

CORNELL  
UNIVERSITY

## STATION NEWS

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DECEMBER 17-24, 1999

## BRIEFS

## THE LAST BACKUP FOR 1999

The last backup for the year 1999 will be done on December 22nd (Plant Pathology). Therefore, please be advised that FST, Administration, B&P & Communication Services will NOT be backed up the nights of December 23 & 24. NO backup will take place the week of December 27-31, 1999. Regular backup will resume on January 3, 2000. If you have critical files, please take appropriate action of your own, or call 2289 for advice. Also, please turn computers OFF during the holiday break. Thank you for your understanding.

— Patricia E. Gibbs

## THE EMPIRE PLAN REPORT

## DECEMBER 1999

Empire Plan participants should have received at home "The Empire Plan Report - December 1999". The Empire Plan will have changes effective January 1, 2000 including: Skilled Nursing Facility, Prospective Procedure Review, Emergency Care, Physical Therapy, Newborn Child Care, Pediatric and Adult Immunizations, Infertility Treatment, Prescription Drug Program, Basic Medical Deductible and Coinsurance, and Home Care Advocacy Program (HCAP).

If an Empire Plan participant did not receive this Report or if you are considering transferring to the Empire and want to review the changes, please contact Human Resources at X2203 or e-mail: cmd4@nysaes.cornell.edu

There was a separate mailing for retirees and a copy may be obtained from Human Resources, Jordan Hall or by calling 315/787-2203.

— Charie Hibbard

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## A Holiday Message

As 1999 comes to a close, my first inclination is to review what happened in the past 12 months. Yet, December 31, 1999 marks not just the end of a year, but the end of the century that began when the Station was only 20 years old. Looking back at developments at the Station over the last century, and even to 1880 when legislation authorizing establishment of the Station was passed, one has to feel proud to be part of the national system of agricultural experiment stations that has contributed so much to the well being of our country and the world. The Station was the sixth established in the nation.

Our predecessors' success in the agricultural and food sciences in the past century is evident by the safe and very reasonably priced food that Americans take for granted today, including fresh fruits and vegetables that are available throughout the year. And, this success had much to do with a change in people's life styles from working on a farm to producing food for themselves and their families to a few being able to produce all the food needed to feed the masses. As more people began to have time to contribute to the arts, sciences, engineering and other endeavors that enrich our society, our culture has shifted dramatically.

The Station's role and that of other agricultural experiment stations and extension programs nationally in making a better life for people is truly one of the most remarkable success stories in the history of mankind. But, this success story and the contributions of the Geneva Station to it are too easily forgotten as we struggle with today's challenges. Fortunately, Dr. Paul Chapman (now deceased) and Dr. Edward Glass, both former chairmen of the Department of Entomology at the Station, have committed several years of their retirement to writing a book on the history of the first 100 years of the Station. The book should be available just in time for you to read it during the holidays. It will help you realize how the Station has changed over the past 100 years to become a better place to work, and why the work we do is significant. Because employees made the Station the success it is today, all active and retired employees who would like a free copy of the soft cover version of the book are encouraged to pick one up at the book signing in Jordan Hall beginning at 10:00 am on December 22. After January 3, they will be available from the Bulletin Room.

The past is important, and we can feel proud of the contributions since its beginning 120 years ago, but we need to build on this success and think creatively about research that can benefit society in the next century. This research will include the development of edible plant-produced vaccines, genetically improved food that is more nutritious, new technologies to improve the quality and ensure the safety of foods, precision agriculture to make production techniques more efficient while protecting the environment, and improved



(Continued on page 2)

*(BRIEFS, continued from page 1)***DECEMBER 31 PAYCHECK**

Semi-monthly paychecks (not direct deposit advices) will be mailed to exempt employees on the afternoon of December 30, 1999 UNLESS an employee(s) has provided the Ithaca Central Payroll Office with a note or e-mail requesting that the paycheck be delivered to Geneva with the advices on Monday, January 3, 2000.

