

We're Rooting for You: Insights from the Field on Nematodes and Soil Health

Agenda:

Time	Speaker
9:00am	“Soil Health” Dr. Aaron Mills, Research Scientist, AAFC
10:00am	“The Underlying Issues: Soil Health and its on-farm Application” Caitlin McCavour, Soil Specialist, Perennia
10:30am	Nutrition Break
11:00am	“Plant Parasitic Nematodes of Nova Scotia” Matthew Peill, Molecular Biologist, Perennia
12:00pm	Lunch
1:00pm	“Developing Knowledge-Based Strategies in Apple Orchards to Manage Nematodes” Michelle Cortens, Tree Fruit Specialist, Perennia
2:15pm	Nutrition Break
2:45pm	“Ecology and Management of Plant Parasitic Nematodes” Dr. Tom Forge, Soil Ecologist/Nematologist
3:45pm	Closing Remarks

Speaker Bios:

Cortens, Michelle:

Michelle is the Tree Fruit Specialist with Perennia. For farm extension she enjoys presenting grower meetings, workshops and tours, and producing photos, videos, newsletters, online tools, and podcasts. She is also happy to advise on local and international committees for research and education. Michelle comes to us with specialties in plant agriculture and apple production through a Bachelor and Master of Science from the University of Guelph, and she has been recognized for award-winning community involvement and leadership. She considers it fate that she was born on the International Day of Apples!

Forge, Tom:

Dr. Tom Forge is a research soil ecologist with AAFC in British Columbia. Tom's research program addresses integrated root health management for horticultural crops, with an emphasis on the ecology and management of plant parasitic nematodes. From 2001 to 2013, Tom was located at the Agassiz Research and Development Centre in the lower Fraser Valley, where he had a focus on berry crops. Since 2013 he has been located at the Summerland Research and Development Centre in the Okanagan Valley, where he has had a focus on tree fruits and winegrape production. Tom is also the test site manager for the minor use pesticide program at Summerland. Prior to joining AAFC, he was an independent research consultant in the Okanagan Valley for five years, conducted post-doctoral research at Oregon State University, the Pacific Forestry Centre in Victoria, BC, and the Macaulay Land Use Research Institute in Scotland. Tom grew up in a small town in Kansas, completed his undergraduate studies in biology at Kansas State University, and graduate studies in plant pathology at the University of Wisconsin.

McCavour, Caitlin:

Caitlin has a Bachelor of Science degree in agriculture from Dalhousie University. She completed her Master of Science at Dalhousie University in earth and environmental science. Caitlin has been the soil specialist at Perennia Food and Agriculture for two and a half years working with producers around the province on soil-related issues. Before working at Perennia, she performed research with Christmas trees, wetland restoration, forest site management, and river ecology throughout Nova Scotia, with soil science being her focus on these projects. Caitlin is passionate about soil and aims to help improve soil health in agriculture throughout the province.

Mills, Aaron:

Dr. Aaron Mills is a research scientist with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, and is based at the Crops and Livestock Research Centre in Charlottetown, PEI. He holds degrees from NSAC, UPEI and Dalhousie University. Throughout his career he has worked in a wide variety of both on- and off-farm jobs including organic farms in BC, pasture extension in NS, and a craft brewery in Port Williams, NS. Under his current post, he conducts research spanning cropping systems, horticulture, and agro-ecology.

Murray, Sonny:

A berry specialist, Sonny has over 19 years' experience in the agricultural industry, working with producers on crop input and seasonal planning. During his time in the agricultural retail business, he spent time developing crop input plans tailored to the producer's quality and yield goals. Sonny provides advisory services in horticultural crops, including strawberries, blueberries and cranberries. Sonny's experience includes nutrient management, soil fertility, weed management, crop rotation and soil

conservation. In September 2017, he joined Perennia to support the growth and development of the ag industry in the Maritimes. In 2020, he took on the position of small fruit specialist. Sonny's extension activities include responding to farm inquiries, hosting production workshops and tours, and publishing factsheets. He serves on production, research and education-related committees.

Peill, Matthew:

Matthew Peill currently works at Perennia as its molecular biologist, primarily performing molecular testing for plant pathogens. Matthew has a Bachelor of Science in biology from St. Francis Xavier University, and his Masters of Science in biology at Acadia University. His master's work focused on strawberry aphids and their role as the primary vector of strawberry decline disease associated viruses. Previously, he was a horticulture specialist with Perennia and worked with small fruit and vegetables producers throughout Nova Scotia addressing production issues. Recently, he has been working on the provincial nematode survey after receiving nematode identification training in British Columbia.