

The DOOR Manual for Plant Nurseries

Reprint – information current in 1996



Let's **DOOR** Our Own Research
The DOOR way to practical solutions

REPRINT INFORMATION – PLEASE READ!

For updated information please call 13 25 23 or visit the website www.deedi.qld.gov.au

This publication has been reprinted as a digital book without any changes to the content published in 1996. We advise readers to take particular note of the areas most likely to be out-of-date and so requiring further research:

- Contacts—many of the contact details may have changed and there could be several new contacts available. The industry organisation may be able to assist you to find the information or services you require.
- Organisation names—most government agencies referred to in this publication have had name changes. Contact the Business Information Centre on 13 25 23 or the industry organisation to find out the current name and contact details for these agencies.
- Additional information—many other sources of information are now available. Contact an agronomist, Business Information Centre on 13 25 23 or the industry organisation for other suggested reading.

Even with these limitations we believe this information kit provides important and valuable information for intending and existing growers.

This publication was last revised in 1996. The information is not current and the accuracy of the information cannot be guaranteed by the State of Queensland.

This information has been made available to assist users involved in the nursery and garden industry wishing to conduct their own research. This information is not to be used or relied upon by users for any purpose which may expose the user or any other person to loss or damage. Users should conduct their own inquiries and rely on their own independent professional advice.

While every care has been taken in preparing this publication, the State of Queensland accepts no responsibility for decisions or actions taken as a result of any data, information, statement or advice, expressed or implied, contained in this publication.



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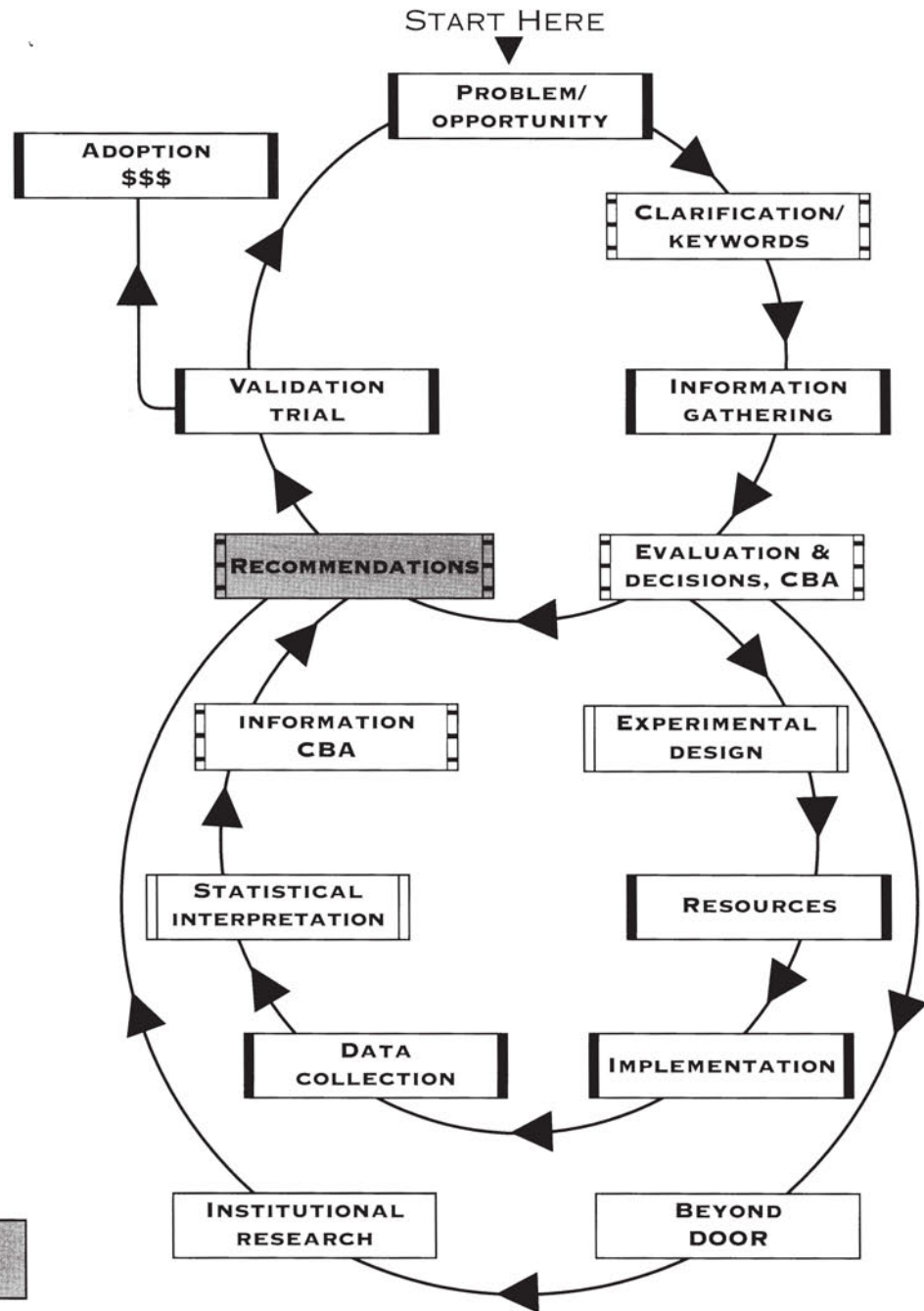
RECOMMENDATIONS

M. N. HUNTER

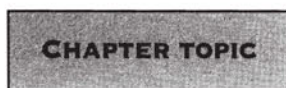


DOOR

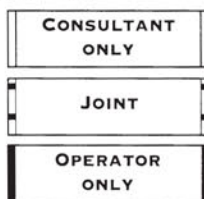
IMPLEMENTATION CYCLE



LEGEND



ACTION KEY



CBA = COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS

8.1 INTRODUCTION

The experimental phase ends with the development of practical recommendations for preferred nursery practice.

