



University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Department of Agronomy & Horticulture

Newsletter



December 2013

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Calendar of Events

Dec. 20-21: Graduation. Department's "Salute to Graduates" reception Friday at 2:30 p.m. in Keim Hall commons area.

Dec. 23-Jan. 1: Holiday closedown.

Jan. 7-9, 2014: Nebraska Turf Conference, LaVista Conference Center, LaVista, Neb. Register at: <http://www.nebraskaturfgrass.com/events/nebraska-turf-conference/>.

Jan. 7: Crop Production Clinics at the Gering Civic Center, Gering. Visit <http://cpc.unl.edu> for details.

Jan. 8: Crop Production Clinics at the Sandhills Conv. Center, North Platte.

Jan. 9: Crop Production Clinics at the Adams County Fairgrounds, Hastings.

Jan. 10: CASNR Teaching & Learning workshop, NEU, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Jan. 14: Crop Production Clinics at the Younes Conference Ctr., Kearney.

Jan. 15: Crop Production Clinics at the Auditorium in York.



Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to faculty, staff, students and friends of the Department of Agronomy & Horticulture! UNL and the department will be closed Dec. 23, 2013 through Jan 1, 2014, as part of the annual holiday shutdown.

Rerucha wins initial Business Plan Competition

Aaron Rerucha, a senior Horticulture major, won the first-ever Engler Agribusiness Entrepreneurship Program Business Plan Competition on Dec. 6, 2013. Rerucha, from David City, Neb., took home the \$4,000 grand prize. Jordyn Lechtenberg, a senior Agribusiness major in the Engler Program, took runner-up and won \$1,000.

The Business Plan Competition, held in the UNL Law College auditorium, was a first for the Engler Agribusiness Entrepreneurship Program that aims to support and encourage entrepreneurship among UNL students. Located in the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources, this program was created thanks to the support of the Paul F. and Virginia J. Engler Foundation.

The two-day competition featured agribusiness-oriented business plans only. Ten out of 20 applicants were selected to compete in a rigorous semi-final round Dec. 3. Rerucha and Lechtenberg were chosen to move on to the finals Dec. 6.

Each student presented plans for 10 minutes then took questions for 10 minutes from a panel of judges in both series of competitions. There were two panels of judges for the semi-final round. Robin Coulter of Coulter Ranches, John Miller of Oxbow Animal Health, and Ed Pallesen of Goldman-Sachs made up the first panel. Judges for the

Rerucha continued on page 2.

Calendar of Events

Jan. 16: Crop Production Clinics at the Beatrice Country Club, Beatrice.

Jan. 17–18: Kansas Grape Growers & Winemakers Association Conference, Ramada Topeka West. Visit <http://kansasgrapesandwines.com/>.

Jan. 20: Martin Luther King, Jr., Holiday, UNL offices closed.

Jan. 21: Crop Production Clinics at the Atkinson Comm. Center, Atkinson.

Jan. 22: Crop Production Clinics at the Lifelong Learning Center, Norfolk.

Jan. 23: Crop Production Clinics, Saunders County Extension Center, Mead.

Jan. 23–24: Iowa Fruit & Vegetable Growers Association Conference, Ankeny, I. Visit <http://www.ifvga.org/>.

Jan. 29: IANR All Hands Meeting, 9–11 a.m., Nebraska East Union (NEU).

Feb. 6: NAIPSC Webinar Series with Matt Chew, ASU, on “How did Weeds become Invaders?”, noon.

Feb. 13: Quarterly Staff Meeting, 1–2 p.m., 150 Keim.

Feb. 14: Valentine’s Day Event, 11:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m., 150 Keim.

Feb. 6: NAIPSC Webinar Series with Bill Rogers, TAMU, on “Ecology and Management of Chinese Tallow in the Southern U.S.,” noon.

Feb. 27–March 1: 17th Annual Nebraska Winery and Grape Growers Forum and Trade Show, Kearney Holiday Inn, Kearney, Nebraska.

March 6, 2014: NAIPSC Webinar Series with Jeremy James, Univ. of Calif., on “Plant traits driving seedling establishment following invasive plant control,” noon.

March 20, 2014: NAIPSC Webinar Series with Rod Lym, NDSU, on “Leafy spurge and Canada thistle control with herbicides and effect on native forbs,” noon.

Rerucha continued from page 1.

second-panel included Todd Johnson, the Big Plate; Jonathan Jank, Seward County Economic Development; Jerry Lentfer, First State Bank Nebraska; Dave Stock, Stock Seed Farms; Rick Stock, Cargill Animal Nutrition; and Terence Bowden, the Business Accelerator Director at UNL Innovation Campus.

