

President's Message 4-21

Wow! Where did winter go? It seems like just the other day I was winterizing all of our equipment as the crews were starting to prune. By the time you read this, we most likely will be preparing the sprayers or perhaps already be spraying. After a much more "typical" winter, I am hoping that the trend continues resulting in a "normal" spring. There are few things more difficult to manage than dramatic swings from cold to warm or visa versa, as though a cruel joke is being played on all the trees, with someone pressing pause or fast forward in their development.

With the winter season wrapping up, I hope that many of you were able to take advantage of the numerous educational opportunities which were made available. From the Mid-Atlantic Fruit and Vegetable Convention, to the "Winter Fruit Schools", or even the IFTA conference, a wealth of knowledge was able to be gained. And thanks to you, our virtual Mid-Atlantic Convention was a success! We had over 70 sponsors, over 70 exhibitors, and almost 1,000 attendees. This event was a true team effort and I would personally like to thank everyone involved who helped to create such a wonderful program. With all of that being said, as I type this, we are planning to be back in Hershey for an in-person convention during the first week of February 2022. Additionally, there is another event in February of 2022 which I would like to make you aware of – IFTA will be holding their annual conference in Hershey two weeks after our convention. This conference will bring together growers from around the world for two days of educational sessions plus a day of orchard visits. Be sure to keep an eye out for more information as it becomes available for what is always a wonderful event.

HAVE YOU MADE SURE TO RENEW YOUR SHAP MEMBERSHIP? As everything this past year had moved to a virtual format, this is one item that may have slipped through the cracks. In most years, people would renew their membership with the same form used to register for the convention. However, since registration for SHAP and the convention were separate this year, some people have yet to submit their membership renewal. On page 27 of this issue, a renewal form can be found for anyone who may need to complete this process. Keep in mind that your membership not only includes 11 issues of the "*PA Fruit News*"; but also, a discounted rate at the Mid-Atlantic Fruit and Vegetable Convention, plus access to view past convention presentations. A truly great value.

Wishing you all a successful growing season!

Ben Keim

SHAP President