Crop Sciences Newsletter

Horticulture Program Transfers to Crop Sciences

Effective August 16, 2009, the Horticulture Program was transferred from the Department of NRES to the Department of Crop Sciences. This transfer was initiated by faculty who believed that the combining of personnel and courses would benefit both Horticulture and Crop Sciences since they shared a common mission, had complementary programs, and both disciplines represented basic and applied plant sciences.

All HORT and CPSC courses will retain their current rubrics. The HORT off-campus courses will become part of the Crop Sciences Online M.S. Degree Program, which will be coordinated by Dr. Don Briskin, who will also continue as the coordinator of the NRES off-campus program. See page 3 for a list of new personnel.

For a list of the names of the people transferring to Crop Sciences, see page 3.

Bob Hoeft Becomes Interim Associate Dean

Effective September 16, 2009, Dr. Robert Hoeft, Head of the Department of Crop Sciences, will become the Interim Associate Dean, Extension and Outreach. Having spent 31 of his 36 years at Illinois in Extension, Dr. Hoeft has a strong desire to see that Extension remains a viable segment of the University of Illinois.

Dr. Hoeft brings both administrative experience and an Extension background to the interim position, enabling the University of Illinois Extension and the College of ACES to maintain exceptional leadership during this period of transition.

The Crop Sciences FAC and the Dean’s Office have developed a plan for an internal search that will begin soon with the goal of finding a new department head by early to mid-November. Dr. Hoeft has agreed to continue as Head until that is accomplished.

Best Wishes to Dr. Hoeft!

Graduate Fellowships and Awards

The Graduate Fellowships and Awards Committee wishes to announce and congratulate the following recipients of Crop Sciences Departmental Fellowships for the 2009-2010 academic year:

Jonathan Baldwin Turner Graduate Fellowship:
- Adam Barling (Steve Moose)
- James DeDecker (John Masianas)
- Justin Pals (Michael Plewa)

S.R. Aldrich Fellowship (Provost Match):
- Nick Tinsley (Mike Gray)

The William B. And Nancy L. Ambrose Fellowship:
- Wes Barber (Steve Moose)

Brockson Graduate Fellowship:
- Adam Henninger (Fred Below)

J.C. Hackleman Fellowship/ Illinois Crop Improvement Assoc. Graduate Fellowship:
- Tim Pruski (Brian Diets)

Richard H. & Elizabeth C. Hageman Endowed Graduate Research Fellowship (Provost Match):
- Nathan Mellendorf (Vince Davis)

Floyd S. Ingersoll Graduate Research Fellowship:
- Sushma Jossey (Les Domier)

Kraft/Frerichs Graduate Fellowship:
- Christine Lucas (Steve Moose)

Larry Schrader Fellowship (Provost Match):
- Matt Maughan (Germán Bollero)

Fred W. Slife Graduate Fellowship:
- Kate Thinglum (Put Tranl)

Carl T. Calkins Fellowship in Plant Breeding:
- Joshua Mache (Rita Mumm/Martin Bohn)

Monsanto Fellowship in Plant Breeding:
- Joshua Bates (Randy Nelson)
- Talon Becker (Martin Bohn)

Pioneer Hi-Bred Plant Breeding Fellowship:
- Mike Meyer (Jerald Pataky)
- Sarah Ports (Schuyler Korban)

Jack Cavanagh Pioneer Plant Breeding Fellowship:
- Nathan Karplus (Fred Kolb)

Ainsworth Fellowship
- Patrick Henry (Emerson Nafziger)

Note: Names of advisors appear in parentheses above.
Meet Yoshie Hanzawa

Yoshie Hanzawa is an Assistant Professor.

Yoshie joins the department from New York University, where she was a senior postdoctoral researcher in the Department of Biology and Center for Comparative Functional Genomics. Her areas of expertise are genetics, genomics, and evolution. She received her M.A. in Genetics and Molecular Biology from Hokkaido University, Japan, in 1997, and her Ph.D. in Genetics and Molecular Biology from Hokkaido University, Japan, in 2000. Yoshie’s office is located in 259 ERML.

