

DOCTOR OF PLANT MEDICINE

NEWS



VOLUME 23
Summer 2021



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UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

INSECT PEST SPOTLIGHT

SPECIES

Vitacea polistiformis

COMMON NAME

Grape Root Borer

PLANT HOSTS

Feeds on the roots and vines of grape spp.

DAMAGE

Larvae burrow into vines to feed

CONTROL

Mass pheromone trapping and mating disruption



Creators

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DPM Student - University of Florida

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 University of Florida Doctor of Plant Medicine Program (DPM)

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to our Graduates

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WELCOMING REMARKS



Alumni, Friends, Faculty, and Students:

The DPM Program was pleased to announce four graduates during the summer of 2021: Dr. Craig Frey, Dr. Nick Goltz, Dr. Keir Hamilton, and Dr. Brianna Whitman! We are so proud of our graduates as this continues to be a difficult time for students to complete their degree as we transition away from the COVID-19 pandemic. The DPM program was also excited to welcome two new students: Peter Gianelli and Caitlin Sollazzo!

Throughout this edition of DPM news, you will discover exciting internships that our students are completion. I would also encourage you to review our latest news through Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube. The spring and summer semesters of 2021 have been very busy, and our students and alumni continue to complete so many amazing accomplishments. Thank you for your support!

Thank you for your continued support! Stay safe and well.

Sincerely,

Dr. Amanda Hodges

Director, Doctor of Plant Medicine Program

NEW STUDENT PROFILES

PETER GIANELLI



Academic Credentials:

- B.S. in PLANT SCIENCES – University of Florida
- Enrolled DPM

Why DPM?

Growing up in Orlando Florida, I learned a lot about ornamental horticulture from going to Leu Gardens, and I learned about gardening from an early age from my parents. I grew and maintained an orchid collection as well as various herbs. The Doctor of Plant Medicine program seemed a practical graduate program which builds useful skills for either academia or business. I've also seen the importance of using multiple disciplines, such as soil, entomology, and plant pathology, in fully understanding and being able to grow plants and maintain soil health. I am ultimately looking forward to working with more tropical plants and insects, where there are more diverse plant and insect interactions.

CAITLIN SOLLAZZO



Academic Credentials:

- B.S. in ENTOMOLOGY AND NEMATOLOGY – University of Florida
- Enrolled DPM

Why DPM?

I chose the DPM program because I was very interested taking my entomology classes but also intrigued by a more wholistic approach to agriculture. I liked how the DPM program had a more academic approach rather than based solely on research.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR GRADUATES

DR. CRAIG FREY



I stumbled upon the DPM program when entertaining the idea of going back to school a bit later in life. I thought the program would be a good fit for me, and it has more than lived up to my expectations. I thoroughly enjoyed the ability to make my own program, taking classes in each discipline around crop production. As I approached the end of my studies, I utilized my electives to branch out further to take business, leadership, and management courses. I was also blessed with the opportunity to engage in multi-disciplinary research alongside this coursework that grounded my studies in the application of what I was learning. Where else can you get such a broad, yet in-depth education in the field of agriculture, as well as adapt it to prepare you for future employment? There is no where else in the world; only the UF DPM program can provide this.

As I finish my degree, I find myself in Southwest Florida, a year into a vegetable extension position working with some of the largest vegetable growers in Florida. Every day I get to build off of the foundations that the DPM program provided as I seek to serve my community. And because of the vast network I was able to develop through the course of my studies, I have specialists I can go to whenever I need extra support. This job fits my expertise and passions extremely well, and I look forward to serving this new community of mine for years to come.

DR. NICK GOLTZ



My time as a student in the Doctor of Plant Medicine program has been transformative. I was able to develop professionally, and I gained real-world skills and experience that I wouldn't have been able to obtain if I were enrolled in another graduate program. The courses, internships, and competency exams I completed allowed me to demonstrate my ability as a plant health practitioner in training.

