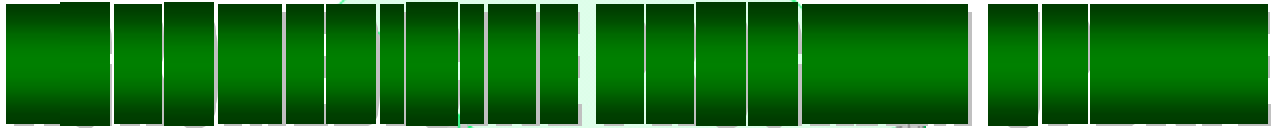


The Newsletter of the Clemson University / MUSC Agromedicine Program



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PROGRAM NOTES

? About four years ago, Dr. Simpson and I mapped out a plan to start my training so that *someday* I might be able to take over his role as the medical director of the South Carolina Agromedicine Program. I have now had the privilege of working with Dr. Simpson for the past six years, recently as associate medical director of Agromedicine. During that time I have come to know Dr. Simpson as someone with a strong devotion to his family and his work. Over the years he has provided a unique service to the citizens of South Carolina through numerous consultations and speaking engagements. Through his work in this field and as a family physician, he has earned several prestigious awards. Prior to Dr. Simpson, Dr. Stan Schuman founded the Agromedicine program as an organization with a strong commitment to service. I met Dr. Schuman only once before he retired, but it is no small feat to be a Professor Emeritus and even have a room named in your honor. *Someday* is

now here and I am taking up the torch that has been handed down by two exceptional leaders. I would like to thank these two giants upon whose shoulders I now stand for giving me the opportunity to continue their commitment to service. Although Dr. Simpson will maintain an active role in the Agromedicine program, I would like to congratulate him on his retirement. Good luck with all you do!
--Ivar

? Presentations to community groups will remain an important aspect of the Agromedicine program, so please contact us if you have an organization and would like for us to come and speak. For that matter, feel free to email me or give me a call as I look forward to meeting anyone who receives this newsletter.

Agribusiness in South Carolina

? A study just released by the Palmetto Agribusiness Council found that agribusiness is a major contributor to our state's economy. The study was conducted

by an economic consulting firm and looked at the combined impact of agriculture and forestry in the state. They estimate that the combined direct and indirect economic impact of agribusiness is close to \$34 billion per year which is larger than any other sector. This industry employs almost 200,000 workers and many of these jobs are well paying with above average wages. Several media sources from across the state have run stories about this report, the original document can be found on the web at the following site.

http://static.mgnetwork.com/spa/pdf/Agribusiness_Study.pdf

RECENT CONSULTS

? A Daniel Island woman called with a concern that both her and her daughter may have been bitten by spiders recently. The mother experienced what was assumed to be a bite while sleeping. She was informed by her physician that it was likely a spider bite. Her 21/2 year old daughter had a similar experience of

being bitten by something in her sleep. Although she did not see the spider biting her, the child was awoken after feeling a bite. When her mother went into the room she saw a small spider scurrying across the floor which she stomped and brought in for us to look at. The spider in question was determined to be ghost spider, genus *Hibana*. There are no known reports of bites from these spiders. This website has a picture of a ghost spider:

<http://www.floridanature.org/species.asp?species=Hibana%20sp>

FROM THE LITERATURE

Carbofuran regulation: The October edition of Environmental Health Perspectives includes an update on recent EPA activity concerning the use of carbofuran (Furadan). The EPA has proposed a ban on all food tolerances for carbofuran meaning that it would be illegal to sell food with any residues of this pesticide. Carbofuran is a restricted-use carbamate pesticide that is used to kill insects, mites and nematodes. It is estimated that 1 million pounds of the liquid form are used annually in the U.S. on various crops such as corn, cotton, potatoes, sunflowers and tobacco. Carbofuran is highly toxic to birds, fish and bees; the granular form has been banned in the U.S. since 1994 due to concern about its impact on birds. In hu-

mans, the compound acts as an acetylcholinesterase inhibitor and overexposure causes symptoms ranging from headaches to coma. Current concerns that children are more susceptible to the effects of carbofuran stems from studies that have shown juvenile rats are more susceptible than adult rats to the effects of this pesticide. Opponents of this regulatory change argue that the EPA has been too conservative in estimating the effect of carbofuran because they use several safety factors in determining the safe level of exposure. The U.S. Department of Agriculture has asked the EPA to reconsider this change in the regulatory status of carbofuran due to the economic impact of the product. Now that the deadline for comments to the EPA has passed, the next step is to await a final decision from the EPA. The manufacturer of Furadan would have the opportunity to request a hearing on this matter if food tolerances are banned. Enforcement would be the responsibility of the FDA.

Salmonella: Several news agencies have been reporting on a recent news release from the US Department of Agriculture. There have been 32 people in 12 states to recently become ill from consuming improperly cooked frozen chicken. The chicken was sold breaded and prebrowned, but it was not cooked. It seems most of the people who had prob-

lems used a microwave oven to cook this chicken. No products are being recalled at this time; rather the USDA is warning consumers that some frozen dinners are raw. People should carefully follow cooking directions on frozen meals. Salmonella is the most commonly reported food borne bacterial infection with an estimated 1.4 million cases reported in the US annually. Three important points to help reduce the likelihood of contracting salmonella are to: 1. clean your workspace, hands and utensils; 2. separate raw and cooked foods when shopping, preparing and storing; and 3. keep foods at the proper temperature for both cooking and storage. To read more about salmonella, see the following website:

http://www.fsis.usda.gov/fact_Sheets/Salmonella_Questions_&Answers/index.asp

Green Halloween: With Halloween just around the corner, something worth looking at is an organization called Green Halloween. It was started by a mom who was impressed by the fact that some of her neighbors provided non-candy treats for the local kids. Their website has information for parents, schools and kids. Topics include alternatives to candy for treats, ideas for costumes and games. More information online at: <http://www.greenhalloween.org/>