

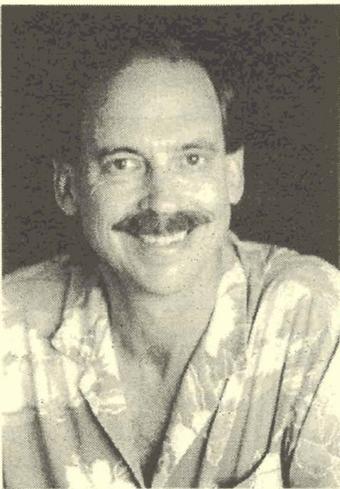
The Chile Institute

VOLUME V, NUMBER 1 SPRING 1996

N E W S L E T T E R

A Fond Farewell to Our Editor, Dave DeWitt

Chel Beeson



Dave DeWitt, one of New Mexico's most renowned chileheads and a co-founder of the Chile Institute, has stepped down as editor of the Institute's newsletter.

DeWitt, the editor of *Chile Pepper* magazine, said that he will continue to contribute

articles to the newsletter, even though he has turned the editorial reins over to New Mexico State University's agricultural communications department.

"The newsletter fulfills the Institute's important task of communicating with its members," DeWitt said. "I really enjoyed editing it, but as the Chile Institute continues to grow, the newsletter will also grow and diversify. It was hard to write and edit each edition from my base in Albuquerque, N.M. Since it was a labor of love, it often moved to the bottom of my list of things to do."

DeWitt moved to New Mexico in 1974 and fell in love with the state and its cuisine. He was working in advertising, doing radio and television commercials, when he originated *Chile Pepper* magazine. The magazine grew bigger and better every year, reaching a current circulation of 80,000. But still DeWitt felt that more could be done to further the cause of chile.

"After reading *Chile Pepper* magazine, the real chileheads want to know *everything* there

is to know about it—cultivation, processing, cooking, nutrient content, and everything else," DeWitt said. "These are the people who became members of the Chile Institute."

The Institute is a society devoted to chile, DeWitt declares, and one of its significant tasks is preserving the chile knowledge that the founders have collected over many years. Without the Institute, this knowledge could be lost when all of us are dead and gone, he said.

DeWitt would like to see the newsletter become a more formal research journal, a clearinghouse of information for chile professionals around the globe. One reason for founding the Chile Institute was to create an organization to support chile research. An expanded newsletter would be the ideal organ for disseminating the results of that research, he noted.

DeWitt's first official, self-assigned task as newsletter reporter will be an article about the National Pepper Conference he'll be attending in Florida in December. Chile Institute members hope this article will be just the beginning.

...through his magazine and the Chile Institute, he will continue his close association with the chilemaniacs of the world.

"Dave did a wonderful job with the newsletter," said Paul Bosland, NMSU's chief chile researcher and co-founder of the Institute. "We're sorry to see him leave his post, but we're thankful for the wonderful work he did in getting the newsletter off the ground, and grateful that he still finds the time to be an active member of our organization."

Continued on page 2

Dave DeWitt, continued from page 1.

DeWitt said that, through his magazine and the Chile Institute, he will continue his close association with the chilemaniacs of the world.

"The Institute is thriving thanks to visionaries like Paul Bosland and the outstanding work

of people like Emma Jean Cervantes, whose extensive experience in volunteer organizations kept us on track," DeWitt said. "I'm proud to be a part of it." ☺

Professionals Turn to NMSU Chile Experts for Help

The Chile Institute, headquartered at New Mexico State University, is made up of chile professionals from around the globe. But who do these pros turn to when they are looking for information? Chile experts at NMSU's College of Agriculture and Home Economics are more than willing to share research information with Institute members, like Paul Bosland.

Ann Bock, home economics professor, answers chile nutrition questions. Her main area of research focuses on chile's affect on other nutrients. She also does literature reviews and studies the difference in chile uses across the Southwest. Lisa McKee, associate professor in home economics, is another food scientist whose areas of expertise are food safety, sensory evaluation, and nutritional composition. McKee has done consumer testing on extruded snacks that use chile as a flavoring. She is currently developing a standard of identity for salsas and researching the safe processing of chile.