Please join us in welcoming Yoshie to Crop Sciences and the University of Illinois!

Meet Sarah Taylor Lovell

Sarah Taylor Lovell is an Assistant Professor, Sustainable Landscape Design and Planning. Sarah was hired under the Target of Opportunity (TOP) program. Sarah will be teaching HORT 455 and 456, “Residential Site Design I and II,” starting Fall 2010.

Sarah is coming to Illinois from the University of Vermont, Department of Plant and Soil Science. Her areas of expertise are multifunctional landscapes, urban agriculture, ecological design, and landscape agroecology. She received her M.S. in Agronomy, University of Illinois, in 1995, and her Ph.D. in Agronomy, University of Illinois, in 2000. Sarah will have an office in Plant Sciences Laboratory.

We are happy to have Sarah back at Illinois!

Meet Maria Villamil

Maria Villamil is an Assistant Professor of Crop Production and one of the newest faculty members to join the department. Maria comes to us from the National Council of Scientific and Technical Investigations (CONICET), Argentina.

Maria received her M.S. in Agronomy, Agronomia, Universidad Nacional del Sur (UNS) in 2000, M.S. in Agricultural Education, University of Illinois, in 2007, and her Ph.D. in Crop Sciences, University of Illinois, in 2005. Her office will be located in N-323 Turner Hall.

Welcome back, Maria!
Awards and Recognitions

Emerson Nafziger has been named the first recipient of the Ainsworth Professorship in Crop Sciences, which was endowed by a generous gift from Dr. Tom and Peggy Ainsworth.

Fred Kolb has been named the first recipient of the Jack A. and Marjorie S. Cavanah Professorship, which was endowed by a generous gift from Jack and Margorie Cavanah.

Robert Skirvin received the Campus Award for Excellence in Mentoring Graduate Students. Over the past 33 years, he has touched the lives of students from a variety of disciplinary backgrounds.

Congratulations on Your Promotion!

Effective August 16, Aaron Hager has been promoted to the rank of Associate Professor.

Effective August 16, Patrick Tranel has been promoted to the rank of Professor.

Effective August 16, Lisa Gonzini has been promoted to Senior Research Specialist.

WELCOME to Hort Personnel Joining Our Department!

As a result of this merger, 67 people are transferring from NRES to Crop Sciences, which includes 15 faculty, 18 academic professionals, 10 civil service staff, 3 research assistants, and 21 hourly workers.

FACULTY
Bruce E. Branham
Donald P. Briskin
Thomas Fermanian (Emeritus)
Yoshie Hanzawa
John A. Juvik
Gary J. Kling
Mosbah M. Kushad
John B. Masiunas
Manfredo J. Seufferheld
Robert M. Skirvin
J. Ryan Stewart
Thomas B. Voigt
Daniel F. Warnock
David J. Williams
Henry T. Wilkinson

ACADEMIC PROFESSIONALS
Bronwyn C. Aly
C. Diane Anderson
Daniel S. Anderson
Patricia A. Bingaman
Monica A. David
Jeffrey D. Kindhart
Philip L. Nixon
Dianne A. Noland
Margaret A. Norton
Dianne K. Pedersen
Richard J. Pyter
James C. Schmidt
William H. Shoemaker
Jeremy M. Shafer
William F. Sharp
Charles E. Voigt
Michelle L. Wiesbrook

CIVIL SERVICE
Craig A. Anderson
Adam F. Deary
Linda G. Harvey
Kenneth E. Horn
Daryl R. Huffstutler
Vernon L. Johnson
Linda J. Kemplin
Jean L. Miles
Kurt W. Noffitz
Patricia A. Sarver

