

Department of Horticulture

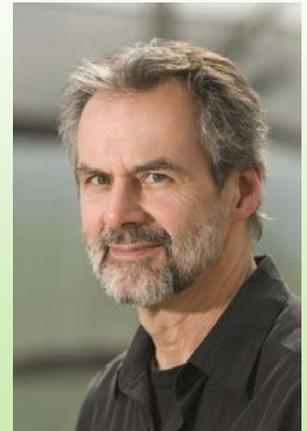
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Richard Veilleux, Interim Department Head

September 2014

Fall semester is in full swing and our students are fully engaged in a multitude of horticultural activities. The newly dedicated high tunnel at the Urban Horticulture Center on Price's Fork Road is supplying the dining halls with organic tomatoes, and other produce. Pumpkins from no-till trials and broccoli harvested from Ron Morse's variety trials at Kentland Farm are reminding us that the growing season is coming to a close. Just this past Homecoming Weekend, the PAX Honor Society saw record sales of spring bulbs designed to delight Hokies next spring with a display of their favorite colors. Our most recent faculty hire, Ramon Arancibia, has arrived at the Painter AREC where he will engage in research on vegetable production relevant to Virginia agriculture (see write-up below). And, just in case all this commotion proves overwhelming, the Hahn Horticulture Garden is offering a new evening class called, "Yoga in the Garden," as a way to relieve stress in a peaceful setting.



New Faculty at Eastern Shore AREC, Ramon Arancibia

Dr. Arancibia is joining Virginia Tech with more than 25 years of experience in research and production of horticultural crops at five institutions: The University of Chile, UC-Davis, LSU, University of the Virgin Island and Mississippi State University. In addition, he has collaborated in research activities with colleagues at UFL, NCSU, UGA and UAPB. His mission at the Eastern Shore Research and Extension Center is to develop the horticulture/cropping systems program to improve sustainability of the vegetable industry. The concerns of the industry will be addressed by putting scientific knowledge (research) to work through outreach activities (extension). Research activities will be concentrated in sustainable production systems including organic, protected (plasticulture and high tunnels) and micro-irrigation in vegetable crops. Outreach activities will be focused on building a bridge between researchers, extension personnel and the stakeholders to address their needs with solid results that will enhance the quality of life of the community.



Dr. Ramon Arancibia

Farewell Andreas!

Dr. Andreas Ntoulis, after one year sabbatical visit to the Horticulture Department, returned back to his permanent position at the Institute of Viticulture, Floriculture and Vegetable Crops at Heraklion, Crete, Greece. We will miss his smiling face at our monthly happy hours!

Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for the Urban Horticulture Center High Tunnel

A long-standing vision for collaboration between the Department of Horticulture and VT Dining Services came to fruition with the construction of the high tunnel at the Urban Horticulture Center this past spring. On September 15th, about 35 people attended the ribbon cutting ceremony for the high tunnel which grows produce for VT Dining Services and has already produced over 2,000 pounds of tomatoes and 600 pounds of cucumbers this growing season. In addition to growing food, this high tunnel is also utilized for educational and research purposes.



Susan Day, Alex Hessler, and Ted Faulkner cut the ribbon for the UHC High Tunnel.

Grants and Funding

Food Safety

Amber Vallotton has received funding for two grant proposals and is collaborating on a third. The grants, sponsored through USDA, are entitled: “Increasing capacity to provide comprehensive fresh produce food safety education from farm to fork” (\$44,021, 2 yr), “Accessing Markets by Improving Virginia’s Fresh Produce Food Safety Culture” (\$42,002, 2 yr), and “Identification and Management of Critical Control Points in the spread of antibiotic resistance from animal manure to raw produce” (\$2,250,000, 3 yr). The new funding will be used to advance food safety in fresh produce in Virginia, and aligns with key federally-mandated food safety initiatives. Congratulations, Amber!

Virginia Wine Industry



Scott Lowman and Chuansheng Mei were informed by the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services that their proposal – *Beneficial bacterial endophytes improve grape vine growth and cold tolerance to strengthen the Virginia wine industry* – has been approved for funding by USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant program in the amount of \$39,798. Congratulations, Scott and Chuansheng!

Lynchburg Grows Local News Story

After 5 years of work, Lynchburg Grows’ greenhouse range was placed on the State register and recommended for the National Register of Historic Places. We believe this will be the only greenhouse range on the national register. The facility exemplifies greenhouse production from 1920 to 2000. Read the article here:

http://www.newsadvance.com/news/local/greenhouse-range-at-lynchburg-grows-added-to-va-historic-register/article_d4e1c44a-44e2-11e4-84a9-0017a43b2370.html



A Pink Laser rose blooms in one of the greenhouses Lynchburg Grows. Photo by Parker Michels-Boyce of The News and Advance.

Floriculture Graduate Students Attend Conference

Mara Grossman and Erika Lyons, grad students in the floriculture program, attended the AmericanHort (OFA) Plug and Cutting Conference in Orlando. In addition to two days of educational sessions, the meeting included tours of Speedling, Knox Nursery, Riverview Flower Farm and Agri-Starts.

