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## Top Story

### New PSS Faculty Member

#### Dr. Jyotsna Sharma

Dr. Jyotsna Sharma recently joined our department as Assistant Professor of Environmental Horticulture. She most recently held a faculty position with the University of Florida at the Quincy, Florida Experimental Station. Dr. Sharma earned her B.S. in Horticulture and Business from the University of Arkansas, and her M.S. and Ph.D. from the University of Missouri. Her research interests include conservation of native, endangered plants; mycorrhizal fungi of horticultural plants, orchids, and environmentally sustainable nursery production. Dr. Sharma's office and lab will be in the first floor of the Agricultural Sciences building. The addition of Dr. Sharma to our department, and the new areas of research interest and expertise she brings, pose some exciting possibilities for our department. Be sure to welcome Jyotsna to PSS when you have the chance.



*"Wine is bottled poetry."*

Robert Louis Stevenson

## Chat with the Chair

By Department Chair  
Tom Thompson



The Texas grape and wine industry has grown from humble beginnings to a \$1.4 billion per year industry, and Texas is now the 5th leading wine-producing state in the country. The Southern High Plains has long been important for this industry, with several wineries in Lubbock county and much of the state's grape acreage in this region. The Department of Plant and Soil Science employs

two faculty with expertise in viticulture, Drs. Ed Hellman and Thayne Montague. During 2007, we were able to create a new faculty position in enology (wine science) through funding created with the help of the Texas Wine and Grape Growers Association and funding from the Texas Legislature. Dr. Brent Trela was hired in this position, and with this core of faculty expertise we now have the ability to offer courses in viticulture and enology. Within the past several months these faculty members have created two new courses in viticulture and three in enology. Two courses, Viticulture I, and Winemaking Worldwide, will be offered for the first time this fall semester. We have also created a new specialization, "Viticulture and Enology", within our undergraduate Horticultural and Turfgrass Sciences curriculum. We have thus become the first university within Texas to offer such a degree specialization. We are now positioned to provide this industry with the educated professionals they need and to bring new students into our department who are interested in wines and winemaking. These faculty members, who took the initiative to create the courses and the degree specialization, deserve the credit for this new opportunity.

## Faculty Corner - Vivien Allen

My interest in farming began before I was old enough to remember. I grew up with a

farm in my family that began with my grandparents in the late 1800 's. It was the place of my growing up years. Days were spent on my bareback horse with my dog alongside returning home only when darkness, hunger, and a worried mother drove me inside. School was a place to be avoided – a loss of my freedom. I would have never gone to college, but my parents had other ideas! We compromised and I attended the University of Tennessee Martin Branch where I could major in agriculture. For the first time, school became fun. I was on the livestock judging team, the dairy judging team, the square dancing team, and became the Barn Warming Queen at the fall dance my freshman year. School was definitely looking up. Plus, I was the only girl in the department for the entire four years that I was there and I graduated with the first degree that UT-Martin had ever awarded to a woman in agriculture. It was a fantastic four years of my life.



Graduate education came at Louisiana State University with an MS and PhD in Agronomy with minors in animal nutrition and reproductive physiology. It was here that my interest focused on forages with the animal, soil, and environment interwoven into an interdisciplinary degree program. Virginia Tech had an opening in their forage program and it became my chance to begin a career. Finally, in 1995, I was offered the opportunity to move to Texas Tech. Both Virginia Tech and Texas Tech have allowed me to follow my career passions of bringing the soil, plant, animal, and environment together in multidisciplinary programs for research and teaching. Any successes I have had are directly due to the enormous opportunities I have had to work with an incredible team of people. No one could ever ask for better colleagues and friends. I passionately believe that we make the best progress through true collaboration and partnerships and in systems approaches to addressing the many challenges that face agriculture in today 's world.



# Have a Great Spring Break!!



## PSS Alumni News

**Z.B. Mayo** was selected as one of the 2009 CASNR Distinguished Alumni. This distinction honors Alumni who have made significant contributions to society, and whose accomplishments and careers have brought distinction to the college and to the professors associated with agriculture and natural resources. Dr. Mayo received his Bachelor of Science degree in entomology in 1967 from Texas Tech, and has been employed by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln since 1972. He has served as associate dean for the Agricultural Research Division. He was also named the Educational Administrator of the Year in 2008 by the National Association of Educational Office Professionals.

Dr. Mayo and his wife, Lois, reside in Lincoln, Nebraska.



## PSS Student News

- **Justin Cave**, a junior agronomy major from Ackerly, TX was awarded as one of the CASNR 2009-2010 Dean 's Scholars. Dean 's Scholars Awards are based on academic excellence, leadership, character and citizenship. Justin earned a Silver Award of \$9,600 four-year scholarship. To keep the scholarship, Silver recipients must maintain a 3.3 grade-point-average. The scholarships are funded by various donations to the college.
- **Galen Roberts** of Brownfield, TX was awarded the PSSAT Undergraduate Scholarship at the PSSAT annual meeting. He was also awarded the Retired Employees of NRCS scholarship. Each award was \$1500.

