



## PPATH 502 Goes International



PPath 502 faculty and students during their recent visit to Costa Rica.

**Don Davis** took his popular Plant Disease Diagnosis course to the tropics in 2008. Don, 11 graduate students, and two able "teaching assistants" (Department Head **Barb Christ**; former Department Head & Mycologist **Elwin Stewart**) spent the period from June 2 -11, diagnosing diseases of tropical crops in Costa Rica. The class was hosted by **Carlos Araya** (Ph.D. Nebraska) and **German Rivera** (M.S. Missouri), plant pathologists with the National University of Costa Rica, and **Marcela Arguedas** (M.S. Lavall), forest pathologist with the Technical Institute of Costa Rica (Engineering and Forestry). Diseased crops examined and diagnosed included cocoa, coffee, papaya, banana, numerous vegetables, citrus, forest trees, and many others. Considerable time was spent at experiment station plantations where banana, cocoa, and papaya were bred or evaluated for disease resistance. A variety of small farms, large farms, tree plantations, forest nurseries, and greenhouses were visited. Throughout the period (including Saturday and Sunday!), one day was spent in the field conducting macroscopic diagnoses and collecting samples, and the next day was spent in well-equipped labs identifying pathogens microscopically. In the lab, each student made oral presentations as to how he/she made each diagnosis. Overall, the class was considered a great success. In addition, as one highly placed, unnamed source said, "It was a great learning experience; the days were hot, but the beer was cold, and the food fantastic." Plans are being made for similar sojourns into the tropics in future years.

Dr. Donald Davis

## Congratulations

Spring and Summer 2008 Department of Plant Pathology graduates **Nicholas S. Dufault** (Ph.D.), **Jean Philippe Marelli** (Ph.D.), **Philip Northover** (Ph.D.), **Alma Rodriguez** (Ph.D.), **Jose Santa Cruz** (M.S.), and **Maria Velez** (M.S.).

## Student Achievements

**Alma Rodriguez Estrada** (Ph.D.) and **Jean-Philippe Marelli** (Ph.D.) successfully defended their theses on May 13<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> respectively. Alma will be working as a postdoc at the University of Minnesota and Jean-Philippe will be working as a postdoc in the laboratory of **Dr. Kathy Dobinson** at Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

**Nicholas S. Dufault** passed his Ph.D. oral exam on June 25, 2008.

**Jose Santa Cruz** passed his final oral exam for the M.S. degree on June 30, 2008 (**Dr. Barbara Christ**, advisor).

## Dr. Beth Gugino Joins PPath Faculty

**Dr. Beth Gugino** joined the Department of Plant Pathology faculty in early June. Dr.



Gugino received her B.S. (Horticulture), M.S. (Plant Pathology), and Ph.D. (Plant Pathology) from the Pennsylvania State University. Dr.

Gugino's areas of interest include

diseases of vegetables and the development of integrated vegetable crop management educational programming.



## PPath Graduate Students Receive APS Student Travel Awards

**Anissa Demers**, **Emily Helliwell** and **Katelyn Willyerd** recently received APS student travel awards to attend the meeting in Minneapolis this summer.

## Sara May Appointed to University Staff Advisory Council

**Sara May** has been named to a three-year term on the Pennsylvania State University Staff Advisory Council. Sara will represent the College of Agricultural Sciences.

## Dr. Martin B. Dickman Gives 2008 Richard R. Nelson Memorial Lecture

**Dr. Martin B. Dickman**, Director of the Institute for Plant Genomics and Biotechnology and Christine Richardson Professor of Agriculture in the Department of Plant Pathology and Microbiology at Texas A&M University, gave the annual Richard R. Nelson Memorial Lecture—“Death Be Not Proud: Modulation of Programmed Cell Death for Disease/Stress Tolerance in Plants”—on Monday, April 28, 2008, in 112 Buckhout. The Richard R. Nelson Memorial Lectures were established in memory of **Dr. Richard R. Nelson** (1926-1991) and focus exclusively upon host-pathogen genetics.

## Mushroom Test Demonstration Facility Tour

The PPath Social Committee sponsored a tour of the Mushroom Test Demonstration Facility (MTDF) on Tuesday, April 22, 2008. **John Pecchia** explained the steps involved in growing white button mushrooms and provided a guided tour of the facility.

## Dr. Henry Ngugi Goes Down Under

In March, **Dr. Henry Ngugi** made a two-week visit to Tasmania and Australia and thereafter spent a week in New Zealand. The visit to Tasmania was at the invitation of the University of Tasmania (UTAS) and the Tasmania Institute of Agricultural Research. During this time, Dr. Ngugi worked with Drs Sarah Pethybridge and Frank Hay on modeling pyrethrum diseases and advised Mick Lang, a graduate student in UTAS fruit pathology program on application of survival analysis techniques to study walnut blight. Dr. Ngugi also gave seminars at UTAS' Cradle Coast, and Hobart campuses, toured pyrethrum production facilities and attended a grower field day organized by Webster Ltd, the largest commercial producer of walnut in Tasmania. Whilst in New Zealand, Dr. Ngugi visited and gave seminars at HortResearch centers at Hawkes Bay and Auckland. As a result of this visit, several collaborative projects are currently being developed.



Dr. Ngugi and Mick Lang inspecting diseased walnuts during a grower field day near Burnie, Tasmania.

## ICE CREAM SOCIAL

The PPath Social Committee hosted an ice cream social on Tuesday, June 17<sup>th</sup>. The Committee supplied the ice cream and toppings for participants to create a delicious array of dairy delights.

## Selected New Books at Hildebrandt Library

Bridge, J., & Starr, J. L. (2007). *Plant nematodes of agricultural importance: A Color handbook*. Boston, MA: Academic Press. Call number: SB998.N4B75 2007b.

Dugan, Frank M. (2008). *Fungi in the Ancient world: How mushrooms, mildews, molds, and yeast shaped the early civilizations of Europe, the Mediterranean, and the near East*. St. Paul, Minn.: APS Press. Call number: QK603.D865 2008.

Hall, I. R., Brown, G. T., & Zambonelli, A. (2007). *Taming the truffle: The history, lore, and science of the ultimate mushroom*. Portland, Or.: Timber Press. Call number: SB353.5.T78H344 2007.

Johnson, D. A. (Ed.). (2008). *Potato health management* (2nd ed.). St. Paul, MN: APS Press. Call number: SB211.P8P664 2008.

Koike, S. T., Gladders, P., & Paulus, A. O. (2007). *Vegetable diseases: A Color handbook*. Burlington, MA: Academic Press. Call number: SB608.V4K65 2007.

Madden, L. V., Hughes, G., & Bosch, F. v. d. (2007). *The Study of plant disease epidemics*. St. Paul, Minn.: American Phytopathological Society. Call number: SB731.M32 2007.

Ristaino, J. B. (Ed.). (2008). *Pioneering women in plant pathology*. St. Paul, Minn.: APS Press. Call number: QK26.P546 2008.

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