

VIRGINIA FRUIT

May/June 2023

VIRGINIA STATE HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY



PROF. SIMON PEARSON
 DIRECTOR, LINCOLN INSTITUTE
 FOR AGRI-FOOD TECHNOLOGY

**Free Virtual
 Agricultural
 Seminar hosted by
 U.S Department of
 Labor's WHD**

Tuesday, May 2, 2023
 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM
 (EDT)

Agricultural robotics and the future of food. https://www.eventbrite.com/e/agricultural-robotics-and-the-future-of-food-tickets-439427598777?aff=erelexpmlt&keep_tld=1 Simon Pearson will discuss the role of robotics and AI in the transformation of food production. This includes the latest research on crop harvesting robotics to harvest crops, novel platforms to phenotype and accelerate the breeding of crops as well as new approaches to sustainable pest and disease control. He is Professor of Agri Food Technology at the University of Lincoln and was Co-Chair of the recent DEFRA Automation and Robotics Review for Horticulture.

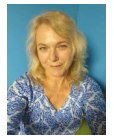
CHECK THIS OUT!



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If you have not sent your dues payment and member forms for 2022-23 please do as soon as possible. If you need another copy, let me know. The form is also on our website www.virginiaapples.net/vshs



The VA Coop Extension 2023 Orchard Meetings are underway, the summer schedule is in this issue, plan to attend as you are able.

Blessings,
 Laura Wiley



vshsociety@gmail.com

PO Box 2445, Winchester, VA 22604, 540.667.9101



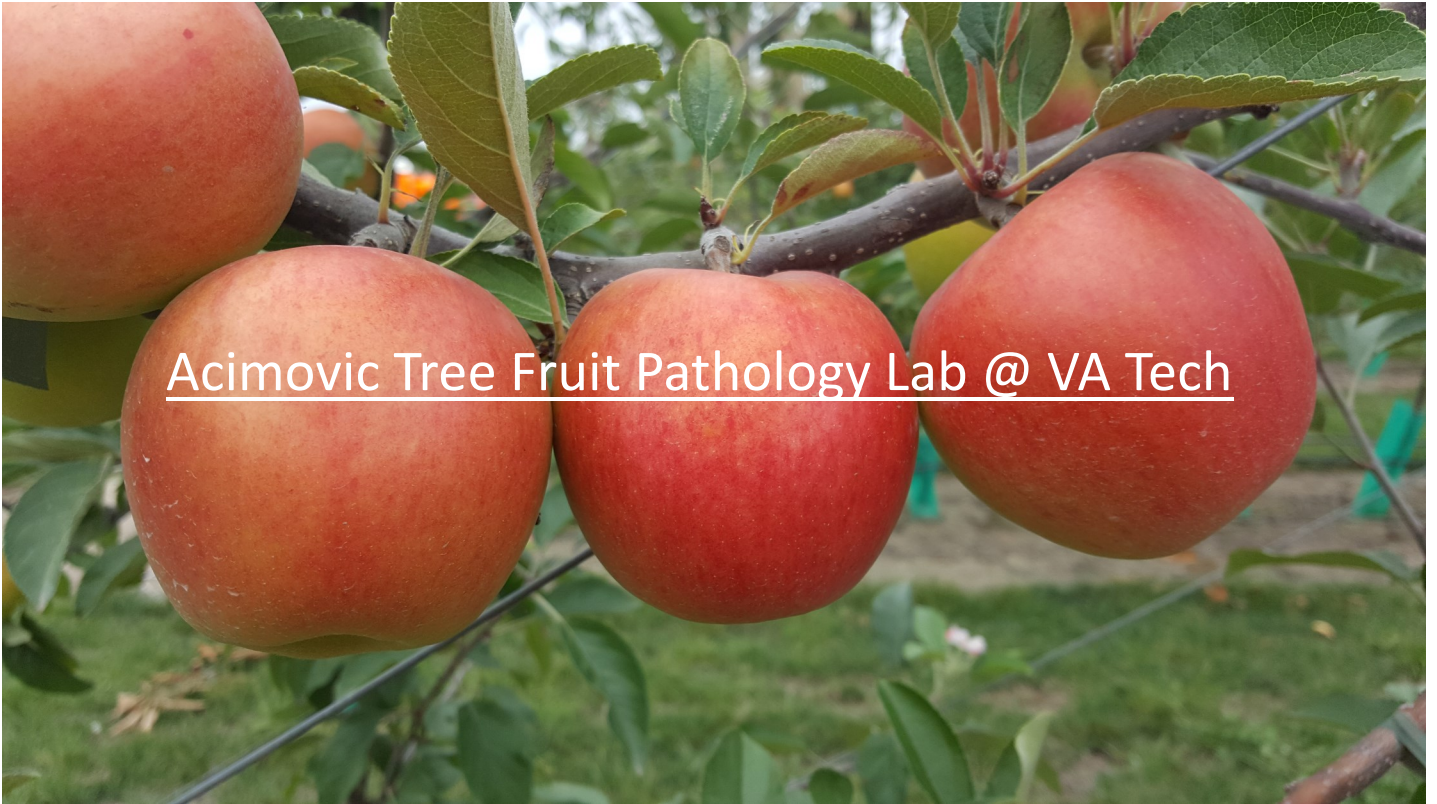
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Acimovic Tree Fruit Pathology Lab @ VA Tech

