How does a bacon-maple doughnut or a delicious Fruit Loops™ doughnut sound to you? What if we told you that these donuts are from the famous Voodoo doughnut bakery in Portland, Oregon? If you had been one of the participants of the recent NPDN STAR-D phase 2 workshop in Salem, Oregon you would have been treated to these (and other tasty varieties of doughnuts) plus two days of laboratory accreditation training and gap audit simulation exercise. The workshop was held at the Oregon Department of Agriculture Plant Health Lab (ODAPHL) hosted by the lab director, Nancy Osterbauer on September 22 & 23, 2015.

The workshop participants consisted of Clarissa Balbalian (Mississippi University), Rachel Bomberger Sprott (Nevada Dept. of Ag.), Ricky Corder (University of Arkansas), Sharon Dobesh (Kansas State University), Jennifer Falacy (Washington State Dept. of Ag.), Natalie Goldberg (New Mexico State University), Sandra Jensen (Cornell University), Yonghao Li (The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station), Debbie Meyer (California Department of Food & Agriculture), Maryna Serdani (Oregon State University), Shouhua Wang (Nevada Dept. of Ag.), and Edward Zaworski (Iowa State University). Instructors were Kathy Burch (USDA-APHIS-PPQ-CPHST) and Karen Snover-Clift (Cornell University), assisted by Dawn Dailey O’Brien (Cornell University).

The first day of the program started with presentations by Kathy Burch and Karen Snover-Clift. The content presented to the participants covered the concept of quality management in general and STAR-D in particular. After the presentations were concluded, an open meeting was held with the laboratory members and administrators. The workshop required the participants to be actively involved in playing the role of auditors to perform a gap audit of the ODAPHL STAR-D system. The gap audit was done by dividing the auditors into two groups and defining the objectives of each group for the audit process. The STAR-D checklist, previously developed and improved over the years, was used by the auditors to collect evidence of compliance and to document the observed good laboratory practices.

The second day of the workshop began the auditors filling in the gaps on the checklist by continuing
to interview the lab staff followed by an extensive review of the evidence that was collected. All the evidence gathered during the audit was combined to create a single comprehensive report document which included specific names, numbers, dates and examples. In a real accreditation audit, this final report would be presented to the STAR-D board so supplying specific details of the evidence of compliance is very important. The auditors presented their findings to the laboratory members and administrators during the closing meeting. The strengths of their existing system were discussed, the nonconformances found were covered and suggestions were given for the continued development of their STAR-D program.

This STAR-D phase two training program was made possible through funding provided through a cooperative agreement with USDA-APHIS-PPQ-S&T. The objectives of these workshops are:

1. To create an opportunity through which our members will have a better understanding of the STAR-D program and get a firsthand experience of an audit by simulating an actual audit process for a site that is preparing their laboratory for a STAR-D accreditation audit.

2. To present a gap audit to the host laboratory (a gap audit is mandatory for a new laboratory, normally done between 12–18 months before the actual accreditation process is started). The details of the gap audit will be used by the host laboratory to assess the quality of their STAR-D system.

3. To provide a real life practical experience through which the auditors can develop their auditing skills prior to officially becoming members of the auditor pool.

The second STAR-D phase 2 workshop was a huge success based on the feedback received. One participant noted “Excellent training — I got a lot out of it and in a relatively short period of time” Another wrote “I feel more comfortable with the whole system and feel more prepared to help our internal auditing process.”

While we can’t always promise fancy doughnuts, we can confidently promise that at the end of every training program, you will have a better understanding of the STAR-D Quality Management System. Thanks to Nancy and her staff for volunteering to have the Phase 2 training and gap audit at her laboratory. If you’d like to volunteer your lab to be the next to host one of these trainings please contact Karen (kls13@cornell.edu) or Dawn (ddo1@cornell.edu).

