

Jeoff Dunster:

PCA and Arborist Addressing Pest Issues in the SF Bay Area

Mindy DeRohan, CAPCA ED Manager

Jeoff Dunster graduated from the University of California, Davis with a Bachelor's of Science degree in Agricultural Systems and Environment, with an emphasis in Sustainable Agriculture and a minor in Entomology.

Jeoff is currently the President of the San Francisco Bay CAPCA Chapter and has held his PCA license since 2002. Jeoff also holds his QAL and is a Certified Arborist. Trees, Landscape, and Backyard Fruits and Vegetables are Jeoff's areas of expertise.

Jeoff has been involved in the tree and landscape industry for more than 15 years. After working for the Napa County Agriculture Department, Jensen Landscape Services, and Target Specialty Products, Jeoff joined the S.P. McClenahan Tree Company where he is responsible for plant health care management including routing, pest consulting, and establishing tree health management programs. "I meet with clients every day to answer their questions and teach them how to properly care for their specific situations," Jeoff said. "My favorite part of being a PCA is being able to help people with their pest control problems and provide them with a wide range of options to solve their problems."

"The ability to help others is my primary motivator. I want my customers to be as successful as possible because if I can help them improve their situation, then I know I have done my job." Jeoff works closely with peers and manufacturers to receive updated information and research that will help him improve his own professionalism.

When asked about the most challenging part of his job, Jeoff said, "The public has always been the most challenging aspect. Being able to assuage their fears and speaking in



terms they can understand is key. There will always be challenges in pest control but making sure you follow a well thought out approach to pest management using all of the tools in your tool box can help balance the public, customer, and pest interface."

Changes in pest populations can cause many problems for clients and growers. "The foamy canker that is spread by polyphagous shot-hole borer is one of the up-and-coming pests in the forestry, landscape, and tree crop world that is proving to be a challenge for our majestic oaks and sycamore trees. It is also a challenge for avocado and nut growers as well."

"HLB and Asian citrus psyllid are two pests that are of the greatest concern to the industry because they can establish in residential neighborhoods without detection by trained eyes."

When asked to give an example of a pest problem that he faced, Jeoff said, "The biggest challenge I ever faced was aquatic weeds in a flood canal in the middle of a city. There are many agencies involved in that process which leads us to trying strategies that do not include herbicides. We had to implement hand weeding procedures since pesticides were not allowed."

Jeoff Dunster

CAPCA Chapter:
San Francisco Bay

Education: *B.S. Agricultural Systems and Environment, University of California, Davis*

Family: *wife, Socorro & 4-year-old daughter, Madalyn*

Interests:
Gardening, fishing, baseball, football

Regarding local issues that may be of concern to other PCAs throughout the state, Jeoff said, “At this time the San Francisco Bay Area is very sensitive to bees and a lot of education is being done. The trick is to make sure that factual evidence is used and all experiments are reproducible.”

One of the biggest highlights of Jeoff’s PCA career is using his license and background to set-up proper IPM strategies for his clients. Cultural controls, mechanical controls, chemically organic controls, and chemically synthetic controls comprise Jeoff’s view on IPM programs for trees and landscape.

Jeoff has also developed a Top Ten program that can be used in IPM:

1. Plant the right tree or plant in the right place
2. Use mulch to reduce irrigation and fertilizer needs
3. Prune for proper structure
4. Hand prune diseased or dying limbs
5. Monitor pest populations through traps and day timing

6. Identify the pest
7. Identify client’s expectations or threshold for pest problems
8. Teach client what level of pest population the tree or plant can take
9. Make sure control strategies are able to meet clients’ threshold
10. Treat with organics if possible

“This is a good process to teach sales people and clients a proper way of thinking in IPM terms using the least amount of pesticides possible. It is a universal strategy that works, but, client expectations and money are the two biggest challenges.”

“CAPCA is a very important resource because the organization helps to provide information in areas I am not well versed in.” Jeoff believes that staying on top of California Department of Pesticide Regulation changes should continue to be a main focus for CAPCA’s leadership. “No matter how a pest problem manifests, changes in regulations dictate how we are able to approach them.”