is moist. We did have one or two days in the 90's this year.

MODERATOR SNODGRASS: The next subject is to be the seed production of Exbury type azaleas. Our speaker is a rhododendron grower, as you guessed. He has traveled in Europe and picked up a lot of new introductions. He is President of the American Rhododendron Society, very active in horticulture and has introduced a lot of new hybrids. John Henny!

EXBURY AZALEAS

JOHN HENNY

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Brooks, Oregon

First of all it probably would be well to define just what is meant by the term, Exbury azalea. This is a strain of azaleas that was developed by the late Lionel de Rothschild at Exbury. It was developed by taking the best of the Knaphill varieties that Anthony Waterer had been working on and then crossing and selecting and recrossing and selecting until the strain developed into what is now called the Exbury strain of Knaphill azaleas. These are different from the *mollis* types in that they flower for the most part from two to three weeks later in the season. They have much larger flowers with rounded instead of pointed petals. The flowers tend to lay back flat instead of funnel-shaped and they are fleshy and of heavy substance. Also the foliage colors quite well on most of them in the fall.