Want to brush up on your microfungal identification skills? Or do you prefer bark and ambrosia beetle ID? Maybe Phytophthora characterization or virus diagnostics is your thing? Then you need to attend the professional development opportunities at the NPDN National Meeting, March 8–12, 2016! You can also develop your STAR-D documents (or just learn more about laboratory documentation in general), join guided tours of the US Botanic Garden, the Smithsonian Gardens, or the home of our federal identifiers at the USDA-ARS and APHIS facilities. And these are just the associated programs. Watch next month’s newsletter for descriptions of the sessions during the full two-day meeting! Can’t wait until then? Sneak a peek at the full program here: http://conference.ifas.ufl.edu/npdn. See you in DC!
NPDN National Meeting Awards Call for Nominations
Karen Snover-Clift, NEPDN Associate Director, Cornell University and Sharon Dobesh, GPDN Associate Director, Kansas State University

The NPDN awards committee is pleased to announce an opportunity to recognize outstanding or innovative service from NPDN members and collaborators at the upcoming NPDN 4th National Meeting in Washington, DC on March 8–12, 2016. We have two award categories, the NPDN Outstanding Service Award and the NPDN Outstanding Team Service Award. This year, the previous award category that was specifically for First Detectors has been rolled into the general service award categories. Additionally we will be repeating our contest for the most unique sample, aka “the rotten tuber award”. The recipients of the awards will be recognized at an awards ceremony at the national meeting in Washington, DC, March 8–12, 2016.

The concept of the NPDN individual and team outstanding service awards is to recognize NPDN members and friends who have performed outstanding service to the NPDN and its collaborating agencies. At times, some individuals, or groups of individuals, go above and beyond the call of duty. These awards recognize their efforts and will make our membership aware of their contributions. These awards should be reserved for those individuals, or groups of individuals, that perform truly exceptional tasks or produce superior products that enable members of NPDN or our collaborating agencies to perform their duties more easily and efficiently, with great materials and/or with a gained knowledge base.

These awards are open to any NPDN member or collaborator who has performed outstanding service associated with an NPDN function. To be considered, nominee(s) should have shown innovative thought in program development; displayed leadership in the development and execution of an NPDN project; demonstrated excellence in developing new programs, teaching methods, or innovation in working with novel groups to be First Detectors. Nominations focusing solely on First Detector training will not be considered as specific awards for First Detector excellence are available. Awards committee members are eligible for nominations but will not be included in the review process on awards in which they are named.

The nominations packages for the Outstanding Service Awards must include a letter from the nominating individual(s) that includes all of the following items:

1. The award type indicated at the top of the letter (NPDN Outstanding Service Award or NPDN Outstanding Team Service Award)
2. The name(s) and affiliation(s) of the individuals being nominated
3. The name(s) and affiliation(s) of the nominator(s)
4. Print quality photo of each of the individuals nominated
5. A statement (no longer than 500 words) describing the outstanding service

Additionally the nomination package should include, when applicable, examples of publications, materials, surveys, etc. specifically pertaining to the project or event described in the nomination statement should be included and letter(s) of recommendation. Nomination packet(s) must not exceed 10 pages in length when including all components listed above (with the exception of the photos) and any additional information pertinent to the nomination.

The NPDN Awards Committee is also very pleased to announce the return of the unique sample story, aka, the Rotten Tuber Award. This contest was first offered at the 2011 National Meeting in Berkeley, California and it turned out to be a lot of fun and worth repeating at the upcoming 2016 meeting.

The contest is an opportunity to recognize those unique samples that leave you asking yourself...“what was this person thinking when they sent this sample?” We are looking for unique situations, odd suggestions, and outlandish sample materials to be presented for the Rotten Tuber Award. For example, I once heard that a laboratory received a live snake in the mail and another Laboratory had a client who suggested their plant disease may have been influenced by UFO activity! Please consider sharing your most peculiar story with our committee for a chance to win the coveted Rotten Tuber Award, to be presented at the 4th NPDN National Meeting in Washington DC, March 8–12, 2016. The following awards are available:

• 1st place Rotten Tuber Award
• 2nd place Rotten Tuber Award
• 3rd place Rotten Tuber Award
• Possible honorable mention Rotten Tuber Award

The concept of the Rotten Tuber Award is to recognize NPDN members and friends who have received very unique and interesting samples that create stories
that are worth sharing with our fellow community members. This award is meant to be fun and to allow us to share some humorous events at the 4th NPDN National Meeting.

