



White Paper

Your Production Schedule.. Are you in Control

Production Scheduling is an essential component in your business. In this paper we give you useful tips to build a production plan and to improve your greenhouse / nursery production efficiency.

Are your spring plantings happening as expected? ... at the right time in the right quantities? If not, as you know, a “miss” on production can be expensive in lost revenue and unhappy customers.

Spreadsheets are typically used to list and organize the items to be produced along with the expected start date and production quantities. This assumes a “correct” calculation based on your expected ready dates and expected production losses. But what effort have you put into generating correct production data for each item or group of items? This generally requires that you look at the whole production process to generate this information accurately.

Once you have the plan, then you need to know your labor, equipment, space, and input requirements, including seeds/liners/cuttings and labels ... and, if you have enough of each to work the plan. Obviously not all will be limiting at the same time, but working through this takes significant computation ... and, once you determine that your plan is infeasible, then you have to make adjustments or even start over.

The basis for such planning and scheduling is knowing the steps required in production along with the dates and requirements. This allows you to put a feasible plan together and then manage each step of the production process. Your production teams need to know their assignments daily. The ideal is where you can generate work orders daily listing the work to be performed ... and then manage the results. Using exception reporting, such as through a dashboard, this allows you to see your status and to better manage the production process.

But how do you generate such a plan and pull everything together to make it happen on schedule? This is where the “devil” is in the details! First, you have to know what the coming season(s) demand is for your products and balance that against your available inventory. Next, if you are limited on space, labor or other resources, you need to know what products give you the best margins so that you can focus on those. This may mean that you buy in the remaining requirements from another producer.

But having agreed on a plan, it has to be produced. This daily effort needs to be carefully scheduled and managed with work assignments being made accordingly. But nature, personnel and resource issues can quickly require adjustments to schedules. Even changes in customer demand can influence the on-going production process.



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