



Introducing Michael Hardigan to the HCRU

Michael Hardigan & Jayden Christman



Michael Hardigan, our new post-doc!

My background is in plant breeding and genetics research, and I have a significant interest in using genomic technologies for accelerating variety development of small fruit species. I received my Bachelor's degree studying applied horticulture at Michigan State University, and later obtained a Ph.D. through the MSU Plant Breeding, Genetics and Biotechnology (PBGB) graduate program.



Don't be shy, come say hi Michael (or send them an email)!

During this time, I worked with the potato breeding program and gained experience generating hybrid populations, identifying novel germplasm carrying traits of interest, and developing self-compatible varieties to improve breeding efficiency. I also obtained genomics training, including genome sequence analysis and high-throughput molecular marker development. These tools were used to identify genes controlling key

agronomic traits in elite potato cultivars, such as photoperiod-induced flowering.

I have spent the last three years as a postdoctoral research scientist in the public strawberry breeding program at the University of California, Davis. Here I contributed to the development of molecular tools needed for introducing genomic prediction into a traditional strawberry breeding pipeline.

Our goal was to improve selection efficiency for disease resistance and fruit quality. I helped develop the first octoploid reference genome of strawberry, and used it to study the genetics of day-neutral flowering.



Michael out in the field!

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