This award is open to any NPDN member or collaborator who conducts sample processing for plant disease, pest or weed analysis. Awards committee members can submit and/or be named in the unique sample entries but they will not be included in the review process on awards in which they are named.

The contest submission package must include a letter from the submitting individual(s) that includes the following items:

1. The award type clearly indicated at the top of the letter (Rotten Tuber Award)
2. The name(s) and affiliation(s) of the submitting individual or team
3. Print quality photo of each of the submitting individual or team
4. A statement (no longer than 500 words) describing the unique sample

Additionally the nomination package should include, when applicable, examples of actual sample submission forms, pictures of the sample, etc. specifically pertaining to the unique sample described in the submission letter should be included.

Information about these two great opportunities can be found on the NPDN website, www.npdn.org, and at the NPDN National Meeting webpage, http://conference.ifas.ufl.edu/npdn. Nomination applications and supporting materials for the service awards and the rotten tuber contest awards should be submitted electronically in .pdf format to the 4th NPDN National Meeting Award Committee Chairman, Sharon Dobesh, sdobesh@ksu.edu, by December 18, 2015.

TRAINING & EDUCATION

Sentinel Plant Network workshop in WI
Rachel McCarthy, NEPDN, Cornell University

The Sentinel Plant Network (SPN) conducted another successful professional development workshop in Madison, WI on October 5 & 6. This workshop served over 50 participants and was part of a larger symposium organized by the APGA’s professional sections for horticulture, greenhouses and facilities, and green buildings & landscapes. The event was co-hosted by the University of Wisconsin-Madison Arboretum and Olbrich Botanical Gardens.

This past June we offered an all-day diagnostics workshop to SPN member gardens at the APGA annual conference. It was so well received that we decided participants would benefit from additional focused time learning about and practicing the diagnostic process at our SPN professional development workshops. The Madison diagnostics team consisted of Howard (the Bugman) Russel and Jackie Smith from Michigan State University Diagnostic Services and Mary Kay Malinoski and Dave Clement from the University of Maryland Extension. We were also joined by JoAnn Cruse and Art Wagner from USDA-APHIS who participated in the workshop and provided some regulatory perspective.

The workshop kicked off at the University of Wisconsin-Madison Arboretum and after a thorough
diagnostics 101 lecture we divided the group into two smaller sections for the diagnostics lab session and the sharpening observations skills walk. The arboretum was beautiful and the weather was perfect (despite overcast skies) and to everyone’s delight there was plenty of cool signs and symptoms to check out! The SPN group joined the symposium participants for an evening reception at the arboretum. The reception is always a great opportunity to network with colleagues, or to stroll again through the gardens. The arboretum has a beautiful meadow which one could walk through or view from the new deck of the welcome center.

Olbrich Botanical Gardens hosted our sessions on the second day of the workshop. The program on the second day was led by SPN managers Rachel McCarthy (NPDN) and Daniel Stern (APGA) and included regional pest updates, information on SPN’s new emerging threats as well as an overview of the Sentinel Plant Network and what is expected of members who participate in the program. While some participants may have attended an earlier SPN workshop, we encourage staff from existing member gardens who haven’t attended a workshop to attend. Additionally we continue to get new gardens to enroll in the program and the number of gardens participating is now over 200! To see a map of gardens in your state visit http://www.npdn-spn.org/content/get-involved.

If you have any questions about the Sentinel Plant Network—SPN samples submitted to your lab, designating samples as SPN in your database program or in the National Repository or if you would like more information on the emerging threats topics please contact Rachel McCarthy, NPDN-SPN coordinator at rachel.mccarthy@cornell.edu or visit NPDN’s Sentinel Plant Network information page at www.npdn.org/spn_private (login required). 🌿

Mary Kay Malinoski (photo left) and Dave Clement (photo right) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison Arboretum on one of the signs & symptoms scouting walks.

