Welcome Winter 2010
Despite the much appreciated but very damp weather in California lately, the members of the Postharvest Team at UC Davis have been seen trekking about campus under umbrellas, and meeting to collaborate on a variety of topics. Key issues have included goals for the Center’s future, detailed plans for our 2010 workshops, and several grant opportunities that the Center’s specialists and staff are working on.

We are especially pleased to welcome Penny Stockdale back to the Center after she spent the past year-and-a-half assisting other centers around the campus. She will serve as an event specialist, and will also be processing orders for our publications.

Fresh Produce Marketing Strategies Short Course to be held at the San Francisco Grand Hyatt, May 5-7, 2010
Course coordinator Dr. Roberta Cook has been hard at work on the agenda, and has recently lined up several new speakers who will be joining the all star team of instructors at our Fresh Produce Marketing Strategies Short Course, scheduled for May 5-7 at the San Francisco Grand Hyatt’s Conference Theater. This superb venue will provide the latest in meeting technology, with executive seating and microphones at each place to facilitate interaction between audience members and speakers. Produce marketing is a very fluid and dynamic arena, and new topics for this year will include social media, SKU rationalization, and managing shrink. Please see the course web page to enroll, or to learn more about this exciting course.

Postharvest Technology Short Course 2010 Open for Registration
Registrations are already quickly arriving for the 32nd Annual Postharvest Technology Short Course, which promises to be more interactive than ever before. Under the capable leadership of Drs. Marita Cantwell, Trevor Suslow, Beth Mitcham, and Michael Reid, this course has been updated for the June 14-25, 2010 session. Research and extension workers, quality control personnel and other professionals interested in current advances in postharvest technology of horticultural crops are invited to attend this two-week intensive study of current
Enrollment is filling up quickly at the 2010 Fruit Ripening & Ethylene Management Workshop

There are about 15 spaces left in the 16th Annual Fruit Ripening and Ethylene Management Workshop. Organized this year by Dr. Carlos Crisostomo and the Postharvest Technology Center, this workshop will be held February 25-26 at the UC Kearney Agricultural Center located in Parlier, California. The workshop is intended for shippers and destination (wholesale and retail) handlers who are involved in ripening fruits and fruit-vegetables. The workshop focuses on how to increase profits by delivering ready-to-eat, delicious fruits and fruit-vegetables to the consumer. We are pleased to keep the same registration fee as 2009, of $700, for this 2-day workshop. Please see the event’s webpage for complete information. We thank our 2010 workshop sponsors: Summeripe, Agrofresh, and Catalytic Generators, LLC.

What’s New on our Website this Month

January additions to our Postharvest Publications Organized by Topic data store
With over 1,000 documents to choose from, our data store can serve as your personal postharvest library. It is searchable by author, topic, or title. This month we are happy to feature a number of articles by postharvest colleagues from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service. Our new additions this month include:

With Tests


Additionally, we have posted six more articles on insect control, lemon, nectarines, broccoli, and postharvest losses on our Web site in our Library: Postharvest Publications Organized by Topic.

With appreciation for the photo editing talents of our student assistant Tracy Liu, a full-page PDF of the Granny Smith Starch Scale poster is now available on our Web site.

Postharvest Specialists’ Activities

“The Packer” Reports on UC Davis Researchers Evaluating Practical Functionality of Rapid E. coli Tests

Postharvest Specialist Trevor Suslow, and his research collaborator Carol D’Lima, compared the efficacy of four commercial rapid E. coli tests kits, and their efforts and findings were reported in a December “Packer” article by Bob Luder.

Postharvest Center’s Workshops @ UC Davis

2010 UC Davis Postharvest Opportunities

- **February 9-12:** Better Process Control School – On the UC Davis Campus. Information about this school.
- **February 25-26:** Fruit Ripening & Ethylene Management Workshop - 16th Annual, scheduled to be held at the University of California’s Kearny Agricultural Center in Parlier, California. **Registration is now open.**
- March 17-18, 2010. Juice Processing Course. 2nd Annual, scheduled to be held on the UC Davis Campus. Information about this course.
- **May 5-7:** Fresh Produce Marketing Strategies Short Course - 2nd Annual, scheduled to be held at the San Francisco Grand Hyatt in the Conference Theater. **Registration is now open.**
- **June 14-25:** Postharvest Technology Short Course - 32nd Annual, scheduled to be held on the UC Davis campus. **Registration is now open.**
- **September 14-16:** Fresh-cut Products: Maintaining Quality & Safety - 15th Annual, scheduled to be held on the UC Davis campus.

Featured Postharvest Publication

Hot Off the Press! “Rice Quality Handbook”

By R. G. Mutters and J.F. Thompson, this new 141 page handbook provides detailed information on how to produce high-quality rice from planting to postharvest. It was written primarily for the Sacramento Valley rice industry, but worldwide rice operations, including growers, buyers, operators of dryers, warehouses, and processing operations, will benefit from this handbook. It is illustrated with 39 color photographs, 58 graphs, and 35 line drawings.
Postharvest Positions