8.2 AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION

8.2.1 SUFFICIENCY

Recommending changes in practice must be based on sound and relevant information from experiments that can be repeated. Where necessary, qualify recommendations by such things as climate, species, season and general pot environment. Extending recommendations beyond the conditions of the experiment is not a good idea, but such extrapolations could form the basis for another experiment.

8.2.2 QUALITY

The outcome of the experiment depends on the timeliness of data collection and the precision and accuracy of the data itself. You must be sure that data are sufficiently accurate before basing recommendations on them.

8.2.3 RISK

Significance tests and probability statements may impede easy communication but they do take care of the level of doubt associated with biological information. Repeating an experiment and getting the same results will increase your confidence in making statements about the results. Remember that your results may have occurred just by chance.

8.3 INTEGRATION WITH CURRENT INFORMATION

Most experimental results will not contradict existing information, though they may vary somewhat in reflecting your experiment's unique environment. As a result of the initial gathering of information, it should be possible to place the new finding into an existing context. Such confirmation gives the result credibility.

When the results conflict with the current dogma, research becomes very exciting, especially if the results actually confirm a personal feeling, or hypothesis. Confirming these results can often move the whole technology ahead. Current practices can be done differently, hopefully with gains in areas such as productivity, quality and sustainability.

Such different results should be backed by some plausible explanation that perhaps has been overlooked previously. Of course this is not a prerequisite—some processes work better than others but we don't really know why. An explanation may lead to fresh views on doing things and this can be very enlightening. Half the battle in doing good research is getting out of the old rut.

8.1 INTRODUCTION

- Develop practical recommendations after obtaining analysed results from the DOOR experiment.

8.2 AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION

- Check that there is enough relevant information to back up your recommendations.
- Avoid recommendations based on extrapolations.

8.2.2 QUALITY

- Data collection needs to be as accurate as is practical.
- Leave room for error. There is always a risk of being wrong in converting information into fact.

8.3 INTEGRATION WITH CURRENT INFORMATION

- Confirmation from outside sources increases the credibility of results.
- Results that vary from available information are not always wrong, especially if the statistics show the significance of the results.
- New results lead to improved practices and insights.

8.4 WHAT IMPACT WILL A NEW PRACTICE HAVE?

- Cost the impact of the recommendation fully.
- Involve staff if existing practices need to be changed.
- Be aware of possible sacrifices in lifestyle.

8.5 SPECIFYING NEW PRACTICES

- Commit the new practices to paper.
- Fully inform staff of any impending changes.

8.6 RECORDING AND REPORTING

- Record all details of the experiments in an accessible form.

8.6.1 REPORT

- The report should contain the following: pre-schedule, analysed data, graphs and completed report form and location details of original data set.
- The report should enable your experiment to be repeated by another person.

8.4 WHAT IMPACT WILL A NEW PRACTICE HAVE?

The impact of implementing any new practice will have on the nursery operation must be assessed.

Recommendations should take into account financial, social, legal and environmental issues that may be influenced by the adoption of the new practice. Recommendations must also take into account the medium to long term. These factors may influence whether they are adopted or not, and how rapidly.

Involving staff in developing changes should minimise their resistance to changes in work practices. Routines and timing of operations may have to be rescheduled.

Costs of new practices should be more than matched by improved profitability or sustainability but remember that disruption of lifestyle is an important cost often overlooked.

8.5 SPECIFYING NEW PRACTICES

Having developed a better way of doing things, commit the new procedures and their impacts on the overall operation to paper. Tell your staff what you have discovered, preferably in group meetings, with information handouts that can be read at leisure. Often the new practice will not be identical to that previously trialed because of economic considerations.

8.6 RECORDING AND REPORTING

Record your information in an accessible form and report it as soon as possible after completion to increase the growth of the knowledge base of nursery technology. Present the information simply and succinctly. This is often the most effective way.

8.6.1 REPORT

The report should contain a completed pre-schedule with details of subsequent amendments, statistically analysed data (tables) with graphs and a completed report form (see appendix 11). Indicate where the original data is located. There should be enough information in the report for the experiment to be repeated by someone else unfamiliar with the experiment.

Initially, the operator and the consultant can collate the report but the operator can assume more responsibility for this task over time. This will increase operator ownership of the outcome.

Report writing forces the writer to think clearly and critically and thus become more competent in conducting research.

8.6.2

PUBLICATION AND SHARING INFORMATION

Assuming others in the industry would find the information useful, it becomes the responsibility of the author to publish the information. In Australia, *Ornamentals Update* is an appropriate forum.

Much of the information generated via the DOOR approach would be quite suitable for presentation at conferences such as those held by the International Plant Propagators' Society (IPPS). Presentations that collate experiences of a number of operators all carrying out similar research could be very valuable.

Those who are willing to share information unconditionally can expect a return of the favour many times over. A shift in the nursery industry to embrace a sharing culture would have undreamt-of consequences in the rate of adoption of new technology.

8.6.2

PUBLICATION AND SHARING INFORMATION

- Authors should publish their results. Journals and conferences are suitable avenues.
- Those who share their information are more likely to receive information in return.

