

Texas Pierce's Disease Research & Education Center Opens in Fredericksburg

Thursday, June 14th was a landmark day for the Texas Pierce's disease program with the grand opening of the new research center in Fredericksburg. This new facility consists of a 3200 sq. ft. laboratory and office facility, three 30' x 48' greenhouses and an adjoining one acre research vineyard.



Over 100 guests gather for the grand opening of the Texas PD Research & Education Center in Fredericksburg

First conceived over four years ago, completion of this complex will facilitate collaborative research between scientists from various disciplines and academic institutions. Efforts to build a center hit a snag two years ago because of a prohibition on the use of APHIS funding for permanent facilities. Local Fredericksburg businessman Sam Golden and his wife Nancy saw the need and decided to make an investment in the program by building the facility and leasing it back to A&M. Because of their dedication and commitment to the community, the Golden's were

presented a certificate of appreciation from U.S.



Legislative, Industry and University representatives gather to celebrate their collaborative success.

Senator John Cornyn during the dedication ceremonies.

The grand opening was attended by federal and state representatives and their staff, regional and state APHIS officials, Gillespie county commissioners, Fredericksburg mayor and council members, TDA representatives, members of the Texas grape growing community and program research and extension personnel. The reception was sponsored by Becker Vineyards and the Cotton Gin Restaurant. The opening was planned and organized by Greg Snelgrove, director of economic development in Gillespie County. Behind the scenes, Snelgrove played a critical role in facilitating the coordination of resources and agencies that finally reached fruition this past week.

Once skeptical of the founding of this center, APHIS regional administration joined in marking the occasion. "A well-focused research and educational effort, such as the one conceived through the new Fredericksburg facility, can help make that a reality", said Phil Garcia, regional director for the USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. "When you've got people from government, industry, academia and local businesses and organizations working together to find practical solutions, a lot can be accomplished," Garcia said. "I think the facility will certainly make a serious contribution toward a national effort to find a solution to the problem of Pierce's disease."



Research vineyard site is completed and ready for the arrival and planting of green-grafted vines. Vines were propagated in April and are expected to arrive the first week of July.



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Additional Articles Contributed by Members of the Texas

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Texas PD Notes


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Fourth Annual Texas PD Research Symposium Held at Flat Creek Estate

The fourth annual Texas PD Research Symposium was held on May 22nd at Flat Creek Estates. This event has become the main educational venue where Texas researchers present the latest findings and recommendations to the growing community. Isabelle Lauziere and Forrest Mitchell gave presentations reviewing new findings in sharpshooter biology and behavior and discussed first year findings on *Xylella* contamination status of sharpshooters throughout the season. Not only do Texas growers face many more insect vectors of this disease, but we are just now beginning to understand the behavior and biology of these carriers of *Xylella*. Their findings differ widely from those in California and dictate that Texas growers would benefit from adopting different management strategies.

The 2007 Keynote speaker was Mr. Bob Wynn, State-wide Pierce's Disease Program Coordinator from the California Dept. of Food & Agriculture. In his address, Mr. Wynn outlined the goals and objectives of the California effort in mitigating the movement of Glassy-winged sharpshooter to uninfested areas of the state, the pilot projects which lower sharpshooter populations in infested areas and the research effort funded by federal, state and industry dollars. Bob also gave an overview of the politics of program funding. While some in California ini-

tially opposed any funding going to Texas, the two states now find themselves as partners seeking continuation of the national PD program.

Lisa Morano and Blake Bextine teamed up to present a joint lecture on the genetic diversity of *Xylella* in Texas. As the program builds infrastructure, the ability of these scientists to analyze samples has vastly increased. Now, four research labs have the ability to run PCR analysis on insect, grape and other plant materials in a fraction of the time as in the past few years. The equipment, improved techniques and invaluable experience gained by these labs not only increases efficiency, but the titer and bacterial genotype can also be determined through these now routine procedures. Unique among research programs, these four laboratories work collaboratively among themselves, with other Texas researchers who offer complementary skills and colleagues from California and around the country. Understanding the genetic diversity and distribution of *Xylella fastidiosa*



Mark Black Presents His Latest Findings on Supplemental Hosts of *Xylella fastidiosa*

in its native range offers real opportunities to unravel the weaknesses of this pathogen.

