

NPDN News

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THE FIFTH NPDN LABORATORY EARNS STAR-D LABORATORY ACCREDITATION

Dawn Dailey O'Brien and Karen Snover-Clift, NEPDN, Plant Pathology and Plant-Microbe Biology Section, Cornell University

We are very pleased to announce that the fifth NPDN laboratory, Texas Plant Disease Diagnostic Laboratory (TPDDL), has received STAR-D laboratory accreditation! Our congratulations go to all the members of this laboratory who have worked so diligently to earn this honor, especially Sheila McBride, Diagnostician and Quality Manager, and Kevin Ong, Laboratory Director. This accreditation is the result of many hours of their hard work and is an opportunity for continual quality improvement of plant diagnostic services to their customers.

The System for Timely, Accurate and Reliable Diagnostics, known as STAR-D, is the National Plant Diagnostic Network's (NPDN) Laboratory Accreditation Program. STAR-D provides a framework for a plant diagnostic laboratory to implement a quality management system in their day to day operations in order to foster accurate, reliable, consistent and repeatable diagnostic results. Accreditation to STAR-D is a voluntary process through which a plant diagnostic laboratory's quality management system is periodically reviewed in detail to ensure that a laboratory has met essential requirements and standards of quality for laboratory management, facilities, equipment, and trained personnel.

Their dedication to the STAR-D program is apparent. Sheila is training to become a STAR-D External Auditor, Kevin attended the original QMS workshop in 2011 and in April of 2017, two other TPDDL staff



Members of the TPDDL celebrate their STAR-D accreditation.

members, Corinne Rhodes and Mandy Little, attended the newly created- STAR-D based, Introduction to Quality Management workshop.

Sheila reported that her fellow lab members are really starting to integrate the STAR-D system into

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their laboratory. They've said things to her such as "Let me fill out a PAR [preventive action report] for that." when they see something that they think needs to be changed in the lab. She also noted in regard to document formatting "It's easier to find things when everything is consistent."

The audit team consisted of Shouhua Wang of the Nevada Department of Agriculture (lead auditor), Judy O'Mara of Kansas State University, and Sharon Dobesh of Kansas State University. The audit team met with Sheila and Kevin, as well as other staff of the TPDDL. They hosted external auditors for three days for an intensive review of their procedures and materials. The NPDN STAR-D Board met to review the extensive, very detailed, External Audit Team report and based on that information provided, granted STAR-D accreditation to the TPDDL as of August 11, 2017. The term of accreditation is for a five year period with required written annual updates.

As we've mentioned before we couldn't have a viable STAR-D system without the STAR-D external auditors who play a critical role in the success of the STAR-D program. The audit team members dedicate a lot of time to ensure they conduct a very complete and comprehensive external audit. We would like to thank ALL of the STAR-D external auditors for their dedication and commitment ensuring that STAR-D is a quality program!

Future STAR-D training opportunities will be advertised in the *NPDN News*, on NPDN's website and through postings to the regional listservs. If you haven't, please consider attending (or sending someone to) a future training workshop and learning more about how STAR-D can benefit your laboratory.

Congratulations again to the Texas Plant Disease Diagnostic Laboratory! 🍀

IR-4 SURVEY FOR DIAGNOSTICIANS

The 40th anniversary of the IR-4 Ornamental Horticulture Workshop is this fall! We need your help to gather information about what is most important for IR-4 to study over the next two years. Our research is geared towards developing efficacy and crop safety data to support new and expanded registrations of biological and chemical tools to manage diseases, pests, and weeds. Our annual budget is approximately \$1 million split between funding from USDA-NIFA and USDA-ARS.

We have added a new survey just for the diagnostic community requesting input on the top 5 issues that have been diagnosed in your lab this past season. Please take a few minutes in your busy schedule to answer the questions in this anonymous questionnaire (www.surveymonkey.com/r/LDKVK8N). This will be open until Sept 8.

If you have growers or landscape managers that you support routinely, please ask them to participate in this grower/extension survey (<http://ir4cf.rutgers.edu/Ornamental/Survey/index.cfm>) and encourage your extension colleagues to also. This survey will close on Sept 1.