RESEARCH ASSISTANTS
Won Byoung Chae
Travis Cleveland
Katie A. Yu

HOURLY EMPLOYEES
Clay H. Apfelstadt
Sosina Asfaw
Gerald E. Barrett
Stephen K. Bosu Jr.
Elizabeth S. Curry
Stephanie E. Dold
Aaron M. Fairbanks
Jessica L. Fermanian
Lauren E. Flowers
Joel R. Gehrig
Alyssa A. Gorski
Carissa R. Graham
Zachary B. Grant
Shelby W. Henning
William F. Hite
Mara H. Horwitz
Sarah A. Kestich
David M. Mayer
Maggie L. Moerschbaecher
Andrew F. Neuman
Kyle Rak
Molly R. Spacapan
Colten A. Stafford
John P. Telthorst
Claire A. Viall
Julie A. Zakes
Friday was such a beautiful day with the sun shining and 75 degree temperature that I decided to visit the campus: the last day of the first week of classes. By the way Myron Feitshans, a retired meteorologist, announced at Exchange Club Wednesday that this was the second coldest summer on record in Illinois. That may reduce the August 1st forecast of a 175 bu./acre avg. corn yield from 12 million acres and, for sure, require more drying costs than in recent years.

I parked behind Turner Hall and was surprised by all the students in the hallways and class rooms. They all looked so young! The boys wore a great variety of indescribable clothing. The girls were in the majority and over 80% were wearing “very short” shorts. Reminded me of a Pat Johnson story about women’s skirts: “He had watched them go down, down, down until they hit bottom and now they were going up, up, up until they were again hitting bottom.”

I was not aware of the renovation of the corn breeding labs on the first floor and was told that the teaching and soil testing labs were also to be remodeled in the basement. Additional Green Houses have been added south of Turner Hall. At Turner Hall’s entry there are Bulletin Boards listing staff of the Crop Science and Natural Resource and Environmental Sciences. I counted 43 faculty, 31 academic and 10 staff (mostly secretaries) in Crop Science housed in three different buildings. There were 78 faculty listed for Natural Resources. These figures may not reflect the new semester, nor the Horticultural Scientists who recently voted to join Crop Science. There is a committee presently considering a possible name change for Crop Science.

My next stop was the relatively new (to me) Agricultural Library. It surely must be one of the most beautiful ones in the country! I visited the huge auditorium in the basement and observed the meeting and computer rooms, and studied and read the many plaques and exhibits in the Rotunda on the first floor. Then on to the second and third floors that have automated book cases plus numerous study areas, and private rooms with computers. What a great place to study or write! Several Librarians were present to answer questions.

A huge mural painted by Billy Morrow Jackson dominates one wall on the first floor entitled, “AG TIME,” will certainly stop any alumni. I was trying to identify the different persons thereon Hopkins, Edward East, W.L. Burlison, and C.M. Woodworth. No other department or research area had this many in the painting. Seems strange—that the first Agronomy Department in America and one that contributed so much to the Agricultural Revolution in Illinois, the nation, and internationally no longer exists!

I then wandered west of the Ag. Library to see the new University Bell Tower. A spectacular sight, about 100 feet tall with nice landscaping. Viewed from the east or west it looks like a rocket ready for take-off at Cape Canaveral, but with a long, sharp, cathedral spire. From the north or south one can see several bells of various size in the top. This structure sits on an imaginary north-south line starting at the Student Union Building through the Quad’s center. It is just north of the relatively new Architecture Building which I toured a couple of years ago. And the architects certainly designed a unique and beautiful building, especially the inside. Not sure I would want an office therein. Each had an all glass front that would allow everyone to see the clutter on the desk, or your absence or napping.

I returned to Mumford Hall where Ag. Administration is still located. There is major construction going on around the building’s foundation to improve drainage and to the inside of south end where Ag. Economics and the old Ag. Library used to be. Compared to the newer buildings on campus, Mumford looks ancient, with dimly lit hallways. The Dean’s office and other Administrators are located on the west side of the first floor. I did run into John

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“The wealth of Illinois is in her soil, and her strength lies in its intelligent development.”

