

Message From the Department Head



The summer has been hot and crops are maturing early in many areas. This has altered schedules for some activities

that are more flexible than harvesting plots, but we adjust accordingly. The graduate students are arriving and we prepare to welcome the undergraduate students back. The new school year will begin on August 20. Lisa Washburn is already assisting students and faculty with the usual array of course-related complications. As you will see below, we have had plenty else to keep us busy.

This is the first year we will offer our multidisciplinary departmental B.S. program entitled

Agro-ecology, Horticulture and Environmental Quality. The name reflects the breadth of the department and the diversity of training we offer students. The intent of the core curriculum is to broaden students' exposure to basic and applied sciences. We will have four degree options (Entomology, Crop and Weed Sciences, Horticulture and Urban Landscape Management and Soil and Land Resources) to permit students to specialize in their preferred area of focus and to prepare for employment or graduate studies. We believe this will benefit our future graduates.

I am also pleased to announce that we have established three new departmental scholarships. The R. Loren and Gale L. Kambitsch Plant Science Scholarship was established in honor of R. Loren Kambitsch's long-time affiliation with the University of Idaho Cooperative Extension Service and interest in research of breeding and variety development in cereal crops. The intent of this scholarship is to award one M.S. student in Plant Science every year. Preference will be given to graduates of Idaho, Washington and Oregon schools.

The Dennis Ridgway Memorial Scholarship was established by Elisabeth Ridgeway and Loyal L. Hower in memory of Dennis Ridgway to honor his interest in horticulture and his affiliation with the University of Idaho. One significant award will be given an undergraduate student in horticulture or crop science with preference to members of the Phi Kappa Tau fraternity.

The Jimmie S. Gregory Scholarship will be awarded to an undergraduate student in the area of plant protection, horticulture, crop science or soil and land resources each year for a total of \$1000.

We made advances with all three major collections housed in the department. We continue to work in the recently expanded William F. Barr Entomological Museum. The Orthoptera, Lepidoptera, larval and slide collections are in the newly acquired space. We still need to purchase additional bookshelves to accommodate recent literature donations from Bill Barr and others. We had a moment of concern when a valve in the deionized water system failed. We were fortunate that the only specimen cabinet that got wet held larvae

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Send suggestions and questions to
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in alcohol and that quick responses by Frank Merickel, several soil scientists (who share the floor with the Entomology Museum), and the departmental office staff limited damage to our Lepidoptera literature. Some publications got wet, but nothing was destroyed. We installed two tiers of railing to protect the Maynard Fosberg Monolith Collection from the periodic random bump from an elbow or backpack. The protection will allow us to develop more extensive displays illustrating soil taxonomy and the soils of Idaho. Two specimen cabinets were added to the Lambert Erickson Herbarium to allow continued growth of our important collection of weed materials.

We are very pleased to have hired Dr. Amber Moore to conduct a research and extension program addressing fertility/waste management and water program addressing soil fertility in southern Idaho. Amber will join the department in October and will be stationed in Twin

Falls. Congratulations to Juan Alvarez, Jim Barbour, Jodi Johnson-Maynard and Mark Schwarzlaender who all received tenure and promotion to the rank of associate professor. Jeff Stark has agreed to continue to serve as the Chair of the Division of Horticulture. I am glad to be able to continue working with Jeff as we strive to move PSES forward. I want to thank Matt Morra for eight years service as Chair of the Division of Soil and Land Resources. It was a pleasure to work with Matt and I greatly appreciated his insights. Correspondingly, I am glad to welcome Bob Maher as the new Chair of the Division. I look forward to working with Bob.

We continue nine searches to fill faculty positions. These positions are: Potato Storage Physiology (Kimberly), Microbial Physiology (Moscow), Potato Plant Pathology (Aberdeen), Soil Physics (Moscow), Research and Extension Entomology (Twin

Plant Molecular Biology (Moscow), Cropping Systems (Aberdeen), Urban Horticulture (Moscow), and Forages (Idaho Falls). All of these are vital to our ability to fulfill our teaching, research and extension missions. I want to thank all the faculty, staff and departmental partners who are dedicating time and effort to these critical efforts.

We are preparing for Ag Days September 27-29 and the meeting of the PSES Advisory Board on October 18. The advisory board is made up of 12 representatives of clientele groups, e.g. growers, agribusiness, teachers, students and environmental groups. We are looking forward to working with this group as we give them information about our current capabilities and gain their insights as we plan for the future direction of our programs. We also want to have the advisory board members deliver information to the citizens of Idaho.

Club News...

