Interim Dean Robert J. Hauser announced on December 9, 2009, that Dr. Germán A. Bollero has been named the new Department Head for Crop Sciences effective December 16, 2009.

Dr. Bollero was awarded a B.S. degree in Agronomy from the National University of Rosario in Argentina. After receiving M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in 1993 and 1994 from the University of Illinois, he continued his association with the U.I. Department of Agronomy as a postdoctoral research associate and senior research specialist in agriculture. In 1998 he joined the ACES faculty as Assistant Professor of Biometry and Cropping Systems, having spent the prior two years as Assistant Professor of Sustainable Cropping Systems at the University of Maryland at College Park.

Dr. Bollero is internationally recognized for his scholarship in biometry. His teaching, service, and research contributions have placed him among an elite handful of truly outstanding faculty members. He has been included on the Incomplete List of Teachers Ranked as Excellent by Their Students 17 times. Among other recognitions, he has received several College of ACES awards, was selected as a member of the ACES Academy of Teaching Excellence, and was in the first class of the ACES Global Connect program. His record of grantsmanship is particularly impressive.

Dr. Bollero is eager to take Crop Sciences into new directions in the next decade. Congratulations, Dr. Bollero!

Dr. Germán Bollero announced on January 19 that Dr. Brian Diers will be the new Associate Head for the Department of Crop Sciences.

Brian Diers has been with the Department of Crop Sciences since 1998. He earned his B.S. degree from the University of Minnesota and his M.S. and Ph.D. degrees from Iowa State University. Dr. Diers leads a soybean breeding and genetics program and teaches introductory genetics. His research focuses on utilizing exotic germplasm to improve the disease resistance, seed quality, and yield potential of soybean. A major contribution of his program has been the mapping and utilization of genes that provide resistance to phytophthora rot, and soybean cyst nematode, soybean aphid, and sclerotinia stem rot (white mold). Congratulations, Dr. Diers!

Dr. Germán Bollero announced on December 21, 2009, that Dr. Jack A. Juvik has agreed to take over the position of Graduate Program Coordinator for Crop Sciences. Dr. Bollero previously held this position before accepting the Department Head position. Dr. Juvik was the Graduate Program Coordinator for the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences before the Horticulture Program joined Crop Sciences.

Congratulations, Dr. Juvik!
Congratulations for Awards and Recognitions

**Don Ort**, Professor of Plant Biology, was elected as a AAAS Fellow by the American Association for the Advancement of Science. His selection was based on his “research accomplishments in the area of photosynthesis, ranging from molecular mechanisms to ecosystems scale responses, and for leadership through service in professional societies.” Visit the web at http://news.illinois.edu/news/09/1217aaas.html to read the complete online News Bureau article about Dr. Ort.

**Steve Long** was elected a Fellow of the American Society for Plant Biologists in 2009. He is also Chief Editor for Global Change Biology, a journal that was listed recently by ISI as the most highly cited journal on Climate Change after Nature and Science.

**Rita Mumm** is the program chairwoman for the 2010 American Seed Trade Association Corn & Sorghum Research Conference. **Dick Johnson** was program chairman for the 2009 Conference.

**At the North Central Weed Science Society Annual Meeting in Kansas City, December 7-10, the following people received awards:**

**Adam Davis** received the Young Scientist Award. Dr. Davis is an Assistant Professor in Crop Sciences in the Program of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology.

**Jim Moody** received the Professional Staff Award. Jim is currently a Biological Science Technician in the lab of Marty Williams, and he worked with the Herbicide Evaluation Program a few years ago.

**Stephanie Rousonelos** received first place in the graduate student paper contest. Stephanie is a Masters student majoring in Weed Science in the lab of Pat Tranel.
Recent News

Alexandre Garcia, a visiting Ph.D. student from Brazil, will be working in the lab of Steve Clough through December 2010. Welcome to the University of Illinois, Alexandre!

