



Meet an MPRINT Scientist



Virginia Ferris

Virginia is an alumna of Wellesley College (B.A.) and Cornell University (M.S. and Ph.D.), and has been a Purdue faculty member since 1965. She does research in applied nematology (management of important plant parasitic species) and basic nematology (systematics of nematodes in natural and disturbed habitats). Both interests have converged on the study of the important agricultural pest, soybean cyst nematode (SCN), and its relatives.

She is involved in an ongoing project with J. Faghihi, of Purdue's Department of Entomology, and MPRINT's Rick Vierling that utilizes molecular markers and phenotypic analysis for development of highly adapted SCN-resistant germplasm for breeders, as well as the cloning and characterization of important SCN-resistance genes. This work has been supported by USDA-NRI and by commodity groups. Her study of systematics and relationships among nematodes led to an interest in acquiring molecular data, first by means of 2-D PAGE protein patterns with MPRINT's Larry Murdock and later through DNA sequence with other colleagues.

The National Science Foundation is supporting her long-term project in comparative genomics and phylogenetics of nematodes using molecular data. To carry out this project on a global basis, she actively collaborates with colleagues in Russia, Estonia, Sweden, Italy, Israel, India, and other parts of the world where cyst nematodes occur.

Some MPRINT Science

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Ferris, V. R., J. M. Ferris, and J. Faghihi. (1991) Biological diversity from the perspective of molecular biology. Pp 71-76 in *The Unity of Evolutionary Biology*, E.C. Dudley, ed., Dioscorides Press, The Netherlands.



Anika Sabo, graduate student in molecular systematics, works with Virginia.

Virginia swims, reads two daily newspapers, and is a lifelong fan of the music of Mozart and the novels of Jane Austin.