Greetings everyone! We have reluctantly bid summer a fond farewell but we are now welcoming the new school year with open arms. Our fall undergraduate class contains 106 future horticulturists. Of those 70 are Environmental Horticulture majors and 36 are Landscape Contracting majors. We also are welcoming four new PhD students and five new MS students. We are very happy that the annual fall career fair will be held this year (October 10) after a two year absence. This important event serves as a great way for students to make contacts for future employment and for internships. Please e-mail me (rharris@vt.edu) with an update that you would like to share in our annual newsletter, “Seeds”. The current edition of “Seeds” is now posted on our website. Please visit the Horticulture Department web site often for former “Seeds” editions and special departmental features. One good way to stay connected with VT is through the university You Tube channel. Be a life-time Hokie by staying in touch with the CALS alumni association. Check out the current issue of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences “Innovations” newsletter. If you have not been to the Hahn Horticulture Gardens lately please treat yourself and see what is new. Keep up with all of the exciting new events by clicking here: Hahn Horticulture Garden

With kind regards, Roger

Welcome new graduate students!
Jeb Fields, PhD, Advisor = Dr. Jim Owen
Parker Laimbeer, PhD, Advisor = Dr. Richard Veilleux
Stephen Rigoulot, PhD, Advisor = Dr. Eric Beers
Shaun Francis, PhD, Advisor = Dr. Megan O’Rourke
Erica Lyons, MS, Advisors = Drs. Joyce Latimer/Holly Scoggins
Nathaniel Foust-Meyer, MS, Advisor = Dr. Megan O’Rourke
Fran De La Mata, MS, Advisor = Dr. Susan Day
Jake Shreckhise, MS, Advisor = Drs. Alex Niemiera/Jim Owen
Candace Delong, MS, Advisor = Dr. Greg Peck

Megan O’Rourke has returned from her fellowship with USAID in Cambodia and is setting up shop in Saunders Hall as our new Assistant Professor of Sustainable Horticulture. Welcome Megan!

Jayesh Samtini is our new Small Fruits Specialist at the Hampton Roads AREC. Welcome Jayesh!
Welcome aboard, Margaret (Tackett) Aiken! Margaret assumed the role of manager of the floriculture and greenhouse production program on July 1st. Margaret graduated with her BS in Horticulture from our department in 2010 and comes back to us after three years in the propagation division of Van Wingerden International in Asheville NC.

Greg Welbaum sends greetings from his sabbatical in California where he is working on a vegetable production text. The picture on the right is from a field day at the seed company "Seeds by Design" in Colusa, CA. "Seeds by Design" produces heirloom vegetables and organic seeds of vegetables and herbs.

Recent publications:
Fennimore, Steven A., Raquel Serohijos, Jayesh B. Samtani, et al. 2013. TIF film, substrates and nonfumigant soil disinfestation maintain fruit yields 67(3): California Agriculture 139-146


Holly Scoggins led the revision of Plants from Test Tubes: An Introduction to Micropropagation, now in its 4th edition (August 2013, Timber Press, 274 pages). Her co-author was Mark Bridgen of Cornell University (VT HORT Ph.D. ’84).

Joyce Latimer and Mara Grossman attended the annual meeting of the Plant Growth Regulation Society of America in Orlando in July. Mara was awarded a travel scholarship to attend the meeting and was awarded their Outstanding Student Presentation Award.

Let’s hear it for Virginia Viticulture! During a visit to the Eastern Shore’s Chatham Vineyards on his "This Commonwealth of Opportunity" tour, Governor Bob McDonnell announced that sales of Virginia wine reached another all-time high in Fiscal Year 2013, increasing by more than 5 percent from FY2012. Virginia wineries sold over 511,000 cases of wine in FY13 versus almost 485,000, the previous record high, in FY12 according to newly available sales figures compiled by the Virginia Department of Alcohol Beverage Control (ABC) and the Virginia Wine Marketing Office. Since FY2010, when almost 415,000 cases were sold, sales of Virginia wines have increased by more than 23 percent. Virginia is now tied with Texas as the nation’s fifth largest wine grape producing state.
Summer interns are critical to the Hahn Horticulture Garden operations; in turn we are proud to provide a well-rounded public garden internship experience. This year's interns were Horticulture students Allyssa Mark and Izak Khani. Their experience ranged from helping with special events, tours, volunteer sessions, and youth camp to planting display beds and practicing the “Irrigation Arts.” Allyssa was the M. Evan Gardener Intern and is a senior in both Landscape Contracting and Environmental Horticulture. Izak is a senior in Environmental Horticulture with a minor in Entomology. He held the Mike and Susie Hildebrand Landscape Internship. Thanks to both of these outstanding HORT students for their hard work and dedication!
- Holly Scoggins

