

VOLUME LXXVII • NO. 26
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BRIEFS
FILL OUT THAT GAS SLIP!!

Gas slips must be filled out when getting gas at the Field Research Unit gas pump and all supervisors are reminded to inform temporary employees of this. Gas slips can be found in the gray metal box next to the pump.

**FOOD SCIENCE STUDENTS
WIN AT IFT!**

NEW ORLEANS—The pencil-shaped chocolate-covered biscuit that flavors coffee when used as a stirrer won the title in the annual food development competition on Monday night in New Orleans. It was the second year in a row that Cornell University food science students—including students from FS&T in Geneva—took first place in the prestigious Institute of Food Technologists' Student Association Product Development competition.

Coffee "Stir-Ins," as they are called, are vanilla-flavored biscuits half-coated with chocolate. A hazelnut flavoring applied to the top of the chocolate disperses into hot coffee, but the high-temperature-melt chocolate does not. After stirring and flavoring the coffee, the gourmet coffee drinker presumably eats the biscuit. The product took six months to create.

"We could hear it crunch! Yes!," said Kathryn Deibler, Cornell graduate student and member of the team, describing the judges' correct use of the cookie. "Then, the judges asked if they could keep the red Cornell coffee mugs. Yes!"

Students from FS&T-Geneva involved in the development of Stir-Ins who went to New Orleans were Ellen Chamberlain, Kathryn Deibler, and Jane Friedrich. Students from FS-Ithaca were Rachel Adelman, Kathy Kostival, Alison Edwards, Susan Connell, Sarah Douglas, Dawn Norton, and Mariano Tosso. Team members Mathew Sade and Sheila Sidhu were from the Johnson School of Management-Ithaca.

"The students, including the three from Geneva, will be featured on a 'Dateline' NBC Special scheduled to air after the Olympics," said jubilant department chairman Mark McLellan from New Orleans on Tuesday. "We are extraordinarily proud of these kids and the incredible job they have done in this competition."

Three judges from the food industry deemed it best. Other entries included University of California at Davis' "Bagelrrito" (a bagel filled with a salsa-chicken concoction); and Kansas State University's "Biscuit Bakes" which are breakfast biscuits filled with an omelet. Teams from Iowa State University, Michigan State University, and University of Minnesota were the other finalists.

Last year, Cornell took first place with its toaster-ready Pizza Pop-Ups.

THOMAS BJÖRKMAN PROMOTED

Thomas Björkman's taste for horticulture was evident early. On his seventh birthday, there were flowers on his cake. And he clearly remembers the golden fields of spring wildflowers on the serpentine grasslands above Palo Alto, most of which he knew by name.

"Since I was very young, I've always known I wanted to study plants," said Björkman. The 38-year-old plant scientist achieves one of his life's goals on July 1, 1996, when his promotion to Associate Professor of Vegetable Crop Physiology in Cornell's Horticultural Sciences Department at Geneva, becomes effective.

"Thomas' promotion to Associate Professor with tenure has been approved by the Board of Trustees," said department chairman Hugh Price. "He joined the Department of Horticultural Sciences in July of 1990 with extensive graduate and post-doctorate experience in plant physiology. Since then, Thomas has effectively used this background to expand our understanding and control of vegetable production problems, such as, fruit set in buckwheat, height control in tomato plug transplants, heat tolerance of broccoli, and plant growth response to *Trichoderma* colonization."

Björkman grew up in the city, but he spent a lot of time in mountain and desert habitats with his parents, both of whom worked with plants. His father is a plant ecologist and his mother coordinates the Jasper Ridge Biological Preserve in Stanford. "I've always found plants inherently interesting," said Björkman.

At the Experiment Station, Björkman's research involves the growth and development of vegetable crops and factors that affect both their productivity and quality. "I work closely with the scientists who are doing cultural practices and breeding. My job is to make sure that scientific principles we discover in plant physiology are put to use in the field, for the horticultural industry, and for everyone who wants to eat better vegetables," he said.