President Draper
Emeritus Corner (continued from page 4)

Santas who in recent years seemed to be about the only one working in International Agriculture (promoting student exchange programs). He is always upbeat and reports “things are looking up” with a newly appointed Director of International Programs in the College who is aggressively looking for new MONEY and projects. Also at the University level where Earl Kellog was Vice President for International Affairs, they are again recruiting a replacement.

The Morrow Plots were next on the agenda. This is the year that all plots are in corn (every sixth). One can easily see big differences in plant growth, but missing brain cells negated my remembering what treatments were where! I thought we used to have a map or pass-out to indicate the rotations and treatments. The plots are well maintained, and looking good to have survived 133 years of continuous attack by University planners and architects.

I walked on to the Quad and into Davenport Hall, the largest agricultural building in America when completed in 1906. Even the President of the University at that time appreciated Agriculture, for carved on the facade across the top of the Building is M.B. Russell’s favorite saying: “The wealth of Illinois is in her soil, and her strength lies in its intelligent development.” There are rumors now that so few courses are being offered in soils that graduate studies may not be feasible. A few years ago the soil staff in Agronomy voted to leave Agronomy and join the Department of Natural Resource and Environmental Sciences. No Comment!

Davenport Hall still has the grand stairway on the Quad side, but about everything else is changed in the building since Agronomy left in 1963. The big Auditorium on the second floor is now offices and class rooms, as are all the former Agronomy Labs. An elevator has been added.

Sadly the small plaque honoring Edmund East for developing Hybrid Corn in the early 1900’s at Illinois is still in the dimly lit entrance to room 311 and unreadable.

Davenport Hall seems to be fully occupied by the Departments of Geography and Anthropology. Looking at their many charts in the hallways they cover everything: the history of the Earth and all its biological entities including human kind. Several charts in the Geography Section on the second floor did catch my eye. (1) Soil is the Foundation of Life. (2) The Soils Of Illinois with a large map. (3) Is Pedology, the historically maligned sibling of soil science, alive and well? You bet, and so is Paleopedology. On one door: Geomorphology and Soils. In one Anthropology hallway was a chart concerning the importance of Indian corn. So the Grand old Building is hanging on to some of its heritage?

I tried to find where the Crop Production Division of Agronomy offices and "THE MILL ROOM" were located in the Annex on the Southeast corner, unsuccessfully. The mill room was the horror chamber where generations of graduate students suffered through their oral prelims and finals. I admit to meeting many ghosts in both Turner Hall and particularly in Davenport: Burleton, Dungan, Woodworth, Bonnet, Bauer, Sears, Fullemann, Weimer, Lang and Early. And so many graduate student friends! We were all veterans with wives and children. We worked Hard, studied hard and played hard. The agronomy softball and volleyball teams did well in the University Intramural leagues, and the Table Tennis Tournaments took courage! The wives formed their own social club (WAGS) wives of Agronomy graduate students and sometimes invited the men to pot lucks.

Fred Slife was the first one to welcome me to Illinois on March 1, 1948 with a cup of coffee and a big Smile! Earl Leng was the smartest of the bunch. He never studied, and could accomplish more in two hours than the rest of us in eight.

A GREAT MORNING and WALK DOWN MEMORY LANE! The beautiful view of the Quad and vitality of the Students and Campus is still present! And how Lucky we were to have been a part of it all at one time!

