

HISTORICAL CHRONOLOGY OF THE PLANT SCIENCE DEPARTMENT  
UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT  
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## INTRODUCTION

The present Department of Plant Science has within it two of the oldest departmental programs at the University of Connecticut: Agronomy and Horticulture. Over time the structure of the department and its areas of strength have undergone change. When the department was first formed, in 1945, the department also included Forestry and Wildlife Management. This section broke away as a department in its own right (Renewable Natural Resources Management) in 1975.

Similarly, disciplinary areas within Agronomy and Horticulture have undergone change. For the first seventy years the department's major strengths were in crop production (agronomy) and pomology (horticulture). During the 1950's new areas began to emerge: ornamental horticulture, floriculture, soil science, landscape design, and plant breeding. These changes were a natural response to the growth of the department and perceived needs of the state. By the 1980's further changes became evident. The development of the landscape architecture program, the beginnings of biotechnology which ultimately expanded into molecular and cell biology, the growth of the integrated pest management program as well as best management practices, have all resulted in a department much different from that formulated in 1945. Most recently, the development of the turfgrass science program is providing a new area of emphasis that replaces the traditional areas that once dominated in agronomy.

Throughout its history the department has had teaching, research, and cooperative extension responsibilities. Teaching has been at all levels: 2-year associate degree, baccalaureate and graduate degrees. Because of the varied disciplines represented in the department many courses have been offered on a yearly basis. Numbers of student majors have varied over the years, as well as the specific major favored. Research, initially field oriented and commodity based and primarily supported by the Storrs Agricultural Experiment Station, also has undergone change. Gradually, laboratory research has become more important since more basic inquiries have been undertaken. Historically, plant nutrition, traditional plant breeding and variety testing, and crop and pasture management projects dominated the research agenda. While some of these areas have continued to be of interest, new avenues of research in molecular plant biology and biotechnology have developed. Of significance is the success that faculty have had in obtaining fund support from external sources.

Service to the commodity industries, as well as homeowners, has always been an important role of the department. Some programs, such as the soil testing program, have consistently been present and provided rapid and accurate help to the state's citizens. Other programs, such as the consumer horticulture center and the integrated pest management program, have developed in response to new needs. Traditional means of providing education to the citizenry of the state, such as short courses, conferences, field essays, bulletins and new articles, have continued to be used but in recent years they have been complemented by the development of websites and other electronic systems.

In the information that follows emphasis has been placed on the role of the departmental faculty in the development and activity of the department. Nevertheless, the department has only been able to function because of a state that provided day to day support.

## THE HISTORY

1881 The curriculum in horticulture and agronomy consist of the cultivation and harvesting of "...buckwheat, potatoes, corn, and a few cabbages, beets, and apples..." (From Stemmon's CONNECTICUT AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE – A HISTORY, Page 41)

1888 The Storrs Agricultural Experiment Station is established under the provisions of the Hatch Act and by Resolution 282 of the Connecticut General Assembly.

Research underway at the Storrs Agricultural School by Professors Atwater and Wood resulted in a major discovery this year, specifically, symbiotic nitrogen fixation in legumes. This discovery has world-wide significance, since the inclusion of legumes in pasture, hay, and silage fields significantly reduces the need for applied nitrogen fertilizers. This work paves the way for many years of research in pasture and crop nutrition by this Department.

1894 Alfred G. Gulley is appointed Professor of Horticulture. A pomologist, he is an outstanding teacher and researcher, and in addition will be responsible for numerous publications on fruit growing and plant pest control, the primary subjects of his research.

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Gulley collaborates with C.S. Barrett , landscape architect from Staten Island, New York, to develop plans for landscaping the front campus. This magnificent sweep of lawn still contains (2006) many of the original specimens planted by Gulley and Barrett.

1895 Gulley established an orchard of experimental varieties on East Hill (now called Horsebarn Hill).

1900 A fifteen acre commercial orchard is established by Gulley in an area west of campus (now west of the football stadium).

