

## Director's Message

2003 was a positive year for the laboratory. All of our research seemed to have a boost in productivity during 2003, with strong research activity and good output of publications. We are looking forward to another good year in 2004.

Francis Nakayama retired during 2003, although it is hard to tell because he comes to work nearly every day, is still active writing grants, and has maintained his enthusiasm for his research. There is little evidence that he has started winding down.

In October, Norma Duran accepted a position with the Environmental Protection Agency in El Paso, Texas. We wish her well and know she will do good work for the EPA in their border issues with Mexico. Norma still visits the lab and interacts with some of her students who stayed to finalize some of the research started while Norma was still here.

The CRIS project for new crops research was approved through the Office of Scientific Quality and Review (OSQR) during 2003. This was an extensive peer review process. This group has charted a new course for the next 5 years which will lay the groundwork for an exciting future for this area of research. They are to be congratulated for their strong planning effort.

The final design for the new facility at Maricopa was completed during FY2003. I'm sure the laboratory staff is relieved to have that step behind them, as they all spent a considerable amount of time over the last three years with The Smith Group, the A&E firm who designed the new research center. The contract is expected to be awarded during early 2004.

Pernell Tomasi joined the lab as a permanent category 3 scientist during 2003. Pernell has worked at the lab for over ten years as a student and technician, and has demonstrated his research capabilities with tissue and ovule culture techniques for interspecific hybrids.

Andrew Salywon was hired as a post-doc (category 2 scientist) to conduct work finding molecular markers to assist in constructing a genetic map, and for selection in breeding. Andrew received his PhD from Arizona State University in Plant Biology this year and has worked at our lab in the past on plant collection explorations.

Andrew French was chosen to fill the remote-sensing position vacated by Ed Barnes. Andrew will report some time in the Spring of 2004.

Three positions were filled in the Administrative Office at our location. . Eiko Adkisson was hired as Administrative Officer. She came to us from the National Park Service where she handled administrative duties for The Grand Canyon National Park. Eiko in turn hired Annette McNeeley from the Department of Defense as the budget and accounting clerk and Regan Alexander from Western Cotton Research Lab as our purchasing agent. Welcome aboard Eiko, Annette, and Regan.

Bert Clemmens  
Laboratory Director