



Kris R. Bachtell

Director of Collections and Grounds
The Morton Arboretum

VITAE

Kris' role at The Morton Arboretum includes directing the horticulture and grounds operations of one of the largest arboreta in the United States. The principal focus of the Arboretum's collections is directed toward hardy woody plants: trees, shrubs, and vines. The collections include approximately 3,500 taxa represented by more than 41,000 individual specimens. Many of the oldest specimens, planted during the Arboretum's early years in the 1920's, were collected in the Orient by famous western plant explorers, such as "Chinese" E. H. Wilson and Joseph Rock. Kris has participated in six germplasm collecting and evaluation expeditions to the northern and northeastern regions of the People's Republic of China to continue to add new wild collected germplasm to the Morton collections.

His interests include evaluating plants suitable for the colder, harsher climate of the upper Midwest, and introducing these plants through the nursery trade. He serves as a Director for the Chicagoland Grows® Plant Introduction Program, a joint venture of The Morton Arboretum, Chicago Botanic Garden, and the Ornamental Growers Association of Northern Illinois (OGA). This program seeks to evaluate, introduce, and promote plants into the nursery trade that possess useful landscape features and can withstand the climate and soils of the upper Midwest. Kris has been directly involved with introducing many outstanding selections from the Morton's collection into the nursery and landscape trade.

Kris has had a long-standing interest in plants and propagation. He graduated from the University of Illinois at Urbana with a B.S. in Ornamental Horticulture, and received his M.S. from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, also in Ornamental Horticulture. He is a former president of the International Plant Propagators' Society—Eastern Region North America. This group is dedicated to understanding how plants are best propagated, and disseminating this information to plant professionals and interested amateurs.

Topic: In a Changing World – The Role of Plant Exploration, Evaluation and Introduction

Contact Information:

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