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## Internship Final Report

Green Circle Growers

Over the course of this spring, I had the opportunity to be a Grower Intern at Green Circle Growers, located in Oberlin, Ohio. I spent four weeks at each of the four facilities here during my sixteen weeks here. Because they are all so unique in their crops and methods, I was able to learn a vast amount of information about the greenhouse industry, plant care for a variety of crops, and management of all the elements of growing. Beginning in Plant 1 in January, I then rotated to Plant 6, followed by Plant 4 (Orchid Range) and finishing up in April with Plant 2.



### Plant 1

While working in Plant 1, I was able to adjust to a new working environment, get used to living in a new area, and meet a lot of people during a less busy period of growing. I moved between the different areas within Plant 1, so I saw a majority of the facility. As far as tasks learned and completed, I spent time getting acquainted with backpack sprayers, watering, weekly tasks like push tests and bug cards, and learning the structure of the company.

### Plant 6

Plant 6 focuses on propagation and seedlings, so there was a lot of movement of crops in, around, and out of the growing spaces. Because of the fast-paced environment, there was a lot to get done every day, and due to the age of the plants, water levels, growth progress, and pest concerns had to be constantly monitored and



addressed. I got a lot of experience applying PGRs, scouting for pests, watering, and maintaining a clean workspace (because of the humid environment and constant misting, it was important to keep algae from building up).

#### **Plant 4**

During my time in the Orchid Range, I had the chance to see Green Circle Growers most technologically advanced areas, and I was so impressed with how precise all of the climate, light, and water control was. While I had a chance to learn some parts of the Priva system in Plant 1, the Orchid Range utilizes Priva throughout the days to monitor any factor that can be measured, and I got a good handle on how to navigate and understand the system. Some tasks completed in the Orchid Range included spike counts, clipping side branches on waterfall orchids, scouting for disease, mixing fertilizer, replacing mist nozzles, and more. Moving around the different areas of Plant 4 shocked me due to the scale of the operation, and it was great to spend a week in four areas.

#### **Plant 2**

The final stop on my internship, Plant 2, was the perfect place to finish off my time in Ohio. I learned a great deal about using different growing spaces effectively and got to see the progress being made on Green Circle's massive expansion. As far as crop variety goes, I learned that there is a large difference between being responsible for one species of plant and having a lot of species to care for. I got more practice watering, and I got an in-depth look at how growers' approach to chemical use and being mindful of sustainability. Plant 2 seemed to have aspects of all three of my previous rotations, so I reflected a great deal on my entire experience.



This internship was a terrific way for me to learn how to apply my education from Kansas State University, and get a good feeling for what it is like to work for a large-scale production operation. Following my internship, I will be returning to Kansas to complete my degree in Horticulture, as well as teaching a section of a leadership class to other undergraduate students. After graduation, I will be seeking a career in horticulture production, and I deeply appreciate the opportunity to learn from industry professionals. These interactions have had a direct and significant impact on my career path, and I could not be more thankful!

