University leads global agricultural-biotechnology effort

By Stewart MacInnis

Agricultural biotechnology holds the promise of harder, healthier, and more abundant sources of food for people around the world as well as new sources for pharmaceuticals.

Biotechnology is also likely to produce winners and losers as a result of social and economic impacts, said George Norton, professor of agricultural and applied economics. According to Norton, sorting out these social and economic effects may be critical to public acceptance of biotechnology. Without that acceptance, he said, many potential benefits may be lost.

Norton is heading an effort centered at Virginia Tech and including scientists worldwide that will investigate the social and economic effects of biotechnologies. The project is funded by a $1.1-million grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The scientific achievements of biotechnology have been occurring at such an astounding pace that social and economic assessments have lagged behind, Norton said.

"There are major benefits that can be expected from agricultural biotechnology, but we expect to see distributional effects as well," Norton said. "For example, early adopters of the technology may be in a stronger position than those who adopt it later."

The four-year project will investigate the impacts of biotechnology from a social-science perspective. The faculty members involved will be able to draw on the expertise of Virginia Tech researchers who have pioneered key biotechnology procedures, especially in the area of generating human pharmaceuticals from plants and animals.

"We can’t look into economics or social issues in a vacuum," Norton said. "We’ll have to inform ourselves [about the scientific aspects of biotechnology] as we go ahead, but we also want to keep our perspective. We don’t want to be an advocate for any side of this."

Other faculty members involved in the project at Virginia Tech include Brad Mills, Dixie Reaves, and Mike Ellerbrock in agricultural and applied economics; Laura Pansini in the Center for Interdisciplinary Studies; and Colette Harris in the Office of International Research and Development. Scientists at Virginia State University, North Carolina State University, the University of Tennessee, and at the International Rice Research Institute in the Philippines are also participating.

"The complexity of the issues requires a team approach," Norton said. "Our group brings expertise in environmental mediation, the economics of tobacco and rice production, evaluation of agricultural research, gender issues, international political economy, and the philosophy of science."

NSF funds research on women in IT

By Jean Elliott

Three Virginia Tech researchers have been awarded a $655,849 grant from the National Science Foundation to study "Women in Information Technology: Pivotal Transitions from School to Careers."

The interdisciplinary team of principal investigators are Peggy Meszaros, director of the Center for Information Technology Impacts on Children, Youth and Families; Carol Burger, coordinator of the VT Science and Gender Equity Program; and Elizabeth Creamer, associate professor in Women’s Studies and in Higher Education and Student Affairs.

The ultimate goal of the project is to increase the numbers of women who choose to enter and remain in information technology (IT) careers. The researchers will study the factors that influence and support IT career choices, including the impact of family, peers, school, and community on girls’ perceptions of IT careers.

The three-year study will provide primary research data for educators, policy makers, and administrators about key pivotal points in girls’ lives that result in their positive or negative view of information technology as a viable career choice.

CAREERS in IT encompass occupations that require designing and developing software and hardware systems; providing technical support for computer and peripheral systems; and creating and managing network systems and databases. While women make up 46 percent of the workforce, they comprise only 25 percent of the professional IT workforce and only 10 percent of the top IT jobs.

“At the end of the three years, we hope to be able to identify barriers, find ways to circumvent them, and begin to provide a pipeline of career women to the IT industry,” Meszaros said.

Girls and women across the state of Virginia at rural and urban high schools (Palasik, Wytheville, Giles, Fairfax and Hampton), and a variety of community colleges and universities (New River CC, Wytheville CC, George Mason University, Norfolk State, Old Dominion, and Virginia Tech) will be interviewed and surveyed. Group activities with computer programs will be used to stimulate interest and understanding of IT careers. The project will also produce a videotape documentary, the development of a web site, and case studies of the longitudinal development of girls’ career transitions and choices. There will also be career-planning workshops for students, parents, counselors, teachers, and administrators to talk with women who are successful IT professionals.