The note or e-mail requesting the paycheck not be mailed must be received in Central Payroll by Monday, December 20, 1999. The note or e-mail must include the employee ID and Department. All e-mail messages should be sent to uco-payroll@cornell.edu. All notes by mail should include the employee ID and Department. The note should be sent to 377 E. Pine Tree Rd., Ithaca, NY 14850.

Employees who are paid by direct deposit will have their funds available in their banking institution on December 31, 1999.

Questions may be directed to Central Payroll at 607/255-5194; tie-line 8-5-5194.

**W-2 ADDRESS**

Please check the home address on the last paycheck/advice you received. This is the address that will be used for the December 31 paycheck mailing and all W-2 forms. The exempt paycheck of December 31, 1999 will be included in the 1999 W-2.

— Charie Hibbard

**Y2K CONCERNS**

As we are all well aware, there is a great deal of uncertainty about what could happen on the night of December 31 or during the day on January 1. Concerns include complete loss of electrical power, brownouts which could cause repeated electrical surges, loss of water, loss of steam, and various other equipment malfunctions. While we don't expect large-scale problems at Cornell facilities, it is still important to take reasonable precautions. At the very least, good planning now will save you effort in dealing with a future snow or ice storm and/or power outage with similar bad effects.

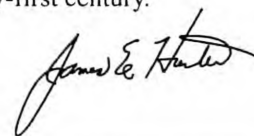
**LABORATORIES**

No one should have active work in progress in laboratories during the overnight

*(MESSAGE, continued from page 1)*

methods of controlling pests and diseases. And, as the world's supply of non-renewable resources is depleted, many more products will be made from plants. These examples of the benefits yet to come from agricultural research should make us feel good about our work and motivate all of us. Fortunately, because of advances made in the twentieth century, our opportunities to make major advances are better than ever.

On this note of optimism, I thank you for your contributions in 1999 and wish you the best of holidays. Whether you work in a support unit or one of the academic departments, I hope you will come back in 2000 ready to do your part to make the Station a stimulating and enjoyable place to work on the challenges of the twenty-first century.


*(BRIEFS, continued)*

on Dec. 31.

Turn off and unplug all electrical equipment that is not absolutely required. You may lose time in powering up and stabilizing equipment after the New Year, but this is usually much preferable to repairing or replacing equipment damaged during electrical outages or brown outs.

Turn off and close fume hoods.

Close all gas cylinder connections that can be closed.

Cap all chemical bottles. Double-check caps of bottles in ventilated storage areas.

For electric items that must run, such as shakers and ultralows, have someone check the equipment after midnight or early the next morning.

If temperatures in your facility drop close to freezing, move aqueous and other sensitive chemicals to insulated locations that will not freeze.

If pipes could burst, pick everything that you can up off the floor. Cover everything that could be damaged by leaking water with plastic tarps, trash bags, or other appropriate covering.

For small buildings at remote facilities, consider draining the pipes to prevent freezing.

**FREEZERS AND ULTRALOWS**

Pay particular attention to chemicals normally kept at cold or freezing temperatures - volatilization could cause pressure build-up and container rupture. This is particularly dangerous where chemicals are flammable and sparks may be present. Never store flammable liquids in refrigerators that are not meant for flammable materials. Consider methods for keeping these chemicals

cold - including using building cold rooms. Otherwise, isolate these chemicals as much as possible to limit impacts if they do volatilize (e.g., keep away from sparks and open flames).

Clean your refrigerators, freezers, and ultralows before the holiday. If you need to consolidate storage because of power failures, it will be a lot easier if you've already reduced the volume. Be extra aggressive about discarding items that you don't need that would create particularly bad odors - things such as carcasses and plant samples.

If power fails, consider moving refrigerated/frozen items to large cold rooms which will maintain temperature for longer periods of time. This should be as well-organized as possible to minimize the number of times that cold room doors are opened.

If it's cold out, consider moving refrigerator samples to a supervised area outdoors. Or, if there's snow outside, use snow in coolers or sinks to keep items cold.

Consider using non-utility methods of storing critical samples [e.g., LN<sub>2</sub> (given adequate supplies), freeze drying].

**ANIMAL HANDLING**

Be sure to have back-up plans for supplying food and water in the event of a several-day power outage or other disruption.

