

Introducing Monica Cooper – Napa County UC Viticulture Farm Advisor

We are happy to announce the hire of Monica Cooper as the Viticulture Farm Advisor/County Director for Napa County UC Cooperative Extension. Monica will begin her position on Wednesday, April 1, 2009. Join us in welcoming Monica to the Napa office.

Monica Cooper comes to the Napa County UC Cooperative Extension office from the University of California, Berkeley where she held the position of Staff Research Associate III-Supervisor. At UC Berkeley, Monica managed CE Specialist, Kent Daane's research laboratory in the Department of Environmental Science Policy and Management coordinating personnel and activities for several projects including Argentine ant, vine mealybug, olive fruit fly biological control, Eucalyptus psyllid pests and grapevine leafroll. She earned a B.S. degree in Biology from Washington and Lee University in Lexington, Virginia in June 1996. She then served as a Peace Corps volunteer in an agrarian community in Panama, from 1997-1999. Upon returning to the U.S., Monica entered the University of Florida where she earned a Doctor of Plant Medicine degree in August 2006. As a graduate of the program she carried a rigorous course load in the disciplines of entomology, plant pathology, weed and soil science, agronomy and horticulture.

During her time as Staff Research Associate III-Supervisor at UC Berkeley she worked on the development and evaluation of Integrated Pest Management programs for arthropod pests in vineyards, apples and olives. Monica's other major focus had been the ongoing study of sustainable mealybug and Argentine ant controls in vineyards where she has organized research and demonstration plots to study the combined effect of management tools such as biological control, mating disruption, and bait, and insecticide applications on mealybug populations.

Monica has authored many publications and press stories related to Argentine ant and vine mealybug management as well as made numerous presentations on both subjects throughout the state. She has been active in the Carneros Growers' Vine mealybug Workgroup since 2006 and a member of the Entomological Society of America since 2002.

As Napa County UC Viticulture Farm Advisor, Monica anticipates continuing her work on vineyard mealybugs as well as addressing additional needs of the industry. She envisions working not only with pest, disease, and fertility problems but will also tackle water, land, and other resource issues.