

CORNELL
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STATION NEWS

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BRIEFS

CHANGES IN COMMUNICATIONS
SERVICES

As of Monday, February 14, Sandy Antinelli will be working as the Account REp in IPM. Communications Services will miss her!

Until a new person is hired, Donna Boyce will answer the main 2248 extension and direct your calls. She will also take all room reservations for Jordan Hall, the Paviloin, and the Sawdust Cafe.

Also, due to the asbestos removal project in Barton Lab, from February 25-April 7, Rob Way is moving his office to the Graphics Studio in Jordan. All slide processing and mounting operations will temporarily be moved back over to Jordan Hall where they used to be. A message will be sent to NYSAES All when the move is made. Clients should continue to email files to the same address: slidemaker@nysaes.cornell.edu. Stay tuned on where to drag and drop large files. Finished slides can be picked up over in Jordan, in the pick-up box located on the outside of the door off the loading dock. Joe Ogrodnick will maintain his office in the photo studio in Barton. Rob Way will be back and forth between Barton and Jordan. Phone numbers and emails remain the same.

Thank you for your patience!

APPLES AT 30 MILLION
BUSHELS IN 1999

It's official, the New York Agricultural Statistics Services has released figures on the 1999 crop: 30 million bushels, up 18% from the 1998 total. The value of utilized apple production, based on packinghouse door equivalent returns, totaled \$138 million.

SAVE THE DATE!

October 10, 2000, Janet Hawkes, coordinator of the New York Agriculture in the Classroom
(BRIEFS, Continued on page 2)

"GENETICALLY ENGINEERED VEGETABLES: ARE THEY WORTH IT?"

Are genetically modified vegetables environmentally friendly or ecologically threatening? Future foods or Frankenfoods? The key to preventing starvation in Third World countries? Good business? Stupid science? Sustainable? Unsustainable?

These and other questions were addressed in a four-hour forum attended by 100 growers, processors, and scientists during the New York State Vegetable Growers Association annual meeting on Monday, February 7.

The six presenters at the Becker 2000 Forum offered multiple perspectives on the topic: "Genetically Engineered Vegetables: Are They Worth It?" The six included two genetic plant breeders from Cornell University, a seed dealer for the controversial Bt sweet corn, a vegetable processor who has decided to drop Bt corn from their 2000 line, a consumers' union advocate, and a marketer concerned about trade policies that could leave American farmers holding the bag.

"The goal of the forum was to educate growers about the potential risk and benefits of genetically engineered crops in their planting and marketing schemes, help increase their understanding of the basic science and technologies involved, and increase their ability to answer questions from concerned consumers," said Anu Rangarajan, a statewide specialist in fresh market vegetable production, and Cornell University professor of vegetable science who moderated the forum.

US farmers have been placed squarely in the middle of the debate between seed dealers, chemical companies, American trade policy, and foreign and domestic consumers on the GMO issue. A recent survey conducted by the American Corn Growers Association, indicated a significant reduction in production of Roundup Ready corn, Bt corn, and Roundup Ready soybeans for the 2000 season, largely due to consumer pressure.

Steve Kresovich, who is in the Cornell department of plant breeding, and director of the Institute of Genomic Diversity, talked about scientific and environmental considerations. "His explanation of conventional breeding versus genetic engineering was most valuable to me," said one grower. "I didn't realize how many intentional and unintentional consequences they were in both."

Dennis Gonsalves, plant pathologist at the Experiment Station, who is responsible for the commercialization of two virus resistant crops in the US—papaya and squash—outlined the 15-year project that led to the revitalization of the papaya industry in Hawaii. "Through the introduction of genetically engineered papaya that is resistant to the papaya ringspot virus, farmers whose livelihoods were ruined have now been able to replant," said Gonsalves. "If you ask them if this is a successful technology, they and their families will say 'yes'."

Michael Hansen, of the Consumers Union, was a vocal advocate for caution and incredulity on the part of the consumer. "In the US at least, there is virtually no regulation of genetically engineered crops on the part of the FDA, the EPA and the USDA," said Hansen. According to Hansen, health risks included transfer of toxins, allergens, antibiotic resistance, and a change in nutrient levels—many of which were unintentional and untested risks. He advocated mandatory labeling so consumers could decide.

Tom Facer, of Agrilink Foods, outlined the processor's decision to drop Bt sweet corn from

(VEGETABLES, Continued on page 3)

(BRIEFS, Continued from page 1) room program, recently announced a summit on agriculture education, to be held October 10, 2000, on the Ithaca campus, at CALS, with the theme: "Developing Unity through Awareness." All agriculture and food systems educators, whether private or public, in formal and non-formal education, are invited this one-day gathering on the future of agriculture literacy. The summit is an opportunity for agricultural educators to network, share models and ideas, and collaborate. The summit will include round-table discussions, facilitated networking session by region, exhibits and demonstrations. The keynote speaker will be John Block, President FDI (former US Secretary of Agriculture), and invited guest speakers, including Governor Pataki, Nathan Rudgers, the Commissioner of Ag & Mkts, the Dean of CALS, and various legislators.

