

Agnello Promoted to Full Professor at Cornell

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By John Zakour

GENEVA, NY: Arthur M. Agnello has been promoted to a full professorship in the entomology department at Cornell University. He is based at the New York State Agricultural Experiment Station, in Geneva, NY, where his main goals are to interpret the results of current research on tree fruit pests, particularly in apples, formulate it into useful information, and make it available to various clientele.

"The reality of everyday extension programming dictates that I maintain several types of communication with the different segments of our industry, and assess them continuously to be sure they're active, relevant, and responsive," Agnello said.

"Art is among the best-if not THE best-fruit extension worker in the world," said Wendell Roelofs, chairman of the entomology department at Geneva. "He has developed a productive and innovative research program on applied projects that are of major importance to the fruit industry. He is able to cope with the demands of both extension and research in addition to the demands of the apple growers. Art has enthusiastically taken this position and excelled in all aspects of it."

When asked about his many accomplishments, Agnello is proudest of the *Scaffolds* weekly newsletter. "Ten years ago we started *Scaffolds* to provide brief updates on tree fruit production and pest control from pest control experts and collaborators to fruit extension specialists, agents, consultants, and industry representatives," he said.

Scaffolds is distributed free to those people who advise growers, and allows county staff to extract useful items for their own service letters. Distribution has grown into a network of individuals, private and public organizations, computer mailing lists, and bulletin boards.



Art Agnello

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In addition to regular post, *Scaffolds* is sent via e-mail to over 300 subscribers in 19 states and four provinces. "We've also made it available as a specially formatted web version with links to a range of on-line Cornell resources," said Agnello. "Exchange of this information with university counterparts in surrounding states helps coordinate regional fruit extension efforts with other production areas, and maintains the value of New York's contributions to this sector of the agricultural economy."

Because he works with so many different types of audiences-researchers, extension agents, crop consultants, growers, ag industry representatives, fruit marketers, regulatory agencies, and the public-Agnello said his biggest challenge is to "make certain I'm satisfying the needs of all the different groups, while still maintaining an active and relevant research program."

Agnello enjoys feedback. "I like, and probably even need, immediate feedback whether it's positive or negative, from an audience or a collaborator," he said. "That lets me know right away whether I'm on the right track or completely off-base." He talks directly to producers in the field so he can find out what is going on. "These interactions give me satisfaction that I'm paying attention to what's happening so I keep on top of pest control problems that might otherwise cause unpleasant surprises."

"I'm looking forward to the challenge of incorporating new technology into the discipline of extension entomology while keeping sufficiently connected with my audiences so they have a sense of asked about the future. "I'm looking ahead-although not without some apprehension-to see how my responsibilities will need to change to respond to increasingly different technological needs and requests from our extension clientele. Developments in distance learning and online capabilities will make this job considerably different from what it is today."

Agnello received his B.S. in biological sciences in 1974 from Cornell University in 1974, his M.S. in Entomology from the University of Florida in Gainesville, FL, in 1979, and his Ph.D. in Entomology from North Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC, in 1985. He came to Geneva in 1986 as an assistant professor and was promoted to associate professor in 1992.

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