“Some so many of the software programs...”
**EVENTS**

**Wednesday, 31**
- Bloodmobile, 8 a.m. to noon, Squires Commonwealth. Leadership Development Workshop, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., DBHCC room G.
- Faculty Development Workshop, 10 a.m. to noon, 3060 Torgersen.
- CommonHealth Program, 12:10 to 12:55 p.m., DBHCC room G.
- Faculty Development Workshop, 12:30 to 1:30 p.m., 3060 Torgersen.
- CEUT Program, 2 to 4 p.m., Hilcrest dining room. “With Good Reason,” 7 p.m., WVTF.

**Thursday, 1**
- Pay Date for Faculty and Staff Members. Native American Heritage Month Begins. Bloodmobile, 8 a.m. to noon, Squires Commonwealth.
- Excellence in Education Conference (Through 11-2). Faculty Development Workshop, 10 a.m. to noon, 3060 Torgersen.
- YMCA Slide Show, noon, Cranwell Center. CommonHealth Program, 12:05 to 12:55 p.m., 336 Wallace.
- CEUT Program, 12:30 to 2 p.m., Hilcrest large conference room.

**Friday, 2**
- International Club, details TBA. CEUT Program, 3:30 to 5 p.m., Hilcrest large conference room.

**BULLETINS**

**Events**

Will to present Cutchins Lecture

Nationally syndicated Washington Post columnist and TV news analyst George F. Will will present “Public Affairs, Public Policy, and American Society,” Thursday, Nov. 8, at 7:30 p.m., in Burruss auditorium. The presentation is the Cutchins Distinguished Lecture, sponsored by the Corps of Cadets Center for Leader Development and the Pamplin College of Business. The lecture is free and open to the public. For more information, call 1-7136.

**History-conference papers invited**

The History Graduate Program invites submissions to present current research at the Brian Bertoti “Innovative Perspectives in History” Conference April 5-6. Graduate and undergraduate students from all disciplines are invited to submit proposals that address historical topics. Chairs and discussants will be selected from among the faculty at Virginia Tech and other regional universities. In addition to the panels, the conference will feature Joel Williamson from the University of North Carolina as keynote speaker. Mail a one-page abstract including the paper’s thesis, sources, and conclusions to Graduate History Conference, Department of History, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA 24061-0117 or e-mail it as an attachment to Jonathan Hoganson at jhoganson@vt.edu. Include with a brief biographical statement indicating academic status along with a return address and current e-mail address. Deadline for submissions is January 1. For more information, contact Hoganson, or refer to the history graduate student web site, accessible Nov. 1, at http://www.majbill.vt.edu/history/graduatestudent/index.html.

**Sign-language activity offered**

Faculty and staff members interested in learning sign language can attend a weekly social signing activity in the War Memorial Chapel Meditation Room from noon to 1 p.m. on Tuesdays. For more information, call 1-6240.

**Food drive scheduled tomorrow**

The Marching Virginians will sponsor a canned-food drive at the Syracuse football game on Saturday. The goal of the drive is to collect 50,000 cans of food. Drop-off points will be outside Lane Stadium, at the Marching Virginians’ practice field, and across campus where Tailgate Pep Bands will be stationed before the noon kick-off. Contributions will be distributed through the Montgomery County Christmas Store.

**Annual mineral, gift sale set**

The Geological Science’s Museum Mineral and Fossil Sale is Saturday, Nov. 3, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. in 2062 Derring. Gems, minerals, fossils, jewelry and gifts pertaining to the geological sciences will be available to view and purchase. All proceeds support the educational programs of the Museum of Geological Sciences.

The American Association of University Women Educational Foundation will also sell pecans, maple syrup, and 2002 calendars from 9 a.m. to noon. Proceeds go for AAUW fellowships and grants to advance educational and career opportunities for women. For more information, call Jennifer Stempfen at 1-1840.

**Watershed Stakeholder Summit scheduled**

The Water Center is sponsoring the Stroubles Creek Watershed Stakeholder Summit November 2 in DBHC room A. The morning workshop will discuss the status of the watershed and the role of university and stakeholders. The afternoon session will present the watershed-survey results and watershed-restoration priorities. For more information, e-mail water@vt.edu or call 1-5624.

