

# SWFREC Update

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 SOUTHWEST FLORIDA RESEARCH  
& EDUCATION CENTER

## Center Director's Corner



The entire faculty and staff at the SWFREC are pleased to welcome Dr. Robert Ebel to the center in the newly created position of associate professor of citrus horticulture and plant physiology. Dr. Ebel comes to us from Auburn University, where he worked for ten years as a pomologist. Dr. Ebel received his undergraduate degree in horticulture from the University of Missouri in 1981. He earned his M.S. in horticulture in 1985 from Washington State University, where he also earned his Ph.D. in horticulture in 1991.



Dr. Ebel's work at SWFREC will focus on lowering production costs for citrus growers by identifying limitations of production, conducting research to address those issues, and relating results back to growers. Specifically, he will help develop methodologies for growers to adopt mechanical harvesting of processed oranges. His research emphases will include the development of abscission compounds as aids to mechanical harvesting and optimizing tree health to promote recovery after harvest. Dr. Ebel's research is being conducted conjointly with the UF/IFAS Citrus Research and Education Center in Lake Alfred. His extension responsibilities include communicating research results to industry personnel and developing recommendations for optimizing mechanical harvesting.



Citrus horticulturalist and plant physiologist Dr. Bob Ebel began working at the SWFREC in May.

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Please join us in welcoming Dr. Ebel to the SWFREC team.

Regarding another position, plant pathologist Dr. Pam Roberts is chair of the search and screen committee developed to hire a faculty member for the SWFREC vegetable horticulturalist position. We will continue to keep our clientele posted as the hiring process progresses for this important role.

*Christine Waddill*

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## Safety Day Educates Farm Personnel

Nearly 180 farm workers and managers from throughout Southwest Florida participated in the 17th Annual UF/IFAS Southwest Florida Farm Safety Day on Saturday, June 2. The afternoon portion of the program, a tractor rodeo contest, was cancelled because of threatening weather associated with Tropical Storm Barry; however, the morning portion was a huge success. Four educational sessions included:



- ◆ Tractor and equipment safety, conducted by Mariano Vasquez of A. Duda and Sons
- ◆ Wildfires and fire safety, conducted by Gerry LaCavera of the Florida Department of Forestry
- ◆ Snakes, venomous insects, and other dangerous critters, conducted by Kiley Harper with the UF/IFAS Palm Beach County Extension Service
- ◆ CPR basics for farm workers, conducted by the Hendry County Health Department

A special thank you goes out to the following sponsors of the event:

**Platinum:** Alico, Inc. (courtesy of John R. Alexander), Barron Collier Partnership (courtesy of Everett D. Loukonen), Collier County Parks and Recreation, and Everglades Farm Equipment.

**Gold:** Citrus Producers, Inc. (courtesy of Michael Murphy).

**Silver:** Creel Tractor Company (courtesy of Brian Creel) and Wheeler Farms, Inc. (courtesy of David Wheeler).

Thanks also goes to numerous Immokalee-area businesses that donated gift cards, clothing, and gift certificates for prize drawings during the Safety Day. The companies included: B & L ACE Hardware, the Seminole Casino restaurant, Lozano's Mexican Restaurant, McDonald's, Rib City Grill, Sewing by Patrice, Taps Automotive, Winn-Dixie Supermarket, and the Farm Safety Day Committee, which donated a \$50 cash prize.

## Field Days Tout Citrus, Vegetable Research

Two field days were conducted at the SWFREC this past spring.

Nearly fifty growers attended April's Citrus Mechanical Harvesting Field Day, which included presentations about UF/IFAS research currently under way. SWFREC's agricultural economist, Dr. Fritz Roka, was joined in the presentations by Dr. Jackie Burns and Dr. Reza Ehsani, both from the UF/IFAS research center in Lake Alfred. In addition, participants watched in-field demonstrations of two types of mechanical harvesting systems, a trunk shaker machine and a canopy shaker machine, and saw the effectiveness of abscission agents in the harvesting process. Silver Strand III grove near Immokalee hosted the field portion of the field day.

The Spring Vegetable Field Day brought 100-plus growers and industry representatives to the SWFREC in May. Three research trials spotlighted work being done on whiteflies, including tomato varieties resistant to tomato yellow leaf curl virus, whitefly control for the management of watermelon vine decline, and a new insecticide for whitefly control. Additional trials focused on biological and chemical control of broadmites and whiteflies on pepper and eggplant, controlled-release fertilizers and their impact on tomato growth and yield, and irrigation needs of pepper plants.



(Top) A grower inspects the amount of fruit shaken loose by a mechanical harvester; (Bottom) Growers hit the field for an up-close look at SWFREC vegetable research trials.



