Caribbean Conference

THE FLORIDA ENTOMOLOGICAL SOCIETY'S
FIRST CARIBBEAN CONFERENCE OF ENTOMOLOGY
August 5-8, 1985

Ocho Rios, Jamaica, West Indies

Some came to enjoy the splendor of Jamaica, others to share entomological information and discuss common interests in insect biology and control, but all were treated to an incredible potpourri of Caribbean agriculture. We advisedly selected Ocho Rios, Jamaica, as the site for the first meeting because of the Jamaicans' desire to participate, the relevance of their agriculture to other areas of the Caribbean, the relative political neutrality and security of the country, and the availability of required logistical services. Aesthetic appeal also was important, along with a diversity of associated activities such as field trips to see crops and their associated harmful and beneficial insects, natural sites for collecting insects, and existing entomological collections and expertise. Our ambitious objectives for this pioneering meeting were to strengthen professional relationships with colleagues in entomology and plant protection, foster collaboration among Caribbean, Latin American, and U.S. scientists, encourage the exchange of scientific information on tropical and subtropical entomology as it impinges on agricultural production and product protection, expose practitioners to the technical problems and singular opportunities associated with developing tropical agriculture, and ultimately evaluate the Caribbean Conference and determine if others should be held. From the outset, we felt that the potential pay-offs of such a meeting could be enormous.

We were welcomed to the island on Tuesday morning, August 5, by Dr. Osmond Tomlinson, Custos of St. Ann Parish including Ocho Rios, who piqued our curiosity about current and historical associations among countries that lie within or border the Caribbean. This provocative introduction, the keynote address, and four invitational papers preceded a symposium on the "Biology and Control of Coffee Pests" organized and presided over by Ms. Janice Reid of Jamaica. Topics included the coffee berry borer, other pests of coffee, and both chemical and biological control. Submitted papers on crop protection moderated by Dr. Gary Leibee followed describing the coffee leafminer in Puerto Rico; pink bollworm in Peru; mites in Central America and the West Indies; the potato tuber moth in Venezuela; Liriomyza, weevils, fruit flies, and insecticide testing in Florida; and cultural and chemical control of bean slug in Honduras. The afternoon was consumed by concurrent sessions with Dr. Russ Mizell's urban entomology and Dr. Emil Moherek's crop protection papers opposite those on citrus and medical entomology moderated by Dr. Bob Bullock and Dr. Arshad Ali, respectively. The exceptionally wide range of subjects were presented by speakers from Guadeloupe, Canada, Jamaica, Cayman Islands, and the U.S. The traditional "Behavioral Ecology" symposium produced by Dr. Jim Lloyd and "Student Paper Contest" officiated by Dr. Nan-yo Su on Wednesday were accompanied by poster exhibits and Dr. Everett Mitchell's symposium on the "Use of Pheromones in Tropical Crops". Thursday morning was devoted to "Biological Control" under Dr. Fred Bennett and "Crop Protection in Small Farm Systems" with Dr. Keith Andrews. Of the 98 non-student papers listed in the program, 33 were from other than U.S. with participation by a total of 14 countries.

One of the highlights of the meeting was a Thursday afternoon and evening "Citrus Tour" organized by Dr. Joe Knapp and conducted by Dr. Villi Bent. We traveled south through the central highlands of Middlesex to groves near Linstead. There we gathered in the field to meet Mr. Walter van Whervin, the Ministry of Agriculture's Chief of Plant Protection. Others present from Jamaica included Mr. David McConnell (Chair-
man, United Estates Limited), Mr. Mark McConnell (Managing Director, United Estates Limited), Mr. Robert Clarke (Manager, Worthy Park Farms), Mr. Winston Miller (Manager, Winston A. B. Miller, Ltd.), Mr. Ken Newman (Managing Director, Wakefield Farms, Ltd.), Mr. S. S. Stons (Project Manager, Citrus Rehabilitation Scheme), Mr. Crook (Expatriate Advisor), Mr. L. A. Bell (Extension & Research Officer), Mr. Amir (Expatriate Advisor, World Bank Fund), Mr. W. E. Tavares (Field Manager, United Estates, Ltd.), and Mr. L. V. Bowie (Ass’t. Field Manager, United Estates, Ltd.). After this brief but impressive ceremony, the owners (David, Peter, Stuart and Mark McConnell) showed us fields of orange trees, sugarcane, and coconut palms. Among other things, they explained cultural practices and experiments designed to control the citrus root weevil. Our next stop was a nursery for citrus and tropical fruit, such as guava and passionfruit, that supplied the plants for new groves. Finally, we entered the St. Thomas-Ye-Vale Valley that had such a severe infestation of citrus root weevils that we were able to collect specimens merely by walking around the trees. On the way home, to our surprise and delight, our hosts treated us to a veritable feast of delicate meat pies and pastry served with hand-squeezed orange and tropical fruit juices. The tour was enjoyed and appreciated by all as a special experience in agriculture, science, natural history, and Jamaican hospitality.

At the traditional “Bull Session”, we had an opportunity to ask those in attendance to fill out a brief questionnaire and carry on a rather lengthy discussion about how they would evaluate this first international venture. In summary, the group responding there (and later) voiced overwhelming support for the Florida Entomological Society to continue to hold periodic meetings in the Caribbean Basin. Instead of every 5 years, most felt that a 3 year schedule was even better.

It occurred to us that most of the stated objectives of the Caribbean Conference were accomplished and that this success should be documented. Therefore, we assembled the keynote address, opening invitational papers and a listing of “Latin American Entomological Serials” into a single unit for publication in Florida Entomologist. Dr. Hugh Popomo put in perspective the commonality of agriculture in countries that share the Caribbean, Dr. Chelston Brathwaite identified the primary agricultural institutions of the Caribbean and briefly discussed the functions of each, efforts to effectively monitor and control hazardous chemical waste in Florida, a relevant problem for other areas of the Caribbean, were described by Drs. Dan Shankland & Herb Nigg, and an international “crisis” in pesticide development, production, and regulation in developing countries was exposed by Dr. Bill Hollis. The serials list was compiled by Ms. Ann King. We sincerely thank all the participants for their contributions to this first international Caribbean Conference on Entomology.

C. S. Barfield and N. C. Leppla
Local Arrangements Committee