

NEW VOICES ... NEW IDEAS ... NEW PERSPECTIVES!

New England Nursery Association Annual Meeting
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Speed Review of New & Noteworthy Books for Green Industry Professionals

Title: Hot, Flat, and Crowded

Author: Thomas Friedman

Review by: Leslie van Berkum – Van Berkum Nursery, Deerfield, NH

Notability: This book is touted as one of the most important books of the decade. It is one of our new president's favorites and a recent photo of Obama carrying Hot, Flat, and Crowded did boost its sales.
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Readability: The book is fairly heavy and full of information, but is peppered with stories and diversions that make it quite readable.
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Takeaways: See below.
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Innovation: Much of this information we already know, but Friedman has brought it together in a compelling, terrifying, but optimistic 'big picture'. Waterfalls can sneak up on you, and he is giving us the sound effects.
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Shelf Life: This was published in August, before the election. It sites many recent events, which will become outdated quickly, but the message is timely for this decade.
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My top takeaways:

- 1) We, as an industry are in the unique position of being able to lead this revolution as we are already 'colored green'.
- 2) We cannot create the ideas needed and innovate in a 'defensive crouch'.
- 3) We can't just sell green plants. If our industry can collaborate on ideas and standards and especially innovative marketing for the green revolution, we can help both the cause and our bank accounts.

How I plan to put the new ideas to work:

- 1) To strengthen relationships with intermediaries such as DOT staff and urban designers.
- 2) To look for more ways to set examples in re-using and less using of our resources.
- 3) To support lawmakers who are leading the green revolution.
- 4) To find time to volunteer our time for this cause.
- 5) To create more ways to market the values our green industry, from creating: better atmosphere, beautiful surroundings, peace of mind, property values, biodiversity etc.
- 6) To research how our business can invest and use alternative energy.