The Summit on Agriculture Education is a conference aimed at uniting agriculture educators and awareness programs to increase the knowledge of youth and the general public about a sustainable food and fiber system.

"It is important to share our ideas, successes, models, challenges, and programs, so we can work together to educate the public about the important role agriculture plays in our everyday lives," said Hawkes.

She expects CCE educators, farmers, teachers, media professionals, 4-H leaders, and others to attend.

BOWLING TOURNAMENT ONCE AGAIN A HIT

On Saturday, February 5, the Station had its annual bowling tournament / pizza party at Sunset Bowl in Geneva. The tournament, which was sponsored in part by Station Club and hosted by the always-chic Matt Lewis, had 80 participants. Bowlers who "competed" in teams of 5, had their choice of traditional bowling on one side of the ally, and the less-than-traditional "cosmic" bowling, complete with music and a light show, on the other side. Both sides had the bowling balls rolling and pizza and liquid refreshments flowing throughout the evening and into the early hours of the morning.

The team of the Balls and Pins, captained by Al Fairbrother, won this year's championship with a total pin count of 2667. Besides Big Al, the team consisted of Tony Laquitara (682 series), Tony Arno (612 series), Ken Bell (493 series) and Tammi Arno (402) series. Team Green Side, consisting of Matt Wavrick, Jim Ballerstein, B.J. Rice, Phillip Stewart and Robbie Jensen, finished second with a total pin count of 2571.

As for individual honors, scores were particular high this year. Robbie Jensen had the high male game with a 259, narrowly nipping Tony Laquitara's 256. On the woman's lane, Betsy Bihn won with a 186. B.J Rice finished a close second with a 182.



The scene of the tourney.



Organizer Matt Lewis accepts congratulations on a job well done.



Team Green Side.



The winning team of Balls and Pins, captained by Al Fairbrother.

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**VINIFICATION & BREWING
TECHNOLOGY LABORATORY**

Open House

Third Annual Gala Dinner

Premiere Wine Country Auction

Friday, March 31, 2000

Ramada Inn, Geneva Lakefront

\$100 per person

(\$50 tax-deductible contribution)

www.nysaes.cornell.edu/fst/vb



It's The Coolest Thing You'll Do All Winter

The Station Club Membership Drive will begin on Monday and will continue throughout the month of February. The cost to join is \$8 for a family membership and \$5 for a single membership. Retirees receive a \$1 discount.

Members receive discounts on Station Club events such as the banquet, golf tournament, summer picnic, bowling party and holiday party. T-shirts, sweatshirts, golf shirts, bookbags and aprons are also discounted when you are a member.

Your membership fees support the Bike/Walk to Work Week, the Outstanding Employee-of-the-Year Award, Sawdust Cafe renovations, Bring Your Child to Work Day, and Station Softball as well as general purchases such as new picnic tables and sporting equipment.

Contact your Station Club representative to obtain your membership.

(*VEGETABLES, Continued from page 1*) their product line in 2000. "It's not that the technology doesn't work," he said, citing as an example, Georgia, where 10-12 pesticide sprays are usually required to get a no-worm corn crop. "We grew 1000 acres of Bt corn in 1999 in Georgia with no spray," he said. But the monarch butterfly study at Cornell is a hot-button topic with consumers, and keeping genetically modified corn separate from conventionally bred corn has proven too costly for the food processing company.

Mark Mason, Bt sweet corn product manager for Novartis, which sells Attribute (Bt) corn, presented convincing numbers on the GMO's efficacy. "Consumers are not very well informed," he said. "Fears are more easily communicated than the facts." Novartis will continue to study effective insect management strategies.

Ann Clark, professor of plant agriculture at the University of Guelph, spoke about the impact of biotechnology on the marketing of agricultural crops. There are two opposing visions, she said. "On the one hand, industry proponents foresee a bright and boundless future, once consumers come to their senses. On the other, the international banking community, food industry, other governments and the Rockefeller Foundation foresee a much diminished future because consumer concerns are here to stay." Her concern is that "farmers are going to be left holding the bag."

Her advice? "This is not the year to grow GM crops," she said. "This is a technology that has been brought prematurely to market." Although there is no evidence that GM foods are safe, neither is there evidence that GM foods are unsafe, she said, advocating for more testing. "Consumers should not be the guinea pigs for the next 20 years," she said.

The forum was occasionally contentious but exchanges were fair and the audience keen to listen to the dialogue occurring among opposing camps. The discussion was frequently amplified by Rangarajan, who proved adept at asking speakers to clarify their statements and define their terms.

The next step? "Extension should play an important role in developing 6MO educational materials for growers and consumers," said Rangarajan. "We would like to take this forum on the road to local communities and farmers' markets."