The curriculum this year consists of seven courses in horticulture and one in soils. A thesis is required of all students in the baccalaureate program. These courses are taught over three terms (fall, from Sept. to Dec.; winter, Jan. – Mar.; spring, April – June).

1903 Gulley plants another test orchard consisting of an extensive collection of dwarf apple trees.

1905 Sherman P. Hollister is appointed to the horticulture staff. Hollister, also a pomologist, resigned after two years, but returned to teaching and research in 1911.

Horticultural Hall (named Gulley Hall after Gulley's death) is built for the sum of \$55,000. The basement floor is a series of rooms in which spray apparatus is demonstrated. Also there are fruit and vegetable storage chambers and a room where produce is prepared for market. The main floor houses a lecture room large enough to seat 50 students. In addition there is a laboratory and also faculty offices. On the second floor there is a drawing and "Microscopic laboratory," a museum, and a botanical laboratory. The attic floor is to be a physics laboratory.

Shortly after the construction of Horticultural Hall, a head-house/laboratory and greenhouses are constructed to the south. These consisted specifically of a forcing house for vegetables and another for roses and carnations. Also there is a very large tropical

house. In addition, there is another greenhouse for propagating bedding plants and also a vinery. The experiment station (to the north) also has a greenhouse.

Later, Gulley Hall becomes the office building for the President and Provost and their staff.

Agronomy research plots during this period are on the fields of the extensive College farm.

Horticulture also operates a botanical garden of one acre, extensive vegetable gardens, and the plantings about the campus. Later a flower garden is created east of Horticultural Hall.

1910 The number of courses in Horticulture remains the same but six courses in agronomy are added probably through the influence of Louis A. Clinton who by this date is Professor of Agronomy and Director of the Storrs Agricultural Experiment Station.

1915 The Cooperative Extension Service is established through the provisions of the Smith-Lever Act. Its primary purpose is to “extend” research to the farmers of this state and their families.

In this department Extension duties are absorbed by the departmental staff, which consists of Gulley, Hollister and Alva Stevens (vegetables).

William L. Slate is now Professor of Agronomy.

1917 Professor Gulley dies and Sherman P. Hollister is made head of Horticulture. Hollister also assumes the duties of extension pomologist and also directs the maintenance of the campus grounds (this remains a responsibility of the department until the late 1940’s).

1919 Benjamin Arthur Brown joins the staff as agronomist. Brown does basic work on the nutrition of pastures and field crops and later becomes an authority on boron deficiency in alfalfa. His work is published in a long sequence of Experiment Station monographs.

Browns’ work, added to that of Atwater and Wood, establishes this department as a leader in the field of crop nutrition. Later, in the 1950’s, Edward J. Rubins demonstrates the deficiency of molybdenum (another minor element) in Connecticut soils.

Also in the 1950’s, Joseph M. Lent, in collaboration with Brown and others, demonstrates the effects of boron deficiency in beets and other vegetables. Dr. Fred Emmert also initiates research in nutrient absorption.

1920 The horticulture department expands by adding W. H. Darrow as extension fruit specialist and George K. Fraser in floriculture and ornamentals. This is the first time in the history of the department that a faculty member is appointed to teach specifically in the ornamentals field. In a few years, Professor Roland Patch is also appointed in floriculture and together these two men start the Dahlia Trial Gardens, which gain national fame. In these gardens, Dahlias are tested and evaluated and horticulturists come from throughout the country to view the results. These trial gardens terminate during World War II and with the retirement of Professor Patch in about 1944.

The trial or test garden tradition is an important one for this department in that varieties of corn, field crops, fruits, vegetables, and flowers have been tested at this University since

about 1895 with many well known introductions. In later years the silage corn variety trials conducted by Walter Washko would be among the most extensive in the northeast.

Henry Dorsey becomes extension agronomist and agronomy becomes a department housed in the dairy building (now gone, but once standing on the site of the Bicentennial Common along Route 195).

