

Vegetable Entomologist Joins NYS Agricultural Experiment Station

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by John Zakour

GENEVA, NY: Brian A. Nault has joined Cornell University at the New York State Agricultural Experiment Station in Geneva, NY, as assistant professor of entomology. An applied ecologist as well as an entomologist, Nault will be working to understand insect pest life systems within vegetable cropping systems in order to determine how pests can best be managed. He started work on April 2, 2001.

"We are extremely pleased to have Brian join our faculty as a member of the Cornell vegetable team, and also to generate research in landscape ecology that will

benefit other programs in the department," said Wendell Roelofs. "He comes with excellent Ph.D. training from North Carolina State under Dr. George Kennedy-who spent time at Geneva, himself-and also with nearly four years of experience in vegetable research and extension on the faculty at Virginia Polytechnic Institute."

Nault's last position was as assistant professor at the Eastern Shore Agricultural Research and Extension Center, Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University, in Painter, VA. At Geneva, he succeeds Charles Eckenrode, professor emeritus of entomology, who retired in 1999.



Dr. Brian Nault

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Nault believes his newest challenge will be balancing his short- and long-term research so they compliment each other. "In the short term, part of my responsibility is to provide growers with immediate solutions to managing pests," he says. "This includes such things as pesticide recommendations and economic thresholds."

Over the long term, Nault seeks to develop landscape ecology studies to further the understanding of the ecology of arthropod pests and their natural enemies for use in developing practical, economically and environmentally sound pest management programs for the agricultural community.

"So often entomologists approach managing insect pests in a particular crop without considering the other host plants that the pest utilizes within the agro-eco system," says Nault. "Rather than working exclusively with a particular crop, I will be working with pests attacking a wide array of crops."

For the immediate future, Nault plans to get acquainted with the vegetable growers, research and extension personnel, and vegetable production systems in New York and learn some of the significant problems faced by the vegetable industry. He is also committing to research projects for the upcoming field season, setting up his lab, ordering equipment for both lab and the field, and recruiting a graduate student or two. He looks forward to advising graduate students in his program and helping students find positions in ecology and entomology in either an academic or business setting.

Nault received his B.S. in Entomology from Ohio State University, Columbus, in June 1988, his M.S. in Entomology from the University of Georgia, Athens, in June 1990, and his Ph.D. in Entomology from North Carolina State University, Raleigh, in August 1994.

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