

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**Atlanta Plantsman breeds Chelsea Flower Show Plant of the Year 2013**

Atlanta, GA - May 22, 2012 - Mahonia 'Soft Caress' PP#20183, a plant bred by Ozzie Johnson of ItSaul Plants is awarded 2013 Plant of the Year at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show, London, England.

Mahonia 'Soft Caress' is a compact evergreen shrub that can be used in containers as well as shady landscapes. Gardeners know the common Mahonia which has thick, pointed, waxy leaves with sticky thorns. 'Soft Caress' is distinctly different with soft, thread-like foliage and no spines. Many people don't recognize it as a Mahonia until they see the familiar yellow blooms and bluish berries that follow. The texture and blue green color of the foliage allow this Mahonia to blend with a wide variety of other plants. 'Soft Caress' has become a standard foundation plant for partial to full shade landscapes.

Ozzie Johnson bred 'Soft Caress' from his collection of Mahonias and selected it in 2001 from a small group of seedlings primarily for its superior foliage and uniform habit. Ozzie has traveled extensively for the past 30 years collecting rare plant seed from Asia to grow and use for breeding in his garden in Metro Atlanta. He joined Richard and Robert Saul and Karen Stever in 1997 to form ItSaul Plants, a breeding company located in Alpharetta GA. Since its formation, ItSaul Plants has patented and introduced over 75 unique plants to the nursery trade in the US and Europe which are sold worldwide.

The Royal Horticulture Society Chelsea Flower Show is the most famous garden show in the United Kingdom, possibly the world. The event is celebrating its 100<sup>th</sup> year at the Royal Hospital location and is attended by over 150,000 visitors each year. ItSaul Plants is proud to announce that the judges chose our patent Mahonia 'Soft Caress' the first place winner for 2013.

ItSaul Plants released the Mahonia into the US nursery market in 2006. It is available to the wholesale market thru Saul Nurseries Inc. in Atlanta GA and to retail customers thru the Southern Living™ Plant Collection.

**Genus** Mahonia  
**Species** eurybracteata  
**Variety** 'Soft Caress'  
**Plant Patent** #20183  
**Zone** 7-9  
Partial Shade  
Evergreen foliage  
**Bloom time** Late Fall Early Winter  
**Bloom Color** Yellow  
**Height** 4 ft  
**Width** 4 ft

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