

SWFREC Update

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 SOUTHWEST FLORIDA RESEARCH
& EDUCATION CENTER

Center Director's Corner



The SWFREC landscape certainly has changed over the last year. Much of the change took place as a result of Hurricane Wilma and the wrath it brought to the property in October 2005. We want to thank UF/IFAS administration and facilities personnel in Gainesville for their assistance in accomplishing the renovations.

A new modular building was erected that now includes office and lab space for staff members from the entomology, water resources, citrus horticulture, and agricultural economics programs. The building replaces a trailer that was totally destroyed by Wilma.

Several of our greenhouses required extensive repairs, and one was a total loss following the storm. All are up and running now and are being utilized by various programs.



The new modular building is being used as an office and lab annex.

In other news, we are pleased to announce the May 1 arrival of

Dr. Robert Ebel to the SWFREC in the newly created position of associate professor of citrus horticulture and plant physiology. Dr. Ebel comes to us from Auburn University, where he has worked for ten years as a pomologist. Dr. Ebel received his undergraduate degree in

horticulture from the University of Missouri in 1981. He earned his M.S. in horticulture in 1985 from Washington State University, where he also earned his Ph.D. in horticulture in 1991. Dr. Ebel's work at SWFREC will focus on lowering production costs for citrus growers by identifying limitations of production, conducting research to address those issues, and relating results back to growers.

Future projects at the center will include construction of a new building that will house the mechanical shop as well as the facilities and farm operations departments. The current mechanical shop will be converted into a much-needed storage building. In addition, plans for a new dormitory building for graduate students are in the works, and repairs will continue to be made to existing structures.

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Growers, Others Take Ag Tours to SWFREC

A group of corn and soybean producers from Illinois, Iowa, Wisconsin, and Canada toured the SWFREC this past January. GROWMARK Industries, a cooperative farmer group, staged its annual convention in Marco Island, and several members participated in an organized field trip to the center.

Several faculty and staff members spoke to the group, including Dr. John Dunckelman, associate center director, who welcomed the group to the center and provided an overview of SWFREC programs and general information about agriculture in southwest Florida. Citrus horticulturalist Dr. Bob Rouse took the group into the SWFREC grove, where he did a demonstration about the evolution of grapefruit varieties. Entomologist Dr. Phil Stansly provided information about citrus problems, including canker and greening diseases. And Dr. Sanjay Shukla, water resources scientist, and engineer Jimmy Knowles spoke about the lysimeter project and water use in agriculture.



Members of GROWMARK Industries watch Dr. Bob Rouse's grapefruit demonstration in the SWFREC grove.

In addition, economist Dr. Fritz Roka spoke to the entire GROWMARK delegation of more than 230 members in Marco Island. His presentation focused on farm labor and immigration issues.

Dr. Roka also spoke to the Greater Naples Leadership group, which included SWFREC among its stops during an agricultural tour this month. He participated in a panel discussion about labor issues, then



Senior biological scientist Peter Newman gives the group a crash course in sugarcane production.

answered questions from the group.

A group of agriculture students from Delaware Valley College in Doylestown, Pennsylvania, also visited the center this month. The group received in-field presentations about growing practices in south Florida, including citrus, vegetables, sugarcane, and peaches.

Company Donations Assist SWFREC Groves

Generous product donations from three companies on behalf of their southwest Florida representatives are being utilized in the SWFREC citrus groves to protect trees against citrus greening disease:

- ◆ Bayer CropScience (Rachel Walters) donated Admire, a systemic insecticide to protect against psyllids, which is being applied to newly planted trees in the SWFREC concept grove. The concept grove is a study of how new plantings will be planted and brought into production in the face of citrus greening. In addition, Bayer donated Temik, a soil applied systemic to help with psyllid control, for the mature trees in the SWFREC grove. Thank you to custom applicator Dan Poole for applying the Temik in the grove.
- ◆ Valent USA (Sarah Hatton) donated Danitol, a foliar insecticide used to control psyllids, which is being applied to the center's mature grove trees.
- ◆ Dow AgroSciences (Tony Weiss) donated Lorsban, a foliar spray that also targets psyllids, for application on the mature trees.

Thank you to reps Rachel, Sarah, and Tony and their companies for these generous donations!