If you are not already subscribed to Dr. Srdjan Acimovic's Lab, the Assistant Professor of Plant Pathology (PI) at the Alson H. Smith Jr. Agricultural Research and Extension Center, Virginia Tech Winchester. Click the link in the photograph below and do so today! You will receive up to date reports from Dr. Acimovic on Tree Fruit Pathology in real time!

FOR MORE VALUABLE RESOURCES CHECK OUT [Tree Fruit Home Page](#)

CLICK HERE

Planning for the Tree Fruit Sessions at the 2024 Mid-Atlantic Fruit & Vegetable Convention

@

Penn State Fruit Research and Extension Center
Biglerville, PA



May 12th at 10:00 AM

Hosts Daniel Weber and Don Seifrit— Penn State Extension (717) 334-6271

Daniel E. Weber daniel.weber@psu.edu

Donald Seifrit Jr. dus970@psu.edu



Zoom Session Will be Available so all can participate.

Gone to the dogs: Canines being enlisted to sniff out spotted lanternfly eggs

By COMAC DODD The Winchester Star April 20, 2023

https://www.winchesterstar.com/winchester_star/gone-to-the-dogs-canines-being-enlisted-to-sniff-out-spotted-lanternfly-eggs/article_0edb53f0-2d4b-55e1-9d54-57f1e257d304.html



Researchers are calling on dogs and their owners to help slow the spread of the destructive spotted lanternfly — a bright-winged planthopper that's one of the more prominent invasive insects in the Mid-Atlantic. With no native predators, the spotted lanternfly is estimated to cause \$40 billion in agriculture and forestry damage nationwide annually. At Virginia Tech's Alson H. Smith Jr. Agricultural Research and Extension Center in Frederick County, researchers hope man's best friend can play a role in stopping the destruction.

Canines are being trained to sniff out spotted lanternfly eggs. The project, unofficially dubbed the Canine Citizen Science Study, is being funded by a four-year, \$475,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The dog-sniffing detectives could become a valuable tool for growers by helping them identify early egg clusters and destroy them. The effort began two years ago in an olfactory lab at Texas Tech and has since expanded to the East Coast. Researchers at Virginia Tech and Texas Tech are working together on the project. They also hope to train dogs to sniff out powdery mildew, a fungal disease that's deadly to plants.

"At the completion of the study, we hope to have a strong network of handlers able to locate spotted lanternfly egg masses as a proof-of-concept program, with the intent to create an enduring citizen-based detection program for this and other invasive species," Sally Dickinson, a doctoral candidate in Virginia Tech's School of Animal Sciences, said in a media release. "Put your training skills to work and help protect our vineyards, fruit orchards and flower gardens."

This is what an adult spotted lanternfly looks like.
Virginia Cooperative Extension

Native to China, spotted lanternfly feed on more than 70 plant species and suck sap and nutrients. Clusters of the pests — which do not sting or pose health risks for humans — are particularly drawn to grape vines due to their sugary fruit. They first arrived to the area in 2018.

Among those working on the effort is Mizuho Nita, a Virginia Cooperative Extension specialist and associate professor in Virginia Tech's School for Plant and Environmental Sciences. He operates a grape disease management research station at the research center near Winchester. He knows firsthand how the spotted lanternfly can beleaguer fruit crops.

"Naturally, my fear is the risk to the quality of the grapes and the wines they produce," Nita said in a press release from Virginia Tech. "I worry that growers will be overusing insecticides. While they have proved effective in killing the spotted lanternfly, they also cause harm to beneficial insects; therefore, it may bring other issues to our crops."

Early detection is crucial to halting the expansion of the spotted lanternfly farther south, Nita said. The insect often travels long distances by hitchhiking on vehicles and other human-assisted movement.