1923 The Horticultural Storage building is constructed at a cost of \$35,000. This later would become the Connecticut State Museum of Natural History.

1930 Howard A. Rollins is appointed extension fruit specialist to replace W.H. Darrow. Rollins starts an intensive program of fruit tree nutrition and works very closely with the Connecticut and American Pomological Society, later serving as president of the latter organization.

Albert E. Wilkinson is extension vegetable specialist. Rollins and Wilkinson perform all the extension duties of the Horticulture department.

Pasture plots, started by Professor Brown, are recognized as being the oldest in the nation.

1932 Harold O. Perkins joins the staff and several courses in landscape design are added to the curriculum.

1937 The first student Horticulture Show is held in the Horticultural Storage Building and sheds adjoining. Students in vegetable gardening, floriculture, landscape gardening and pomology construct displays.

1940 The faculty for this year consists of four in agronomy and eight in horticulture. Twenty five courses are offered in horticulture and seven in agronomy.

By this date, the horticulture and agronomy department are conducting research at the newly acquired 10-acre Lee Farm in Coventry.

1941 The Ratcliffe Hicks School of Agriculture is chartered and the department begins plans for course offering for this two-year certificate program. Later, the program would offer a two-year Associate Degree in Horticulture.

1944 Sherman P. Hollister retires as head of horticulture and Howard A. Rollins is appointed his successor, continuing the tradition of a pomologist as administrator.

1945 The departments of Agronomy, Horticulture, and Forestry and Wildlife Management are combined into one department called the Department of Plant Industries.

During the late winter the greenhouses and headhouse/laboratory situated south of Gulley Hall burn resulting in a great loss and inconvenience to the department. These conditions, coupled with crowded laboratory and classroom, and office space, create great hardship for the department.

1947 The name of the new department is changed to Department of Plant Science.

- 1948 Construction begins on new greenhouses north of the Storrs Church. First, three houses and part of the headhouse are built. Two houses and additional headhouse space are added later and completed by 1951.

Students resume the production of their fall Horticulture Show after a period of no shows during the War. Attendance approaches 2000. This is the first year that students on the Ratcliffe Hicks School of Agriculture participate in the show and that Forestry and Wildlife and Agronomy students also present displays.

- 1950 Majors in the Department this year total 69, but the department serves a total of 1568 students. There are 26 courses in horticulture, 14 in agronomy, and 16 in Forestry and Wildlife. In addition, courses are offered in the Ratcliffe Hicks School of Agriculture. The faculty totals 22 members.

In late summer, the various sections from the newly formed Plant Science Department come together as one department in the College of Agriculture building, (now the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources and the building is named after W. B. Young), though some of the laboratories in Agronomy remain in the Dairy building because the Young building is not entirely completed. (The two ends of the building were completed in 1952).

- 1952 Breeding of floricultural crops is added to a similar program in the breeding program on vegetable crops with the hiring of Dr. Gustav A.L. Mehlquist. Mehlquist specializes in carnations, lilies, orchids, delphiniums. Later, Mehlquist extends his work with rhododendrons.

John Scharchuk, instructor in plant breeding, introduces the “Storrs Green Hybrid” squash

Noteworthy research in herbicides to control weeds and to consequently increase crop yields, is started by newly hired Dr. Robert Peters. In the coming years many graduate students will study under Dr. Peters. He also initiates no-tillage research, using forages, one of the first in the country to do so.

- 1953 The Horticulture Club begins a tradition of planting trees on the campus on Arbor Day, the last Friday in April. This year the event was called “Plant a Dogwood Day.” Eighty Dogwoods are planted around Mirror Lake. The club initiates a fund drive to which residence halls, fraternities and sororities contribute to pay for the trees.

- 1954 The Horticulture Show moves to the new Ratcliffe Hicks Arena. The shows in the Arena have continued to the present.

This year the department vegetable judging team started a trend toward first place in the national contest for four years in succession. The department also sponsored a flower judging team.

