

Panel 5. Pollination Panelist Biographies

Tom Davenport

University of Florida, TREC
18905 SW 280 St., Homestead, FL 33031
Tel.: (305) 246-7019
tldav@gnv.ifas.ufl.edu

My research interests in reproductive physiology of tropical fruit trees include flowering and fruit set mechanisms in citrus, mango, lychee, longan, carambola, and avocado. I have focused on avocado pollination because of its potential impact on fruit set and the disparity from classic dogma that the results in Florida have displayed. My research has determined that in humid climates, self-pollination is the norm in avocado flowers with pollen transfer usually occurring within flowers during the second floral opening. It leads to the conclusion that although the avocado has evolved an elegant mechanism to promote outcrossing, self-pollination is also available to perpetuate the species, depending upon environmental conditions.

Elizabeth Fetscher

Dept. of Biology, University of California
Riverside, CA 92521
annef@mail.ucr.edu

I am a postdoctoral researcher who will be conducting an experiment comparing the avocado-pollination efficacy of two honey bee races, Italian and Carniolan, in the coming months. My involvement in this project marks my debut in avocado research. My research interests include plant-pollinator interactions and the evolution of floral characters, particularly the relative placement of stigmata and anthers within hermaphroditic flowers and temporal patterns of floral sex expression.

Shmuel Gazit

Department of Horticulture, Faculty of Agriculture
The Hebrew University of Jerusalem
P.O. Box 12, Rehovot 76100, Israel
Tel.: 972-8-9481090
gazit@agri.huji.ac.il

Reuben Hofshi

Del Rey Avocado Co.
1260 S. Main St., Fallbrook, CA 92028
Tel.: (760) 728-8325
rhofshi@cts.com

Reuben Hofshi is a California grower and packer who is interested in innovation and sharing of information through international collaboration. He plans to promote modern avocado horticulture among indigenous populations. He is particularly interested in the concepts of high density planting, making clonal propagation economical, pollination and increasing productivity through innovative farming practices. He is currently the Chair of the Production Research Committee.

Gad Ish-Am

Kibbutz Eilon

D.N. Western Galilee, Israel 22845

Tel.: 972-4-985-8272

isham@agri.huji.ac.il

Gad Ish-Am has worked on improving avocado fruit productivity through the management of the European honey bee for numerous years. He has published several papers on increasing avocado fruit set through the proper use of the honey bee and the planting of avocado pollenizer varieties. More recently he has investigated the potential use of the bumblebee to supplement the honey bee for enhancing avocado pollination. He has also participated in the search for the native pollinator of the avocado in Mexico and Central America with Dr. Shmuel Gazit and others. It is hoped that alternative pollinators of the avocado may be found and introduced to further supplement the use of the European honey bee.