On December 8 & 9, 2015 ten brave souls attended the most recent STAR-D Phase 2 workshop in Ames, Iowa. We know what you’re thinking … December in Iowa, are you crazy? Luckily for all those involved we had lovely weather for that time of year! The workshop was held at the Iowa State University Plant and Insect Diagnostic Clinic and hosted by the lab director, Laura Jesse and the quality manager, Ed Zaworski.

The participants included Tricia Allen (Cornell University), Sohrab Bodaghi (University of California-Riverside), Nathan Chambers (Washington State Department of Agriculture), Eva Grimme (Montana State University), Patricia Hosak (University of Missouri), Chelsea Jones (USDA-APHIS), Irene Lavagi (University of California-Riverside), David McCann (Ohio Department of Agriculture), Jesse Ostrander (North Dakota State University), and Barry Pryor (University of Arizona).

Karen Snover-Clift and Kathy Burch each gave presentations to review overall Quality Management Systems (QMS) concepts and specifically STAR-D requirements to start out the workshop. The remainder of the time was spent with the participants going through the entire process of performing a gap audit for the lab including reviewing laboratory documents, checking out lab facilities and equipment, and asking questions of lab personnel. While going through the training process, one of the participants noted “It was very helpful to visit the lab and come back to discuss the findings. This allowed us to refocus and ask follow-up questions.” The workshop culminated in a final wrap up session where we presented the findings in the closing meeting to the laboratory staff and a number of upper administrators. After the workshop we put all of this in a neat package by presenting Laura and Ed with a complete gap audit written report which they may use as a complete internal audit of their system.

Issue Highlights

- Last call! 2016 NPDN/USDA-APHIS Beltsville advanced diagnostic workshops
- Bark & ambrosia beetle workshop NPDN national meeting
- Old World bollworm identification workshop in Gainesville
- Job opportunity: potato and sugarbeet pathologist at MSU
Participants in our third STAR-D Phase 2 workshop were given an opportunity to provide the planning team with feedback and all seemed to feel it was time well spent as summarized by one participant who wrote “A terrific experience!”

Not only did the participants of the training learn a lot about STAR-D procedures from this exercise, the lab also obtained valuable feedback on the implementation of STAR-D. When asked about using the STAR-D system in her lab Laura stated “It takes a while to get everything in place at first, but once it’s set up it actually frees up your time and mental energy to focus on other projects.”

Thanks to Laura, Ed and their staff for volunteering to have the Phase 2 training and gap audit at their 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).
DIAGNOSTICS

Last call! 2016 NPDN/USDA-APHIS Beltsville advanced diagnostic workshops
Karen L. Snoover-Clift and Tricia Allen, Cornell University & Mark Nakhlia and Vessela Mavrodieva, USDA-APHIS-PPQ-S&T, Beltsville Laboratory

Time is running out to sign up for the Beltsville workshops! The workshops available are listed below. We have some space available in a few of the workshops. If you are interested in attending any of these workshops, please let Tricia Allen (tra42@cornell.edu) know immediately.

There are two announcements that will make arranging travel for those attending the upcoming workshops helpful.

This year we are in the process of creating a webpage specifically for information about the Beltsville workshops. This space will provide important workshop and travel announcements, display participant workshops lists, and enable participants to access and print all of the documents required to request travel reimbursement. We are in the final stages of finalizing the webpage. Once the website is up and running we will notify all participants and provide them with a link to access the webpage.

We have made some changes to the ‘CU-Travel Planning Guidance Document’. The most recent version will be available on the webpage along with other updated documents. Please refer to the most recent version when looking for answers to any of your travel or reimbursement questions. In the meantime, please contact Tricia Allen directly for assistance with any travel and reimbursement questions.

During the spring of 2016, the following topics will be offered:

- Week 1: Bioinformatics workshop, February 29–March 2, 2016, 3 days
- Week 1: Phytoplasmas workshop-session #1, March 3–4, 2016, 2 days
- Week 2: NPDN National Meeting—Tours and Workshops coordinated through the meeting website
- Week 3: Phytophthora 101 workshop-session #1, March 14–16, 2016, 3 days
- Week 3: Phytoplasmas workshop-session #2, March 17–18, 2016, 2 days
- Week 4: Plum Pox Virus workshop, March 22–23, 2015, 2 days
- Week 5: Phytophthora 101 workshop-session #2, March 28–30, 2016, 3 days
- Week 5: Citrus pathogens (citrus leprosis & citrus black spot) workshop, March 31–April 1, 2016, 2 days

Identification of Common and Important Bark and Ambrosia Beetles

Instructor: Dr. Robert Rabaglia, National Entomologist, USDA-FS, Forest Health Protection, Washington, DC

From pine beetles in Colorado and New York to redbay ambrosia beetles in Florida and shot hole borers in California, bark and ambrosia beetles are impacting forest and shade trees across the US. There are more than 60 non-native bark and ambrosia beetles established in the US and some of these are commonly found in survey traps while others are significant pests on the landscape. Native bark beetles are also important and have killed millions of acres of pines in the west, south and now northeast. This session will mix presentations on impacts of these beetles with identification techniques and tools. References to keys and online resources will be provided. Attendees are encouraged to bring dead specimens from their labs for identification.