Erica Feuerbacher, an associate professor of applied animal welfare and behavior at Virginia Tech, is recruiting a team of dogs and their owners through a partnership with the National Association of Canine Scent Work.

Feuerbacher and Nita are asking dog owners to unite and utilize their pets' skills in scent to identify spotted lanternfly eggs soon after they are laid. "This is a great opportunity for people to have fun with their dogs while also contributing back to their communities in a meaningful way," Feuerbacher said in the release.

Canines — which have up to 300 olfactory receptors — are known for their keen smell and are often used in this same capacity to locate missing persons and detect illegal narcotics. One dog, Flint, a border collie, has been roaming the local research facility, which is known for its fruit tree and grape research, according to the release.

"Every day, average dogs are competing and finding these scents, and that speaks to their potential ability to detect ecologically and agriculturally relevant targets," Feuerbacher said in the release.

While spotted lanternfly infestation is fairly widespread locally, Nita said growers have not reported notable losses.

"In terms of the damages, it is not as bad as we first thought, and rarely will spotted lanternfly kill the plant. It's really a nuisance pest," he said. "Our mission is to educate growers on how to spray wisely and not to panic."

Still, Nita said the spotted lanternfly is of national concern. Certain insecticides have been found to be effective in combating the spotted lanternfly. And researchers are also studying two native fungi as a biological control.



Sally Dickinson and her trained detection dog, Flint, search the vineyard at the Alson H. Smith Jr. Agricultural Research and Extension Center in Frederick County for spotted lanternfly egg masses. They are beginning to recruit other people with their dogs to do the same. It's a four-year project funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Photo by Luke Hayes for Virginia Tech

For more information about the canine study, visit: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdeP29ZFRFAOp_AFJmk-WP50H1EBI2_GKdneSNrblI9yRasng/viewform.



Apple Ambassador 2023

Morgan R. Sutphin

The daughter of Mark and
Courtney Sutphin of
Stephens City, Virginia



Each year the Ladies Auxiliary of the Virginia State Horticultural Society sponsors the Apple Ambassador competition. The application for the position is included with this issue of VA Fruit (**see pages 4-5**). The main duty of the Ambassador is representing the Virginia State Horticultural Society as a princess at the Shenandoah Apple Blossom Festival. The winner chosen in June 2023 will be a representative in the 2024 Shenandoah Apple Blossom Festival as well as the guest at the Ladies Auxiliary Luncheon. The Ambassador may also be contacted to appear at a local farm market. *Please make sure you read the qualifications to apply carefully.*

The deadline is June 1, 2023

Agricultural Worker Protection Standard Posters, videos, and compliance information links

Current videos here: [https://
pesticideresources.org/wps/training/
percvids/](https://pesticideresources.org/wps/training/percvids/)

Information on compliance: [https://
pesticideresources.org/wps/guide/
compliance.html](https://pesticideresources.org/wps/guide/compliance.html)

EPA Website:

[https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-worker-
safety/agricultural-worker-protection-](https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-worker-safety/agricultural-worker-protection-)

CELEBRATE APPLE BLOSSOM!



Application for
VIRGINIA APPLE AMBASSADOR

Sponsored by
The Virginia State Horticultural Society Women's Auxiliary

Completing this application is the first step toward one of the most exciting years of your life. Attending the official functions, as well as offering your service to the industry for other appearances will help you develop confidence and poise as well as promote the apple industry of Virginia. If you know you **will not** be able to attend one of the official functions listed below, please note this with an explanation.

REQUIREMENTS FOR VIRGINIA APPLE AMBASSADOR:

- **You must be associated with the Apple Industry**
- **You must be single and between the ages of 17 and 22, but 18 by April 1st prior to the festival**
- **You are expected to attend two functions during your reigning year:**
 - The Annual Horticultural Convention in January
 - The Apple Blossom Festival in May (as Virginia's Horticultural Princess)
- **You must be a full time student.**
- **No tattoos that can't be covered with makeup. Only allowed one piercing in each ear for the festival all other have to be removed. (Instructions from Apple Blossom Festival)**

Please send your completed application and two (2) color photographs (suitable for news release) in a drape (like Senior pictures) to **be received by June 1st** to:

Kara Jenkins
5699 Middle Road
Winchester, VA 22602

If you have questions, please feel free to call me at (540) 336-6441

Full Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

I like to be called: _____ Telephone Number: _____

Cell Number: _____

Present Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Email: _____

Parents Names and Address: _____

Grandparents name and address (Paternal): _____

Maternal: _____

What High School do/did you attend: _____ Date of Graduation: _____

Year in School (underline/circle one): Freshman Sophomore Junior Senior

Name of College or Institution or Higher Learning: _____

Major: _____

What are some of your hobbies? _____

Please list your special talents: _____

Activities or organizations you are involved in: _____

Names and address of your local newspaper: _____

Name and address of your local TV stations: _____

On a separate paper, please answer the following questions pertaining to the Apple Industry.