**Congratulations!**

**Galen Roberts and John Sackatt,**  
PSSAT Scholarship Committee Chairman



- **Cassidy Sooter, Luke Britten** and **Joshua Boxell** competed for the best student presentation award at the Texas Soil Workshop. Cassidy and Josh tied for second. They split the \$700.00 prize.
- Students representing the Horticulture Society participated in the J. Benton Storey Horticulture Judging Contest in Atlanta, GA at the Southern Region meetings of the American Society for Horticultural Science.

**Nathan Roberts and Amanda Delgado at**  
the J. Benton Storey Hort Judging Contest



## PSS Staff News

Sandy Rogers and Emily Saiz will be leaving our department this month.

Emily Saiz will resign, effective 13 March, to accept a position with another Texas Tech department. We wish her the best for her new position.

Sandy Rogers is retiring after 14 years of dedicated work to Texas Tech University and almost 5 years of being part of our department. Both Sandy and Emily have been loyal and valuable employees of PSS for several years, and they will be missed.

Emily Saiz



Sandy Rogers

## Accomplishments

## Presentations

- **McKenney, Cynthia**. "Impact of a Non-thesis distance Graduate Program on Horticulture Enrollment: A Three Year Study". Atlanta, GA . Southern Region ASHS meetings. (2009) .
- **Montague, T., Edward Hellman, and Michael Krawitzky** . Comparison of field grown grapevine stomatal conductance measurements using differing porometers. Southern Region ASHS meetings. (2009) .
- **McKenney, Cynthia**. "Impact of a Non-thesis distance Graduate Program on Horticulture Enrollment: A Three Year Study". Southern Region ASHS meetings. (2009) .
- **Trela, B.** Sulfur Dioxide in Wine. Texas Wine and Grape Growers Association, Annual Meeting. Austin. 2009 February.
- **Trela, B.** Sustainability in Vineyards and Wineries: High pH/High TA. 24th Annual Midwest Grape & Wine Conference. Missouri, Osage Beach. 2009 February 7-9.



### PSS-5100 Seminar!

When? March 9th, 23rd, 30th  
April 6th, 13th, 20th, 27th

Where? PSS 108.

Information about class contents will be posted on our website and emailed to our Faculty, Staff, and Graduate Students. Don't miss it!



### PSS-Faculty Meetings!

March 12<sup>th</sup>, 2:00- 3:30 pm; PSS 108  
April 10<sup>th</sup>, 12:00 - 1:30 pm; PSS 115  
May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2:00 - 4:00 pm. PSS 115



March

6-8: Home & Garden Show  
8: Daylight Saving Time  
14-22: Spring Break

1: Advance Registration Begins  
1: Water Restrictions Begin  
12: Easter 13: No Classes  
27: Open Registration Begins  
22: Earth Day 24: Arbor Day  
28: Last Day of Classes  
29: Individual Study Day  
30-May 5: Final Exams

April

### PSS- Monday Social Hours!

Where? 2nd Floor Hallway, PS Building

When? from 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m., on  
March 9th & 23rd, and April 6th & 20th

## Upcoming Events!!



### Cont...Presentations:

### Accomplishments

- Trela, B.** Sustainability in Vineyards and Wineries: Wine Equipment. 24th Annual Midwest Grape & Wine Conference. Missouri, Osage Beach. 2009 February 7-9.
- Light, G.G., P. A. Dotray, R. J. Wright, L. V. Gilbert, and J. Cuarezma.** 2009. Evaluation of *Amaranthus rudis* accessions for susceptibility to glyphosate. Proc. South. Weed. Sci. Beltwide and SWSS/WSSA Meetings. (In Press).
- Light, G. G., R. J. Wright, and A. S. Culpepper.** Investigating resistance mechanism in glyphosate-resistant *Amaranthus*. 2009. Proc. Weed Sci. Soc. of Am. . Beltwide and SWSS/WSSA Meetings. (In Press).
- Light, G.G., P. A. Dotray, R. J. Wright, L. V. Gilbert, and J. Cuarezma.** 2009. Determining glyphosate susceptibility in Texas populations of common waterhemp. Proceedings of the Beltwide Cotton Conference. San Antonio, TX. Jan. 5-8, 2009. Memphis, TN: National Cotton Council of America. . Beltwide and SWSS/WSSA Meetings. (In Press).

### Book Chapter:

- Auld, D. L., G. G. Light, M. Fokar, R. D. Allen and E. Bechere.** 2009. Mutagenesis systems for genetic analysis of *Gossypium*. In *Genomics of Cotton*. A. H. Paterson (ed. ). Springer Science Publishing, New York, NY.

### Journal Publications:

- Yabaji, R., J.W. Nusz, K.F. Bronson, A. Malapati, J.D. Booker, R.L. Nichols, and T.L. Thompson.** 2009. Nitrogen Management for Subsurface Drip Irrigated Cotton: Ammonium Thiosulfate, Timing, and Canopy Reflectance. *Soil Sci. Soc. Am. J.* 73:589-597.
- Basinger, A.R., C.B. McKenney and D. Auld.** 2009. Competencies for a United States horticulture undergraduate major: A national Delphi study. *HortTechnology*, 19 (2) :1-7.
- Nansen, C.; Meikle, W., Campbell, J., Phillips, T.; Subramanyam, B.** 2008. A Binomial and Species-Independent Approach to Trap Capture Analysis of Flying Insects. *J. Econ. Entomol.* 101 (6) : 1719-1728.