**Black History Month call for participation**

The theme for 2002 is “The Color Line Revisited: Is Racism Dead?” Programs and events are sought which explore the existence or non-existence of racism in today’s society. Program participation forms may be obtained from the Black Cultural Center or Multicultural Center (126/140 Squires Student Center), or downloaded from the Multicultural Programs page at http://www.mcp.vt.edu/~hto/. Sign-language activity offered

- **Faculty Development Workshop, 10 a.m. to noon, 3060 Torgersen.**
- **CommonHealth Program, 12:10 to 12:55 p.m., DBHCC room G.**
- **Faculty Development Workshop, 12:30 to 1:30 p.m., 3060 Torgersen.**
- **CEUT Program, 2 to 4 p.m., Hilcrest dining room. “With Good Reason,” 7 p.m., WVTF.**

Excellence in Education Conference honors innovators

By Joan Elliott

As part of a continuing tradition of promoting quality in teaching, the College of Human Resources and Education will sponsor the 18th-annual Excellence in Education Awards Conference on November 1 and 2.

Since its inception in 1983, the Excellence in Education Awards Conference has recognized innovative approaches to teaching and learning in Virginia’s public schools and community colleges. The conference has become a forum in which public-school educators gather to present ideas and exchange information with peers, colleagues and Virginia Tech professors in teaching and learning. Excellence in education requires innovation, enthusiasm, creativity, and dedication, and this conference honors some of Virginia’s most-exemplary educational programs and the dedicated individuals who created them.

Richard DuFour will be the keynote speaker for this event. DuFour’s address, “Professional Learning Communities at Work: Best Practices for Enhancing Student Achievement,” will be at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 1, in the Donaldson Brown Hotel and Conference Center auditorium. The public is invited to attend, free of charge.

Named as one of the “top-100” school administrators in the nation by Executive (See EXCELLENCE on 3)

**Seminars**

**Friday, 26**
- Geological Sciences, 3 p.m., 4069 Derring: Roger Slatt, Oklahoma.
- Monday, 29
  - Biochemistry, 4 p.m., 223 Engel: Ed Park, Tennessee-Memphis.
  - History, 4 to 5 p.m., 434 Major Williams: Allison Blakely, Boston U.
- **Wednesday, 31**
  - Global History, 12:15 to 1:15 p.m., 427 Major Williams: Laura Parisi, Douglas Rorer, Jeff Corniassell.

**Friday, 2**

**Regan to lecture**

Dean Thomas Regan of the College of Architecture at Texas A&M will present a lecture entitled “Leadership in the New Era of Architectural Education: The Large College Emerges,” today at 5 p.m. in 2150 Torgersen. Regan held administrative appointments here as director of Foundation Studies and assistant dean for the Division of Architecture and Environmental Design. He was instrumental in creating an off-campus unit of the college, the Washington-Alexandria Center, and became its first director. While at Virginia Tech, he was selected twice for the Excellence in Teaching Award by his colleagues, won the Wine Award for Outstanding Teaching, which is awarded to three university faculty members annually. He also chaired the Academy of Teaching (See REGAN on 3)}

**Women in Mathematics Career Day set**

Virginia Tech faculty members, students, and alumnae will join approximately 250 sixth graders from 20 area schools on Wednesday, Nov. 14, for an intergenerational, multi-media mathematical celebration.