Do not allow carcasses or other biological waste to accumulate before Dec. 31.

**PLANTS**

The greenhouse management has been thinking about emergency preparedness. If you have particular concerns about your plant material, please talk to the responsible

*(BRIEFS, continued on page 3)*



## Kuo-Tan Li Receives 1999 Perrine Scholarship

**K**uo-Tan Li thinks orchids could be easier to raise than apples. The fourth-year graduate student received the Perrine Scholarship Award on Dec. 10, "in acknowledgement of his outstanding graduate work in pomology." Hugh Price, chairman of the horticultural sciences department at Geneva, presented the award to Li on behalf of the Perrine family. The scholarship was established by David Perrine (Cornell '22)

in 1993 to support pomology research at Geneva. The \$2,000 award is posted to Li's bursar's account to support his Ph.D. research program and educational expenses. Li is the fifth recipient of the award.

Li came to Cornell in August 1996 to pursue his Ph.D. in Pomology. Cornell's international reputation attracted him, and he was further encouraged by his advisor in Taiwan, who spoke highly of Lakso's work. Li has been working on his thesis for three years, studying the impact of summer pruning on photosynthesis and carbohydrate balance in apples.

"Summer pruning is valued for its practical application as well as its academic interest," said Li. Prior work indicates that summer pruning, an orchard practice that improves fruit color, could induce a significant reduction in whole-canopy photosynthesis rate. But results on fruit yield and quality have been "inconstant," according to Li, and indicate a "complexity" on the carbohydrate demand side. Since this summer, he and Lakso have been working on whole-canopy gas exchange as well as root growth and will examine the return blooming next spring.

"We hope the results will enable growers to regulate their pruning practices and orchard management techniques to maintain consistent yield and high fruit quality, enhancing profitability as well as sustainability," said Li.

Li has always been interested in horticulture. He received his B.S. in Horticulture from National Chung Hsing University and his M.S. in Horticulture from National Taiwan University in Taipei. He has worked in hydroponics, nursery management, landscape design and execution. He raises orchids, and maintains a collection of 100 plants at his parent's house in Taiwan, as well as 20 to 30 in Ithaca.

Li expects to receive his degree in the summer of 2000 at which point he will return to Taiwan to find a job, or continue with a postdoc in Europe.

### THE PERRINES WERE ORCHARDISTS

David Perrine was a prominent orchardist from Centralia, Illinois. He established the generous gift in memory of his wife, Fanny French Perrine, whom he met and fell in love with while at Cornell in the 1920s. At the time, Fanny was a student in bacteriology and David a student in pomology. Fanny, who was frequently called "Superwoman" by her family, ran many of the farm's activities and was deeply involved in community activities.

David and his brother, Alden (Cornell '47), were partners in the Perrine Orchard, farm-



Left to right: Alan Lasko, Kuo-Tan Li, Hugh Price, Director, Jim Hunter.

(BRIEFS, continued from page 2)  
greenhouse staff.

### GENERATORS

CALS is circulating a separate safety reminder about proper use of generators. If you have not received this and you are interested, please contact Mary-Lynn Cummings (5-2557; mc101@cornell.edu).

### STAFFING

Each department will have to weigh the necessity or value of having someone in each building between 10 PM and 2 AM. If the choice is made not to staff during the mid-night transition, then it is suggested that someone check the building and equipment early on Jan. 1.

Departments should update phone lists, and know who will be immediately available to deal with problems and who will be out-of-town. Every lab should have at least one person available to come in to campus; otherwise, alternative contacts should be made before the break. Departments should consider the possibility that phones may not work; some departments may want to keep a list of contact's home addresses or may want to require that certain people be on campus on January 1 to check equipment, chemicals and research.

— Mary-Lynn Cummings

### HEAR YE! HEAR YE!

On December 31, 1999, Semi-monthly paychecks will be mailed to exempt employees on the afternoon of December 30, 1999 unless they have provided the Central Payroll office with a note or e-mail requesting that the paycheck be delivered on January 3, 2000.