Winter Session 2015 Course: HORT 4324 Greenhouse Management

HORT 4324

GREENHOUSE MANAGEMENT

Dr. Holly Scoggins and Dr. Joyce Latimer



HORT 4324, Greenhouse Management will be taught during Virginia Tech's Winter Session. The course is completely online and asynchronous - work on it day or evening.

This is exactly the same 3-credit course that is offered Fall semester and Summer 1 session. It is presented in an intense, fast-moving format, with deadlines to help keep students on track. The course is available to both current Virginia Tech students and "visiting" or non-degree students. Winter session starts December 27 and ends on January 17. Visit

<http://www.winter.edm.vt.edu/> for general information on how to register.

The course will serve green industry professionals as well as Extension agents and educators. Current students can take advantage of this opportunity to get ahead, catch up, or simply learn something new - all from the comfort of home - wherever that might be!

HORT 4324 covers all phases of commercial greenhouse management, including greenhouse construction, environmental controls, disease/insect identification and management, control of plant growth, root-zone management, and marketing and management principles specific to greenhouse operations. The course has been completely updated as of Fall 2014 by Holly Scoggins, Associate Professor, and Joyce Latimer, Professor and state Greenhouse Extension Specialist. For more information on the course, contact Holly Scoggins at perennials.vt.edu or call [540-231-5783](tel:540-231-5783).

Education and Special Events at the Hahn Horticulture Garden

There's always something going on at the Hahn! Fabulous speakers, seminars, symposia, hands-on workshops, free garden walks, plant sales, and other events happen throughout the year - check back frequently for the latest!

Be sure to pick up a Visitor's Permit from Parking Services or the VT Visitor's Center if attending an event in the garden during weekday business hours (M-F, 8-5). Faculty and staff can only park in F/S spaces (limited).



Fall at the Hahn Horticulture Garden

Yoga in the Garden

What better way to end the day than yoga in the garden? The series of beginner-intermediate level yoga classes led by certified yoga instructor, Megan Helmer. The class is held in the beautiful, tranquil setting of the Hahn Horticulture Garden, moving indoors if the weather or insects do not cooperate (or the grass is too wet!).

Yoga classes began Tuesday September 2, 2014 and are held on Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 6:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. \$45 for 5 classes or \$10 per class if purchased individually. Space is limited to 12 participants - registration is required. To register, contact Stephanie at the Hahn Horticulture Garden [540-231-5970](tel:540-231-5970) or vtgarden@vt.edu

Botanical Drawing Class

Wednesday October 8, 2014 10:00 a.m. -12:00 p.m. Local artist, Felta Virginia, will instruct a class on botanical drawing at the Hahn Horticulture Garden. No experience necessary; all skill levels are welcome (appropriate for teens-adults). \$45 includes instruction in botanical drawing using colored or graphite pencil and also guidance in watercolor painting for those who have some experience and would like to incorporate watercolors.

Must pre-register by contacting Stephanie Huckestein at vtgarden@vt.edu, 540-231-5970. Workshop is limited to 20. The participants will need to bring their own supplies: sketchbooks, watercolor paper, or drawing paper, pencils, watercolors or color pencil, brushes, container for water, drawing board, easel (not absolutely necessary). Be prepared to be working outdoors.

Art in the Garden

Art in the Garden new program featuring the work of local artists on display inside the Peggy Lee Hahn Garden Pavilion. Currently on display **through November 1: paintings by Sally Mook.**

Lunchtime Learning - Free Garden Walks and Talks!

Held on various Wednesdays (not every week). All start promptly at 12:00 noon and run from 30 minutes to 1 hour. Meet at the Peggy Lee Hahn Garden Pavilion. No registration required. Parking passes available at Pavilion for Visitors only, or stop at the Visitor's Center on Prices Fork to pick up a pass. F/S must park in designated F/S spaces. Heavy rain may cancel these programs - call [540-231-5970](tel:540-231-5970) to confirm.

October 15, 2014 - 12:00-1:00 p.m.

Wonderful Woodies in the Hahn Garden with Dr. Alex Niemiera.

Fall is when many trees and shrubs really strut their stuff - Alex takes you on a walk and talk through the garden for a look at some of our best and most unusual woody plants. Alex is a Professor in the Dept. of Horticulture and teaches Woody Landscape Plants I & II, Environmental Factors, and Horticulture Science and Industry. He also serves as Assistant Dean of Student Programs for CALS, as well as the garden's Woody Plants Curator.



Alex teaching in the Garden

Publications

Samtani, Jayesh B., John S. Rachuy, Beiquan Mou, and Steven A. Fennimore (2014) Evaluation of tribenuron-methyl on sulfonylurea-resistant lettuce germplasm. *Weed Technology* 28:510-517

Lowman, J. Scott, Alejandra Lava-Chavez, Seonhwa Kim-Dura, Barry Flinn, Jerzy Nowak, and Chuansheng Mei (2014) Switchgrass Field performance on two soils as affected by bacterization of seedlings with *Burkholderia phytofirmans* strain PSJN. DOI: 10.1007/s12155-014-9536-3.