Johnny Pendleton was Professor of Crop Production. He retired from the University of Illinois in April 1971.
CPSC 598 PMPB Wednesday Noon Seminar
W109 Turner Hall

9/2: Scott Jackson, Purdue Univ. “Advancing genetics and breeding in a set of Phaseoloid legumes through genomics”

9/9: Yoshie Hanzawa, UIUC. “Evolution of Flowering Time Pathways in Arabidopsis thaliana”

9/16: Rita Mumm, UIUC. “The new face of cultivar improvement”


CPSC 598 Thursday Noon Seminar
W109 Turner Hall

9/17: Andrea Bohn, U of I, College of ACES

9/24: George Czarap, U of I, Springfield Extension Center

10/1: Jose Gonzalez, South Dakota State University

10/15: James Doolittle, North Central Sun Grant Center

10/22: Emerson Nafziger, U of I, Crop Sciences

10/29: Sukhvinder Singh

National Agriculture Plastics Congress

Bill Shoemaker, a new member of our department, recently returned from giving a presentation at the National Agricultural Plastics Congress, which was held from July 12-16 in State College, PA. His talk was entitled, “Plasticulture Stand Establishment Techniques Impact Grapevine Development.” The congress is a function of the American Society for Plasticulture and provides an opportunity for researchers to learn and progress in research areas, such as biodegradable plastics, controlled environment crop culture, water management with drip irrigation, plastic films in crop production, and recycling of agricultural plastics. The Pennsylvania State University hosted the event this year. The keynote speaker was a plasticulture researcher from Italy, Dr. Giacomo Scarascia Mugnozza of the University of Bari, whose presentation was titled, “Current Status of Plasticulture in Europe.”

Committees

During recent elections, Germán Bollero, Tom Voigt, and Frank Zhao were elected to represent the faculty for two-year terms as the Faculty-at-Large representatives to the Department Advisory Committee through August 15, 2010. Kevin Steffey was also a Faculty-at-Large member, but due to his retirement on May 15, 2009, Dr. Hoeft has appointed Jack Juvik to the remaining year of Kevin’s term. Marcia Johnson was elected to represent staff for a two-year term on the Department Advisory Committee from August 16, 2009 through August 15, 2011. Don Ort remains the 0-time Faculty representative to the DAC through August 15, 2010. Sarah Potts remains the Graduate Student representative to the DAC through August 15, 2010.
Crop Sciences Reaches Out to Students Using Distance Education Technologies

Did you know that the Department of Crop Sciences offers a M.S. degree delivered through distance education technologies? This program enables students to strengthen their education part time through mainly synchronous online course delivery and optional site-based programming. The program, which prior to Fall 2007 was strictly site-based classes offered only in Illinois, has delivered University of Illinois courses to agriculture professionals in the seed, chemical, consulting and other related fields for over thirty years and has a twenty-three year history of granting M.S. degrees in Crop Sciences.

The Online M.S. Program in Crop Sciences also works in conjunction with the Natural Resources and Environmental Studies Online M.S. program, the Department of Animal Sciences and the Agriculture Education Online M.S. program to offer a diverse set of courses to meet the needs of students.

A recently released U.S. Department of Education research study described that "Studies of earlier generations of distance and online learning courses have concluded that they are usually as effective as classroom-based instruction," said Marshall "Mike" Smith, a Senior Counselor to the Education Secretary. "The studies of more recent online instruction included in this meta-analysis found that, on average, online learning, at the post-secondary level, is not just as good as but more effective than strictly conventional face-to-face instruction." This increase in quality of distance education programs and delivery is part of the reason for the significant increase in development of online programs, online course delivery and student demand and enrollments globally. Students in distance education degree programs can continue to work and have the advantage of applying the knowledge they learn in their coursework immediately in their jobs and lives.

The Department of Crop Sciences is looking to the future needs of the non-traditional student and working professionals by delivering the entire degree requirements through online distance education technologies. Online courses in the department are typically a blended distance education model consisting of "live" class meetings in a virtual classroom setting where student/faculty interaction is maintained to a high level. Additionally, an asynchronous (independent) component for course readings, assignments and a student (chat) web-board is also part of many courses. By using a blended distance education model of synchronous (live) lecture sessions plus asynchronous (independent) work, the rigor and quality of the program is maintained as well as a high success level of the students in the courses. Optional site-based courses may still be offered occasionally in Illinois, but are not required for graduation. Students may enroll in individual courses for personal or professional advancement, complete a Certificate of Professional Development in Crop Sciences (a three-course sequence), and Certified Crop Advisors may take any course at a non-credit rate for professional development CEU’s to maintain their certification.