Two new external auditors added to STAR-D auditor pool

Congratulations to Rachel Bomberger Sprott (Nevada Dept. of Agriculture) and Sharon Dobesh (Kansas State University) who have recently completed and earned the title of NPDN STAR-D External Auditor which requires the completion of Quality Management System training, ISO-17025 Auditor Training and two auditing exercises. The latest Phase 2 training held at the Oregon Department of Agriculture Plant Health lab, which counted as their second auditing exercise, was the final piece necessary to fulfill the requirements. Rachel and Sharon join the distinctive list of external auditors including Jason French (New Mexico State University), Ron French (Texas A&M University), Laura Jesse (Iowa State University), Judy O’Mara (Kansas State University) and Shouhua Wang (Nevada Department of Agriculture). STAR-D external auditors are responsible for auditing NPDN plant diagnostic laboratories and we couldn’t have a viable STAR-D system without them. Thanks to ALL the external auditors for their time commitment, dedication and enthusiasm.
Philadelphia CBP intercepts five destructive invaders never reported before in US, Delaware Valley

US Customs and Border Protection Newsroom

On October 23 USDA confirmed that five insect pests that U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) agriculture specialists intercepted recently in the Port of Philadelphia are significant interceptions, including an insect never recorded before in the United States, and four never seen before locally.

CBP intercepted the first-in-nation Steirastoma histrionica (Cerambycidae), a species of longhorned beetle, in a container of Costa Rica melons on March 17, 2014. CBP submitted the pest to the local USDA entomologist who identified the species on September 21. Two days later, the entomologist advised CBP that the insect is a pest new to the United States. According to the USDA, longhorn beetles pose a significant threat to coniferous and deciduous forests and kill live trees.

The four pests observed for the first time in the Delaware Valley include: Paulinia (Acrididae), Donus zoilus (Curculionidae), Limnobaris calandriformis (Cucurlionidae), and Paranandra (Cerambycidae).

To read the full news release visit the CBP newsroom at www.cbp.gov/newsroom/local-media-release/2015-10-23-000000/philadelphia-cbp-intercepts-5-destructive-invaders

---

Rose rosette disease detected in Louisiana

Raj Singh, Plant Diagnostic Center, LSU AgCenter, Baton Rouge, LA

Rose rosette disease caused by Rose rosette virus has been detected for the first time in Louisiana. The disease was found on landscape Knock Out roses growing in a commercial landscape in Bossier City, LA.

Symptomatic roses produced a cluster of elongated new shoots from a single point on the parent canes and appeared like ‘witch’s broom’ (Figure 1). Infected daughter canes had excessive thorns that were green and soft (Figure 2) and thicker than the parent canes (Figure 3). Reddening of new foliage and shoots were also observed on infected plants (Figure 4). Tiny eriophyid mites were observed on symptomatic tissue under a microscope (Figure 5).

Figure 1: Witch’s broom symptoms caused by Rose rosette disease on Knock Out rose. Figure 2: Excessive thorns that are soft and green on the new infected growth of Knock Out rose. Figure 3: Thicker daughter cane (right) compared to parent cane (left). Figure 4: Reddening of new foliage and shoots caused by Rose rosette disease on Knock Out rose. Figure 5: Tiny eriophyid mite (pointed by black arrows) feeding on the newly developed bud of Knock Out rose.
UPCOMING EVENTS

Meetings

November 15–18, 2015
Entomology 2015
Minneapolis, MN

March 8–12, 2016
NPDN 4th National Meeting
Washington DC

CONTRIBUTE

Share Tips and News with Your Colleagues
Recently write an article for a trade journal? Do you have a tip, announcement, regional news or network update you would like to include in the NPDN News? Email Rachel McCarthy at rachel.mccarthy@cornell.edu