How are you associated with the Apple Industry?

How do you plan to promote the Apple Industry?

What do you see as the biggest problem facing the Apple Industry? How can you help solve this problem?

What do you see as the reward of being associated with the Apple Industry?

2023 Orchard Meetings

Date (Tues)	Time	Location	Information
Mar 28	11am	Crown Orchard 837 Red House Rd Rustburg, VA 24588	Bring your own folding chair and packed lunch. email gimonger@vt.edu for more information
April 4	11am	Woodbine Farms Inc 452 Barley Lane Winchester, VA 22602 (turn north onto Silo Lane to main farm entrance)	Box sandwich lunches provided (bring your own folding chair) Email mark.sutphin@vt.edu to RSVP and note any dietary needs
April 11	11am	F.T. Valley Farm 513 F.T. Valley Road Sperryville, VA 22740	Lunch provided (bring your own folding chair) Email klove@vt.edu to RSVP
April 25	11am	Silver Creek Orchard 5529 Crabtree Falls Hwy Tyro, VA 22976	Details TBA
May 2	11am	Alson H Smith Jr AREC 595 Laurel Grove Road Winchester, VA 22602	Box sandwich lunches provided Email mark.sutphin@vt.edu to RSVP and note any dietary needs
May 9	11am	Jenkins Orchard 355 Yancey Rd Woodville, VA 22749	Lunch provided (bring your own folding chair) Email klove@vt.edu to RSVP
May 23	11am	Dickie Brothers Orchard 2685 Dickie Rd Roseland, VA 22967	Box sandwich lunches provided Email gimonger@vt.edu to RSVP and note any dietary needs
June 6	9am	Carrol County Orchard Meeting	Details TBA
June 20	5pm	Spring Valley Orchard Hampshire Co WV	Dinner Provided, more details TBA
July 18	TBA	USDA ARS 2217 Wiltshire Rd Kearneysville, WV 25430	Lunch provided, more details TBA
Aug 15	5pm	Cider Production Meeting	Details TBA, Dinner Provided



Employment Opportunity

Research Specialist II Position

Virginia Tech's Alson H. Smith Jr Agricultural Research and Extension Center (AREC) in Winchester, Virginia.



Follow Link Below for More Details.

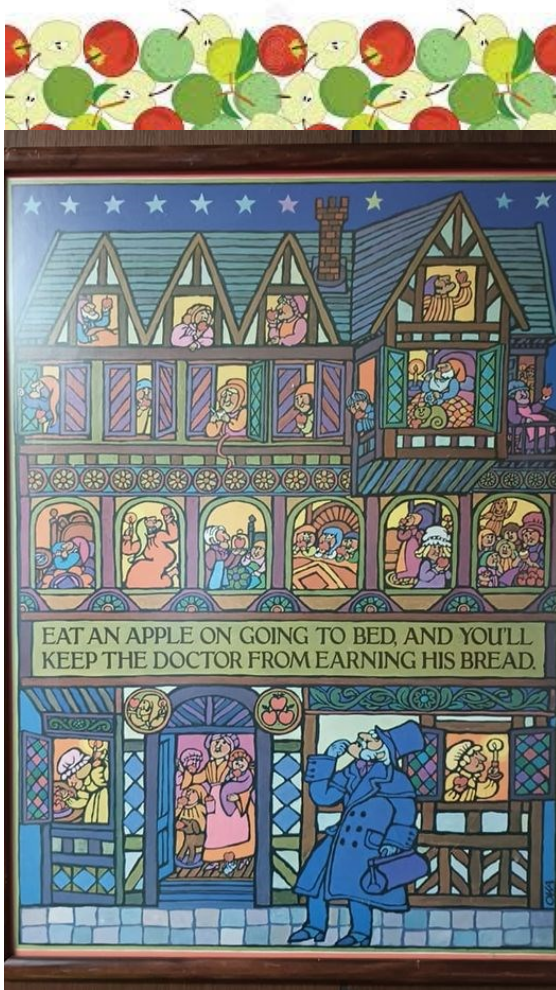
<https://careers.pageuppeople.com/968/cw/en-us/job/524378/research-specialist-ii>

Interested candidates may also contact:

Dr. Srdjan Acimovic 517.449.0905

Assistant Professor

Tree Fruit and Specialty Crop Pathologist



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