



Welcome! This is the second issue of the NCPN *Network News*, a newsletter delivered via email to the public and stakeholders of the [National Clean Plant Network](#) (NCPN). Our first edition, Summer 2016, provided an overview of the seven specialty crop groups which currently comprise the National Clean Plant Network.

In this issue, we feature a few of the individuals who are integral to the network, either as members of various clean plant centers or as recipients of the services provided to specialty crop growers and producers.

Future editions will provide a more in-depth look at the centers across the United States that support these crops and work collaboratively to reduce viruses and virus-like agents that cause economic harm to U.S. agriculture

FRUIT TREES

By Seth Truscott, College of Agricultural, Human & Natural Resource Sciences, *WSU News*

Prosser, Wash. - As new director of the Clean Plant Center Northwest, Scott Harper will help growers stop devastating crop viruses before they gain a foothold. His top priority is to grow the Northwest's supply of virus-free fruit trees, vines and hops.

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<https://news.wsu.edu/2017/02/01/new-clean-plant-center-director/>

"The front line of the battle against viruses is clean material," said Harper, hired January 3 to run the center.

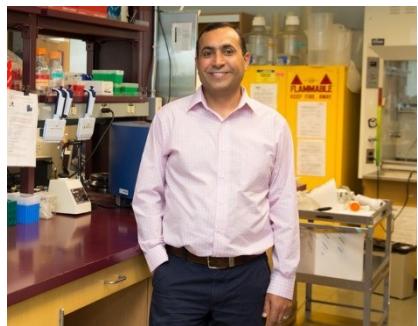


Dr. Scott Harper, the new director at Washington State University's Clean Plant Center Northwest, is featured in the *WSU News*.

GRAPES

Dr. Maher Al-Rwahnih took over the reins as Diagnostic and Research Lab Director at Foundation Plant Services (FPS), UC Davis on July 1, 2016. He also serves as vice chair of the NCPN-Fruit Tree Tier 2, is on NCPN-Roses Tier 2 and is actively involved in the NCPN-Sweetpotato virology committee.

Maher (pronounced Ma - her) originally hails from Jordan and spent time in Italy at the University of Bari and came to FPS in 2004 as a post-doc. We are very fortunate to have him in his new position as Lab Director on the FPS Team! We have certainly benefited from his research skills, organizational skills and great negotiating skills with equipment salespeople.



Maher Al-Rwahnih enjoys showing off the 600 million reads he gets from the Next Seq 500 machine purchased with NCPN funds for use at Foundation Plant Services.

Al-Rwahnih (pronounced al - ra - wa - hnee) was a pioneer in applying Next Generation Sequencing (NGS is now called High Throughput Sequencing (HTS)) technology to a plant (grapevines). This was the first time a plant of any kind was analyzed by HTS. His work will have major benefits for regulatory agencies, clean plant programs and grape growers. His biography is at <http://www.apsnet.org/members/awards/Hutchins/Pages/MaherAlRwahnih.aspx>

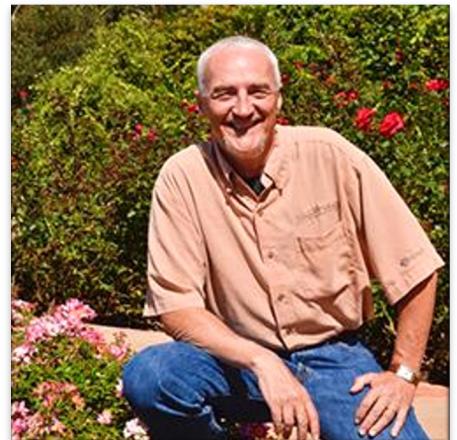


Next time you are at an NCPN meeting and hear a friendly voice in a lilting French accent, it likely belongs to Jacques Ferare, an industry representative to the NCPN-Roses Tier 2 Committee. He is Vice President for Licensing and Rose Program Director at Star Roses and Plants in West Grove, Pa. A native of Nice, France, Jacques graduated from Colorado State University with a M.S. in Floriculture and has honed his rose expertise working around the globe for such enterprises as Meilland International, the French Rose breeder, The Conard-Pyle Co., based in Pennsylvania, and Star Roses and Plants in California. Jacques is a member of Pi Alpha Xi, the Honorary Society for Floriculture.