- 1955 The department extends its extension activities to include a home gardening specialist (Rudy J. Favretti) and an ornamental horticulturist (Jay S. Koths). Until this date, only fruits, vegetables and pest control were covered by extension specialists.

The “Black Beauty” Squash, developed by John Scharchuk, wins the bronze medal of the All-American Selections.

- 1958 Doctoral programs are now offered in three areas: plant breeding, soils, and plant nutrition.
- 1960 There are 138 majors in the department and a total of 1517 students are served.
- 1961 Howard A. Rollins retires as head of the department and Dr. A. J. Robert Guttay, an agronomist, is hired as his replacement.

Dr. Gustav A. L. Mehlquist introduces a new carnation variety named “Dorothy Ober,” after one of his graduate students. Later, Mehlquist introduces another carnation named U-Conn White Sim Number 1. This variety was developed using gamma radiation.

- 1963 Professor Joseph M. Lent and John Scharchuk receive the All-American Bronze Medal for their introduction of “Black Opal,” a red-leaved basil.

The departmental faculty now numbers 28, composed of 8 professors, 12 associate professors, 6 assistant professors and 2 instructors. Disciplines represented are agronomy, landscape design, horticulture, natural resources, entomology and plant pathology. Total majors in the department (2-year, 4-year and graduate) are 162. Undergraduates major in horticulture (2-year), and in agronomy, horticulture, and forestry and wildlife management (4-year). Both M.S. and PhD. programs are available at the graduate level. A broad range of extension activities are underway in the production, management, marketing and utilization of agricultural products and renewable natural resources. Research covers a wide range of subject matter, both basic and applied, and is supported by 19 federal, regional and state research projects.

- 1964 The department becomes a participant in the All-America Variety trials under the leadership of W. Harper. Trial annuals are raised at the Lee Farm in Coventry for testing purposes.

- 1965 The Bartlett Arboretum in Stamford, Connecticut was acquired by the state with federal, state and private monies (Open Space Program). The department is given the assignment of managing the Arboretum and did so in cooperation with a private group, the Bartlett Arboretum Association. Professor E.J. Duda was appointed as the first Director and three staff members were appointed.

- 1970 By this time the soil testing program, under the leadership of G.F. Griffin has been significantly modernized with autoanalysis equipment. During the 1969 – 70 year over 10,500 soil samples were analyzed and fertilizer recommendations prepared for both commodity growers as well as homeowners. Following the incorporation of the auto analysis system for soil tests came the development of computer programs for lime and fertilizer recommendations. Finally, automated methods for determining ammonium and nitrate in soil extracts and water were developed. These activities would expand in subsequent years and have continued into the present.

- 1971 J.M. Lent submitted an improved UConn Acorn squash to the 1971 All American Selection trials. A bog walk is completed at the Bartlett Arboretum

- 1972 R.J. Favretti developed a graduate program in community aesthetics.

At the Bartlett Arboretum S.L. Kelsey identified, labeled and accessioned more than 350 species and varieties of plants. Work on the construction of the dwarf conifer garden is undertaken. E.T. Duda (Bartlett Arboretum) undertook a funded study of gypsy moth

populations in Connecticut. Later, many of S. Waxman's dwarf conifer cultivars as well as rhododendron's bred by G.A.L. Mehlquist would be placed in the arboretum.

Heavy metal research projects are undertaken by several faculty including D.W. Allinson, J. Koths, E.J. Rubins and D.B. Schroeder.

1973 D.R. Miller's research projects on the microclimate of the forest – urban edge and the microclimate within the metropolitan complex are underway and will continue for many years. Natural resource data will be used in land use decision – making.

S. Waxman begins to exhibit selections of witches' broom conifer seedlings, an activity which will result in the release of many new cultivars in the coming years.

Total number of students majoring in the department is 434. The areas of natural resources and ornamental horticulture are especially attractive to undergraduates.