Personals

- Mrs. Norma Boone, wife of the late Lester V. Boone, passed away on Sunday, December 12, 2009. Lester Boone was the Coordinator for the Agronomy Research Farms. The visitation took place on December 29, 2009 in Mt. Vernon, Illinois. Graveside services will take place at a later date. Condolences can be sent to the family at www.bohlenderfuneralchapel.com

- “Dear Crop Sciences Colleagues: Thanks for the generous donation to honor my mother’s passing. I appreciate your support and thoughtfulness during this difficult time. We were comforted by your kindness.” Tom and Debby Voigt

Recent Retiree

Dennis Thomas, long time employee and friend of Agronomy/Crop Sciences, retired on December 31, 2009 after 30 years of service. Dennis started working in the department under the direction of Dr. Cecil Nickell and ended his career with Dr. Brian Diers. Thank you, Dennis, for all your years of hard work to the department! We wish Dennis well in his future endeavors!

Newly Elected Field and Furrow Officers for 2010

President - Whitney Massey
Vice President - Ross Recker
Secretary - Robin Rollings
Treasurer - Ryan DeWerff
Reporter - Hayley Bunselmeyer
Membership/PR - Zach Ferguson
ACES Council Reps - Spencer Allen and Brad Launer
Social Chair - Kaitlin Weitekamp
Philanthropy Chair - Elisabeth Siddell
Fundraising Chair - Drew Wright
Conventions Chair - Ross Wilkin

DID YOU KNOW?

In 1938, U.S. farmers produced 2.3 billion bushels of corn on 94.5 million acres. By 2009, they grew 12.9 billion bushels of corn on 86.4 million acres.

(Quoted from the Illinois Farm Bureau ~ derived from USDA farm reports)
This handout, which was being slyly circulated on the campus, was brought to me by Joe Blaze, Head of Campus Security at the University of Illinois, about noon on Tuesday, October 14, 1969. At that time, I was sitting in the S.W. corner office on the second floor of Turner Hall and the sign on my door read: “Head, Agronomy Department.”

Mr. Blaze said there was nothing university police could do to prevent the protests, nor could they take any action until and unless some physical harm was done. So it was up to us in the department to defend the plots if we chose to do so. He would have officers watching from the roof of Mumford Hall and elsewhere, and they would quickly come to our rescue if necessary.

Of course we would protect these historic plots! My first call was to Gene Oldham, manager of the department’s South Farm and in charge of field operations on the Morrow Plots. “The corn is ready to be harvested; so let’s harvest it!” Gene said.

Gene and the South Farm Crew promptly headed to the Plots. From Turner Hall came professors, graduate students, and technicians. All corn on the Morrow Plots was picked and weighed before dark. Now let the rascals come! They’ll not destroy any yield data, no matter what they do.

But what if they try to put poisonous chemicals on the plants and soil? We can’t allow that, but how can we stop them when they come at noon tomorrow?

Well, let’s meet them and see if we can maybe teach them something about the importance of these plots and why they are here. So we put on our orange field day caps (pre-Squanto model) and were at the Morrow Plots ready to meet whoever might come at noon on the 15th. We had little idea what would really happen, but we were ready as we could be.

Shortly after noon, we could see a core group of 20 or so, followed by a straggling group of indefinite size coming from the north headed towards the plots. The leader wore a white lab coat, was wearing a gas mask, and had a lab wash bottle in his hand. When they were within earshot, I welcomed them to the “First Student Field Day at the Morrow Plots.” That stopped them a bit, and I added that we would be glad to listen to their complaints if they would first let us tell them a bit about the plots which they evidently wanted to harm. Sam Aldrich, in full extension teaching mode, then told the restless group facing us that these plots were established by researchers to find out if corn could be grown continuously on the same land and what treatments were needed for profitable farming and for soil preservation. He told them these were world famous and were followed by agricultural

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scientists and teachers in many countries. 

The protest leader then said they would like to tell us why it was wrong for the university to be doing work for the military which allowed defoliation of crops in countries with whom we were at war—currently Vietnam. He introduced a faculty member from Chemistry Department who gave a technical lecture of a half hour or so about defoliants and other poisons. He spoke in monotone and things were very quiet on both sides of the fence.

