

Station News A PROGRESS REPORT for staff

and Friends of America's first Agricultural Experiment Station

Departmental News

97th Annual Plant Science Day Open House at Lockwood Farm—A Great Success

By: Ms. Vickie M. Bomba-Lewandoski (printed earlier in the Connecticut Department of Agriculture's Connecticut Weekly Agricultural Report)

The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station held its 97th Annual Plant Science Day open house on Wednesday, August 1st, at Lockwood Farm in Hamden.

Commissioner F. Philip Prelli, Connecticut Department of Agriculture, gave the Samuel W. Johnson lecture this year entitled "Connecticut Agriculture—The Local Flavor".

This year, we featured 5 main lectures, 2 technical demonstrations, 6 barn exhibits, and 84 field plots for our visitors to explore, learn, and experience what the scientists at The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station are investigating. Research on mosquitoes, honey bees, wildlife, salt marsh dieback, growing crops for biodiesel fuel, chestnut trees, and on ticks attracted special public interest. All research projects are designed to develop, advance, and disseminate scientific knowledge, increase agricultural productivity and environmental quality, protect plants, and enhance human health and well being of Connecticut residents.

We hosted approximately 841 adult visitors and 184 children throughout the day, along with the distribution of 28 Brownie try-it badges and 36 Junior badges for the interactive passport activity. We hosted this activity for all of the children who attended Plant Science Day. They received information about birds, butterflies, deer, native trees, bees, honey, ticks, and vegetables. A few small tokens were given to each child for a completed passport. By

incorporating more children activities into our Plant Science Day program, we are hoping to encourage our youth to develop an interest in agriculture and other fields of science. We also presented pesticide credits for attendance to talks, technical demonstrations, and participation in an hour-long research tour. We had 27 Plant Science Day attendees receive pesticide credits for various licenses. This year, we also hosted three guided walking tours of our Lockwood Farm, one in the morning with 4 field plot lectures, one at noon exploring our native shrub planting, and one in the afternoon with 6 different field plot lectures.

Another annual event of Plant Science Day is the presentation of the Century Farm Award to a Connecticut farming family in operation for more than 100 years. The recipient is selected by the Connecticut Agricultural Information Council. This year's recipient was Mapleleaf Farm in Hebron. Members of the Ellis family have been farming since the mid-1700's and at the current location in Hebron since 1903. The main focus is dairy production and includes a herd of 400 Holstein cows, 210 of which are milking cows averaging a yield of 67 pounds per day.

The Bird and Butterfly Garden and the Connecticut Nurserymen's Garden are always a popular attraction to our visitors. These gardens provide people with first-hand information on native varieties of plant specimens and the bird, insect, and other animals these plants attract. Every year we record the butterfly, moth, bird, dragonfly, and other animal sightings. This year, we had 16 different butterfly species, 2 species of moths, 20 species of birds, 3 species of dragonflies, Eastern Cottontail rabbit and a White-tailed deer. Our Bird and Butterfly Garden is open to the public Monday-Friday 8:30am-4:00pm, but is closed on weekends and state holidays.

We had a very successful open house this year, and we hope to have another great event in 2008. We invite you to our 98th Annual Plant Science Day on Wednesday, August 6, 2008 at our Lockwood Farm in Hamden.

For more information, refer to the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station web site: <http://www.ct.gov/caes> or call (203) 974-8500 (New Haven) or (877) 855-2237 toll-free (statewide).

Administration

DR. LOUIS A. MAGNARELLI was interviewed about Station Research by Judy Moeckel of the News Times in Durham and Middlefield (August 1); was interviewed about insects by Jim Shelton of the New Haven Register (August 13); and was interviewed about honey bees by Jared Newman of the Wilton Villager (August 22).

Grants and Fundraising Office

Analytical Chemistry

Dr. Brian Eitzer attended a meeting of the multi state hatch project, NC-508 – Sustainable Solutions to Problems Affecting Honey Bee Health, in Chicago, IL (August 13).

Biochemistry and Genetics

DR. RICHARD PETERSON as Vice President attended an executive committee meeting of the Quinnipiac Chapter of Sigma Xi (August 24) and sat on the Ph.D. examination committee for Mary Grace Gallinato of the Department of Chemistry at UCONN (August 30).

