



Jeff Hackett Biography & Presentation Synopsis:

I joined the Southern Tier Orchid Society in February 2024, shortly after relocating to the Southern Tier region of New York from Florida, where I was born and raised. My interest in plants began several years ago with citrus and other fruiting trees, and over time expanded into aroids and other foliage houseplants. I began growing orchids in 2020, and they have since become the primary focus of my collection.

Professionally, I hold a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering with emphasis in geotechnical, water resources, and environmental engineering. Currently, I work in environmental engineering, specializing in the design and modification of wastewater treatment facilities. This technical background has strongly influenced my approach on orchid cultivation within my own collection and I hope to be able to share this knowledge with everyone in the club.

Like many engineers, I tend to approach challenges with a logical and pragmatic mindset, and that perspective carries over into my growing practices. I'm particularly interested in the relationship between water, air, media, and container systems as understanding the water nexus within our culture greatly impacts our ability to grow a wide diversity of plants. I've developed a presentation focused on helping growers better understand how media selection, pot type, and media blends influence drying behavior and the overall root environment. My goal is to provide a framework that allows growers to make informed decisions and adapt their culture techniques more effectively, regardless of their prior experience with specific media.