The note or e-mail requesting the paycheck not be mailed must be received in central payroll by December 20, 1999. The e-mail may be sent by a payroll rep. The list should include the employee(s), employee(s) Id's, and department name. The employee may chose to mail or e-mail his or her request directly and include the employee Id and department. All e-mail should be sent to uco-payroll@cornell.edu. All mail should include the employee Id and department. The note should be sent to 377 E. Pine Tree Rd., Ithaca, NY 14850.

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## CALENDAR of EVENTS

DECEMBER 17 - 24, 1999

## SEMINARS

## HORTICULTURAL SCIENCES

**Date:** Monday, December 20, 1999  
**Time:** 11:30 a.m.  
**Place:** Staff room, Jordan Hall  
**Speaker:** Laura Benson, Ph.D. Candidate,  
 Field of Plant Breeding  
**Title:** "Characterization of Apple  
 Germplasm from Central Asia"

## MEETINGS

## CHAIRS' MEETING

Wednesday, December 22, 3:00 p.m., in  
 the Director's office

## CLASSIFIEDS

**FOR SALE:** 1990 Cheverolet Berretta, 116000 miles, no rust (spent most of it's days in Florida) with A/C and cruise control. Just had checked out by a mechanic and said the engine is in good shape. Please contact soon if interested (x2407 or x2474).

**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, air conditioning, 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.

**CAR FOR SALE:** 1990 Chevrolet Beretta GTZ, 115,00 miles, air, no rust. Car was checked out by a mechanic who said the engine is in good shape but the car needs a new timing chain and wheel bearing. Edmunds.com lists resale price at over \$3,000 but I am asking \$1,200 due to needed repairs. Please contact Tim at tlw10 or x2374.

**WANTED:** Older U.S. coins (pre-1950), foreign coins and stamps for my niece and nephews' coin collections for Christmas. I am willing to exchange for equivalent U.S. value or homemade cookies! Please send to Cathy Heidenreich, Plant Pathology, x2433.

**WELL-FURNISHED ONE BEDROOM APARTMENT:** Available immediately. One mile from Station. \$350 per month including utilities. No pets. Please contact 789-7379 or 789-1638, Mary Lou Cosentino.

(CLASSIFIEDS, continued in next column)

(SCHOLARSHIP, continued from page 3)

ing 600 acres of peaches, apples, and pears. Jim Cummins, professor emeritus of horticultural sciences at Geneva, who has known and admired the Perrine family for many years, said David was the "best fruit grower in the Midwest." David had a long and distinguished career as an apple and peach grower, and was a leader in the fruit industry. He was president of the National Peach Council, a member of the National Apple Institute, and president of the Illinois State Horticultural Society. He died in 1996.

Cummins first met the Perrines after World War II, when he served as a field agent for F.H. Simpson Co., the fruit broker who handled the Perrine apple and peach crop. "I served around 100 fruit-packing houses that summer of 1946, and it was always an exciting relief to turn to the Perrines—the Perrine fruit was always a perfection, maturity just right, trunk loading on time, perhaps the only 'honest pack' on my circuit," said Cummins.

The Perrines were instrumental in Cummins continuing his studies in pomology at Cornell after he finished his undergraduate course work at the University of Illinois. The families maintained a close friendship throughout the years.

"Dave continued to be active in dwarf fruit tree experimentation even when he was in his 90s," said Cummins. Rootstocks also held a special fascination for Dave, and Cummins credits him for using 'Hibernal' and 'Virginia Crab' stocks on a commercial basis long before the industry was taking them seriously.

The scholarship has already helped launch the promising careers of four young horticulturists. In 1994, the first year it was awarded, the Perrine Scholarship was given to Patrick Conner, a doctoral student in pomology whose research with Susan Brown focused on the genetic mapping of apples and the identification of certain sequences in the apple genome that determine traits, such as size, flavor, and color. Conner is currently an Assistant Professor at the University of Georgia. In 1995, Thomas E. Clark received the award while he was pursuing a master's degree at Cornell, and working with Terence Robinson. In 1996, Chris Owens received the award. He worked with Ed Stover on two projects in plant growth regulators at the Hudson Valley Lab, and is currently pursuing his Ph.D at Michigan State. Last year's recipient, Laurie Boyden, continues to conduct research with Susan Brown.