Entomology

DR. CHRIS T. MAIER spoke about Station research on fruit at meeting of the Program Committee of the Connecticut Pomological Society in Rocky Hill, CT (August 16).

DR. VICTORIA SMITH participated in the National Plant Board Meeting, held in Honolulu, Hawaii, and in a meeting of the Eastern Plant Board (August 20), at the same meeting (approximately 150 participants) (August 19-23).

DR. KIRBY C. STAFFORD, III was interviewed by Melinda Tubus, free lance reporter, about bees in Connecticut (August 1); interviewed by Steve Grant, Hartford Courant, about ticks in shrubby environments (August 6); interviewed by Tim Stelloh, Stamford Advocate, about studies supporting deer reduction for tick control (August 16); participated in a meeting with the First Selectman, Northeast District Department of Health, CT Department of Agriculture and Cooperative Extension on fly problems at the Plainfield Town Hall (7 attendees) (August 23); interviewed by Jared Newman, Wilton Villager, about colony collapse disorder (August 27); and interviewed by Jared Newman, Wilton Villager, about varroa mites (August 29).

DR. KIMBERLY A. STONER hosted a workshop on identifying swede midge with Julie Callahan of Massachusetts and Lisa Tewksbury and Heather Faubert of Rhode Island (August 2); visited the farm of Gordon Bednarz to do training in Integrated Pest Management, Glastonbury (August 6); participated in the meeting of the Eastern Apicultural Society, Newark, Delaware (August 8- 10); presented a workshop “Biological Control: What’s Worth the Money?” to an audience of (20 participants) and participated as a representative of Connecticut in a meeting of the NOFA Interstate Council, NOFA Summer Conference, Hampshire College, Amherst, MA (August. 12); Spoke on “Why Organic?” at the NOFA Organic Lawn and Turf Course, Marblehead, MA (70 people) (August 14); Spoke on “Why Organic?” at the NOFA Organic Lawn and Turf Course, Manchester, CT (75 people) (August 16); and participated in a meeting of the Board of Directors of CT NOFA, Berlin, CT. (August 25).

Forestry and Horticulture

DR. JEFFREY S. WARD presented an invited lecture "Dispersal of exotic species by white-tailed deer in Connecticut" at the Mid-Atlantic Invasive Species Conference in Philadelphia (150 attendees) (August 15); along with MS. JOAN BRAVO, visited Christy Hass to discuss urban tree populations in New Haven (August 21); visited Ed Vaughn, Warden, to examine declining basswood trees in Orange (August 21).

DR. MARTIN P.N. GENT met with Dr. Ratus Fischer of Fischer Ecoworks to discuss copper sterilization techniques for nutrient solutions (August 1).

DR. ABIGAIL A. MAYNARD discussed new crops with John Holbrook at his farm in Bethel (August 24).

DR. WILLIAM R. NAIL visited Richard and Al Ruggerio at Paradise Hills Vineyard in Wallingford (August 7); met with Jerry Servino at Servino Vineyards in Woodbridge (August 14); and visited Charlie Rosabianca and inspected his vineyard in Hamden (August 16).

Lockwood Farm

Plant Pathology and Ecology

DR. SANDRA L. ANAGNOSTAKIS attended the Annual Meeting of the Mycological Society of America in Baton Rouge, LA (August 8-10); gave two papers entitled "Identifying butternut" and "Nutrients in chestnuts" at the Annual Meeting of the Northern Nut Growers Association in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada (150 adults attended) (August 11-15); and with MS. PAMELA SLETTEN, led a tour and discussed their chestnut research at the Chestnut Plantation at Sleeping Giant State Park for members of The American Chestnut Foundation (18 adults attended) (August 25).

DR. WADE H. ELMER was interviewed about his research on sudden wetland dieback by Marci Gallow of Senator Joseph Lieberman's office in Washington, D.C., and about sudden wetland dieback at Cedar Beach on Long Island, New York, by Rebecca Packard of the Suffolk County Times (August 7); participated in the Ph.D. proposal defense for Anathep Pasura in the Department of Plant Science at The University of Connecticut in Storrs (August 8); participated (via conference call) in the Ph.D. proposal defense for Cheng-Hua Huang, Department of Plant Pathology, The University of Florida (August 21); and gave a presentation on sudden wetland dieback to the "Friends of Hammonasset" at Hammonasset Beach State Park in Madison (38 adult attendees) (August 30).