Beginning in 1999, even well before federal funding became available, David Appel and Mark Black invested their time, effort and invaluable insight in the fledgling Texas PD Program. Their expertise is needed to understand where this pathogen resides in nature and how it moves in susceptible grapevines. Both Appel and Black offered presentations at this past conference on their research findings and more importantly, offered insight on how growers should alter their cultural practices to minimize PD risk and to minimize losses once a plant has been diagnosed positive. Proper site selection and removal of supplemental *Xylella* hosts near the vineyard is a necessary practice to minimize the risk of initial infection. Understanding when and how the pathogen moves between vines and adopting rouging strategies will minimize losses once the disease has been identified.

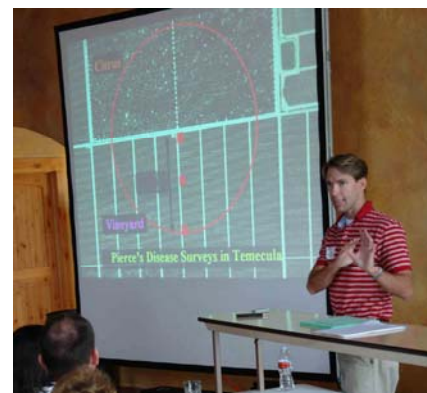
Over the course of the past five years, Texas PD researchers have brought the Texas grape growing community up to speed in understanding the dynamics of the disease under local conditions. Continued support from federal, state and county government and most importantly, the Texas grape industry will help us work toward a practical solution for Pierce's disease.



CDFA Program Director Bob Wynn Reviews the California Pierce's Disease Program in His Keynote Address



Isabelle Lauziere Presents Her Findings On How Sharpshooter Biology in Texas Differs From That in California



Blake Bextine Discusses Genetic Variability Between Texas and California PD Strains

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2006 CDFA Pierce's Disease Symposium Proceedings Now Available On-line

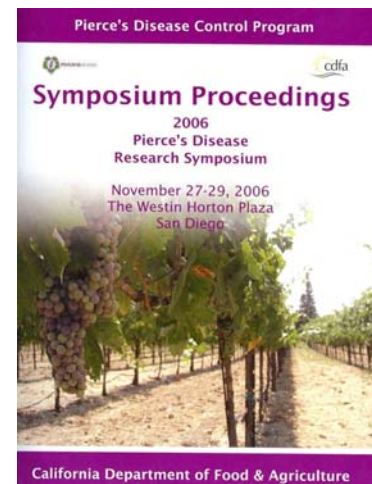
As most growers familiar with various Pierce's disease programs and events are aware, a tremendous amount of the work is coordinated by the California Department of Food & Agriculture. Bob Wynn, who was the keynote speaker at the 2007 Texas PD Symposium, heads the effort and is responsible for the organization of the annual CDFA Research Symposium each winter. This three day

conference brings together researchers from a wide variety of disciplines and institutions to share research findings and ideas on how best to continue the effort to overcome the effects of PD. While the nature of these projects and reports is primarily basic in nature, they offer the best overview of cutting edge scientific work on many facets of the pathogen and its vectors.

Proceedings from the 2006 symposium which was held from November 27-29 are now available on-line free of charge. To view or download these proceedings, visit the CDFA web page at:

<http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/phpps/pdcp/ResearchSymposium/gw2006symp.htm>.

There are download options available for both high speed and dial-up web connections.



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Fipps Presentation Offers Practical Injection Advice

Dr. Guy Fipps, professor in the Ag. Engineering department at Texas A&M gave a hands on, practical approach to using injection technology with drip irrigation systems at our past PD Research Symposium. Brought to the conference by suggestion

of the Grower Advisory Board, Dr. Fipps outlined equipment, technology and safety needed to accurately use this technology. Dr. Fipps has posted his presentation on his webpage and can be downloaded at:

<http://gfipps.tamu.edu/powerpoits/GrapeGrowers.ppt>



As Director of the Irrigation Technology Center, Guy Fipps Appears in his Recent Capacity as Senior Advisor for Water at the U.S. Embassy in Kabul, Afghanistan

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