1974 "Table King" squash, a new introduction by John Scharchuk, receives the Silver Medal of the All-America Selections.

A proposal by A.J.R. Guttay to separate the Natural Resources section into their own department in the CANR was prepared and submitted to the university administration. Changes in graduate degree programs are also submitted. These included combining M.S. programs in agronomy and horticulture into a single program called Plant and Soil Sciences. The M.S. program in wildlife management is to be changed to Renewable Natural Resources Management.

1975 The departmental request that the Natural Resources section receive departmental status came to fruition during the 1974 – 75 academic year. The new department consists of the former Forestry and Wildlife section of the Plant Science Department. The major programs in the Department of Plant Science are now agronomy and environmental horticulture with responsibilities in teaching, research and extension.

D. Allinson, an agronomist, is appointed head of the Plant Science Department to succeed A.J.R. Guttay who stepped down to devote full time to research.

The soil testing laboratory performed 18,000 analyses and made 21,000 recommendations.

G.A.L. Mehlquist is awarded the Jackson Dawson Gold Medal by the Massachusetts Horticultural Society for his work with the breeding of rhododendrons. He also receives the American Rhododendron Society Gold Medal for this work.

E.J. Rubins is awarded the Faculty Excellence Award in Teaching by the University of Connecticut Alumni Association.

1976 The Consumer Horticulture Center was opened and E. L. Marrotte hired to provide staff needs. This program, initially intended to provide education in the area of horticulture for homeowners, would expand greatly in the coming years.

Two new greenhouses were constructed, one at the Bartlett Arboretum and the second was added to the Floriculture greenhouse complex along route 195.

After several years of research, W.W. Washko released a comprehensive recommendation list of corn silage varieties.

J.L. Lent was awarded the L.M. Ware Distinguished Teaching Award. R.J. Favretti was awarded a Claremont Fellowship.

- 1977 This began a period of retirements and the hiring of new faculty. Retirees included G.A.L. Mehlquist, L.A. Mitterling, and E.J. Rubins. New faculty included R.D. Parker (plant breeding), J. Alexopoulos (Landscape Design) and H. D. Luce (soil science).

A program in horticulture therapy was initiated at the Bartlett Arboreum.

The Horticulture Cold Storage building was partially remodeled and the soil testing program relocated to that facility. Apple sales continued on the first floor.

- 1978 There are 395 students (undergraduate and graduate) majoring in Plant Science (now Horticulture and Agronomy). The department served about 2600 students through its course offerings.

A new major in Landscape Design was proposed and was subsequently approved (1980). The appointment of J. Alexopoulos as a second landscape architect, made this development possible. R.G. Adams, an entomologist, was appointed. Initially, his responsibilities were in the area of pesticide education, but would expand over the years into the Integrated Pest Management program, aimed at reducing the use of pesticides in the state, and certification training.

A grant from the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation (federal) enabled the Bartlett Arboretum to make substantial improvements to the physical facilities.

About 10,000 people attend the annual Horticulture Show.

Dr. Sidney Waxman introduces four dwarf white pines from his witches broom selections. They are named: "U-Conn," "Blue Shag," "Sea Urchin," and "Green Shadow." John Scharchuk, receives the All-American Bronze medal for his ornamental pepper introduction called "Holiday Cheer."

The Consumer Horticulture Center is now handling about 10,000 inquiries per year.

After many years of service J.M. Lent and K.A. Bradley retired. They were replaced by B.B. Bible and E.G. Corbett.

- 1979 The three major offerings in the Ratcliffe Hicks Program were combined into the single Horticulture major. A new graduate program (MS) in Historic Landscapes was developed by R.J. Favretti and submitted for approval.

R.A. Peters was awarded the Distinguished Weed Science Award by the Northeastern Weed Science Society; J. Scharchuk the All-America Bronze Medal Award for the Ornamental pepper, "Holiday Time", and S. Waxman a Certificate of Commendation from the International Plant Propagator's Society.

