

Idea Exchange at Soilborne Plant Pathogens Conference

Approximately 90 participants met at the Dominican University of California (DUC) in San Rafael, California for a combined meeting of the 60th Annual Conference on Soilborne Plant Pathogens (CSPP) and the 46th Annual California Nematology Workshop on March 11-13, 2014. In addition to primarily West coast attendees, the meeting attracted scientists, students and professionals from other parts of the US as well as Germany, Russia, Israel and Mozambique.

On the first day, participants went on a field trip to visit the new California Academy of Sciences at San Francisco's Golden Gate Park followed by a visit to Muir Woods National Monument and Mount Tamalpais State Park to view the occurrences of Sudden Oak Death (caused by *Phytophthora ramorum*). In the evening a social and dinner was held at the beautiful Edgehill Mansion on the DUC Campus.

The presentation sessions took place at DUC's Guzman Hall on Wednesday and Thursday. The plenary session began with Steven Weisler, the University's Provost who welcomed the participants. Karen Suslow, Program Manager of NORS-DUC (National Ornamentals Research Site) gave a brief introduction to the purpose of the NORS program. Its mission is to support research concerning diseases and pests of ornamental nursery stock while safeguarding plant health and the environment. Tim Paulitz, USDA-ARS at Washington State University enlightened the audience with his presentation entitled "Ripples in a Pond". He summarized the 60-year history of the CSPP that was started by researchers from the University of California with primary interests in soilborne fungi, thus formerly called Soil Fungus Conference. More recently, the scope of this meeting has expanded to include nematodes, bacteria, algae, and viruses. Johan Leveau, UC Davis concluded the plenary session with his talk about microbial communities of plants and soil.

As in previous years, the CSPP steering committee encouraged the participation of graduate students with \$500 scholarships plus a meeting fee waiver. Tim Paulitz announced that this year's awards went to Stacy Mauzer (Washington State University), Jade Florence (Oregon State University) and Luke Steere (Michigan State University). Mel Carter, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo received a free CSPP registration.

The next three sessions, "Discoveries and Developments in the Realm of Soilborne Pathogens, Pests and Diseases", "Bio-based Strategies for the Management of Soilborne Pathogens and Pests", and "Chemical Management" were chaired by Jennifer Parke, Oregon State University, Julien Mercier, Harris Moran Seed Co, and Becky Westerdahl, UC Davis, respectively. Among the approximately 20 talks, the following addressed Nematology-relevant issues:

- Louise-Marie Dandurand, University of Idaho. Bio-based control strategies for *Globodera pallida*.

- Luke Steere, Michigan State University. Using spatial information to interpolate soil data in a Michigan potato field.
- Stacy Mauzey, Washington State University. Overview of the genus *Rathayibacter* and distribution of *Rathayibacter* spp. in the Pacific Northwest.
- Kristi Sanchez, UC Davis. Mollusks as vectors of plant parasites.
- Hannes Witte, UC Riverside. Assessment of soils for the presence of the nematophagous fungus *Dactylella oviparasitica* by a PCR-based strategy.
- Lawrence Marais, Leffingwell Ag Sales & Gillespie Ag Service. Seaweed extracts and other compounds for managing citrus nematode.
- J. Ole Becker, UC Riverside. On the horizon: new nematicides under development.
- Antoon Ploeg, UC Riverside. A new needle nematode in CA?
- Becky Westerdahl, UC Davis. Post-plant management of lesion nematode on walnuts.

The California Nematology Workgroup met during the noon break to discuss the state of Nematology in California. Representatives of the groups at UC Riverside (A. Ploeg, J.O. Becker), UC Davis (B. Westerdahl, E.P. Caswell-Chen) and the California Department of Food and Agriculture (J. Chitambar, S. Subbotin, K. Dong) summarized current research activities of their labs.

On the final day of the CSPP meeting, sessions were held on "Soilborne Pathogens and Food Safety" as well as on "*Phytophthora* and NORS-DUC talks". These were chaired by Karen Suslow and Wolfgang Schweigkofler (DUC), respectively.

The CSPP Steering Committee thanked Certis, Novozyme BioAg and the Society of American Florists for their financial support of this meeting. Next year's combined CSPP/California Nematology Workshop will take place on the UC Riverside Campus on March 24-26, 2015.

Submitted by J.O. Becker, April 3, 2014



Group Photo of Participants