For instance, he recently completed a project to help tomato transplant growers prevent legginess in transplants without the use of chemicals. He also developed a screening method to select for heat-tolerant broccoli, on which he collaborated with Mike Dickson. A current focus is the enhancement of root growth and development on nearly all vegetables when the roots are colonized by *Trichoderma*, a beneficial fungus that was developed at the Experiment Station in the early '80s by Gary Harman.

"The teams of scientists at Geneva makes this kind of work really productive. I get a kick out of working in the kind of environment where you can do good science and see it matter right away," said Björkman. He also acknowledges the expertise of the 12 current and former members of his lab, and the Station field staff in making the progress recognized by this promotion.

When he first came to Geneva, Björkman admits his academic training had not prepared him to work with farmers. "It is wonderful to have a group that cares so much about your work. Good observation is the key to doing the right experiments in science. The growers I work with make valuable contributions with their keen observations, and they also provide a candid evaluation on the value of the results." Among other projects, he is now responsible for cooperative trials all over the state with farmers who grow fresh market and processing sweet corn.

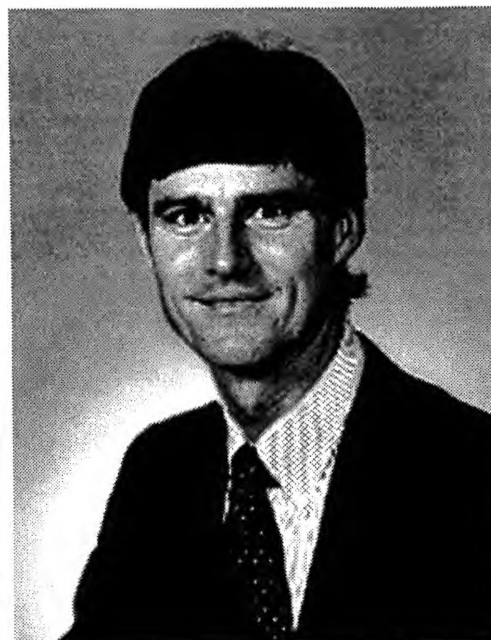
"The purpose of those trials is to make sure we won't have any surprises with *Trichoderma*," he said. Important variables are the different types of soil around the state and the soil management practices employed by different farmers. The biggest surprise so far is that there is a thousand-fold range in *Trichoderma* populations among New York State soils. "We need to know what it takes to keep this helpful fungus happy in the field."

Björkman is looking forward to investigating how root development affects crop growth so dramatically, and says there are a lot of ways to affect root growth that have been ignored or not understood well enough to use them to their fullest potential.

Björkman received an undergraduate degree in Biochemistry from UC-Davis in 1979, and his Ph.D. in Plant Physiology from Cornell at the Boyce Thompson Institute in 1986. He did a post-doc at the University of Washington in Seattle on Gravitational Biology, and came to the Experiment Station in 1990.

"For the last six years, my only important hobby has been to get tenure," said Björkman, who lives in East Varick with his wife Ann Raffetto. He says he misses the mountains, but notes the great thing about living in the Finger Lakes is you can own a little piece of woods and a gully and

(Continued on page 2)



THIS WEEK'S CALENDAR

JUNE 28 - JULY 5, 1996

EVENTS • MEETINGS

Thursday, July 4

Independence Day Holiday
Station Closed

CORRECTION

In last week's News, Alan Roloson, Food Science, was identified as Charles Bennett, Horticultural Sciences, in the 10 Year Recipient Service Award picture. Charles Bennett was missing from the picture. Sorry for the confusion.

STATION SOFTBALL



Last week's results:

Thursday, June 20 HS/Xtras vs. PP
Rained out
Wednesday, June 26 Ent def. PP

This week's schedule:

Tuesday, July 2 No Game
Thursday, June 4 No Game

VOLLEYBALL

at the Pavilion
behind Jordan Hall
Tuesdays at 6:30 pm.
Everyone's invited.
Questions?
Call Aijun at x362



CO-ED SOCCER

now on the south
lawn of Barton Lab
Thursdays at 7:00 pm
Everyone's invited.
Questions?
Call Pat at x221.