Rerucha’s business plan involved a landscape company—Oxbows Natural Landscapes—focusing on native, historic, and natural elements with an emphasis on reducing water usage in the environment and still providing functional spaces. His plan included furniture making in the winter months, harvested from trees on the land in which he would operate his business just south of Columbus, near Bellwood, Neb.

Judges for Friday night’s final were Laura Ward, Senior Managing Director of First Republic Securities Company in San Francisco and Andrew Uden, Graduate student at UNL and business owner of Uden Cattle Company.

Rerucha, who is advised by Department of Agronomy & Horticulture Associate Professor Kim Todd, is currently enrolled in HORT 488 as a distance education student. The class, taught by Department of Agronomy & Horticulture Assistant Professor David Lambe, is a business plan writing class focusing on student ideas and entrepreneurship where Lambe encourages his students to compete in on-campus business plan competitions.

Engler Agribusiness Entrepreneurship Program Director Tom Field said they plan to hold the event annually and would like to thank student leader Adam Kruger, and helpers Larissa Wach and Jared Knobbe for their assistance in planning and running the competition.



Aaron Rerucha is pictured above with his adviser, Kim Todd. Aaron won the first Engler Agribusiness Entrepreneurship Program Business Plan Competition.



Dillinghams Welcome New Baby Boy

John & Jenny Dillingham welcomed new son, Henry Frederick, on Friday, Nov. 22, 2013 (just in time for Thanksgiving!). Henry weighed 8 pounds, 12 ounces and was 21 inches long.

At left, Henry is pictured with his Dad and Mom, and big brother, Jack. He also has a big sister, Addy.

Dad says he & Mom are adjusting to Henry’s sleep schedule with limited success. John is the personnel generalist with the HAPPI Business Center.

April 3, 2014: NAIPSC Webinar Series, Diane Larson, USGS Northern Prairie, "A weed is a weed is a ... placeholder? Toward a more nuanced approach to restoration & weed management," noon.

April 3, AHGSA Banquet, Lied Commons.

April 17, 2014: NAIPSC Webinar Series with Dirac Twidwell, UNL, on "Fire intensity and mortality thresholds - what is needed to achieve restoration objectives?," noon.

April 30, 2014: NAIPSC Webinar Series with Richard Mack, WSU, speaking on "The case for eradication, not simply control, of invasive and potentially invasive species," noon.

May 1: NAIPSC Webinar Series with Joseph Craine, KSU, on "Drought tolerance in grasslands," noon.

May 2: Cookout Event, 11:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m., 150 Keim.

May 14: Quarterly Staff Meeting, 9–10 a.m., 150 Keim.

July 23: Nebraska Turfgrass Research Field Day, Mead, Neb.

Aug. 15: Quarterly Staff Meeting, 8–9 a.m., 150 Keim.

Nov. 17: Quarterly Staff Meeting, 10–11 a.m., 150 Keim.

Announcements

NAIPSC Web Course Planned

The NAIPSC Web Course (WC) is a two-day online course Jan. 22–23, 2014, that will provide in-depth learning about traditional invasive plants. Attendees will hear from top instructors and gain new knowledge for immediate application.

A computer and Internet connection are required. For more information and registration details, please visit the NAIPSC website (<http://ipscourse.unl.edu>).

New Hires for Agronomy & Horticulture



Dr. Dirac Twidwell

Please welcome, **Dr. Dirac Twidwell**, who joined the Department of Agronomy & Horticulture on Nov. 4, 2013, as a rangeland ecologist.

Dr. Twidwell previously worked at Oklahoma State University as a post-doctoral research associate. He received his Ph.D. from Texas A&M University, his M.S. from Oklahoma State University, and his B.S. degree from Missouri University of Science and Technology.

Originally from North Platte, Neb., he is joined in Lincoln by his wife, Kristin, and two children, Marin, 3, and Caius, 7 months. Dr. Twidwell's hobbies include golfing, pheasant hunting and fishing.

The Department of Agronomy & Horticulture is pleased to announce that **Joanne "Annie" Vance** joined the office Nov. 11, 2013, as the receptionist/office associate. Vance comes to the department from The Legacy Retirement Community where she was the front desk receptionist there.

Originally from Cedar Rapids, Iowa, Vance attended Iowa State University and then transferred to UNL, which she completed a B.S. degree with a major in Agronomy.

She is married to Buzz Vance, who works at the Nebraska Department of Agriculture. She and Buzz have been married for 31 years and have two children, Anthony, a student at UNL majoring in broadcast journalism, and Jeremy, a student at Hastings College majoring in web communications.

In her spare time, Vance loves to read, walk and take care of their dog, Kirby, participate in women's bible study groups, and help her husband with their home honey business. She has lived in Lincoln for more than 35 years.

"It is a wonderful city and I love that it is a university town," said Vance.