I'm thrilled to share that, after completing most of the program and working as a graduate assistant in the UF Plant Diagnostic Center for almost two years, I accepted a dream job to direct the University of Connecticut Plant Diagnostic Laboratory! I'm honored to have this opportunity to continue to share my love and knowledge of plant health and disease diagnostics with people every day for a living. I wouldn't have this chance were it not for the DPM program, and for that I am incredibly grateful.

We asked our graduates to share a few words on their time as a DPM student and their next steps.

DR. KEIR HAMILTON



My name is Keir Hamilton. Before entering the Doctor of Plant Medicine (DPM) Program I was able to collaborate on multidisciplinary environmental science research. Upon becoming a DPM student, I gained invaluable mentorship and coursework direction in Entomology, Nematology, Agronomy, Plant Pathology and Soil science. Fortunately, my background in applied research and/ or extension activities made my transition into the DPM Program seamless. My most fulfilling internship occurred at Grace Marketplace, where I co-instructed an applied horticulture and landscape management course and was able to empower individuals who were experiencing homelessness or food insecurity.

Overall, the DPM Program provided invaluable applied research experiences and allowed me to work in cross-functional groups to cultivate organic tomato, bok choy, lettuce, cowpea, strawberry and cannabis. In the future, I will likely use my applied knowledge and tact to ensure food security in the US and 3rd world countries. More specifically, I will continue to collaborate with multidisciplinary teams to accelerate sustainable agricultural solutions using acquired plant diagnostics skills.

DR. BRIANNA WHITMAN



Acquiring my Doctor of Plant Medicine degree has been one of the most rewarding accomplishments. Graduating from UF with my Masters and DPM degree has prepared me to make an impact in the world. I enjoyed planning our Plant Health Conference and FFFF. I hope these two events continue for years to come because they were great opportunity to meet stakeholders, alumni, and fundraise for our program. Working in the BRE lab has sharpened me in many ways. I was able to make an impact in the Peach Tree Borer project and make long lasting connections through my internships. I am grateful for my time at UF and I can't wait to see what the future holds for me.

University of the Virgin Island's Cooperative Extension Service

by ZACH ELDRED

Zach Eldred is spending his summer conducting an internship with the University of the Virgin Island's Cooperative Extension Service. His internship is focused on Integrated Pest Management with the region's IPM extension agent Dr. Amy Dreves. Much of this work included on farm monitoring, coordination with local growers, and developing IPM specific outreach information. Additionally, it was important to gain a thorough understanding of the many unique issues related to agriculture and what the local community is doing to address these problem. To gain additional perspective he met with Positive Nelson (below), the Commissioner of the Department of Agriculture for the US Virgin Islands as well as the Assistant Commissioner Diana Collingwood, and discussed the future of agriculture and sustainability on St. Croix and the USVI.

Additionally, he is taking an International Research Immersion course in agroecology. The focus of this research is looking into plantain mulching systems and how they affect soil health. In addition to mulching, we are developing a plantain survey and monitoring system to determine pest pressure to advise local growers and develop IPM recommendations. Finally, he is helping on a project that is looking at runoff and sedimentation related to various soil erosion areas including farms.



South Florida Project

by *ANDY JEAN-LOUIS*

The project's goal was to survey the Homestead, Miami-Dade County area intensively and systematically to determine the abundance of the Asian Bean Thrips (ABT) and have a general idea of the thrips diversity. I had been surveying vegetables, nurseries, and fruit orchards (Dragon Fruit). The monitoring consists of three different trapping methods: yellow and blue sticky cards, pan traps, hand collecting. The flowering season began and I started collecting 5 flower stages (including the fruit) to identify the thrips species that are directly affecting the flower/fruits.



DOCTOR OF PLANT MEDICINE STUDENT ORGANIZATION NEWS

STUDENT OFFICERS

Congratulations to Julia, Sarah, Adam, Shannon, and Hannah winning the Summer 2021 DPMSO officer elections!



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