(CLASSIFIEDS, continued)

**CHRISTMAS GIFTS:** Handmade Ottoman-style sterling silver jewelry for sale. Perfect gift for ladies. For details, e-mail: nb51@cornell.edu

**WANTED:** Tops grocery tapes. The tapes are a fund-raising activity in support of Geneva High School's Marching Band/Color Guard. Please send tapes to Judy Birkett, Jordan Hall.

**WANTED:** Used, old, ratty, artificial Xmas tree (silver, white, pink a bonus). Also old Xmas lawn ornaments. Thank you. Please e-mail: bkg1@nysaes.cornell.edu

**FOR SALE:** 1990 Honda Civic (3 door), gold with brown interior. NO RUST. New tires, cv joints, brakes, shocks and exhaust. Stereo cassette plus an extra stereo cassette (the newer one's digital- I was going to swap them out but didn't have time. We'll even throw in a set of chains for nasty weather. 130,000 miles. Gets great gas mileage and can haul a lot of stuff. Contact us by e-mail (mlk25@cornell.edu) or by phone (x2419, 789-5345, home) if you are interest. Mike and Helen Kirby





# Would Your Chemical Waste Pass Muster?

**T**he Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is focusing on hazardous waste management in academia and is inspecting college/university laboratories and facilities for compliance with the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA). RCRA is EPA's primary tool for regulating the generation, transportation, treatment, storage and disposal of hazardous waste. The Department of Environmental Health and Safety at Cornell expects that colleges and universities in EPA Region 2 (New York, New Jersey and Puerto Rico) will soon see increased inspections and enforcement under RCRA.

Mr. Stefan Wawzyniecki, Jr., Chemical Health and Safety Manager at the University of Connecticut (UConn), was on campus in September to share his experience in dealing with an EPA hazardous waste inspection. UConn was found to be in violation of 18 hazardous waste handling regulations. The University was not fined directly, but it was mandated to complete Supplemental Environmental Projects which cost over \$170,000.

We at Cornell can learn some lessons from UConn. Principal Investigators, laboratory managers and laboratory staff can manage waste properly by following guidelines below. Labs that manage waste by the rules will be prepared for a compliance inspection with the added benefit of creating a safer, pollution-free work environment.

## GUIDELINES FOR HAZARDOUS WASTE MANAGEMENT

### DO

- Deface the original label of the waste container (except when the waste is the same as the original contents).
- Use the hazardous waste stick-on labels available from EH&S.
- Label the waste container with the chemical name with no abbreviations, structures or formulae.
- Identify the percent of each component in the waste container.
- Cap the container while it is in storage. The container is in storage whenever waste is not being added or removed.
- Use containers in good condition
- Store waste containers in a designated area, with proper segregation of incompatibles.
- Put especially hazardous wastes (acutely toxic or very reactive) in secondary containment.

### DON'T

- Do not keep funnels in open waste containers.
- Do not date the hazardous waste container until it is full and you have contacted EH&S for a pickup.
- Do not keep chemical containers that the EPA would consider inherently waste-like, such as chemicals past their expiration date, containers with noticeable dust on the top, etc.

Environmental Health and Safety (X2466) will provide an RCRA Laboratory Inspection Form upon request.

(BRIEFS, continued from page 3)

All employees who are paid by direct deposit will have their funds available in their banking institution on December 31, 1999.

Please have your employees check the address on the last paycheck they received. This is the address that will be used for the December 31 mailing and the W2.

Paychecks and advices of deposit of direct deposit will be distributed on January 3, 2000 by Red Runner, Courier, and Pickup at East Hill Plaza.

The paycheck of December 31, 1999 will be included in the 1999 W2.

If you have questions, please call Central Payroll at (607) 255 5194.

## RECYCLING COMPUTER EQUIPMENT

Spurred by the recent article in *Station News* about the problem of disposing of old computer hardware, Jim Engel contacted Solid Waste Management at Cornell and found some very useful information to address the problem. Resources on the Cornell campus are available to Station departments. Information is available on their web site at <http://www.fm.cornell.edu/recycling/computers.html>.