The seventh annual Women in Mathematics: Career Day at Virginia Tech will begin at 9:30 a.m. with a welcome session at the Math Emporium on University City Boulevard in Blacksburg. The session features Bevlee Watford, associate dean for academic affairs in the College of Engineering, and John Rossi, head of the Department of Mathematics in the College of Arts and Sciences. From 10 a.m. to noon, participants will engage in a series of 15-minute math-related activities, followed by a noon luncheon and a four-hour mathematics symposium, entitled "Women in the Workplace." The symposium will include a presentation by the William and Mary chapter of the Association for Women in Mathematics, as well as a math competition. Following the luncheon, 2:30 p.m., participants will visit math-related departmental activities for brief presentations. Virginia Tech professors, faculty and students will lead workshops on algebra, geometry, pre-calculus, and calculus. For more information, contact Jennifer Stempfen at 1-1840.
Employment

Classified Positions

FULL TIME
Administrative Staff Assistant, 007867R, PB 3, VBI.
Alternative Transportation Manager, 007223F, PB 4, OT.
Assistant Director for Capital/Reserve Projects, 007870H, PB 5, RDP.
Business Officer, 007865R, PB 4, IDD.
Computer Systems Engineer, 007861R, PB 5, VBI.
Database Administrator, 007777R, PB 5, VBI.
Facility Data/Procedure Technician, 006286G, PB 3, Personnel Services.
Financial Planning Manager, 007567F, PB 5, BFP.
Fiscal Assistant, 006239F, PB 2, Controller's Office.
Fiscal Technician Senior, 004190R, PB 3, OSP.
Full-time food service positions available.
Food Production Supervisor, 000405H, PB 1, RDP.
Housekeeping—Night Crew, 007814H, PB 1, RDP.
Housekeeping Manager, 000675R, PB 3, RDP.
Housekeeping Supervisor, 000269H, PB 2, RDP.
Housekeeping Worker, 000969R, PB 1, RDP.
Laboratory Specialist, 000096H, PB 1, RDP.
Laboratory Specialist, 007078B, PB 3, CE.
Laboratory Specialist, 007866R, PB 3, VBI.
Laboratory Specialist, 007860M, PB 3, CVM—BSP.
Medical Technician, 002596M, PB 4, Veterinary Teaching Hospital.
Multimedia Systems/Applications Specialist, 002054A, PB 4, VBS.
Project Coordinator/Technical Writer, 007869R, PB 3, Entomology.
Secretary Senior, 002403M, PB 2, CSES.
Server, 000986H, PB 1, RDP.
Sous Chef, 000304H, PB 3, RDP.
Telecom Database Technician, 006818A, PB 3, CNS.
Transportation Planner, 007492F, PB 4, OT.
Animal Care Technician, 000280M, PB 2, VTH.
Animal Care Technician/Small Animal, 002265M, PB 1, VTH.
Laboratory Specialist, 002305M, PB 3, APS.

Licensed Practical Nurse, W023318A, PB 3, Health Center.
Radiologic Technologist, W022383J, PB 3, Health Center.

UNIVERSITY ONLY
Windows/Linux Support Specialist, U007864B, PB 4, Math/Physics.
OFF CAMPUS
Program Support Technician, 005114M, PB 3, VGE—Bath County.
Radio Announcer, W020800S, PB 3, UR.
Undertaking Account Executive, 001963S, PB 4, UR/WVT.

Faculty Positions

INSTRUCTIONAL
Educational Leadership/Learning Studies, Assistant/Associate Professor (2), Contact: Dianne Yardley, 101 War Memorial (0317).

POST OFFICE
Continued from 1
penalties will also be imposed upon people who use the federal mail system to perpetrate hoaxes associated with biological hazards such as anthrax.

Increased awareness of the anthrax-based biomaterial has prompted more reports of suspicious-looking-white powders to the Virginia Tech Police Department and Office of Environmental Health and Safety Services, according to Co-Director Bernadette Mondy.

Our nation is at war and the internal security of the United States is being threatened," Duncan said. "We are taking prudent action in the face of these threats. We are going to endeavor to do everything to maintain the safety and security of our university," she said, adding that Virginia Tech has highly trained personnel and support infrastructure in both law enforcement and bio-security.

"But we are dealing with an extremely serious situation," she said. "As such, we are taking a zero-tolerance approach to jokes and pranks. Everyone should be advised that the law provides extremely serious penalties for any kind of misconduct in this area." The research will begin by collecting information concerning attitudes of producers and consumers through surveys and focus groups. Researchers will then develop a framework to assess economic and social impacts of agricultural biotechnologies. The group will then develop educational materials about the benefits, costs, and concerns associated with biotechnologies for students and the general public. Those educational materials will be distributed in K-12 educational programs, college courses, and to the general public through web-based materials.

