

## BEN CECIL



A native of Elizabethtown, Ky, Ben Cecil graduated from Western Kentucky University with a BS in Agriculture. From there he spent several years in the area working with the University of Kentucky Extension Service, Bernheim Arboretum and a few commercial nurseries in the Louisville area. During this time, Ben was on the boards of the Kentucky Nursery and Landscape Association and the Louisville Nursery Association, where he also served as president for a period. Additionally, he has been on the Theodore Klein Plant Selection Committee Since the mid-2000's.

In 2011, Ben accepted a position with Loma Vista Nursery in Kansas as their Operations Manager. There he implemented productivity improvements and successfully installed a Pot-in-Pot production system that is flourishing today. Accepting the position of New Plant Coordinator, he moved to Oklahoma to serve Greenleaf Nursery. There he worked closely with breeders searching for varieties to improve both a species aesthetics and their durability in the landscape.

Though successful in this role, traveling wasn't appealing to Ben or his family. This resulted in them moving to Ingleside Nursery in Virginia to assume the responsibilities of their container production manager. Here he was responsible for all decisions regarding plant culture and production numbers. After 3 years the position as Farm Manager for Riverfarm became available. Given the closeness of the nursery to both Ben and Karen's parents and the excellent reputation of Riverfarm, the move was a no-brainer.

In February of 2020, Ben started with the nursery and has enjoyed every minute. During this time, the nursery has not only maintained their reputation for high-quality plants and a diverse palette of selections, but they have also installed 3000 Pot-in-Pot trees. This system of production is also using the grow bag method which results in higher quality root system aiding in the survivability of the trees. Along with these roles, Ben is active in both the Kentucky Nursery and Landscape Association, Louisville Nursery Association and stays in regular contact with the Kentucky Horticulture Council. Since moving back, he has also become of member of the Oldham County Agriculture Council through the Cooperative Extension Service.

Lastly, Ben boasts more about his family than his plant career. He has been married to Karen for 23 years and raised 4 children with the last of those slated to graduate in 2026. Ben is also a deacon and Sunday school teacher with Salt and Light Church in L 'Esprit, KY.