- 1980 W.C. Kennard was awarded a Faculty Fellowship from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration at the Goddard Space Flight Center.  
R.A. Peters: Elected Fellow of the Weed Science Society of America.  
S. Waxman: Award of Merit, International Plant Propagators Society.  
D.W. Allinson resigned his position as Department Head and R.W. Wengel was appointed Acting Department Head.
- 1981 Extension activities in the department are now very broad, including vegetable and fruit production, horticulture merchandising, nursery management, landscape design, floriculture and greenhouse management, field crop and bedding plant production and management, pesticide training program, and home gardening and soil testing.
- 1982 The landscape design program is accredited.  
E.D. Carpenter is named an Outstanding Teacher by the National Association of Colleges and Teachers of Agriculture.  
R.J. Favretti won the National Honor Award from the National Trust for Historic Preservation.
- 1983 E.R. Emino, a horticulturalist, is appointed Department Head. The department established an Endowment fund with the University of Connecticut Foundation. This was to be the first of many endowments. The horticulture club established the first student endowed scholarship at the university.  
E.D. Carpenter received outstanding teaching awards from NACTA.
- 1985 M. Bridgen joined the faculty and initiated a research program in plant improvement using, as a basic tool, tissue culture.
- 1986 Professors Koths and Washko retired. Both had been very active in extension activities, Professor Koths in floriculture, Washko in agronomy.  
A teaching-research nursery facility is developed by E.G. Corbett, at the agronomy farm off Route 195. This development was enabled by a major monetary gift (Burr Endowment).  
Turf research is expanding under the direction of W.M. Dest. Several faculty members, including G. Griffin, H.D. Luce, A.J.R. Guttay, and R.W. Wengel, have soil-based research projects underway.  
W.L. Kennard in leading a program in remote sensing.
- 1987 E. Emino resigned his position as Department Head and left university service. D.W. Allinson was appointed as Interim Department Head for a two-year period.  
70 courses are presented by departmental faculty. Long range planning reviews are undertaken to address the future direction of the department.  
S. Waxman releases named cultivars of hemlock, white pine, and Japanese umbrella pine, all derived from witches-brooms. Significant numbers of faculty and staff members have resigned or retired, without being replaced, and this in placing significant stress on the department.  
K. Guillard (Agronomy) is appointed as lecturer.
- 1988 Four faculty members retired: R.J. Favretti (Landscape Architecture), A.J.R. Guttay (Agronomy), W.L. Harper (Floriculture), and M.G. Savos (Entomology). S. Olsen was appointed Farm Manager and Sharon Morrisay appointed Director of the Bartlett Arboretum. M. Brand (Horticulture), R. Kent (Landscape Architecture) and R. McAvoy (Horticulture) joined the faculty.

The decrease in course enrollments that had begun in 1979 now seemed to have stabilized. Number of students majoring in any Plant Science program, at the time, was 174. At the undergraduate level the landscape design major had the most students. Several new dwarf conifers are released and cultivars of *Catharanthus*, *Torenia*, and *Pachysandra* are close to release. The IPM program expands with funds from the Connecticut General Assembly. The Laboratory for Remote Sensing also continues to expand.