EXCELLENCE
Continued from 2
Excellence. He has served as dean of colleges of architecture in three major universities during his 32-year career as a professor and administrator.

Career Day activities are sponsored by the Department of Mathematics. Co-sponsors include the College of Arts and Sciences, the Women's Center at Virginia Tech, the Women's Network, the Math Club, Womanspace, Montgomery County NOW, the Office of the Provost and the Office of the Dean of Students.

For more information, contact Susan Anderson at 1-804-1, e-mail anderson@math.vt.edu, or mail her at Math Department 0212.

Those with disabilities who need assistance, services, or other accommodations to participate in this activity may contact Anderson at least one week before the event.

The Virginia Tech News, a faculty-staff tabloid, is published each weekend by the Office of University Relations. Questions or comments about this news feature should be addressed to the editor, 102 Media Building, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA 24061. Letters to the editor and questions for "Ask Spectrum" should be addressed to the editor, 102 Media Building, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA 24061. The Virginia Tech News is a non-profit publication of the Office of University Relations. The Virginia Tech News reserves the right to reject any communication that it determines is irrelevant, inappropriate, or offensive.

Continued from 2

study of the politics and economics of technology transfer and diffusion.

Much of agricultural biotechnology that has been marketed to date has been aimed at enhancing productivity. But increasing, biotechnology is being applied to add value to crops, such as by increasing nutritional value, adding certain vitamins, or in co-creating plants to create substances that can be used in making pharmaceuticals.

The study is concentrating on tobacco and rice because those crops are the focus of much biotechnology research. Tobacco is a plant whose genetics are relatively easily manipulated, making it an ideal candidate for producing compounds for use in creating pharmaceuticals that treat human diseases. Rice is a staple food for much of the world's population, especially in poor regions. Biotechnology might be a boon to agriculture.

But we are dealing with an extremely serious situation," she said. "As such, we are taking a zero-tolerance approach to jokes and pranks. Everyone should be advised that the law provides extremely serious penalties for any kind of misconduct in this area."
Officials dedicate new Horseshoe Crab Research Center

By Lynn Davis

Virginia Tech has dedicated its new Horseshoe Crab Research Center on Thursday. The horseshoe crab facility, holding more than 200 adult crabs, is the largest captive population of horseshoe crabs in the region. The facility was dedicated in honor of the Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine faculty member and researchers who have contributed to the development of the facility.

The new center is located on the Virginia Tech campus and will be used for research on the biology, ecology, and management of horseshoe crabs. The facility will also be used for education and outreach programs, including public tours and workshops.

The facility was dedicated in honor of Dr. Charles B. Jones, former director of the Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine, and his contributions to the study of horseshoe crabs. The new center is a reflection of the university's commitment to research and education in the field of biology and ecology, and will be a valuable resource for researchers and students alike.

In Other News

Governor’s CVC Letter

I want to take this opportunity to salute the great compass and commitment you and your colleagues have shown over the last few weeks. Virginia Tech faculty and students have been working tirelessly to support their local communities in this time of crisis. In response to many requests from our employees, the CVC has developed a plan that allows our employees to earmark donations to go specifically and directly to the relief effort. Three CVC charities will be able to meet this need: American Red Cross, National Disaster Relief Fund (3901); September 11 Fund, United Way of America (3902); and Salvation Army Disaster Relief Effort (3903).

I know we will generously provide assistance for this national emergency. But as the Honorary Chairman of the Commonwealth of Virginia Campaign, I also want to stress that during our annual campaign we should not forget the continuing needs of our local communities. The CVC has begun and runs through November 30. Please consider this opportunity to help both America and our neighbors here at home.

For more information, contact the CVC office at (804) 225-2159.

Thank you for your support of CVC at this critical time in our history.

Governor James Gilmore