Our biennial Workshop is being held Oct 17 – 19 in San Diego, CA. If you are interested in attending please visit the information page at <http://ir4.rutgers.edu/Ornamental/OrnamentalWorkshop/ORNWorkshop.htm> and register by September 8 or a late fee will be assessed. September 8 is also the deadline for booking your lodging with the Bahia Hotel.

Thanks for helping to make this upcoming workshop successful!



Diagnostics Committee

Clarissa Balbalian, Committee Chair, Mississippi State University

The Diagnostics Committee had a conference call on August 24, 2017. The following agenda items were discussed:

- Training for diagnosticians
Although Sara is not available to plan another training workshop for about 2 years, she offered to assist anyone willing to organize a training workshop by providing tips and advice from her experience hosting the NPDN/PSU Plant Disease Diagnostics Workshop.
The Microfungi Workshop Manual from the workshop held by Megan at the NPDN National Meeting is available on the conference website (see minutes).
Sara also spoke with the person who runs the Fusarium Research Center at PSU and he is interested in hosting a basic Fusarium ID workshop and has some funding that could be used for the training. Rob Wick may be willing to provide a nematode training for Northeast and he may be interested in offering it at a national level. There is an upcoming Bark and Ambrosia Beetle workshop at the University of Florida that is recommended for entomologists.
- Other topics—Lina forwarded the changes to the NPDN dictionary terms to Mike Hill. Joe LaForest and Tom Creswell have been working on securing funding for developing an electronic protocol sharing system. Clarissa was contacted to discuss validated and STAR-D approved protocols. Protocols would be uploaded and can use these as part of the STAR-D system of labs.

When protocols are updated, the individual labs can accept the updates or choose to use the original version. These will be particularly beneficial for smaller labs.

Full minutes from this call are available on the Diagnostics Committee webpage. The next conference call will be October 19, 2017 at 1:00–2:00PM ET. ☺

Training and Education

Joan Allen, Committee Chair, University of Connecticut

The Training and Education Committee had a conference call on July 24, 2017. The following agenda items were discussed:

- First Detector website update
Continued review of new site (working, not live). Rachel M. reports progress on functionality, for example, creating workshops & viewing options. Still working on Excel upload for registration. Joe H. is working on quizzes, randomization of questions, including true and false. The new website will have a responsive design HTML5.
Rachel Mc. asked about Adobe Captivate. Rachel M. mentioned there were not files for questions, they were from a database.
Action item—a separate call to discuss module uniformity and responsiveness to users in tablets and phones was proposed. Also, how will the FD historical data be accessed? Some modules in the past changed titles, making it difficult for users to track their progress. How would this be fixed?
Action item—send photos for the First Detector website to Rachel Moore. Resolution

required is at least 500 pixels wide, bigger the better (higher quality). Photos should be of First Detector trainings or workshops, national/regional significant or regulated pathogens and pests.

- Farm Bill discussion
 - FY17 work plan includes new content for FD website, internal sharing space (diagnosticians to drop presentations). Significant pests or pathogen materials for the FD website, without needing to take the module or quiz on that topic. Market and promote program. Website needs to be finished and launched and content needs to be ready before working with media company. Work with Purdue to set a timeline. FY17 also includes the development of an app and a way to report pests through the FD website.
 - Farm Bill FY18 closes August 18. Ideas were discussed.
- Pest alerts for First Detectors—next meeting Rachel Mc. will share templates.
- Communication with First Detectors (national/regional)

Full minutes for this call are available on the Training and Education Committee webpage. The next committee call is scheduled for September 18 at 2:00PM ET. ☺

Visit the NPDN homepage at www.npdn.org for more information on Program Area Committees. Login and password required.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Meetings

November 5–8, 2017

Entomology 2017

Denver, Colorado

March 19–22, 2018

Ninth International Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Symposium

Baltimore, Maryland

July 29–August 3, 2018

International Congress of Plant Pathology (ICPP) 2018

Boston, Massachusetts

August 12–16, 2018

National Plant Board 2018 Annual Meeting

Cleveland, Ohio

PHOTO OF THE MONTH

When inspecting a tree for Asian longhorned beetle damage be sure to check all sides.

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