The **Plant & Soil Science Club's** first meeting will be September 5th at 5:30 pm in the 6th St. Greenhouse. It will be a welcome back party with pizza and a casual get-to-know everyone with a tour of the greenhouse and a brief explanation of the club for any new members.

Club Activities for the Fall Semester include apple picking at an Orchard in Hells Canyon or at the WSU you-pick, a trip to the pumpkin patch for a Halloween party, an annual Holiday Dinner, and of course, growing and selling a large crop of Poinsettias (as well as any other plants club members would like to grow). We will also be growing and selling a wide selection of houseplants and planting black and yellow tulip bulbs for a campus services project. Students of all majors (including grads) are all welcome to join.

Thanks much, Paul Collins, PSSC President

Club News (cont.)...

Meet The Soil Stewards!

In addition to creating and managing the UI's certified organic farm, the Soil Stewards, an ASUI recognized student club, work to foster a campus food system that is healthy, local, and organic. The Soil Stewards have had a busy summer growing delicious organic vegetables at the farm. The produce grown at the farm provides participants in our community a supported agriculture program, as well as our own members, a weekly supply of seasonal vegetables. Some of the produce is also purchased by Sodexo, the UI's campus food service, and donated to local food banks via the Palouse-Clearwater Environmental Institute's Backyard Harvest program. Extra produce is sold every Thursday from 4-6 on the eastside of the Ag Sci Building. The first annual farm field day is scheduled for September 11th. In consort with Sodexo, there will also be an Organic Buffet on Oct. 23rd in the Commons Food Court. The Stewards encourage people to come get involved with the newly constructed hoophouse at the farm through October. For more information on current and future activities and meetings, please visit <http://stuorgs.uidaho.edu/~soilstewards/index.htm>. See you at the farm!



New Hires

James T. Faber has been hired as a Science and Business Liaison in Moscow under Matt Morra. He will coordinate and facilitate research, commercialization, and promotional activities on biodiesel and associated co-products with CALS by working directly with research faculty in PSES and BAE. He started his position June 1.

Amber Moore has been hired as a new faculty member in Twin Falls. She will start her position in October.

Mary Lauver has moved to **Jack Brown's** research group as a Research Support Scientist I.

Welcome our new Graduate Students for Fall 2007! :

Mackenzie Ellison (Zemetra), **Maxwell Handiseni** & **Clark Neely** (Brown), **Mary Ridout** (Tripepi), **Elin Maki** (Barbour), **Bryan Blades** (Karasev), **Carole Rapo** (Eigenbrode), **McClure Tosch** (Mahler), and **Kara Butler** (Guy).

Congratulations!

PSES has received final notification from President White that **Juan Manuel Alvarez, Jim Barbour, Jodi Johnson-Maynard** and **Mark Schwarzlaender** were granted tenure and will be promoted to the rank of Associate Professor for the 2007-2008 academic year.

Graduate students **Esther Ngumbi** and **Leigh Winowiecki** were both awarded the University of Idaho Doctoral Research Fellowship Awards for the Fall 2007 semester.

Graduate student **Esther Ngumbi** was selected as a guest speaker for North Carolina State University's annual Fall Ethics Event scheduled for November 12, 2007.

PSES alumnus **Tim Miller**, Associate Weed Scientist and Extension Weed Specialist at the WSU Mount Vernon Northwestern Washington Research and Extension Center, received the Kenneth J. Morrison Extension Award. For the complete story, see WSU Today at <http://www.wsutoday.wsu.edu/completestory.asp?StoryID=4228>.

Essie Fallahie, Professor and Research Director, Pomology Program, Parma, was recently contacted by the newly established national "Current T.V.", and was selected as one of the most successful immigrant Americans in agricultural science. The segment was titled "American Dream" and can be viewed at <http://www.current.tv/watch/116787972?s1=newVids&list=newVidsByAssignmentGroup&filterone=0&filtertwo=0&sid=116787972&fr=3>.

Saad Hafez, Professor of Nematology, Parma, has had a new species of nematode named after him, honoring his long service as a Nematologist. The species name is *Longidorella saadi* sp. n. This name is documented in a paper submitted for publication by researcher M.R. Siddiqi.

Dates to Remember

Friday, August 17—New Student Orientation

Monday, August 20—First Day of Class

Wednesday, August 22— New & Returning Grad Student Orientation/Pizza Luncheon, 11:30-1:00 pm, Ag Sci 141

Tuesday, September 11—College of Ag & Life Sciences Picnic

Friday, September 14—Last Day to Drop Without a "W"

September 27-29— Ag Days