DR. ROBERT E. MARRA met with Jack Hine, a park official at Hammonasset Beach State Park, to discuss the widespread decline of Japanese pines (August 13); and was interviewed about edible fungi by Sarah Twombly of Esquire magazine (August 21).

Soil and Water

DR. THEODORE ANDREADIS was interviewed about mosquitoes and West Nile virus by Ann DeMatteo, New Haven Register (August 1); was interviewed about the first human cases of West Nile virus in Connecticut by Bob Miller Danbury News Times; Marc Sims, CT Public radio; Judy Benson, The Day; Bill Hathaway, Hartford Courant; NBC 30; and Matt Dwyer WTIC Radio; and Marilyn Moss, Greenwich Times (August 3); was interviewed about the detection of West Nile virus in Stamford by Tony Savino, WGCH Radio Greenwich; and Sam Gingerella, WTIC radio (August 8); was interviewed about the human case of West Nile virus in New London by WTNH TV8 New Haven (August 8); was interviewed about the detection of West Nile virus in Fairfield County by Steve Kovak, Stamford Advocate (August 13); was interviewed about the West Nile virus season in Connecticut by Jared Newman, Wilton Villager (August 20); was interviewed about the detection of West Nile virus Greenwich by the Greenwich Times (August 21); met with members of the State Mosquito Management Program to review details of the larvicide

program for mosquito control directed by Governor Rell (August 21); was interviewed about the status of West Nile virus in Connecticut by WSTC/WNLK Radio Stamford (August 23); was interviewed about human cases of West Nile virus in Connecticut by Gillian Ness, Cablevision News 12 Norwalk (August 24); was interviewed about the finding of Eastern Equine encephalitis in mosquitoes in Plainfield by WTIC radio; Steve Kotchko CT Radio Network; Judy Bensen the Day; Lisa Chamoff The Advocate; and Lauren Petty NBC 30 (August 28); and was interviewed about the finding of Eastern Equine encephalitis in mosquitoes in Plainfield by Mark Sims, Metro Radio, Hartford; and Gillian Ness Cablevision 12 Norwalk (August 29).

MR. GREGORY BUGBEE interviewed by Pamela Weil of the "Connecticut Gardener" on using limestone to improve lawns (August 17).

DR. JOSEPH PIGNATELLO judged an Area Exam ("preliminary defense") as part of the thesis committee for Yale graduate student, Janel Grebel (August 13).

MS. ROSLYN SELSKY attended the Connecticut Geospatial Council meeting, held at the Station as the CAES' representative (August 25).

Valley Laboratory

DR. JOHN AHRENS answered questions on weed control at a twilight meeting of the Connecticut Christmas Tree Grower's Association in Mystic, CT (attendance was approximately 50) (August 7) and presented a talk on "The Latest on Herbicides for Christmas tree Plantings at the combined meeting of the Maine Christmas Tree Growers and the National Christmas Tree Assn. in Bangor, ME (110 people were in this session) (August 17).

DR. RICHARD COWLES presented "Chemical control of hemlock woolly adelgids" in a Barn Exhibit at Plant Science Day, Hamden, (August 1), "Management of Christmas tree insect pests" at an evening meeting of the CT Christmas Tree Growers, Mystic, (55 attendees) (August 7), and "Management of Christmas tree insect pests" for the summer meeting of the RI Christmas Tree Growers, Coventry, RI (26 attendees) (August 25).

DR. JAMES A. LAMONDIA was interviewed about the use of oilseed crops for biodiesel by Ann DeMatteo for the New Haven Register (August 1); participated in a planning meeting for Arboriculture 101 in New Haven (August 8); was interviewed about tobacco plant pathology research and tobacco culture by Quannah Leonard of the Waterbury Republican American (August 17); assisted Dr. Alex Wilson of the University of Miami and graduate student Wenting Huang with collections of tobacco green peach aphids from the Valley Laboratory (August 29); was interviewed by Dr. Gary Ginsberg of 'Greener living with Dr. G' of WDRC radio about IPM research of biodiesel crops (August 29); and was interviewed about differences between tobacco types and culture by Quannah Leonard of the Waterbury Republican American (August 31).

Journal Articles Approved August 2007

Ward, Jeffrey S. Crop Tree Release Increases Growth of Red Oak Saw Timber: 12 year Results. Central Hardwood Forest Conference XVI.

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