

Farm and Weather Summary, Horticulture Station

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Farm Comments

Effective July 1, the Horticulture Station was transferred from the Department of Horticulture to the Research and Demonstration Farms. A cooperative effort between the Horticulture Department and the Research and Demonstration Farms has made this transition successful.

Turf Field Day—July 24, 2003. Forty distributors and 450 attendees participated in the classes, tours, and demonstrations. Horticulture 221, “Principles of Horticulture,” class tours introduced 200 students to the Horticulture Station in April and October. Horticulture 442, “Nursery Production and Management,” lab introduced another 25 students to the challenges of tree relocation by ball and burlap and tree spade processes.

The Horticulture Station entered into an agreement to have rural water distributed throughout the facilities. The Turf facility added a new floating pump system to augment the irrigation system.

A prisoner work program was initiated to help resolve some of the labor deficiency. Inmates from the Women’s Correctional Facility at Mitchellville provided 665 hours harvesting the apple crop. Men from the North Central Iowa Correctional Facility at Rockwell City provided 210 hours removing diseased, dead, and overgrown trees and shrubs.

The apple harvest began on September 1 and was completed by October 16. Approximately

1,655 bushels of apples were harvested. The Chieftain, developed at Iowa State University, is the premier apple grown, and 812 bushels were harvested.

Approximately 417 bushels of apples were sold wholesale to local retail apple growers. Another 354 bushels were sorted, bagged, and sold on consignment to the ISU Residence Hall Food Service and the ISU Horticulture Club.

New Projects

Two new major research projects were incorporated into the Horticulture Research Station from the Department of Natural Resources Ecology and Management. Dr. Richard Hall continued his Poplar biomass research with two new plantings. An additional planting is scheduled for 2004. Dr. Joseph Morris started a new fish research program with the construction of six rearing ponds. Both programs add to the diversity of the station and are highlighted in this annual report.

Weather Comments

The Horticulture Station received 47.01 inches of precipitation for the year. July, August, and September were extremely dry with a total of only 9.45 inches of rainfall. Consequently, approximately 6.4 million gallons of irrigation water was pumped from the lake to sustain the various crops, including turf. The lake was recharged with 22.65 inches of rainfall in October and November.

Other weather data for central Iowa can be found in Table 1 in the Agronomy Farm article, page 5.