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Thank You, Colorado!



COLORADO

***The 2025 Colorado conference was a huge success.
Thank you to all the attendees who could make it and a
special thank you to Cheryl Smith and the rest of the
WHIS planning team!***



2025 Conference Re-Cap

September 30th 2025- October 2nd , 2025 Longmont, Colorado

Topics covered:

- **Welcome and introductions - Cheryl Smith, Commissioner Kate Greenburg, Director of Plant Industries Wondirad Gebru, and WHIS executive committee**
- **Corn Earworm in Colorado update- Melissa Schreiner, Extension Entomologist at CO state University**
- **Peach research update- Ioannis Minas**
- **Biocontrol- John Kaltenbach, CO department of Agriculture**
- **Field Inspections using Drones- Audrey Beldon, Melissa Franklin**
- **Preparing for and conducting Field Inspections- CDA inspectors: Becky England, Cara Meyers, Audrey Beldon, CSU extension: Melissa Franklin**

Activities:

- **Mind trap puzzles and silent auction**
- **CSU Spur campus tour**
- **CBP Point of Entry tour at Denver International Airport**
- **WHIS banquet at Oscar Blues**
- **Tour of CSU Seed diagnostic lab**
- **Tour of CSU trial gardens**
- **Tour of Gulley Greenhouse and GCP audit training**



CSU Trial garden flowers



CSU sculpture



**CSU SPUR tour of hydroponics
and agricultural methods**



Prizes included bug cards!

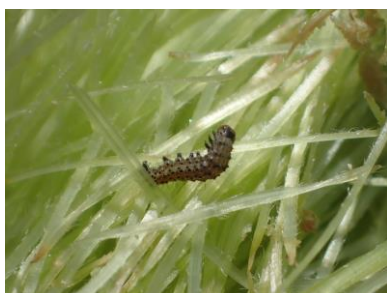
Corn Earworm in CO: Work by Melissa Schreiner and CSU Extensions



Presentation focus: Identification, biology, behavior, and observations from the field, highlighting ongoing challenges in pest management for fresh market sweet corn in the Uncompahgre Valley of Western Colorado, specifically Delta and Montrose Counties.

- Olathe sweet corn farmers and regional packing sheds are struggling to meet grade, as corn earworm is not a plant killer but significantly impacts marketability.
- New genetics in corn earworms discovered by APHIS PPQ after receiving corn earworm samples from CSU Extension. New genes originate from Old World “bull worm” relatives, which appear to have possibly influenced the pest’s behavior and biology, making it even more difficult for growers to consistently produce clean sweet corn for distributors.
- Larval insecticide trials, which evaluated multiple modes of action to determine their effectiveness against very young larvae as well as mixed-aged populations. This work aims to provide actionable insights to growers and collaborators seeking to address control failures in the region.

Though the problem is far from solved, and with some sheds possibly closing for 2026, we are grateful efforts are being made to attempt to further information and move closer towards a solution.

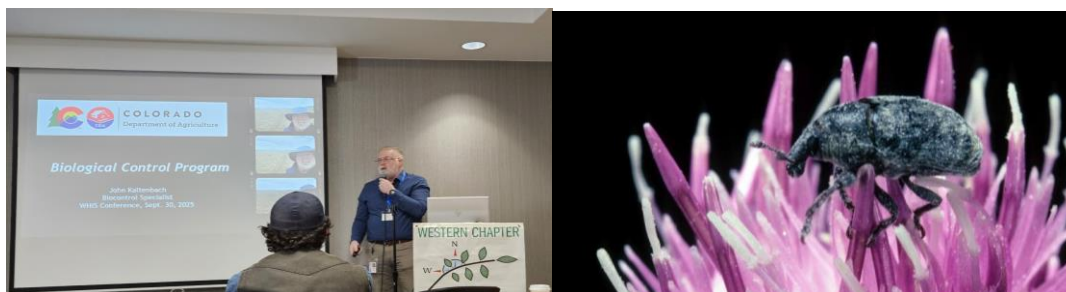


**Peach Research Update- Ioannis Minas, Colorado State University**

Dr. Minas' XLSOR utilizes advanced, non-destructive sensors and fruit tree physiology to predict harvest timing and fruit quality with high precision. By integrating disciplines like ripening physiology, metabolomics, and cold hardiness, his work helps growers understand how genetic and environmental factors influence fruit flavor and metabolism.