L. McCandless

CALENDAR of EVENTS

FEBRUARY 4 - FEBRUARY 11, 2000

SEMINARS

HORTICULTURAL SCIENCES

Date: February 14, 2000
Time: 11 a.m.
Place: Jordan Hall Staff Room
Speaker: Marty Petrovic Professor
 Floriculture & Ornamental Horticulture, Ithaca
Title: "The Use of Natural Zeolites as a Soil Amendment"

Date: February 16, 2000
Time: 3 p.m.
Place: Jordan Hall Staff Room
Speaker: David Eissenstat, Associate Professor, Department of Horticulture, Penn State University
Title: "Relating Root Function to Lifespan: Contrasting Grapes, Apples & Oranges"

PLANT PATHOLOGY

Date: February 15, 2000
Time: 3:30 p.m.
Place: A133 Barton Lab
Speaker: Pat Krauss, Cornell University, NYSAES, Geneva, NY
Title: "Will There Ever Be An Agriculture and Food Technology Park in Geneva?"

FITNESS

AEROBICS AT THE SAWDUST CAFE

Date: Every Monday, Wednesday and Friday
Time: 12:10 to 1 p.m.
 This group uses the videotapes of the fitness expert "Gilad." VCR and tapes are provided by the Station Club. For more information contact Julie Kikkert at x2221 or jrk2@cornell.edu.

TAEKARDIO

Date: Monday, February 14, 2000
Time: Noon
Place: Jordan Hall Auditorium

Date: Wednesday, February 16, 2000
Time: Noon
Place: Sawdust Cafe

CLASSIFIED

FOR SALE: Honda Accord LX (1987, 134 k miles) runs smooth, and is in good condition. Automatic transmission, power windows & mirror, power & tilt steering, stereo, AC, and cruise control. New timing belt, four new tires, two new rear ball joints, one new front axle & control arm, new water pump, and new brakes. Price: \$2,000, or best offer. Contact 787-2344 (office), 789-0107 (home) or sej7@cornell.edu, and ask for Seong.

FOR SALE: Refrigerator and electric range and electric dryer. All in excellent condition. Call Nancy at x2313 or 789-5485.

FOR SALE: Casio electronic keyboard with stand. Model CT 620. Full size keys. \$100. Contact John Ludwig at x2407, jwl2@nysaes.cornell.edu or 539-3155.

WANTED: Tops grocery tapes in support of Geneva High School's Marching Band/Color Guard. Please send tapes to Judy Birkett, Jordan Hall.

WANTED TO RENT: Studio apartment with cooking facilities, bath, bed, chair, desk for U.S. Visiting Fellow. Non-smoker, no animals. Will have transportation to and from Station. March 15 - July 31, 2000. Contact Dona Soper X2234 or dns1@cornell.edu.

DAY CARE OPENING: Full or part-time. Some restrictions apply. Call Penny VanKirk at 789-9518.

FOR SALE: Loveseat and matching highback chair, floral print. Excellent condition. \$200. Contact Dave at x2220, or 781-1217.

BARGAIN SKI TICKETS: Ski or snowboard at Bristol Mt. on Feb. 20 from 5-10 PM for only \$15. Reduced prices will also be available for ski (\$12) and snowboard (\$18) rentals, and lessons are only \$5. Proceeds benefit the Bristol Mt. Ski Patrol. Tickets must be purchased before Feb 15. Contact Jennifer Grant, jag7 or x2209.

WANTED: Used cross country ski equipment. Cheap. We could use kids or adult equipment. Contact Marty VanKirk at mwv1 or Penny at 789-9518.

FOR SALE: Scuba equipment: oceanic ocean sport BC, size: M, near mint, black with blue trim, comes with blue carry bag. \$300, or best offer. Contact Mike Fordon at x2214 or mpf8.

2000 EMPLOYEE HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

2000 Holiday	Actual Date	Observance Date
Memorial Day	Mon, May 29	Mon, May 29
Independence Day	Tues, July 4	Tues, July 4
Labor Day	Mon, Sept 4	Mon, Sept 4
Thanksgiving	Tur, Nov 23-Fri, Nov 24	Tur, Nov 23-Fri, Nov 24
Winter Break	Mon, Dec 25-Mon, Jan 1	Mon, Dec 25-Mon, Jan 1 (6 working days)

PESTICIDE APPLICATORS SAVE THE DATE

The 2000 Pesticide Applicator's Update will be held on Thursday, March 30, in the Jordan Hall Auditorium. Registration and refreshments will be from 9:00-9:30 and the program will run from 9:30-11:30.

PROGRAM:

Session #1 - Changes to the New York State Pesticide Applicator Certification Regulations; presented by Ron Gardner, Extension Associate in the Pesticide Management Education Program

Session #2 - Everything You Ever Wanted To Know About Backpack Sprayers; presented by Andrew Landers, Extension Associate in Agricultural and Biological Engineering

Separate credits will be issued for each session in the program. The first half of the program is applicable to all pesticide applicators in CALS and all applicators are expected to attend. Applicators who do not use or who do not expect to use backpack sprayers do not have to stay for the second half of the program.

Please mark your calendars now; more details will follow.