Selected Notes from the Mail Round Robin
Submitted over a period of time by Harry Heineman

Using Surflan to Induce Polyploidy

Both from Pat McCracken and Tony Avent I learned of a new method of producing polyploid plants using the common weed killer, Surflan. The method is simple and very inexpensive. The steps are:

1. Use seedlings 4-7 days after germination.
2. Wash soil from roots.
3. Soak plantlets in glass dish contain Surflan solution for 24 hours.
4. Transfer to cheesecloth and wash in water for 3-4 hours.
5. Plant in soil. Note the root tips will be swollen and they will rot readily at this stage.
6. Keep the plants cool, ideally at 68-75 degrees. Plants will make no growth for about two weeks. At this point, notice the thick growth of new leaves.

Results of success should range from 50 and 90 % Use a lower dose on grasses and a higher dose on daylilies A high rate is 1:100 and a lower rate is 1:200.

Pat McCracken used this method on Magnolia grandiflora seedlings with quite good success but he applied the Surflan to the young plants just as the true leaves were forming, hence no effect on the roots. I saw his plants and can verify his success.

August Kehr
(printed posthumously)