

March
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Kearney Research News

University of California
Agriculture and Natural Resources



Research and Extension Center System

March 2017 [UC Kearney Agricultural Research and Extension Center website](#)



Message from the director: Jeff Dahlberg

What a difference a year makes. Last year, we had the driest January on record and this year it keeps on raining. In fact, it is raining as I'm writing this. I've heard talk about the drought being over and I can only hope that this is true, but I will continue to study drought tolerance using the cereal crop sorghum as a model to understand how plants deal with drought and water stress. We will need to better understand how to apply irrigation to give plants the chance of making the most out of this somewhat variable natural resource. If you want to learn a bit more about sorghum, come visit <http://sorghum.ucanr.edu>. We continue to work on getting additional research scientists here on the Center and will be interviewing for a new IPM Fruit and Nut Tree Specialist sometime in March, so I look forward to welcoming another new scientist here at KARE soon. We've added a new enclosed building that we can now use to house research equipment (which seems to be getting more and more expensive) and have added an additional solar array to compliment the other two we had in place to help off-set electrical costs to our Post-Harvest Research facilities. I was interviewed by a local TV channel to talk about the potential for Tea here in the valley. I'm working with the UC Davis Global Tea Initiative to see about getting research restarted here at KARE. We will be building upon research that was conducted at KARE back in the 1960-70s, and being a tea drinker myself, I'm excited about the potential for Tea here in the SJV. We'll keep you posted on where this is headed.

A couple of retirements happened. Chuck Boldwyn, our Ag Manager, retired in November, while Alan Cary, our EH&S manager, retired at the end of February. We wish them luck in this new chapter in their lives. We continue to host kids from around the Center in hands-on training experience teaching them about the joys and potential of ag science, hopefully inspiring the next great ag scientists to continue to pursue a career in science. We attended the Tulare World Ag Expo February 14-16 in Pavilion A. We partnered with all of UC-ANR to talk about the range of programs and activities that we are doing. We hope that you had the opportunity to come by to see what ANR is all about. I was in our REC booth highlighting things that are taking place amongst the 9 research centers spread throughout the state.

As always, you can help us financially and allow us to expand our research efforts so that we can continue to research sustainable solutions to the variety of problems that face our farmers and our food systems through our "Make a Gift" on-line donation button. If you feel the need to talk, feel free to contact me at

jadahlberg@ucanr.edu, through our Facebook page, [blog](#), or at our [website](#).

Jeff Dahlberg



National invasive species awareness week was February 27 – March 3, 2017.

Invasive species are plants, animals, fungi or microbes that are not native to an area, but can quickly establish, multiply, and become pests. These species can hurt the environment, agricultural production, and even human health in some instances (e.g. the mosquito *Aedes aegypti*). According to the [USDA](#), invasive species are responsible for \$137 billion per year in economic losses in the United States.

In agricultural systems, invasive species may reduce yields, render crops unmarketable, or make rangeland unfavorable to livestock. In natural areas, they may squeeze out native species, change soil quality, and increase the frequency or intensity of wildfires.

Some invasive species were introduced intentionally, while others arrived by accident. [Read more.](#)



UC ANR participated in the 2017 World Ag Expo in Tulare, CA.

UC ANR participated in the [World Ag Expo](#), held February 14, 15, and 16, 2017. Statewide programs, UC Cooperative Extension, and the Research and Extension Center System had booths and personnel available for the entire show. We had booths 1411, 1412, 1512 and 1513 in Pavilion A, and Wilcox Agri Products donated some space for an UC ANR [conservation tillage](#) tent in the M48-53 area. UC ANR also had people participating in the newsmakers conference as well as providing seminars.



UC ANR IPM academic coordinator is based at Kearney.

[Lori Berger](#) is the new academic coordinator for the Pests, Pesticides and IPM Project. Berger joined ANR in 2014 to coordinate a program to identify and manage critical uses of chlorpyrifos in almonds, citrus, cotton and alfalfa. Berger has worked extensively with the regulatory community in developing science-based approaches to pest management and agricultural production, sharing her expertise on pest management, pollinator protection, international MRLs, water quality and soil health.

Based at the Kearney Agricultural Research and Education Center in Parlier, Berger holds a Ph.D. in entomology and is a licensed pest control adviser as well as a certified crop adviser. [Read more.](#)



The South San Joaquin Valley Region Invasive Aedes Workshop was held at Kearney in January.

First reported in California in June 2013, the invasive mosquito *Aedes aegypti* can vector four viruses: yellow fever, dengue, Chikungunya and Zika. Moderated by entomologist [Anthony Cornel, Ph.D.](#) at Kearney Agricultural Research & Extension Center and the entomology department at UC Davis, the workshop's agenda included

- Programmatic activity updates
- Surveillance techniques and integrated vector management
- Public outreach and community involvement
- Response plans

[Read more.](#)



Is your pesticide safety training in compliance with the new Worker Protection Standard?

We are in the midst of a new and changing era of Worker Protection Standards (WPS). The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the California Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) recently published the revised WPS, which is meant to increase protections for agricultural fieldworkers and pesticide handlers from pesticide exposure when they're working in farms, forests, nurseries and greenhouses. The changes are already affecting California agriculture!

Some major regulatory changes have already gone into effect, some will come later.

Who do these changes affect? [Read more.](#)

Interest in Kearney tea plants mentioned in the local abc 30 news broadcast January 2, 2017.

On January 2nd, 2017, abc 30 news aired a [story](#) on the 50 year old tea plants at UC ANR Kearney Agricultural Research and Extension Center. When the 1967 20-yr long Lipton tea project ended, some of the top two cultivars were kept in the general landscaping. The Global Tea Initiative at UC Davis learned that the tea plants survived for fifty years without any special treatment. The initiative plans to do some studies on these plants.



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