Other Projects in the Early Stages of Development

Palm Leaf Skeletonizer: Project Participants: K. Godfrey, F. W. Howard (University of Florida, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida), and D. Kellum (Agricultural Commissioner's Office, San Diego, California). The palm leaf skeletonizer [*Homaledra sabalella* Chambers (Lepidoptera: Coleophoridae] was identified from samples of palm fronds from private residences in San Diego county in 2000. This insect is native to Florida and feeds exclusively on palms. In Florida, biological control maintains densities of this insect well below economic levels. Therefore, a project was initiated to identify and import appropriate biological control agents for this insect. A survey of the natural enemies attacking palm leaf skeletonizer began in 2002 in Florida. From this survey, the following parasites were tentatively identified: *Phytomyptera* spp. (Diptera: Tachinidae); *Conura* sp. (Hymenoptera: Chalcididae); *Horismenus* nr. *ignotus* Burks (Hymenoptera: Eulophidae); *Arachnophaga costalis* Gahan, *Brasema* spp. (Hymenoptera: Eupelmidae); *Goniozus nigrifemur* Ashmead, and *G. scitulus* Evans (Hymenoptera; Bethylidae). In addition, Dr. Kellum traveled to Florida to learn about the palm leaf skeletonizer and its parasites.

Citrus Root Weevil: Project Participants: K. Godfrey, E. Grafton-Cardwell (University of California (UC), Riverside, Kearney Agricultural Center, Parlier, California), C. McCoy (University of Florida, Lake Alfred, Florida), J. Pena (University of Florida, Homestead, Florida), and R. Luck (UC, Riverside, California). The citrus root weevil [*Diaprepes abbreviatus* (L.) (Coleoptera: Curculionidae)] is a serious threat to the citrus and nursery industries in California. This weevil has been intercepted numerous times in shipments of plants to California with the most recent interception occurring in 2001. Because of the threat from this weevil, funding was obtained from the UC Exotic Pests and Diseases Research Program to educate producers as to what to expect from this weevil when it becomes established in California and to develop suitable biological control agents for this insect. During 2002, three workshops were held in Temecula, Tulare, and Ventura to educate producers. Dr. McCoy and Dr. Pena traveled to California to speak at the workshops. In addition, an educational booklet and web site were developed for use in the workshops. Studies are also underway in Florida to identify strains of fungi and an efficient delivery system that could result in epizootics in the adult weevil population. Egg parasites of the weevil are also being studied to determine their biologies, the best methods to rear large numbers of the parasites and the most efficient method for field release and establishment.