

Who's Who in the Administration Team



Amy Iezzoni

When she's not conducting RosBREED business, she can be found in the orchard under a cherry tree.



Audrey Sebolt



Joan Schneider

Amy Iezzoni (Michigan State University), project director, was chosen to lead RosBREED because she successfully led the Rosaceae Community in the writing of our White Paper when she was Chair of the U.S. Rosaceae Genetics, Genomics, and Breeding Executive Committee in 2006. Amy has been a tart cherry breeder for more than 20 years, a mentor to more than 12 graduate students, and has published more than 80 peer-reviewed journal articles. In addition, with prior and ongoing USDA-AFRI funding, she was the first specialty crop breeder in the U.S. to begin to utilize Pedigree-Based Analysis. This effort led to her group identifying a major fruit size gene region in cherry that is this newsletter's featured "Jewel in the Genome" (page 10). Amy has also developed with her collaborator at Ohio State University, Dr. Esther van der Knaap, a set of Rosaceae markers that are being used as Rosaceae-wide anchor markers.

Amy's responsibilities as project director include budget oversight and keeping the cogs of the RosBREED wheels well greased. Amy leads monthly teleconference calls with the nine RosBREED Team Leaders to monitor activities and provide input. She also attends numerous conferences to maintain relationships with RosBREED's Advisory Panel Members, allied scientists, matching partners, and collaborators. At these meetings, she informs the community of RosBREED's objectives and progress. Amy is assisted by her two project assistants, who are partially funded through RosBREED. Audrey Sebolt is the project assistant for communications and Joan Schneider is the project assistant for budgets.

Audrey Sebolt has been Amy's research assistant for 10 years and is involved in the field aspects of RosBREED, as Amy is also one of the 12 RosBREED demonstration breeders. Audrey's project assistant responsibilities include assisting with the organization of conferences and workshops, proofing project reports, recording meeting minutes, and editing presentations. She also assists the Extension Team leader Cholani Weebadde with newsletters, attending local conferences, and the development of handouts and brochures.

Joan Schneider comes to the project from MSU's Contract and Grants Office, where she worked for 25 years. Her experience has already proved to be invaluable as RosBREED has 11 subawards and must meet and document 1:1 matching funding requirements. Joan states, "After working with research funding solely from the contractual angle for so many years, it is really enlightening to be involved in such a vast and far-reaching program. Since I am not a scientist, I appreciate the opportunity to be that much closer to the science of RosBREED and know that I can contribute to the success of the program."