- 1989 Mrs. M. Burr Sober provides a gift of \$800,000 to the department. This endowment provides scholarships to students in agronomy and ornamental horticulture. The soil testing laboratory analyzed some 13,000 soil samples while the consumer horticulture center provided information to 10,000 individuals. R.A. Peters retired. A decision was made to seek accreditation for the landscape architecture major. This follows a decade of steady enrollment in this discipline. Research funding, from all agencies, passes \$650,000 while proposals for research support are slightly below \$1 million. G.F. Griffin introduces the June nitrate-test for corn silage fertilization (best management practices). M. Bridgen releases "UConn White" (*Torenia*). M. Brand, with G.A.L. Mehlquist, is about to begin releases of new cultivars of Rhododendron. W.C. Kennard serves as interim Department Head for one year. D.W. Allinson is awarded the faculty Excellence Award in Teaching by the University of Connecticut Alumni Association.
- 1990 Dr. Suman Singha is appointed Department Head. Also appointed were C.L. Johnson (Landscape Design) and G. Elliott (Horticulture). R.W. Wengel (Agronomy) retired. A proposal for an accredited program in Landscape Architecture was submitted to the Board of Higher Education. R.A. Parker introduced three new varieties of *Catharanthus* and all three were awarded 'All-American' status – a unique accomplishment. Several faculty have initiated research projects aimed at 'environmental health' insofar as crop production and management of natural resources are concerned.
- 1991 R.A. Parker continued to release *Catharanthus* selections. These not only gained national attention but also brought the department, college, and university significant economic returns via royalties. The Landscape Architecture program was granted licensure by the Board of Governors for Higher Education – the first step toward national accreditation. K. Guillard had several research projects underway with a general theme of improved environmental efficiency in crop production and, with W. Dest, begins work with turfgrasses. The soil testing laboratory analyzed over 16,900 soil samples and provided over 20,200 fertilizer recommendations. E.G. Corbett and M.H. Brand become heavily involved in the Connecticut Nurseryman's Association Education Program.
- 1992 G.G. Griffin (Agronomy) and S. Waxman (Horticulture) retired and C. Schulthess (Soil Science) joined the faculty. Research programs continue to develop within a theme of environmental health: IPM, water

- quality, reduced fertilizer inputs, etc. These principles are being applied to both agronomic and horticultural plant species.
- 1993 C. Auer (Horticulture) and T. Morris (Soil Science) joined the faculty.  
D. Allinson is awarded the USDA Excellence in College and University Teaching Award for the Northeast Region.  
R.D. Parker's *Catharanthus* variety Tropiana "Bright Eyes" is awarded the University of Georgia's Gold Medal.  
Two research laboratories and one teaching lab in the Young Building are renovated.
- 1994 The Landscape Architecture program develops a Computer Aided Design Laboratory.  
Total number of students in the department, including two- and four-year undergraduate and M.S. and Ph.D. graduate total 171.  
Faculty continue close extension involvement with both commercial and homeowners: Connecticut Nurseryman's Association, IPM Program, Master Gardener Program, Soil Testing (including nitrate) Program, Connecticut Greenhouse and Groundskeeper's Association.
- 1995 The 1994-95 period was marked by several faculty changes: S. Singha resigned his position as Department Head to accept the position of Associate Dean and Director of the Ratcliffe Hicks School of Agriculture. R.A. Ashley stepped in to serve as Acting Department Head. R.D. Parker and R.L. Kent both left university service. R.G. Adams vacated his position (Entomology and coordinator of the IPM program) to become Associate Director of Cooperative Extension. T. Morris became Director of the Soil Testing Lab. P. Miniutti joined the Landscape Architecture section.  
The department continued placing greater emphasis in the areas of ornamental horticulture, landscape architecture, and environmental quality and management.  
The Northeastern Weed Science Society named R.A. Ashley a Distinguished Member.  
While research support continued from the Experiment Station, faculty members were now receiving significantly more support (\$.8 million) from other sources.
- 1996 G. Berkowitz (Molecular Biology) was appointed Department Head and Dorothy Wurman (Landscape Architecture) joined the faculty.  
Emphasis on acquiring external grants to support research continued to be successful.  
Most of the undergraduate students (baccalaureate) are majoring in Landscape Architecture.  
Some facilities that have long been used by the department are closed down or reassigned: Horticulture Cold Storage building, the Lee Farm Research Laboratory (field work was abandoned there in 1972 - 73) and the Fruit Orchards. In addition, the Department no longer manages the Bartlett Arboretum.
- 1997 W.M. Dest retired.  
The number of students majoring in the department is 195. The number of Ph.D. candidates has approximately doubled over the previous year.  
Emphasis on external funding for research continues with increased success. Emerging areas of focus include plant biotechnology and molecular biology as well as turfgrass management. Emphasis continues in the area of IPM, plant breeding, and sustainable agriculture and environmental quality.  
The department provided a comprehensive cooperative extension program to both the commercial commodity groups as well as homeowners. The IPM, Soil Testing Lab, and Consumer Horticulture Center continue to provide invaluable service.

