

Campus News & Research Updates

Compiled by Julie Newman, Farm Advisor, UCCE

Research Updates

UC Davis is Testing 14 Elm Varieties

by Jim Harding¹, Greg McPherson², Skip Mezger³, Mary Louise Flint^{4,5} and Steve Dreistadt⁶

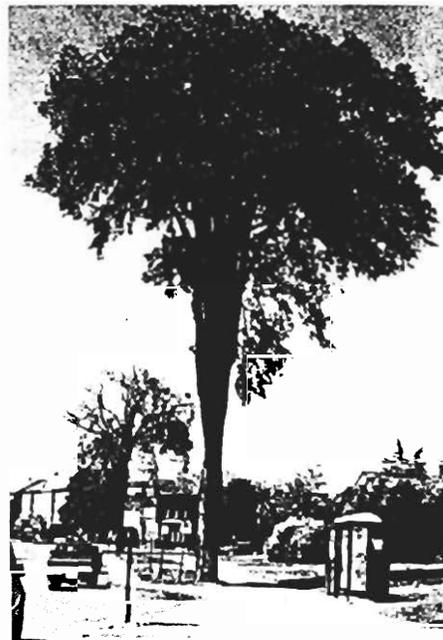
Elm trees were dominant features along the streets of many American cities during the early 20th century. But beginning in the 1930s, Dutch elm disease began taking its toll, and by the 1970s the disease had swept across the country killing most of the elms. For many years, it was as if the elm was extinct. Now, an elm revival is underway. New disease resistant trees have been propagated and are being planted once again.

As part of this national renaissance, researchers, teachers, students, and grounds crews planted 70 elms at the Bowley Plant Science Teaching Center on the campus of UC Davis during May 2005. The trees, provided by Schmidt Bros. Nursery in Oregon, consist of 14 different varieties selected because of their potential to be good performers in Northern California. They include the disease tolerant American elm cultivar 'Valley Forge' and hybrids such as 'Accolade,' mostly of Asian heritage, whose vase-shape duplicates the American elm. Other promising cultivars have the added advantage of elm leaf beetle resistance, ornamental bark, and a wide range of environmental tolerances.

The trees, planted every 20-ft in four rows at the Bowley Center plot, will be measured and evaluated annually for five years, then transplanted to various sites on campus and monitored for another five years. Students are assisting with annual evaluations.

UC Davis, USDA Forest Service, and other researchers will compare the trees' performance in terms of growth, health, fall color, and resistance to elm leaf beetle and Dutch elm disease. Their root architecture will be examined using air-spades that expose roots with minimal disturbance. This technology makes it possible to identify cultivars with deep and shallow rooting patterns, thereby reducing future conflicts between tree roots and sidewalks.

This project partnership between UC Davis Plant Science Department, Grounds Division, and USDA For-



American elm cultivar Valley Forge. (Photograph by Gilbert Carley, 1996)

est Service, Center for Urban Forest Research is providing new information that will spur reintroduction of what was the crown jewel of many California cities—the elm tree.*

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*Jim & Skip -
pls add to website
New on web-site.
The Guy*

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UC Davis Campus News

A reception to present Ray Hasek with an emeritus status from UC Davis was held on October 14th at UC Davis. Ray made many significant contributions to the floral industry during his career. It was only due to an unfortunate paperwork glitch that he wasn't granted emeritus status earlier.

Ray Hasek received his Ph.D from Ohio State and worked in the flower industry for 15 years prior to joining UC. One of his earliest contributions was work on vacuum cooling cut flowers, reporting its first use in the US.

Serving as Cooperative Extension Specialist for Environmental Horticulture from 1967-1985, he worked statewide with farm advisors to solve problems in the county and to extend research information. He taught courses at UC Davis and wrote numerous articles.

Upon his retirement from UC he served as Executive Director of the California Floral Council (CFC) for 7 years, administrating, representing the Council on various issues, and writing a monthly newsletter to keep 250 flower grower members informed on legislation, labor issues, and imported flower duty problems. He worked with the Floral Trade Council, handled their finances, and wrote newsletters sent to over 500 flower growers nationally, pro bono. He also contributed and was a catalyst to the formation of the California Cut Flower Commission.

During Ray's career he received many industry awards, including a Roses Inc. Fellowship and a Research Award. He also received the "Man of the Year" award for the California State Florists Assoc., which included \$5000 and a month tour of Holland and Germany to study energy saving procedures in commercial flower growers' greenhouses.

Ray worked internationally, extending horticulture information to growers world-wide.*