Annie Vance

Department Celebrates with Holiday Luncheon



Nearly 150 employees and friends of the Department of Agronomy & Horticulture celebrated the holidays by attending a staff appreciation luncheon Dec. 13. The buffet lunch included grilled chicken, salad, fruit, potato or minestrone soup, and dessert bars or Christmas cookies.

Dr. Gaussoin introduced new employees and nearly a dozen point-tias were given as prizes.

Irvin Schleufer was announced as the latest winner of the SAC Special Contribution award. Irvin is an Agronomy Research Technician III at the South Central Research Lab in Clay Center. Congratulations Irvin!

In The News

Dr. Harkamal Walia, plant molecular physiologist, was featured in the UNL Today on Dec. 1 for his research on “Seeking salt-tolerant rice genes.” Dr. Walia and his collaborators received a \$2 million grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF). See: <http://news.unl.edu/newsrooms/unltoday/article/research-project-seeks-salt-tolerant-rice-genes/>.

Dr. George Graef and Dr. Carlos Urrea were highlighted in the IANR Fall 2013 Magazine, “Growing a Healthy Future.” Dr. Urrea’s work with dry edible beans was publicized on pages 10 and 11.

On page 16, Bayer CropScience announced a new soybean agreement between UNL and Dr. Graef. Facilitated by NUTech Ventures, the agreement focuses on soybean germplasm. Bayer also funded a new endowment to name Graef a Nebraska presidential chair in soybean breeding. The agreement builds on previous research funded by the Nebraska Soybean Board.

Visit the IANR website at <http://ianrhome.unl.edu/> to see the entire magazine.

Former Agronomy & Horticulture post doc and graduate student, **Jessica Torrion**, was featured in the UNL news for her recovery efforts after Typhoon Haiyan struck the Philippines. A native of that country, Torrion is a research assistant professor in Biological Systems Engineering. For details, see the website at: <http://news.unl.edu/newsrooms/unltoday/article/torrion-assists-with-typhoon-relief-efforts/>.

The Department of Agronomy & Horticulture newsletter is produced monthly by the University of Nebraska–Lincoln Department of Agronomy & Horticulture.

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Nominees Sought for Holling Teaching Award

Nominations for the annual Holling Family Teaching Excellence Awards in Agriculture and Natural Resources are due on Jan. 10, 2014. Nominations may be made by peers and/or administrators who feel that a particular individual effort is deserving of special recognition. The nomination should include specific information on how an individual’s work matches the award criteria.

Categories

- 1) Senior Faculty Teaching Awards, \$5,000 per individual;
- 2) Junior Faculty Teaching Awards, \$3,000 per individual; and
- 3) Teaching Assistant Awards, \$1000 per individual.

The Holling Family Fund for distinguished teaching is to recognize outstanding contributions by faculty and teaching assistants in the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources (CASNR), Extension (only faculty in agriculture and natural resources subject areas), and the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture (NCTA). Faculty recipients must hold faculty appointments in CASNR, Extension or NCTA. For criteria and nomination details, see http://casnr.unl.edu/LinksforFaculty-andStaff/FacultyAwards#Holling_Family_Award.

News from the HAPPI Business Center

Travel Updates

Pre-trip Travel Authorization (T.A.) forms are required any time an employee or student travels on behalf of the university outside Nebraska.

After the person returns from his or her trip, an expense voucher must be completed to get reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses. Expense vouchers must be completed within 60 days of the final day of the trip. State law requires detailed receipts that are fully itemized, including the amount, date, place, and character of the expense. Original signatures are required ideally with a colored pen. Current travel forms may be found on the Sapphire website: <https://sapphire.nebraska.edu/gm/folder-1.11.19843?mode=EU>.

Mileage Rate

The new mileage rate is .56/mile down from \$.565/mile. This new rate becomes effective Jan. 1, 2014. For more information, see: <http://travel.unl.edu/policies/mileage-reimbursement>.

Membership Dues

Requests for reimbursement for membership dues should be turned in within 60 days of the payment. Membership requests should not held until the conference date.

Gratuities

Travelers will be reimbursed for reasonable gratuities. The tip amount should reflect the quality of service received or the prevailing custom for that particular service. A 15 percent tip is customary for a meal. If an employee has not included gratuity on the receipt, gratuity should not be included in the reimbursement request.

Holiday Closing Dates

UNL will be closed Monday, Dec. 23, 2013 through Wednesday, Jan. 1, 2014, except for essential designated operations. Regular and temporary employees eligible for holiday or floating holiday leave would use the following posting determinations:

Dec. 23 & 24 — Floating holiday, vacation or leave without pay

Dec. 25 — Holiday

Dec. 26 & 27 — Floating holiday, vacation or leave without pay

Dec. 30 & 31 — Vacation or leave without pay

Jan. 1, 2014 — Holiday

Jan. 2 — Return to work