Computers contain toxic elements (including lead and cadmium) which may be harmful to the environment when improperly disposed of. As a result, EPA regulations prohibit the land filling of computers by institutions such as Cornell. The Cornell University Grounds Department offers the community an alternative by recycling the equipment for free. Equipment must be removed from inventory in accordance with existing University policy prior to pickup. Information related to disposal of capital assets (including computers) can be found at: <http://www.univco.cornell.edu/policy/CA.html>

Acceptable materials include: monitors, CPU's and hard drives, keyboards, printers, circuit boards, associated cabling and wiring.

Cornell recycled 20.95 tons of computers from the Ithaca campus during fiscal 98/99. According to "We would be glad to recycle any computer components that the Station could deliver to us at our facility at 307 East Palm Road," said University Solid Waste Manager Walter Smithers.

Engel is going to look into establishing some kind of recycling program at the Station and deliver old equipment to Cornell.

# Cornell Experts Discuss Biotechnology Strategies at NATO Workshop

Five Cornell experts participated in a NATO Advanced Research Workshop focused on uses of agricultural biotechnology, held in Szeged, Hungary, October 17-21. The five-day program that was organized under the directorship of Geza Hrazdina, professor of biochemistry in Food Science and Technology. Local organizer was Dr. Janos Pauk, from the Cereal Non-Profit Research Co., Szeged, Hungary. The workshop was intended to foster scientific cooperation among scientists interested in using biotechnology to solve common agricultural problems. The workshop was part of an ongoing effort, initiated in 1998 by Cornell's International Agriculture Program, to assist Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia in their efforts to adapt their agricultural practices and market strategies to meet the economic challenges associated with democratization. In order to qualify for member status in NATO—the first step toward integration into the European Union—these three countries will have to integrate their economies, including agricultural production.

The Szeged workshop brought together more than 40 scientists from seven countries to consider the uses of agriculturally important genes in agricultural biotechnology. Five plenary sessions were held to address the issues of plant transformation, plant genomics, breeding for resistance, and the legal aspects of biotechnology, including risk assessment.

Among those who presented papers were Hrazdina, who discussed "Down regulation of ethylene production in apples," Minou Hemmat, a research specialist in Horticultural Science, who addressed the problem of "Identification and mapping of scab resistance in apple genes"; and Herb Aldwinckle, professor of plant pathology, who spoke on "Enhancement of resistance in apples." The Ithaca campus was represented by; Richard Cahoon, associate director of patents and technology, who spoke on the legal aspects of biotechnology; and James Haldeman, associate director of the International Agriculture Program, who discussed "Opportunities for successful collaboration."

"The workshop, as measured by the number of participants and the discussions, was very successful and resulted in multinational collaborative efforts," says Hrazdina. "This is what it intended to accomplish," he explains.



U.S. and European experts gathered at the NATO Advanced Research Workshop held October 17-21 in Szeged, Hungary, to consider agricultural uses of biotechnology.

## Book Signing

To celebrate the publication of *The First 100 Years of the New York State Agricultural Experiment Station at Geneva, NY*, there will be a book signing in the Jordan Hall Lounge, on Wednesday, Dec. 22, from 10 a.m.-noon, and from 2-4 p.m. Co-author Dr. Ed Glass will be signing soft-cover copies of the book. Dr. Barton and Dr. Hunter will make brief comments at 10 a.m. and toast the book's release. All employees, graduate students and visiting scientists are invited to attend.

In recognition of the importance of the contribution of employees to the Station's remarkable accomplishments over its 120-year history, Director Hunter is providing a free copy of the soft-cover version of the history to every employee, active or retired. You are encouraged to pick up your copy at the Book Signing on Dec. 22. At that time, additional copies of the soft-cover version will be for sale for \$20 plus tax.

If you cannot pick up your free copy on Dec. 22, stop by the Bulletin Room in Jordan Hall the week of January 3-7 between the hours of 1 and 3 p.m., and get a copy from Matt Lewis.

The case bound version will be available later in January and will sell for \$25 plus tax.

Other arrangements or requests can be made by emailing Matt at mel18, or put a note to him in Campus Mail.