Postdoctoral Position: Development of rapid methods to monitor harvest maturity and assess specialty crops
A postdoctoral position is available immediately in the UC Davis Department of Biological and Agricultural Engineering to qualified candidates with a Ph.D. in engineering, food science, plant science, or a related discipline to assist in the development of rapid methods to monitor harvest maturity and assess eating quality of specialty crops, with a focus on fresh produce. Knowledge of postharvest technologies, methods of produce quality assessment (soluble solids, titratable acidity, dry weight, flesh firmness/texture, etc.), research methods (data collection, data analysis, and reporting) and multivariate statistical methods is desirable. Submit 1) a signed letter of intent outlining special interests, qualifications and experience, and career goals; 2) curriculum vitae; and 3) the names and addresses of three professional references to: dcslaughter@ucdavis.edu
For full position description, go to http://www.gradstudies.ucdavis.edu/employment/postdoc.html

Postdoctoral Position in Sensory Analysis of Tree Fruit
The UC Davis Department of Plant Sciences has an opening for a postdoctoral position in the laboratory of Carlos H. Crisosto (Wickson Hall). This two-to-three-year postdoctoral position (with annual renewal subject to performance and funding) is available to establish a sensory evaluation system to understand fruit sensory losses during postharvest handling and propose innovative treatments to reduce these barrier problems. This sensory evaluation system will consist of a trained panel (descriptive analysis) that will be validated by several in-store consumer panels. Preference will be given to applicants with demonstrable experience in laboratory and statistical analysis techniques relating to descriptive analysis and consumer testing, and postharvest technology of fresh fruit. Requirements include a Master’s or PhD degree, good interpersonal skills, well organized, and proficient in written and oral communication. Applicants should submit a letter of interest, curriculum vitae, a brief statement highlighting research interests and experience related to the position, and contact information for three references to: Carlos H. Crisosto, chcrisosto@ucdavis.edu; tel. 530-752-7549 and Gayle Crisosto (gayle@uckac.edu).

Postdoctoral Position in Microbial Food Safety of Horticultural Foods
The UC Davis Department of Plant Sciences has an immediate opening for a 12-month appointment, renewable with a three-year maximum, contingent upon continued satisfactory individual productivity and performance within a team-research setting. This position is suitable for an individual in the early stages of their academic research who has already distinguished themselves in creative research accomplishments and a technical skill set consistent with or demonstrably transferable to local, national, and global issues in preharvest and postharvest microbial food safety. Demonstrated knowledge of preharvest and postharvest management of horticultural crops is highly desirable and will be given strong consideration Interested individuals should e-mail a cover letter with résumé and/or CV and 3-5 references to Dr. Trevor Suslow. For full position description, see http://www.gradstudies.ucdavis.edu/employment/postdoc.html

Banana Ripening Specialist
Well run and successful wholesale produce distributor seeks a Banana Ripening Specialist for their Fresno, California operation. Must have two years experience ripening bananas by the truckload or boatload. Ripening experience with other fruit and the ability to speak Spanish would be a bonus but not necessary. Benefits, relocation, and salary depending on experience. Please email resumes directly to Edgar Blunt at edgar@denham.net or call 559.222.5284 with any questions.

USDA SIP
The 2010 USDA Summer Intern Program provides an opportunity for college students to gain experience as assistants in scientific, professional, and technical areas. The SIP consists of paid internships that give students an opportunity to gain career experience and to strongly consider future employment with USDA. Summer 2010’s internships fall under 7 categories including food safety, research, education and economics, and rural development.
USDA welcomes SIP applications from all college students, including students with disabilities. USDA interns must be a U.S. Citizen, must be currently enrolled in a college or university, and must be planning to continue their education (enrolled for fall 2010).

Please note that each intern position vacancy has its own deadline (closing date). Also, the individual USDA Agencies may post additional summer positions on their own websites, so be sure to check throughout the spring for further updates.

This is the link to access USDA summer internships; check back regularly for more vacancies:


Postharvest Calendar: Upcoming Conferences, Courses and Workshops

- February 1, 2010. Tomato Processing School. Sacramento Convention Center
- February 9-12, 2010. Better Process Control School. UC Davis Campus
- June 14-25, 2010. Postharvest Technology Short Course. 32nd Annual. UC Davis campus.
- August 22-27, 2010. 28th International Horticultural Congress. Lisbon, Portugal.

Ask the Produce Docs

Q. I have a recipe that I would like to can and sell. I understand the recipe must first be tested in a lab to ensure its safety. Does UC Davis offer such services? Thank you so much for you assistance. (L.H.)

A. Please see the University of California Food Safety web site (www.ucfoodsafety.ucdavis.edu) and look under “Food Industry Assistance”. There you should find information that will help you move further along. We do not provide product development or testing services at UC Davis. The “safety” of a product is dependent to some extent on the type of product you are making. We have information about a broad range of products at the web site above. --Linda Harris

Q. I have been looking for information on what causes vertical burst on zucchini. We have had several loads come in and after the fact we are seeing this issue I need to explain why this is happening and I have been unable to find any information on the subject. Anything you may have to help would be greatly appreciated. (L.K.G.)
A. I have never seen this problem, but I suspect that these zucchini were soaked or hydrocooled and perhaps left too long in water. Since zucchini are susceptible to water loss and the associated loss in visual quality, it is common to cool them with water. They will absorb significant amounts of water through the delicate skin (3-4%). Also if they are fully or excessively hydrated and then packaged with a film liner to prevent water loss, there can be splitting. What type of packaging is being used? Also they look on the mature side and seeds continue to grow inside at warmer temperatures. Another consideration is handling, any drops or rough transport with turgid product might lead to cracking. Obviously I am speculating, but I hope that it may assist you with asking some questions about the initial handling of the product to resolve the issue.

– Marita Cantwell