Virtual Grower 3.0 Tutorial #8: Generating Reports

(0:02)   Welcome to Virtual Grower tutorials, an online series designed to help users navigate different aspects of the Virtual Grower software.

(0:11)   Once you have calculated the energy costs for your greenhouse, you have the option to export data from your simulation for use in other applications. This tutorial will briefly show you how to export and re-open your report in a word processing and spreadsheet program.

(0:29)   Load an existing simulation by going to 'File' and then 'Load'. Choose your .gsf file and click 'Open'. Navigate to the Output portion of the program. The Greenhouse Setup screen should appear. Make sure you have already assigned heating, lighting, and plant properties to your greenhouse. Now click the 'Costs' button. Check the box next to the greenhouse you wish to simulate and press the 'Calculate Output' button. For more details on these two pages, watch Virtual Grower Tutorial # 6: The Output Menu and Greenhouse Setup and Virtual Grower Tutorial #7: Output and Calculating Costs.

(1:09)   You are now ready to export your simulated costs. Click the 'Generate Report' button and choose a location for your saved file. Name your file and press 'Save'. Your report will be saved as a "rich text format", or .rtf file.

(1:26)   Many computers will default to opening the .rtf file in a word processing program, as is the case here. You will notice our file has a Microsoft Word icon. Right click this icon and open it. Leave the encoding at the default setting and press 'OK'. You may notice that some values are shifted slightly out of line, but that can easily be corrected using the Tab key. You will see your report is organized based on the three different output types you could choose from on the Costs page. Your Total Costs Report is presented in the first section, listing BTU consumption, total heating cost, heating cost per area, total lighting cost and lighting cost per unit space, broken down into monthly values for all the greenhouses you have simulated.

(2:17)   The Greenhouse Costs section details more information about your individual greenhouses and chosen heating schedules. If more than one greenhouse is simulated, this section will break down the monthly costs of individual greenhouses, instead of combining the total costs for all structures. Details of your heating system, such as efficiency, fuel type, fuel cost, and air exchange are also given. The Plant Growth section lists the species from your selected plant list and details the weeks to flower and projected weight at that time.

(2:50)   You may find it easier to use your report in a spreadsheet program.   As you import in your report, each value is assigned a unique cell, thus making the data columns line up for ease in moving the data around and using it for further calculations. If your spreadsheet program is open, you can open your .rtf file with it.

(3:09)   Choose the 'Open' command in your spreadsheet program. Navigate to the directory containing your .rtf file and choose 'All Files', so that your .rtf file will be given as a file option to open.

Choose your file and click on 'Open'. You will need to designate the splitting of the text into the appropriate data columns. Your .rtf file is tab delimited, meaning the text columns are separated by a set number of spaces. On this first screen, choose 'Delimited' and press 'Next'. Now check the box next to 'Tab'. In the picture below, you will see lines marking the columns. Press 'Next'. Leave the data format at the default setting, and choose 'Finish'. Your file will open and is ready for you to use.

(3:57) This completes the instruction on generating reports. Additional tutorials in this series address navigating other functions in the Virtual Grower software.

(4:07) Any time you need more assistance, you can go to the Help menu. There, you will find our email address, USDA-ARS@utoledo.edu.