



September 2013

News from the UC Davis Postharvest Technology Center

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Director's Update

Fresh-cut Products Workshop a Huge Success

With a sold-out crowd, dynamic speakers, and perfect weather, the 18th Annual Fresh-cut Products: Maintaining Quality & Safety Workshop could not have been better. Dr. Marita Cantwell did a terrific job of organizing the workshop, inviting many of the foremost leaders in packaging, processing, and safety as instructors. If you did not have a chance to attend this year's workshop, mark your calendars for next year's "must-attend" event - September 23-24, 2014.



Produce Safety Workshop

With only 6 spaces left in the November 5-7, 2013 offering of our new produce safety workshop organized by Dr. Trevor Suslow, we expect another sold-out session. A cadre of top-notch instructors, combined with hands-on, interactive sessions, promises an innovative and interesting approach to review and integrate the key topics of produce safety. [Enroll today](#) to grab one of those remaining spots!



Awad M. Hussein

We were saddened to learn in late August of the passing of Dr. Awad M. Hussein, a good friend and valuable postharvest expert. Awad earned his Ph.D. at UC Davis, and served on the faculty at the University of Alexandria in Egypt. He was a very pro-active supporter of many of the efforts of the Postharvest Technology Center.



For several years, he led the effort to translate 132 Produce Facts into Arabic. These can now be found on our website. Dr. Hussein was a good friend of the late Dr. Adel Kader (UC Davis emeritus) and partnered with both Dr. Kader and Dr. Najib Elassi (University of Jordan) to present a week-long postharvest short course for 30 Iraqi agricultural extension agents and university instructors, and collaborated on numerous other grants and projects aimed at reducing postharvest losses and improving produce quality around the world.

He authored a number of publications including "[Harvesting and Postharvest Handling of Dates](#)" which he co-authored with Dr. Adel Kader. His cheerful smile and friendly outlook will be missed. To read more about some of his collaborative outreach efforts, see the [UC Davis CA&ES Outlook magazine, Spring 2009](#), pgs. 13-16.

--Beth Mitcham

Postharvest Workshops at UC Davis

Upcoming Educational Opportunities

Join us for the November 5-7 "Produce Safety: A Science-based Framework" Workshop

We are pleased to introduce a new workshop, organized by [Dr. Trevor Suslow](#), which will feature an integrated approach to building a foundation of awareness and improved understanding of the current scientific basis for produce microbial safety systems and preventive controls. The workshop will be held November 5-7, 2013 on the UC Davis campus. This two-and-a-half day interactive workshop is one of the core required components for the Produce Professional Certificate program.



The course delivery is largely interactive, with formal lectures, group assessment of case examples, and break-out group problem-solving challenges. The emphasis of the curriculum is the scientific-basis for audit standards, preparing for using audits, and targeted microbiological testing to improve performance. Key resources and tools for hazard awareness, risk identification, risk-based preventive controls, and verification of corrective actions will be provided. The enrollment fee for this workshop is \$950. To learn more about it or to enroll, please visit the [web page](#) or contact [Ms. Penny Stockdale](#).

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Methods for Measuring Fruit & Vegetable Color, Flavor & Texture Workshop

This one-day workshop scheduled for January 22, 2014 will include lectures on the principles and applications of measuring produce color, flavor, and texture, and will also include demonstrations of a variety of the latest equipment.

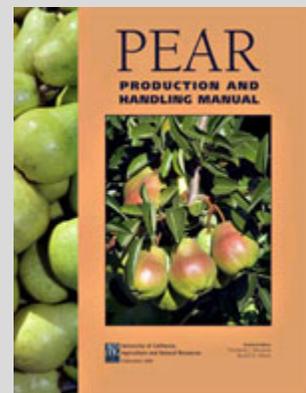
The discounted course enrollment fee of \$295 is made possible by a USDA Specialty Crops Research Initiative Grant. To learn more about the workshop or to enroll, please visit the [web page](#) or contact [Ms. Penny Stockdale](#).

Featured Postharvest Bookstore Item

25% Discount on Pear Production and Handling Manual

Through the end of October, we are offering a 25% discount on this helpful manual. Content includes introduction and pear industry overview, pear orchard and tree management, irrigation and fertilization of pears, pest management in pears, postharvest handling of pears, and 15 pages of color plates.

Regularly \$25, this publication is now on sale for only \$18.75. Please use [this link](#) for shipments to U.S. addresses. For international shipping addresses, please use our [PDF Order Form](#), and note 25%Pear.



Postharvest Specialists' Updates

Jam & Jelly Preservation – Postharvest Training & Services Center, Arusha, Tanzania

Dr. Diane Barrett conducted two training programs at the Postharvest Training & Services Center in Arusha, Tanzania as part of a Horticulture CRSP-funded project. The first was a one-day Train the Trainer program for Master Trainers, who were taught various means of extracting pectin from oranges, for potential local production and sale. The second was a three day training program for 21 local female food processors, which was taught in collaboration with Dr. Anne Perera. This program involved production of tomato jam, using both commercial pectin and the extracted orange pectin, guava jam and jelly, candied orange peel and chutney.

Mitcham visits the Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) in India

Postharvest Technology Center Director Beth Mitcham visited New Delhi, India during the last week of August to discuss possible collaborations with the Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) on capacity building and training on postharvest technology in India. California Congressman Ami Bera was also visiting India during this time and participated in a public announcement of the pending collaboration between the two organizations. [Read More...](#)



Mitcham gives keynote at postharvest conference at Cranfield University, England

Dr. Beth Mitcham also attended the VI International Conference on Managing Quality in Chains and delivered one of the keynote addresses, "Use of Controlled Atmospheres during Marine Shipment". She also continued a long-standing tradition of the late Adel Kader, and awarded postharvest books to the two youngest attendees at the meeting. Recipients were Elmi Fardusa, recently graduated Ph.D. student at Cranfield University, England and Gwanpua Sunny George, a Ph.D. student at KU Leuven, Belgium.



