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Contact: [Linda McCandless](#), 315-787-2417

Robert Seem Named Interim Director of the Geneva Experiment Station

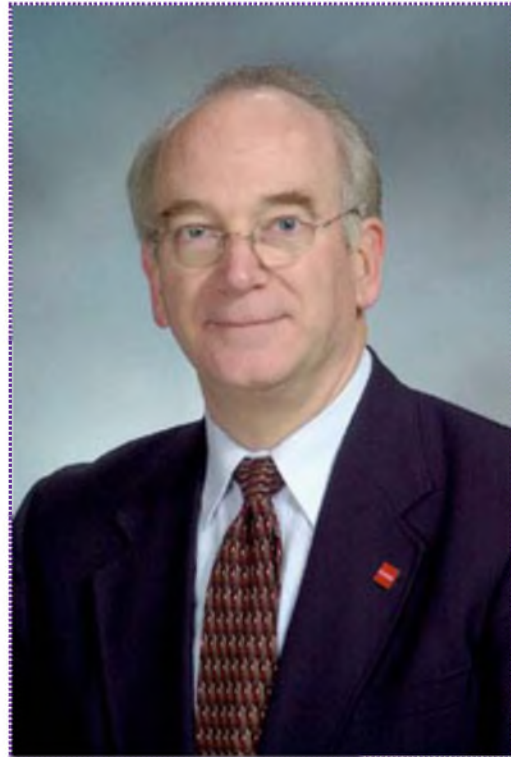
GENEVA, NY: Robert C. Seem, Cornell University professor of plant pathology, has been named interim director of the New York State Agricultural Experiment Station, effective January 1, 2004. Seem has served as the Station's associate director since 1990. James E. Hunter, who has served as the director of the Station for 13.5 years, had previously announced his plans to resign as director. Hunter will investigate the diversity of interactions between academe and industry beginning January 1, 2004.

Hunter said that he has every confidence in Bob Seem because "there's nothing at the Station about which Bob is not well informed."

"Bob's dedicated service for 13 years as associate director has prepared him well for this role," said Susan A. Henry, The Ronald P. Lynch Dean of Agriculture and Life Sciences. "I am confident that he will be able to provide the necessary leadership and continuity to ensure a seamless transition to the new administration."

"At this time, I expect to maintain all ongoing programs and not undertake any major initiatives," said Seem. Current programs include the implementation of a new administrative service center as part of the university-wide Workforce Planning Initiative, ongoing budget planning, work with the Ag & Food Tech Park, and continuing development of a new Vineyard Laboratory in Fredonia. Seem added, "The fundamental role of administration is to make the Station a stimulating and dynamic place where faculty and staff can effectively carry out their research, outreach and education. I want to insure that remains in effect during the transition."

Seem is a native of the Allentown area in eastern Pennsylvania, and a graduate of The Pennsylvania State University, where he received a B.S. in botany (B.S.), and a M.S. and Ph.D. in plant pathology. He joined the department of plant pathology at Cornell as an assistant professor of plant pathology in 1975, and was promoted to full professor in 1998. Seem specializes in the epidemiology, biology, and control of fruit and vegetable diseases with emphasis on the development of decision support systems ranging from simple models of disease to sophisticated simulation models. He is widely respected for his creative and inclusive approaches to research, and for his applications of new technologies to solving problems. He is a leading authority in the application of geographic information systems and high-resolution weather forecasting to the management of plant diseases.



Robert C. Seem

Seem has conducted research in Australia, New Zealand and Norway, and provided technical assistance in Hungary, Morocco, and the People's Republic of China. He has produced over 150 research publications with his graduate students and support staff. As associate director, he is part of the Station's management team with specific responsibilities for research farm operations and the outlying facilities in Fredonia. In recent years Seem has focused on the Station's interaction with other research stations in the Northeast and across the nation, as well as relationships with federal agencies.

Recognizing that a search for the next director will take some time, Dean Henry assured faculty and staff of the "high priority that I and the rest of the College leadership place on finding an outstanding individual to succeed Jim Hunter." To get input on the search, Dean Henry has scheduled a meeting with faculty and staff at the Experiment Station for November 10. If the search goes as planned, Dean Henry expects a new director to be in place by June 2004.

The 123-year old Experiment Station is a SUNY-supported research and extension institution, located in Geneva, NY, that involves 46 faculty members, approximately 230 staff, 70 graduate students, 800 acres of research plots, and a budget exceeding \$20 million. Today's researchers concentrate on all activities related to fruits, vegetables, and turf, to improve and sustain New York's \$3 billion agriculture industry.

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New York State Agricultural Experiment Station, 630 West North Street, Geneva, New York 14456
Telephone: 315.787.2011



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