Jacques has been an enthusiastic supporter of the Clean Rose Collection maintained by the Foundation Plant Services. His leadership and vision has been integral to the success of adding Roses to the National Clean Plant Network. NCPN support for the rose clean plant collection is allowing the expansion of the collection, the renovation and retesting of the established collection, the reassessment of virus testing protocols, and the development of important networking and educational opportunities. With the efforts of Jacques and of all the other industry supporters, the rose industry now has a virus-tested source for rose propagation and breeding. The FPS clean rose collection is the largest such publicly supported collection in the world.

Married with three grown daughters, Jacques enjoys gardening, which he does not limit to roses, as well as hiking and playing the guitar. One of his pet peeves is confining roses by themselves in a garden bed without any neighboring plants, creating what he has memorably coined a *rose ghetto*.

NCPN is lucky to have the energy and perspectives Jacques brings to NCPN-Roses.



Jacques Ferare of Star Roses & Plants, has been an enthusiastic supporter of the Clean Rose Collection maintained by the Foundation Plant Services.



Today, though Washington, Oregon, and Idaho still produce 90 percent of the nation's crop, Michigan's efforts are now back on the map, thanks to modern fungicide treatments, the craft beer boom, and entrepreneurship.

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<http://www.traverseticker.com/story/more-green-ahead-say-hops-farmers>

"We are an organic farming enterprise, committed to sustainable agricultural practices. Starting with virus-tested hop plants is a key strategy for establishing the healthiest, most robust acreage possible."

--Brian Tennis
Michigan Hop Alliance



Brian Tennis, Vice Chair for the NCPN-Hops Tier 2 Committee, is a pioneer in Michigan's re-emerging hop growing industry. Tennis and partners in the Michigan Hop Alliance are focused on supplying the craft brewing industry with small acreage, high-demand cultivars.

BERRIES

Bob Martin's interests are as diverse as the berry crops of which he is so passionate. Perhaps this is the result of growing up with 10 siblings and adapting to the wide variety of personalities and priorities on the family dairy farm in Wisconsin. Hard work and a can-do attitude shaped Bob's world view and the result is an ever-present smile and optimism that influences both his personal and professional life.

Armed with a B.S. in Forestry and Ph.D. in Plant Pathology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Bob set out for the west coast to hone his expertise in strawberry viruses.

After a postdoc at the USDA-ARS in Corvallis, Oregon, Dr. Martin moved to Vancouver, British Columbia where he held the position of Plant Pathologist with the Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. His tenure in British Columbia lasted 13 years, at which point he returned to USDA-ARS in Corvallis. Currently, Dr. Martin is the Research Leader and Research Plant Pathologist at the Horticultural Crops Research Unit (HCRU).

[Read More](#)

http://nationalcleanplantnetwork.org/NCPN_News/



Bob Martin is the USDA-ARS Research Leader and Research Plant Pathologist at the Horticultural Crops Research Unit in Corvallis Oregon. He serves as a representative on the National Clean Plant Network-Berries Tier 2.

SWEET POTATOES

You'd think something named "sweetpotato" would be a bit more attractive, but the tuber's lack of visual appeal can be forgiven once it hits the palate. Sweetpotatoes are an excellent source of beta-carotene, vitamin A, antioxidants and anti-inflammatory nutrients. But let's be honest—the sweetpotato's real charm is its versatility in providing a vessel for melted butter, cinnamon, curry, raisins, and a host of other sweet and savory flavors. So we are most fortunate that this old-world vegetable has become one of the newer specialty crops in the National Clean Plant Network. As one of 7 crops in the network, sweetpotatoes benefit from the attention of scientists and growers who are committed to protecting the species from harmful viruses. Such a team of sweetpotato saviors staff a clean plant center at Louisiana State University.

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Dr. Chris Clark and Emily RIngeman are part of the expert team that manages the Sweetpotato Clean Plant Center at Louisiana State University AgCenter. Over 60 years of collective experience are represented by the team members who collaborate across two locations: the Sweetpotato Research Station in Chase, and the Plant Pathology & Crop Physiology program in Baton Rouge.

A Look Ahead: Upcoming Events

- March 29-30, 2017 NCPN Information Mgmt. Meeting, Purdue University W.Lafayette, IN
- April 27-28, 2017 [NCPN Grape Tier 2, Foundation Plant Services](#), Davis, CA
- May 15-15, 2017 NCPN Berries Tier 2, NC
- July 2, 2017 [VII Int'l Symposium on Rose Research & Cultivation](#), Angers, FR
- August 1-2, 2017 [NCPN-Roses Tier 2](#)
- August 5-9, 2017 [American Phytopathological Society Annual Meeting, San Antonio TX](#)

National Clean Plant Network

USDA-APHIS-Plant Protection
and Quarantine
Science and Technology

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