**Biocontrol- John Kaltenbach, CDA**

The Biological Control program of the CDA is headquartered at the Palisade insectary. The insectary started in the early 1940's to handle the Peach Moth which threatened the Palisade peach industry. A biocontrol agent, *Macrocentrus ancylovorus* (Mac wasps), was introduced to great success to control the peach moth population. The wasps were unable to survive the winter, so the insectary established a rearing program. Since 1945, between 1 and 3 million Mac have been released almost every year. Over the past 80 years the Insectary has grown to implement various biocontrol against 20 species of noxious weeds and 13 arthropod pest species. Post-release monitoring is done to evaluate the effectiveness of the agents and look for any non-target effects, the results of which are shared with the public. Free agents are provided to establish field insectaries and for research projects. Colorado residents can buy them through the Request-a-Bug program.



The classical biological control practiced is a safe, inexpensive, sustainable, and effective means of reducing pests through the use of natural enemies. If you'd like more information or to request agents, call the Palisade Insectary (866) 324-2963 or submit online to request a bug at www.palisadeinsectary.com .

Certification and usage of drones for field inspections- Melissa Franklin (CSU extensions) and Audrey Beldon (CDA)

Drones are a powerful tool for improving field safety and efficiency, offering a comprehensive aerial overview that helps identify crop anomalies and target focused ground inspections. While they do not replace manual, hands-on inspections, they significantly reduce labor in difficult terrains like rain-soaked or irrigated fields. To use drones for these inspections, pilots must obtain FAA Part 107 certification by passing an aeronautical knowledge test and registering their equipment. The certification process includes obtaining an FAA Tracking Number (FTN), clearing a TSA security check, and maintaining the license through regular renewals. For the best results, operators should fly slowly for clear video and carefully plan flight paths based on weather and battery capacity.



The invasive Asian Jumping Worm has been positively detected in Colorado. Please contact aja.bos@state.co.us for details



**This year's auction items included puzzles, wines,
and home-made ornaments!**



**WHIS was happy to provide conference-goers
with take-home bags with many gifts, including the
above WHIS mugs**



The WHIS group was able to enjoy a day at the CSU trial flower gardens after a lovely lunch



An evening banquet at Oskar Blues wound down the first evening of the conference



A tour of the Customs and Border Control Agricultural inspection station was both interesting and Informative!



Conference goers were able to make friends with Titus, a special employee of the Customs and Border Control Agricultural inspection station and a very good boy! His job involves sniffing out prohibited agricultural products.



New WHIS Officers!

President:

Cheryl Smith- Colorado

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Vice President:

Carson Thomas- Montana

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Secretary:

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Honorary member:

Ruben Arias- California (retired),

rarias12@gmail.com

**We are looking forward to planning your
2026 Annual Meeting!**

Check us out on our [Website](#) or find us on [Facebook](#)!



Want to help us? Learn more below!

2026 Annual Meeting Plan and Call for Topics

Our annual meeting for September 2026 will be another teleconference!

The planning committee is looking for presentation topics and speakers.

Presenting at the WHIS meeting is a great opportunity to showcase your state's horticultural industry and current plant pest issues that face your state.

If you have an idea for a talk, please contact the WHIS President or any other officer



Got Newsletter Content?

Have an emerging horticultural plant/pest issue in your state?

Spread the news to your fellow state inspectors by contributing to the WHIS newsletter!

**If interested, contact editor Aja Bos at
aja.bos@state.co.us**

The Horticultural Inspection Society - Western Chapter (WHIS) seeks to solicit and exchange information from its participating members, creating an avenue to further educate the organization as a whole.

New information is continuously garnered and learned along the way, much of which is not available or timely able to be presented in a formal educational approach.

WHIS members, through dialog and training expand the level of expertise necessary for professional horticultural inspection and plant protection.