Tyler Hoskins recently won 1st place in the Southern Nursery Association Research Conference MS competition for the paper and presentation titled Nutrient Movement in a Bark-Based Substrate During Irrigation. Congratulations Tyler!

Winning iBook Publication by VCE Master Gardener Available for Download by Lindsey Nelson, MG Communications Project Coordinator. For the Birds, Butterflies & Hummingbirds: Creating Inviting Habitats, is now available for download as a PDF, iBook or ePUB on the VCE publications website. The iBook publication contest was held for the first time in 2012. To give added incentive for Master Gardeners to submit their manuscripts, an iPad was offered as the prize for winning. Check it out at http://pubs.ext.vt.edu.
Emily Zhou recently presented her MS research (advisor = Greg Welbaum) at Seed Ecology IV, the Fourth International Society for Seed Science Meeting on Seeds and the Environment, held on Shenyang, China. Only 15 oral presentation opportunities were offered to graduate students. Congratulations Emily! Emily’s trip was funded in part by the Howard & Betsy Massey Graduate Scholarship in International Horticulture.

Alex Niemiera has taken on a part time position as Assistant Dean of Undergraduate Instruction in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. He will focus on student and faculty awards, scholarships, and advising duties and will continue teaching all of his Horticulture classes.

Joyce Latimer presented at the Ohio Floriculture Association Short Course in July. Mara Grossman and Margaret Aiken also attended the Short Course.

Brenda Arnold (left in photo on right) recently attended the Potato Association of America conference in Quebec City and won 5th place for her oral presentation in the Frank L. Haynes graduate student research competition. Her talk was from her MS research (advisor = Richard Veilleux) and was titled “Identification of candidate genes for self-compatibility in a diploid population of potato derived from parents used in genome sequencing”. Congratulations Brenda! Second from right in the photo is Norma Manrique, recent PHD graduate of our department. Brenda’s trip was funded in part by the Howard & Betsy Massey Graduate Scholarship in International Horticulture.
**Green Roof Class**: This year’s Practicum class was coordinated by Alex Niemiera and covered the basics of green roof technology including lab exercises investigating green roof substrate (soil) physical and chemical characteristics. Students also visited a nursery that produced green roof plants and a commercial building with a recently installed green roof. On the final day of the course students installed 200 square feet of a mock green roof at the Urban Horticulture Center.

**Eric Beers** and his collaborators Amy Brunner (FREC) and Rich Helm (Biochem) were recently awarded a $500,000 grant from the National Institute of Food and Agriculture for their proposal titled: *Determining The Potential Of Sugar Sensing Genes To Regulate The Partitioning Of Carbon To Woody Biomass*.

**Susan Day** is the VT Scholar of the Week for September 9-15. Congratulations Susan!

**Dave Davis**, PhD pomologist from our department and former Ag Tech instructor (currently Horticulture Instructor at West Virginia University) has written a mystery novel. The book is called *Apple Blossom Weekend*. In May, 1992, Steve, a fly fishing horticulture professor and Eddie, a bait fishing mechanic, attempt to flee Winchester, Virginia on its busiest weekend of the year—Apple Blossom Festival. However, their plans get changed and they find themselves back where they started. Ride along with Steve and Eddie on a humorous adventure while they try to solve a crime. During this crazy weekend, you’ll become acquainted with the competing apple and housing industries, educated with the city’s history and socio-economic class and more enlightened on parades, carnivals, horse racing and bar hopping. Check it out at Amazon.com.