- 1998 The Landscape Architecture program was upgraded by the opening of a new teaching studio-complex in the Young building. The program also underwent a review for national accreditation and was granted accreditation by the American Society of Landscape Architects.  
Undergraduate majors now have concentrations available to them in Turfgrass Science and Integrated Pest Management. Four patents were awarded to faculty related to genetic engineering of crop plants.  
Extramural funding, in new and continuing grants, exceeded \$1 million. Projects in sustainable agriculture, environment/water quality, and plant molecular biology/biotechnology were particularly well supported.  
D. Kollas, fruit specialist, retired.  
Y. Li (Plant Molecular Biology) joined the faculty.  
The orchard field site was closed down.
- 1999 Research activities throughout the department are resulting in numerous publications and papers and, particularly, increased funding levels – \$3.3 million this year, half of which is in the area of plant molecular biology and applied biotechnology.  
Several new faculty are hired: Susanne Beck von Bodman (Molecular Plant Pathology), Kristin Schwab and Mark Westa (Landscape Architecture).  
The number of PhD candidates in the department numbers 15, over 50% of the total number.  
Cooperative extension activities continue in the traditional areas but, in addition, applied biotechnology approaches are being used to enhance the nursery and greenhouse industries in the state.
- 2000 Dr. R.A. Gaxiola (Plant Molecular Genetics) joined the faculty. Undergraduate and graduate majors in the department number 174 with course enrollments about 1115. Extra mural funding reached \$3.5 million, approximately 50% of which was in the fields of plant molecular biology and applied biotechnology.  
Extensions programs continue to be effective: Soil testing programs (including June nitrate test) over 12,000 analyses, Garden Education Center (provided responses to 15,000 enquiries), IPM (major reductions in pesticide use), numerous conferences, and individual contacts with commodity groups in the state.  
M. Brand released six new Rhododendron cultivars and, with E.G. Corbett, developed a perennial plant database and website for plants used by nursery/landscape businesses in the state.
- 2001 K. Guillard elected as a University of Connecticut Teaching Fellow. Active grants in the areas of plant molecular biology and applied biotechnology reach \$2 million  
Many new courses have been developed in the discipline of turfgrass science, a concentration offered under the aegis of the agronomy major. This concentration is also attractive to students in the Ratcliffe Hicks School of Agriculture.  
Computers are now used in all phases of activity: teaching, research and extension. Plant databases and IPM websites receive many hits per day.  
M. Bridgen begins releases of new *Alstroemeria* cultivars.
- 2002 The department taught 80 courses. New courses are continuously developed to meet changing student needs.  
Research output, as evidenced by major publications and research grants (\$4.5 million) is at an all-time high.

Extension continues to make major contributions to the needs of the state. The Plant Database, the IPM website, and the Soil Testing website served over 1 million people. During this academic year Dr. G. Berkowitz relinquishes his position as Department Head. R.A. Ashley serves as Interim Head. Also during this academic year a facilitator, working with the faculty, developed the outline of a strategic plan to guide the department over the next decade.

Faculty in molecular cell biology, biotechnology and IPM move into the Agriculture Biotechnology Building.

#### SOURCES:

1. University of Connecticut Bulletins, 1900 – 1978
2. Reports of the Board of Trustees to the General Assembly, 1900 – 1920
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*Prepared by Rudy J. Favretti, Professor Emeritus of Landscape Architecture Derek W. Allinson, Professor Emeritus of Agronomy, and Mary Musgrave, Department Head for the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the University to be celebrated in 2006.*