CLASSIFIED

FOR SALE: 1995 Club Cadet, 14 horsepower, hydrostatic power with rear bagger, 42 inch deck. Asking \$2,450. Can be seen at 893 Castle Road, Geneva. Call 789-7619.

FOR RENT: 3 bedroom apartment with deck, garden, parking. Walking distance to the Station. \$500/mo. plus utilities. Available immediately. 781-2500.

FOR SALE: Lot 180' x 383' 3/4 miles from Station on Pre-Emption Road on Indian Acres Farm. Will take mortgage. Call 789-1258.

FOR SALE: 1985 Chevy 1/2 ton pickup with cap and bedliner. 6 cyl. 3 speed, 32,000 original miles, needs paint. \$3400.00 negotiable. Call Dave x278 or 585-2248.

FOUND: 2 baseball gloves (1 black, 1 brown) found after Ent/PP game Wednesday evening, June 26. Claim at B&P office.

MOVING SALE: Saturday, June 29, starting at 8:00 am. 665 Castle Street. Lots of items to go.

THINKING
CAN REPLACE A LOT
OF NEEDLESS
EQUIPMENT

(BJÖRKMAN, cont.)

develop your own woodlands and wildlife habitat.

Björkman is also involved with bringing science to the schools with the Sigma Xi Partners in Science Education Program, coordinating scientists from the Experiment Station and Hobart William Smith to develop science projects in the local schools. "I want to make sure the same sort of opportunities exist for kids as existed for me," he said. "I'm not sure that kids these days even take walks in the woods."

GENEVA-ITHACA VIDEO LINK ==> FUNDED!

On Monday, June 17, Cornell University announced that it was going to fund a matching grant to implement a high quality video link between the Geneva and Ithaca campuses. The funding, totaling almost \$160,000, is the culmination of almost two years' work on the part of AESNet (Geneva Network Oversight Committee), AGET (CALs Network Oversight Team), CALs Media Services, Geneva B&P staff and individual faculty and staff members.

Initial work led to the commitment by Daryl Lund of \$75,000 toward the project plans. This most recent announcement matches those funds along with some commitments from FST, B&P-Geneva, Geneva Administration and CALs-Media Services with an additional \$82,585.

The project calls for the installation of high-end video conference centers based in the Food Science Conference Room (FST-Geneva) and Stocking Hall Room 124 classroom (FS-Ithaca) to serve both campuses for teaching, seminars and meetings. The system will operate on three ISDN lines which NYNEX will install. In Geneva, we will dead-end a series of dedicated lines for the ISDN services which will allow us to add other Geneva sites at a later time. Speakers at each end will be able to remotely control cameras at the opposite end. Sound quality will be very high and color video should be close to full motion broadcast quality.

Additionally, this system will offer both campuses an opportunity to link to other worldwide sites using standard high quality video typical of the PICTel type systems.

One last note: We hope this system will help take a 2-1/2 hour round-trip commute between the campuses and reduce its tendency to discourage collaboration, interaction and teaching. It will not take the place of all face-to-face contact in all circumstances but it will make it easier to communicate and share ideas across the distance on a more regular basis. This experiment in distance education will be very much a learning experience but an exciting one too!

Mark McLellan

Station Club Picnic
"50's & 60's Hop"

Friday, July 12
at 6:00 pm

*1/2 Chicken, Salt Potatoes,
Tossed & Macaroni Salads,
Fruit Cup, and Beverage*
Members: \$8.00
Non-Members: \$10.00

*Hotdog w/ Roll, Salt Potatoes,
Tossed & Macaroni Salads,
Fruit Cup, and Beverage*
Members: \$6.00
Non-Members: \$8.00



*featuring the band
"Ruby Shooz"*



Tickets on sale now! See your department rep!!