For more information on the Crop Sciences program offerings, please visit www.cropsci.uiuc.edu/ocs or contact Heather Miller, program director at 217-265-6568 or hmiller1@illinois.edu.

Read what two of our Online M.S. Crop Sciences graduates have to say about the program.

Kelli A. Bassett, Area Agronomist, Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Inc.
I enjoyed taking the evening classes with other working professionals. Many of our discussions were focused on applied topics related to agronomics and this was helpful for farmers and industry representatives and [we] have continued the professional working relationships we developed long after our degrees were completed.

Ron Lloyd, U.S. Lead for Agronomy and Learning Centers, Monsanto
It was one of the best educational experiences I have ever participated in. The biggest value for me was that I had been in the workplace for several years and the information I was exposed to in these classes was very applicable to my every day work. Another key benefit for me was to be challenged in the way I think about things, understand multiple viewpoints and learn how to be successful in a dynamic environment like agriculture.
**New Graduate Student Orientation**

**October 1, 2:00-4:00 pm, 350B ERML**

All Crop Sciences students admitted for the terms Spring, Summer, and Fall 2009 are expected to attend. Learn the rules and policies of the department.

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**Important Fall 2009 Dates**

- September 11, 2009: Feed Your FACES, South Quad 11:00-1:00 pm
- September 19, 2009: Fall “Kick-Off” Picnic, 4:00-7:00 pm
- October 1, 2009: Crop Sciences Grad Student Orientation, 350B ERML, 2:00-4:00 pm
- December 1-2, 2009: Illinois AgMasters Conference, I Hotel, Champaign
- December 18, 2009: ACES December Graduation Reception, 4:30-7:00 pm ACES Lib.
- January 6-14, 2010: Illinois Corn & Soybean Classic
- March 12-13, 2010: ExplorACES

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

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**ANNOUNCING – DALTON ROBERT MOOSE**

Born Sept. 13, 2:09 p.m., weighing 5 lbs. and 12 ozs. and 19.5 inches long. Proud parents Steve and Shawn.

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**Graduate Announcements**

Congratulations to...

- Horacio Lopez and Rawikarn Pulam for awards of support from the Fulbright International Student program.
- Carolyn Bonin who is receiving support from the United Soybean Board for her Ph.D. program.

The following are the officers elected to the 2009-2010 Crop Sciences Graduate Student Organization:

- Sarah Potts, President
- Matt Maughan, Vice President
- Nathan Karplus, Secretary
- Kate Thinglum, Treasurer
- Joana Novais, Fundraising
- Bhupinder Farmaha, Social Chair
- Wesley Barber, Teaching Rep
- Justin Ma, Seminar Rep
- Charlie Thompson, Grievance Rep

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**Important Fall 2009 Dates**

- Sept. 18: Last day to take final exam for October doctoral degree
- Sept. 25: Masters Deposit Deadline
- Oct. 2: Doctoral Deposit Deadline
- Oct. 15: October Degree Conferral
- Nov. 1: Daylight Savings Time Ends. Turn back your clock one hour.
- Nov 13: Last day to add name to December degree list
- Nov 13: Last day to take final exam for December doctoral degree
- Nov. 21: Thanksgiving Vacation Begins
- Nov. 30: Instruction Resumes
- Dec. 4: Doctoral Deposit Deadline
- Dec. 9: Instruction Ends for Fall Semester
- Dec. 10: Reading Day
- Dec. 11: Masters Deposit Deadline
- Dec. 11-18: Final Exams
- Dec. 21: December Degree Conferral

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Undergrad student working in the Landscape Design Studio in Plant Sciences Lab.