## SWFREC Staff News

- ◆ Congratulations to water resources scientist Dr. Sanjay Shukla, who has been promoted from assistant professor to associate professor.
- ◆ Congratulations as well to Dr. Kamal Mahmoud, who in April successfully defended his Ph.D. dissertation, "Effect of Drip Irrigation and Nitrogen Application Rates on Soil Nitrogen and Potassium Movement and Nitrogen Uptake and Accumulation in Vegetable Crops." Kamal is working on his academic training with soil and water scientist Dr. Kelly Morgan. Kamal wishes to convey his appreciation to Dr. Morgan for his financial and moral support, as well as his encouragement and patience. He also would like to thank Dr. Shinjiro Sato, post-doc research associate, for proofreading his dissertation.
- ◆ Presentations by SWFREC faculty and staff:

Dr. Phil Stansly, entomologist: "Biological Control and Psyllid Management: Compatible Goals?"—Florida Citrus Growers Institute, Lake Alfred; "Pest Invasions and Biological Control: A Bug's Eye History of Florida Citrus"—LaBelle, FL, Rotary Club; "Biologically Based Management of *Bemisia tabaci* in Vegetable Greenhouse Production"—Florida State Horticultural Society annual meeting, Palm Beach Gardens.

Dr. Ed Hanlon, soil and water scientist: "Environmental Features of South Florida and Their Impact on Forage BMPs"—2007 Southern Pasture and Forage Crop Improvement Conference, Tallahassee, FL.

Jawwad Qureshi, assistant research professor: "Integrated Approaches for Managing the Asian Citrus Psyllid (Homoptera: Psyllidae) in Florida"—Florida State Horticultural Society annual meeting, Palm Beach Gardens.

- ◆ Refereed articles, EDIS documents, and trade journal articles recently published:

Urbaneja, A., Sanchez, E. and Stansly, P. A. 2007. Life history of *Eretmocerus mundus* Mercet (Hym.: Aphelinidae), a Parasitoid of *Bemisia tabaci* Gennadius (Hom: Aleyrodidae), on Tomato and Sweet pepper. *Biocontrol* 52:25-39.

Xiao, Yingfang, J. A. Qureshi, and Philip A. Stansly. 2007. Contribution of predation and parasitism to mortality of citrus leafminer *Phyllocnistis citrella* Stainton (Lepidoptera: Gracillariidae) populations in Florida. *Biological Control* 40:396-404.

Stansly, P. A. , C.C. Childers, H.N. Nigg and S.E. Simpson. 2007 Florida Citrus Pest Management Guide: Plant Bugs, Chewing Insect Pests, Caribbean Fruit Fly, and Thrips ENY605/CG005.

Childers, C. C., C.W. McCoy, H.N. Nigg and P.A. Stansly. 2007 Florida Citrus Pest Management Guide: Rust Mites, Spider Mites, and Other Phytophagous Mites ENY603/CG002.

M.E. Rogers and P.A. Stansly 2006 2007 Florida Citrus Pest Management Guide: Asian Citrus Psyllid and Citrus Leafminer ENY734/IN686.

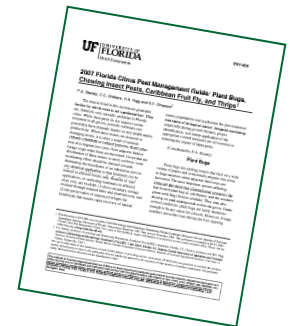
Roka, F. and B. Hyman. 2007. Field Day Addresses Mechanical Harvesting. *Citrus Industry* 88(6):6.

Stansly, P. A. 2007. Scouting for pests and beneficials in Florida citrus. *Citrus Industry* 88(2):14-17.

Rouse, R. 2007. Preparing Florida Groves for Hurricane Season. *Citrus Industry* 88(6):20-21.

Rogers, M. E. and P. A. Stansly. 2007. Psyllid management update. *Citrus Industry* 88(4):19-21.

Carson, J. 2007. Field Days Showcase IFAS Research in Citrus, Vegetables. *Citrus and Vegetable* 71(10):30.



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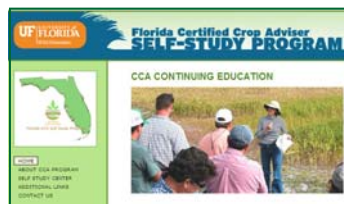
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**<http://swfrec.ifas.ufl.edu>**

## Self-Study Program Benefits CCAs

A self-study program for Florida certified crop advisors (CCAs) to earn CEUs is available now at the following Web site: <http://cca.ifas.ufl.edu>. The site offers choices from the four study areas and contains ten topics in each study area. For more information, contact Dr. Ed Hanlon at SWFREC via e-mail: [eahanlon@ufl.edu](mailto:eahanlon@ufl.edu).



## Upcoming Events

**August 22-23:** *2007 Florida Citrus Expo.* 8am-4pm Wednesday, 8am-4:30pm Thursday, Lee Civic Center, Fort Myers, FL. Free admission to citrus industry trade show and UF/IFAS educational seminars coordinated by SWFREC. For more information, go online to <http://www.citrusexpo.net/>.

**September 5:** *UF/IFAS Tomato Institute.* 9am-3pm, Ritz Carlton Hotel, Naples, FL. Free admission. Speakers will include Dr. Monica Ozores-Hampton of the SWFREC, who will present results from her latest BMP trials.

