



HORT CROPS
RESEARCH



Pacific West Area – Horticultural Crops Research Units
Corvallis, OR

Thank you Dr. Inga Zasada for your service as RL!

Author: Jerry Weiland, Carolyn Scagel, Jungmin Lee, and Walt Mahaffee

Questions? Email walt.mahaffee@usda.gov



Dr. Inga Zasada

Dr. Zasada has been a Research Plant Pathologist (Nematologist) at the USDA-ARS Horticultural Crops Research Unit (HCRU) in Corvallis, Oregon since 2008. She was the Research Leader (RL) for HCRU and later Horticultural Crops Disease and Pest Management Research Unit (HCDPMRU) since 2020. She returned to being a full time Nematologist in October 2023 and continues to serve the small fruit, potato, and nursery industries.

While RL, Inga oversaw a >\$4.5 M increase in Congressional appropriations for the unit, oversaw the opening of five new positions (blueberry breeding, precision viticulture, small fruit weed science, bioinformatics, and small fruit pathology), hired four new scientists (Drs. Devin Rippner, Claire Luby*, Michael Hardigan, and Dimitre Mollov), distributed >\$3 million in funds to support small fruit research through the NWCSFR, improved local facilities, and guided the unit through the COVID pandemic. She was also instrumental in relocating the fruit chemistry program from Parma, ID to Corvallis, OR, and in splitting HCRU containing 17 scientists into two units to ease administrative burden, the HCDPMRU (8 scientists) and the Hort. Crops Production and Genetic Improvement Research Unit (9 scientists). While serving as RL, she also served as the president for the Society of Nematologists and published in *Nature*.



Dr. Walt Mahaffee

We thank Inga Zasada for her leadership these past 3 years and welcome Dr. Walt Mahaffee as the acting RL for HCDPMRU!

**Luby is now an assistant professor at Montana State Univ.*