Follow Us, Like Us?

We enjoy our online interactions with those who are following us on the various social media platforms such as [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Linked In](#), and through our [blog](#). These platforms provide us a great opportunity to share some of our photos, snippets of our activities, and other newsworthy events. Thanks for taking a few moments to *like us*, *follow us*, *connect* with us, or *re-tweet* us.

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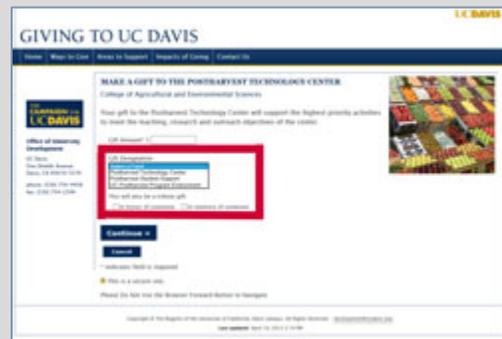
What's New on Our Website

Online Gifting Simplified

Via a single portal we are now able to accept online gifts for:

- Postharvest Program Endowment Fund
- Student Scholarships and Support
- General Support for the Postharvest Technology Center (such as serving as a sponsor for an event)

The Postharvest Technology Center truly appreciates each and every gift from [our supporters](#). Thanks for making a [generous gift today!](#)



New this month in the "Postharvest Publications Organized by Topic" Library

This extensive [free postharvest resource library](#) currently offers more than 1,900 articles on a wide variety of topics.

Food Safety

Suslow, T.V., [Getting a grip on L. Mono](#). American Vegetable Grower. January 2013. Pgs. 40-41

Suslow, T.V., [It's time to "Farmer Up"](#). American Vegetable Grower. April 2013. Pgs. 43-44

Grain Drying

Khair, R., Z. Pan, J.F. Thompson, A.S. El-Sayed, B.R. Hartsough, M.S. El-Amir, [Moisture removal characteristics of thin layer rough rice under sequenced infrared radiation heating and cooling](#). Journal of Food Processing and Preservation. 2012, 11 pgs.

Peach

Palou, L.I., Smilanick, J.L., C.H. Crisosto, [Evaluation of food additives and low-toxicity compounds as non-polluting means to control the main postharvest diseases of California peaches](#). Acta. Hort 962 (2012) 539-548.

Postharvest Losses

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, [Summary Report: Food wastage footprint – Impacts on Natural Resources](#). 2013, 63 pgs.

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, [Toolkit: Reducing the Food Wastage Footprint](#). 2013, 119 pgs.

Processed Fruits and Vegetables

Peng, J., J. Tang, D.M. Barrett, S.S. Sablani, J.R. Powers, [Kinetics of carrot texture degradation under pasteurization conditions](#). Journal of Food Engineering 122 (2014) 84-91

Walnut

Khair, R., Z. Pan, G.G. Atungulu, J.F. Thompson, D. Shao, [Size and moisture distribution characteristics of walnuts and their components](#). Food Bioprocess Technology. November 2011, 12 pgs.

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Postharvest Calendar

- October 22-24, 2013. [EAPR Post-Harvest Section Meeting](#). Warsaw, Poland
- November 5-7, 2013. [Produce Safety: A Science-based Framework Workshop](#). UC Davis campus
- December 4-6, 2013. [Southeast Asia Symposium on Quality Management in Postharvest Systems](#). Vientian, Lao, P.D.R.
- December 5, 2013. [The Honeycrisp Experience. Production, Harvest and Storage](#). Wenatchee, Washington
- January 22, 2014. [Methods of Measuring Fruit & Vegetable Color, Flavor and Texture](#). UC Davis campus
- March 25-26, 2014. [20th Annual Fruit Ripening & Retail Handling Workshop](#). UC Davis campus
- June 10-13, 2014. [V International Conference Postharvest Unlimited](#). Lemesos, Cyprus
- June 16-27, 2014. [36th Postharvest Technology Short Course](#). UC Davis
- August 17-22, 2014. [XXIX International Horticultural Congress](#). Brisbane, Australia
- August 25-29, 2014. [Small-Scale Postharvest Horticultural Technologies Short Course & Study Tour](#). Bali, Indonesia
- September 16-18, 2014. [19th Fresh-cut Products: Maintaining Quality & Safety](#). UC Davis campus
- November 4-6, 2014. [Produce Safety Workshop](#). UC Davis campus

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Ask the Produce Docs

Q. I need to measure the water activity in some prunes. Can you steer me in the right direction? (A.L.)

A. See the following site for a water activity meter that might work for you. <http://www.aqualab.com/products/water-activity-meters/pawkit/>. They do not list the price but as I remember it is several hundred dollars.

The other option is to buy a relative humidity meter that has a probe you can insert into the lid of a jar. Put the prunes in the jar, close the lid, and insert the humidity sensor. The relative humidity (RH) should be fairly constant in a few minutes. Divide the RH reading by 100 and you have water activity (Aw). One caution, all electronic RH meters need to be checked for calibration. A calibration kit costs about \$50 or so.



--[Jim Thompson](#)

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End Notes and Disclaimers

Postharvest Questions. If you have a perplexing postharvest question you'd like answered, please send it to

postharvest@ucdavis.edu, and we'll see if one of our specialists can help.

Archived Items. Link to a data store of all our previous "[Ask the Produce Docs](#)" questions, or link to archived copies of our [monthly e-newsletter](#) as PDF documents.

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