James Libbin, a professor in the agricultural economics and agricultural business department, prepares a cost-of-production analysis for the chile industry each year. This analysis is a series of cost/return estimates for the different varieties of chile in various areas of New Mexico. Potential growers, land buyers and appraisers, agricultural lenders, chile processors, and a host of others find his informa-

tion invaluable in determining profitability levels for their farms.

Theodore Sammis, a professor of agronomy and horticulture, is the chile irrigation expert. Growers regularly link up to his weather bulletin board page on the Internet to determine the best irrigation schedule for their farms. Growers often call with specific questions, especially about drip irrigation.

Mike English, department head for the Cooperative Extension Service's plant science department, is an entomologist who works with chile producers and university scientists to identify insect pests and prescribe treatments. He often teams up with Brad Lewis, a research entomologist with NMSU's entomology, plant pathology, and weed sciences department, who is a specialist on applied economic entomology. Lewis' Integrated Pest Management systems are a boon to farmers concerned about the environment.

Natalie Goldberg, assistant professor, is the Extension plant pathologist. She creates and presents programs on chile diseases—what they are, what causes them, and what to do about them. She writes bulletins, visits individual farms, and organizes meetings around the state to analyze problems and educate farmers about solutions. Craig Liddell, an associate professor at NMSU, also is a plant

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pathologist whose chile research focuses in two areas: analyzing phytophthora root rot to understand the basis of the disease, and virus detection and control. His job includes suggesting and monitoring disease controls and he fields many calls from Extension and industry personnel.

Don Lindsey, NMSU professor, is another of the college's experts on phytophthora root rot and verticillium wilt, the two dominant diseases in the chile industry. His research explores the effect of drip irrigation and plastic mulch on controlling these disease problems.

Jill Schroeder, associate professor at NMSU, studies weed management in crops and weed interactions with other pests, such as nematodes and insects. Her research includes test plots for evaluating new herbicides and analyzing the effects of product combinations. Steve Thomas, associate professor, investigates plant parasitic nematodes, especially the root knot nematode—a generalist pest that affects chile and other crops. His research involves looking for resistant varieties of chile. He and Schroeder field many questions from chemical companies and crop consultants.

Mary O'Connell and Greg Phillips, professors of agronomy and horticulture, are both

involved in genetic research with *Capsicum* species. O'Connell explores the cloning of structural genes for capsaicin synthesis and is looking for a genetic means of reducing the environmental influence on pungency. Phillips' genetic engineering experiments introduce genes from diverse species into chile to make the plant's disease resistance more complete.

Marisa Wall, an associate professor of horticulture, is a post-harvest physiologist who examines chile after it has been picked and processed. Her research includes evaluating *Capsicum* germplasm on the basis of nutritional value and anti-oxidant attributes, extending the shelf-life of fresh green chiles, and characterizing the physiology of maturation and ripening in order to improve and maintain the fruit's quality.

Cynda Clary, an assistant professor in agricultural economics, developed the World Wide Web page for the Chile Institute. She is generating marketing plans for the Institute so that this valuable organization can reach a wider audience.

Future issues of the Chile Institute newsletter will feature in-depth articles on the work of each of these chile experts. ☺

C A P S I C U M N E W S

Research Articles Wanted

The Chile Institute newsletter is looking for a few good research articles. Whether your chile experiments are taking place in the field, the greenhouse, the kitchen, or the laboratory, we want to hear about them and herald your results to all Institute members. In future issues, we will be writing pieces about the research being done at New Mexico State University, but we'd also like information about chile studies being done around the world. Of course, any idea for an article is welcome. Send your suggestions to the Chile Institute address on the back of this newsletter.

Chile On-line

The Chile Institute has found its way onto the information superhighway with a web site on the World Wide Web. Our homepage is located at:

<http://www.nmsu.edu/~hotchile/index.html>

On our web site you'll find the Chile Institute's mission statement and information about the International Center for Chile, plus publications, articles, and other interesting web sites on chile. There are even photos of chile that you can download onto your own computer.

Hop on-line and give us a look!

To order back issues of the Chile Institute Newsletter, contact The Chile Institute, Box 30003, Dept. 3Q, NMSU, Las Cruces, NM 88003, or call (505) 646-3028.