The person with the gas mask and the bottle said he wanted to do a symbolic defoliation of the corn to protest the U.S. defoliation program in Vietnam and that the liquid was only water. So we watched while he sprayed water on a fence post. The crisis was over!!

Many in the crowd seemed really interested in the plots and asked intelligent, searching questions about the research underway. I recall one lad asked why the university didn’t plant some crop in there that people could eat. He did not realize his listener was an animal scientist and he got a short course on animal nutrition from Dean Orville Bentley.

This event was just 40 years ago. Most of today’s students and some faculty were not yet alive, but Squanto Survivors remember the Turbulent 60’s with protests of the war in Southeast Asia and student boycotts of companies supplying goods or services to the military. There were some campus riots; one doing considerable damage to property on Green Street. This was only six months before the student protest at Kent State University resulted in the killing of a student.

Mr. Blaze told me that university officials had tried to find out which segment of the university had an army contract to which the protesters objected. University Contracts Office could find no such contract in effect with any college or department and concluded the protesters were in error. Later it was discovered that the contract was with State Geological Survey which was located on campus, but not really a part of the university. It was for use of boron compounds for military purposes. Also we learned that the protest leader was the son of a faculty member in Agriculture and that he eventually became CEO of a Boston firm.

Fred Welch arranged for an installation at the S.W. corner of the plots where a tape recorder could be activated to play a short informational program about the plots. Recorders were stolen or destroyed and no amount of added metal seemed to be adequate for protection of the installation, so it was abandoned.

Dr. Marlowe Thorne came to University of Illinois as Head of the Department of Agronomy in 1963 from Oklahoma State University, where he had been department head since 1956. Dr. Thorne stepped down as department head in 1970 to take an assignment in India.
Department of Crop Sciences
AW-101 Turner Hall
1102 S. Goodwin Avenue
Urbana, IL 61801
Ph 217-333-3420
Fax 217-333-9817
www.cropsci.illinois.edu

Jan. 19:  First Day of Instruction, Spring Semester
Feb. 1:  Last day to add name to May degree list using Web Self-Service
March 1–2:  Illinois Corn Breeders School, I Hotel and Conference Center, Champaign, IL
March 20:  Spring Break Begins
March 29:  Instruction Resumes
April 23: Last day to deposit May doctoral dissertations
Apr 30: Last day to deposit May master's theses
May 5:  Instruction Ends for Spring Semester
May 6:  Reading Day
May 7–14:  Final Exams
May 16: Commencement

Visit the Crop Sciences web site at http://www.cropsci.illinois.edu for more information about upcoming events.

What I Did on My Christmas Vacation by Charlie Smyth

Audrey and I made a quick one-week visit to San Diego via the Dallas airport to visit my family and her sister. We’d like to share several discoveries we made: DFW can’t handle an inch or two of snow, you can ride the shuttle train as long as you like, seeing the new Dallas Cowboys stadium to the SW in Arlington or to catch great sunrises or sunsets, and the best restaurants are in Terminal D.

There are still wild places left in San Clemente, once known as Rancho San Clemente. The “long way” to the top of Iron Mountain in San Diego County is far prettier, more rugged, and provides for more solitude than the tourist route. The trail system in the Lake Hodges area next to my parents house, part of the San Dieguito river shed, is expanding east and west to eventually result in an off road trail from Solana Beach on the coast to Julian in the mountains – we made avid use of the area for biking and running, including finding out that Audrey can run to the top of Mt. Bernardo faster than I can ride it. And finally, flipping over on a mountain bike is very easy, follows the laws of physics, and rocks win.

As Manager of System Services, Charlie provides oversight of computer and web resources for the department.

Best Wishes for a Quick Recovery!

Tom Ahasic broke his foot and has been getting around Turner Hall with the aid of an orthopedic trolley. Tom has recently been upgraded from a cast to walking boot. Hope you finish mending soon, Tom!

Linda Kemplin had surgery on her arm in December and has been home while recuperating. Hope you feel better soon. We miss you, Linda!