SWFREC Staff News

- ◆ Dr. Sanjay Shukla, water resources scientist, made an invited presentation, “Effects of Compost Application on Water Movement and Quality,” at the US Compost Council Meeting in Orlando in January.
- ◆ Post-doctoral research associate Dr. Ronald French accepted a faculty position as an assistant professor and extension specialist with Texas A & M University. He joined the Department of Plant Pathology and Microbiology and is stationed at the TAMUS Research and Extension Center in Amarillo. Dr. French received his Ph.D. in plant pathology from UF in May 2004. At SWFREC, he conducted research on *Phytophthora capsici*, which causes Phytophthora blight and rot of bell pepper and other vegetable hosts. In his new position, Dr. French is focusing on plant disease management.
- ◆ Jimmy Knowles, an engineer in the Water Resources program, participated in the following educational seminar in December at the UF/IFAS Citrus Research and Education Center in Lake Alfred: “Geodesy Fundamentals and GPS Positioning for Agricultural, Surveying, and GIS Applications.”
- ◆ Senior biological scientist Karen Armbrester retired on January 31 after nearly thirty years at the SWFREC. The center’s faculty and staff had a luncheon in Karen’s honor and presented her with a commemorative plaque and other gifts. While at the SWFREC, Karen spent most of her years working in the vegetable horticulture program.
- ◆ Gregory Hendricks, a Water Resources graduate student, was selected to receive a travel grant from the UF Graduate Student Council to present a paper on the effectiveness of vegetable BMPs at the 2007 annual meeting of the American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers in Minneapolis, MN.
- ◆ The following are refereed journal articles, trade publication articles, and EDIS documents published by SWFREC faculty from December-March:



Armbrester

Cherry, R., P. Stansly, R. Nagata, and S. Halbert. 2006. *Liburnia pseudoseminigra* (Delphacidae: Homoptera), a New and Unusual Pest of St. Augustine Grass. *Florida Entomologist*. 89: 459-462.

Jaber, F. H. and S. Shukla. 2007. Accuracy of Hydrodynamic Modeling of Reservoirs. *Journal of Hydrologic Engineering* 12(2): 225-230.

Rogers, M. E. and P. A. Stansly. 2006. Management of Citrus Leafminer. *Citrus Industry* 87(4): 15-16.

Shukla, S. and F. H. Jaber. 2006. Groundwater Recharge from Agricultural Areas in the Flatwoods Region of South Florida. University of Florida, IFAS, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, ABE Circular, 7 pp.

Shukla, S. and F. H. Jaber. Stormwater as an Alternative Source of Water Supply: Feasibility and Implications for Watershed Management. University of Florida, IFAS, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, ABE Circular 1493, 6 pp.

Shukla, S. 2006. Harvesting Water as a Second Crop. *Citrus and Vegetable magazine* 70 (9):28.

Stansly, P. A. and M. E. Rogers. 2006. Managing Asian Citrus Psyllid Populations. *Citrus Industry* 87 (3): 17-19.

Stansly, P. A. 2006. Footsteps: the Best Thing to Put in Your Grove. *Citrus Industry* 87(6):28-29.

Stansly, P. A. 2007. Scouting for Pests and Beneficials in Florida Citrus. *Citrus Industry* 88(2):14-17.

Urbaneja, A., Sanchez, E. and Stansly, P. A. 2007. Life History of *Eretmocerus mundus* Mercet (Hym.: Aphelinidae), a Parasitoid of *Bemisia tabaci* gennadius (Hom: Aleyrodidae), on Tomato and Sweet Pepper. *Biocontrol* 52:25-39.

Xiao, Yingfang, J. A. Qureshi, and Philip A. Stansly. 2007. Contribution of Predation and Parasitism to Mortality of Citrus Leafminer *Phyllocnistis citrella stainton* (Lepidoptera: Gracillariidae) Populations in Florida. *Biological Control* 40:396-404.



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Upcoming Events

April 4: *Certified Crop Advisors Seminar*. 7:30am-5:30 pm, SWFREC, Immokalee (and via videoconference at additional locations). Integrated pest management, 5 CEUs; nutrient management, 5 CEUs. For more information or to register: http://www.crec.ifas.ufl.edu/crec_websites/cca/index.htm.

April 18: *Citrus Growers Mechanical Harvesting Field Day and Workshop*. 7:30am-2pm, SWFREC. Event will include in-field machine demonstrations. For more information, visit: <http://citrusmh.ifas.ufl.edu>. To RSVP, contact Barbara Hyman at 239-658-3461 or e-mail brh@ifas.ufl.edu.

June 2: *Seventeenth Annual UF/IFAS Farm Safety Day and Tractor Rodeo*. 7:45am-3pm, SWFREC. Event includes educational sessions in the morning and tractor safety contest in the afternoon. Registration forms will be mailed to companies in late April/early May.



June 19-20: *2007 Florida Cattlemen's Association Convention*. Marriott Resort, Marco Island. For more information, link to the following Web site: <http://www.floridacattlemen.org/fca/index.htm>. Be sure to stop by the SWFREC booth (#29) in the trade show.

August 22-23: *2007 Citrus Expo*. Lee Civic Center, Fort Myers. Event features UF/IFAS-sponsored educational seminars and a citrus industry trade show. For more information, visit <http://www.citrusindustry.net/expo.html>.

