

Issue 3 – February 2012 - [UC Kearney Agricultural Research and Extension Center website](http://www.uckac.edu)



#### Message from the director: Dr. Jeff Dahlberg

To say that this has been a busy first year on the job would be a bit of an understatement. KARE is such a diverse center with a wide-range of research and extension activities that it is sometimes a bit overwhelming trying to keep up with it all and manage the day-to-day operations. Fortunately, we have great academics and staff that makes this job a real pleasure. We are continuing to build upon our new acronym, "KARE," through our outreach efforts, such as this e-newsletter and our first appearance at the World Ag Expo in Tulare, Feb. 14-16. Visit us in Pavilion A, Space 1412. We are working through our budget restrictions, seeing retirements of some of our long-term academics and working to meet the challenges of ensuring that we re-staff our academic positions and keep the center a strong, vibrant community of research and extension with the goal of **"KARE"ing for the farmers, consumers and environment of the San Joaquin Valley, California and the nation!**

I am also involved in Ag Warriors, a program launched by the International Agri-Center in Tulare to identify, develop and place returning veterans in long-term professions in the agriculture industry following their military service. This program strives to recognize the commitment and sacrifice our men and women in the armed services have made and to bring back some of that talent and dedication into the agricultural community. I see really great opportunities in this program and hope that you look it up and become engaged.

See you at the World Ag Expo and thank you for the feedback. As always feel free to contact me at [jadahlberg@ucdavis.edu](mailto:jadahlberg@ucdavis.edu) and I encourage you to explore our website ([www.uckac.edu](http://www.uckac.edu)) to learn more about KARE.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeff Dahlberg".



#### Greater demand driving GIS program growth at Kearney

The Geographic Information Systems (GIS) team at the Kearney Agricultural Research and Extension Center is growing this year. The program will add two positions in the coming months with new grant funding as more scientists recognize the value of employing spatial mapping in their agricultural research.

[Read more about the Kearney GIS program.](#)



### **New “UC Fruit Report” launched**

A newly redesigned website, the [UC Fruit Report](#), was launched at the beginning of 2012 with comprehensive information for Central Valley tree fruit producers. The website contains research and photos that three UC Cooperative Extension advisors and specialists developed and collected over the past 30 years. Website visitors will find useful horticultural information about establishing and managing fresh market peach, plum and nectarine orchards.

[Read more about the UC Fruit Report.](#)



### **Composted green waste supports soil solarization**

Applying composted green waste to a field before solarization is more effective for killing weed seeds than solarization alone, according to the preliminary findings of research conducted at the UC Kearney Agricultural Research and Extension Center last summer.

[Read more about the solarization research project.](#)



### **Dwarfing rootstocks developed at Kearney cut peach farming expenses**

UC Kearney Agricultural Research and Extension Center scientists have found that stonefruit production costs can be cut dramatically by growing “dwarf” trees that minimize the need for ladder access. However, the limiting factor for peaches has been the lack of acceptable dwarfing rootstocks for the best peach varieties. Over the past 25 years, research at Kearney has identified several excellent dwarfing options for growers.

[Read more about dwarfing rootstocks.](#)



### **Pomegranates draw a crowd to Kearney**

The growing interest in valley pomegranate production was demonstrated by a standing-room-only crowd of more than 130 farmers, pest control advisers and industry representatives at the San Joaquin Valley Pomegranate Meeting last fall at the Kearney Agricultural Research and Extension Center. Speakers discussed integrated pest management of insects and diseases in pomegranates, unique pomegranate varieties and a new research project at Kearney in which scientists are studying pomegranate irrigation, fertigation and nitrogen use efficiency.

[Read more about the pomegranate meeting.](#)



### **Balkans farmers show keen interest in postharvest science**

UC subtropical horticulture specialist [Mary Lu Arpaia](#), who is based at the Kearney Agricultural Research and Extension Center, was one of four UC specialists who traveled to Sarajevo Oct. 24-28 at the request of local officials to present a condensed version of the UC Postharvest Technology Short Course. Nearly 100 participants from 11 countries attended the program, which included lectures and a field tour. Simultaneous translation was offered in Bosnian and Russian.

[Read more about the postharvest short course in the Balkans.](#)



**In memoriam: Kearney-based entomology specialist emeritus Richard "Dick" Rice passes away**

Richard "Dick" Rice passed away on Dec. 24, 2011, at the age of 74. Dr. Rice was a UC Davis entomologist who worked at the Kearney Agricultural Research and Extension Center for 33 years. [Read more about Rice's life and career.](#)

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