

# Fifth Annual SE-EPPC Symposium by Joyce Bender

One hundred participants gathered in Lexington, Kentucky May 15-17 to attend the fifth annual Southeast Exotic Pest Plant Council symposium on invasive plants hosted by the Kentucky Exotic Pest Plant Council. Attendees from as far away as Wyoming and Pennsylvania and everywhere in between enjoyed two days of presentations on a variety of topics including the status of the St. Louis Declaration a year and a half after implementation, the invasion of exotic plants into fire sites in the Great Smoky Mountain National Park, Ohio's efforts to curb invasive plants on their wildlife management areas, herbicide application methods and equipment, new products from Monsanto and BASF, as well as integrated roadside management techniques employed by the Kentucky Transportation cabinet.

The keynote address by Randy Westbrooks, invasive plant coordinator for the USGS, focused on the national early warning and rapid response system that is being developed for invasive plants. The Federal Interagency Committee for the Management of Noxious and Exotic Weeds (FICM-NEW) envisions this project as improving our ability to detect, report and identify new plants that are suspected of being invasive. A coordinated framework will enable a quicker assessment of potential threat and assist in a faster response for eradication of the species.

Researchers presented their latest findings on Japanese stiltgrass (*Microstegium vimineum*); how seasonal metabolism affects control of bush honeysuckle (*Lonicera maackii*); how to convert exotic grass infestations to warm season grasses; the best means to control Chinese privet (*Ligustrum sinense*); and predicting plant invasions in forests. Presenters from Florida made us glad we don't have to contend with Old World Climbing Fern (*Lygodium microphyllum*) and gave us hope that an integrated approach to *Melaleuca*

(*Melaleuca quinquenervia*) control will bring success.

Other presentations focused on developing interagency teams and working with private partners to control widespread, large-scale infestations, illustrated by work being done in Illinois on kudzu (*Pueraria montana*) and on Japanese knotweed (*Polygonum cuspidatum*) in southeastern Pennsylvania. A cogongrass (*Imperata cylindrica*) task force is being developed by the Commissioner of the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce. Let's hope we hear from this task force at a future SE-EPPC symposium.

Rain dampened everyone's enthusiasm for the hikes to natural areas of the state's Bluegrass region, but those in attendance at the Saturday morning herbicide application workshop enjoyed a very informative session given by professors J. D. Green and Bill Witt from the University

of Kentucky's School of Agriculture.

Symposium sponsors received a lot of attention from participants who visited their booths for free samples and good advice. Our sponsors helped us keep the costs low and deserve our sincere thanks: BASF, Dow AgroSciences, Inc., Monsanto, Syngenta, The Nature Conservancy, Third Rock Consultants, LLC and the U.S. Forest Service. The Reel World String Band provided entertainment at the Thursday night social where the silent auction brought in over \$800. The KY EPPC wishes to thank all of the vendors and organizations that donated items to the auction. The Autumn Olive Wine was especially notable for both the price of the final bid and the fact that the winners offered tastes for a dollar. I think I can speak for everyone who tried it that this vintage won't be turning up at your local wine shop any time soon.



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