Sign up today at http://conference.ifas.ufl.edu/npdn/workshops.html
Old World Bollworm identification training session in Gainesville, Florida
Amanda Hodges, Department of Entomology and Nematology, University of Florida

I am pleased to announce registration for an Old World Bollworm identification training session that will occur on the University of Florida campus, April 7 and 8, 2016. Please visit the “Identification Training Session” link on the Old World Bollworm website for further information at http://entnemdept.ifas.ufl.edu/hodges/Old_World_Bollworm/index.html.

During 2016, some opportunities for NPDN diagnostic labs to participate in processing *H. armigera* samples on an overflow basis may exist. The Old World Bollworm training session will focus on morphological identification and dissection of *Helicoverpa* genitalia.

Some grant-funded travel reimbursement funds are available, and I encourage non-federal employees to request travel funds and submit your registration application as soon as possible. New applications for travel funding will be considered as long as funding remains available.

Please note that this is a hands-on identification session, and the majority of the training will focus on the dissection of *Helicoverpa zea* genitalia. Also, classroom space is limited to 30 participants. As the Old World Bollworm is of interest to cotton entomologist throughout the U.S., the identification training session information has also been distributed to a larger group of cotton entomologists. Additionally, the USDA-APHIS-PPQ intends to support travel for 10 NIS identifiers to attend the training due to the emerging concerns related to this pest.

As noted on the website, a block of rooms has been reserved at the Holiday Inn for both a USDA Strategic Planning Workshop and the Identification Training Session. The two events will have a joint social at the Holiday Inn on the evening of Wednesday, April 6, 2016. Further details regarding the USDA Strategic Planning Workshop will be provided within a Save the Date Announcement from a leadership team member of the USDA-APHIS-PPQ Old World Bollworm Cross Functional Working Group to invited attendees.

I hope to see NPDN diagnostician representation at the Old World Bollworm Identification Training Session! Please contact me (achodges@ufl.edu) if you have any questions regarding this opportunity.

---

Join STAR-D beginners and current users at the STAR-D document roundup pre-conference workshop! Don’t forget to sign-up soon!
Karen Snover-Cift and Dawn Dailey O’Brien, NEPDN, Cornell University

If you are attending the NPDN National Meeting and are thinking about implementing STAR-D into your laboratory in the near future, consider attending the STAR-D Document Round-up pre-conference workshop. The workshop will be held following the regional meetings on Tuesday, March 8th. It is designed for NPDN members that are interested in developing the core STAR-D-Quality Management System (QMS) documents needed to implement STAR-D in their laboratories. Whether your laboratory has absolutely no STAR-D-QMS documents started or has numerous documents in place—or anywhere in between—we encourage you to participate in this workshop. We understand that setting aside a block of time to create these documents may be difficult when samples are constantly arriving at your laboratory door. And even if you find the time, questions may arise as you begin customizing the templates for your situation, making you feel kind of stuck in the process. Our goal is for participants to leave the session having completed
JOB OPPORTUNITY

Potato and sugarbeet pathologist at Michigan State University

Assistant Professor (annual-year appointment, tenure system) in the Department of Plant, Soil, and Microbial Sciences at Michigan State University. This position is 40% Research and 60% Extension in the area of potato and sugarbeet pathology. The successful candidate is expected to provide leadership in research and extension activities associated with pathology of potato and sugarbeet. The successful candidate will establish an externally funded research and extension program that advances our fundamental understanding of plant disease dynamics, monitors pathogen populations for fungicide resistance, and develops rapid plant disease diagnostics and progressive approaches to improve disease management for potato and sugar beet while preserving profitability and environmental quality. An integrative approach to both research and extension is expected, including working with multidisciplinary teams of research scientists, extension specialists, Extension educators, and stakeholders. Active participation in the MSU Extension field crops work team and other MSU Extension work teams relevant to this position is essential. The successful candidate is also expected to interact with producer and commodity groups for the development of research and extension activities and provide a leadership role in solving plant disease problems affecting potato and sugarbeet. In collaboration with plant breeders, the candidate will develop and refine screening techniques for potato and sugarbeet disease resistance using classic techniques and modern genetic and genomic methods. The successful candidate is expected to combine innovative research and information transfer to client groups, publish in refereed journals, and advise graduate students. Together with Plant, Soil and Microbial Sciences faculty, the candidate will participate in areas of emphasis such as soil microbiology and integrated pest management.

The full job description and information on how to apply can be found at https://jobs.msu.edu, posting #2668.
UPCOMING EVENTS

Meetings

March 8–12, 2016
NPDN Fourth National Meeting
Washington, DC

July 30–August 3, 2016
APS Annual meeting
Tampa, FL

July 31–August 4, 2016
National Plant Board 2016 Annual Meeting
Wilmington, DE

September 25–30, 2016
2016 XXV International Congress of Entomology
Orlando, FL

PHOTO OF THE MONTH

Symptoms of Plum Pox Virus on Chenopodium foetidum, an important indicator species of plum pox disease.

Scott Bauer, USDA Agricultural Research Service, Bugwood.org

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