



NEWSLETTER

Spring 2020

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WHIS members in San Diego. Photo provided by C. Smith

<http://whis.org/>

Find us on Facebook at

<https://www.facebook.com/western.chapter.7>

2019 WHIS ANNUAL MEETING

San Diego, CA | May 2019

*by Melissa Lujan and Amanda Ohrn, Oregon Department of Agriculture
Originally published in ODA Annual Report*

The Western Horticultural Inspection Society (WHIS) is comprised of state and county regulators from the Western region of the United States. The group works together to share information, inspection techniques, training opportunities, and promote harmonization between agencies.

Membership is encouraged and open to all state and county inspectors.

In 2019, the WHIS and Regional Cooperative Agricultural Pest Survey (CAPS) were invited to join the Western National Plant Board (WNPB) for their 100th Anniversary meeting in San Diego, CA. Over 125 participants attended the meeting, including Horticulturists Melissa Lujan and Amanda Ohrn. The discussions in the joint meeting focused on protecting plants, trade, and other agriculture topics that the WHIS group does not normally cover. This offered a unique insight into how the WNPB keeps agriculture moving in commerce.

Field tours are always a significant feature of the WHIS meetings. Several locations of interest were visited: GO Green Agriculture, The Flower Fields, Mellano & Company, Altman Plants and two unique trips being an overnight fieldtrip to the Los Angeles Produce and Flower Markets and a behind-the-scenes tour of Disneyland and Disneyland California Adventure Park. Each location provided a look at an essential facet of the nursery industry.

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Go Green Agriculture, an organic hydroponic lettuce farm, demonstrated their growing and sanitation practices, which are essential to product quality assurance and control. The Flower Fields in Carlsbad, CA grows Ranunculus flowers to be sold as bulbs and cut flowers. Many of the fields are left to go to seed for the next round of crops. The visit to Mellano & Company, a large cut flower farm that provides flowers for the floral industry across the US, demonstrated the importance of sanitation to keep their products fresh and long-lasting.



Robot demo at Altman Plants. The robot is used to move plants around the warehouse floor.

Altman Plants, a large wholesale nursery specializing in annuals, perennials, succulents and cacti, showcased best management practices (BMPs) to ensure the growth of healthy, quality plant material as well as the practices involved in participating in the Systems Approach to Nursery Certification (SANC) pilot program.

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The visits to the Los Angeles Produce and Flower Markets and the Disneyland locations were unique experiences for the inspectors. Despite being in the middle of the night, the Los Angeles Produce and Flower Markets were bustling with workers moving product from warehouses to trucks and vendors purchasing material. The market opens for business at 2am for florists and floral trade business, and at 8am for the general public. The behind-the-scenes tour of Disneyland and the Disney California Adventure Park to meet with their horticulture staff proved to show the dedication of the Disneyland employees. Staff stay out of the public eye by working between 2am and 7am. Staff shared pest issues on some of the plants, and the process to replace plants if they need to be removed.



Attendees of the Disneyland tour. ODA staff pictured: Dr. Helmuth Rogg, Melissa Lujan, and Jake Bodart.

A final interesting tidbit: the famous floral Mickey Mouse face is changed multiple times throughout the year with about 4500 flowers alone used on the face.

SAVE THE DATE!

WHIS 2020 ANNUAL MEETING Two-Day Teleconference



https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Candlestick_Telephone_with_Note_Pad.png

WHEN:

August 4-5, 8-11 AM PST

WHERE:

GoToWebinar app

WHO:

Speakers from across the
Western states

*While we regret being unable to meet in person this year, WHIS is planning a content-packed meeting, with a variety of **educational talks and networking opportunities** specifically geared to our members!*

*This format may also offer an unprecedented opportunity for **more inspectors to attend** some or all of the conference!*

Stay tuned for updates! We hope to see you there!

Pest Alert:

Asian Giant Hornet

A new pest has made its way to the Northwestern US. According to the Washington State Department of Agriculture, Asian giant hornets were reported in the state in December of last year. Learn more about this pest at the Washington State Department of Agriculture website.

<https://agr.wa.gov/departments/insects-pests-and-weeds/insects/hornets>



Image 5570918, by Allan Smith-Pardo, Invasive Hornets, USDA APHIS PPQ, Bugwood.org

The USDA NPRG lists illegal importation of the hornet as a potential means of introduction. Learn more from the USDA's New Pest Response Guidelines.

[https://cms.agr.wa.gov/WSDAKentico/Documents/PP/PestProgram/Vespa_mandarinia NPRG_10Feb2020-\(002\).pdf](https://cms.agr.wa.gov/WSDAKentico/Documents/PP/PestProgram/Vespa_mandarinia_NPRG_10Feb2020-(002).pdf)

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WHIS PURPOSE

- To promote high standards of horticultural and regulatory inspection work
- To combine and share expertise, knowledge, experience and training among plant pest inspectors toward stimulating interest in and professionalizing plant inspection work
- To advocate harmonization between State and affiliated agencies
- To provide a means of disseminating information to plant pest inspectors, allied workers and the general public that is particularly pertinent to plant pest inspection work
- To provide a means of furthering fellowship among plant pest inspectors and allied workers