Welcome Back Aggies!

The AGGIE AGENDA “Welcome Back Students” Edition

September 2011

We congratulate our summer graduates (see article). Another semester is underway and it looks like our student numbers are level, following a big jump last year (departmental enrollment table).

We have had a very active late summer with many drought issues to address, beginning of classes, ASA,CSSA, SSSA in Texas, getting our clubs and judging teams going, moving our new curriculum and majors through the process, field days, and national focus meetings where we are leaders in directing the future of science. It will be a great time to celebrate our successes in these ventures when we get together for the Annual Tailgate event in Wellborn (see details on the web and on page 13). Tami Hons is looking for all the great volunteers she can find. All faculty, former faculty, staff and students are also invited to a tailgate three hours before each home game on the North side of HEEP – please let Judy Young know by the Friday before each game if you are planning to attend. We will have one tailgate on October 29th, where we will be joining the College of Ag Development Council at the new Ag and Life Sciences Building.

Since the last newsletter I have had the opportunity to Chair the CSSA Science Policy Committee and establish a focus area on bioenergy, which will include participants from A&M on the writing team. I also worked to develop a call for proposals for the Southern Regional aflatoxin group and will be engaged in the review process in the coming days. This program is unique in that it encourages regional participation by pooling corn check-off dollars dedicated to aflatoxin research across several impacted states. I was able to participate in the retirement reception for Dr. Gerald Evers in Overton and we wish him the best in his retirement.
A Word from the Department Head

participated in the Feed the future Steering committee which coordinated the International Working Conference for AgriLife which will take place October 6 and 7. Please plan to participate in this conference if possible as it will shed light on future international activities that we might play a leading role in. We were able to complete the hiring process for a new turf ecologist and I am pleased to announce that Dr. Ben Wherley will be joining our faculty here at College Station on October 1. Please plan to say hi at the Turf Field Day on October 5. I also served on the reallocation planning team for the College and we are now participating in attempting to provide funding for enhanced experiential learning as part of our new curriculum. Dr. Todd Baughman will be leaving at the end of the month for a new position as director of the new Oklahoma Center at Ardmore, Ok, which will focus on bioenergy crops and linkage with the Noble foundation.

You may note a little activity during the next few months on third and sixth floor as we have received the go-ahead for some funding for renovation of labs vacated by soil testing.

The Texas A&M Invitation Golf Tournament is rapidly approaching with the tee time set for Friday September 30th, around noon. I hope that many of you will be able to participate in a portion of this event that supports our turf research and extension program. We are fortunate that this year it will be part of the festivities in preparation for the Arkansas game and will be at Bear Creek Golf Club in Irving, Texas. Register at http://invitation.tamu.edu.

Big thanks to all that played a role in the Departmental Tenure and Promotion process. Special kudos to Dr. David Stelly who served as chairman and Judy Young who makes it all happen, but also each member of the committee, mentors and applicants. There are few decisions more important to the department and I want to congratulate everyone on completion of a fair, transparent and conscientious effort.

Come Tailgate With Soil and Crop!

The Soil and Crop Sciences Dept. will hold tailgate parties prior to home football games this fall. Tents will be set up on the north lawn of the Heep Center, next to lot 68.

Please RSVP to Judy Young by noon on Friday if you plan to attend.

Win or lose, we'll have a great time.

Join us for great time!

We’re on the web: soilcrop.tamu.edu
As another fall semester is underway, we have many new faces in addition to those returning, as our enrollment continues to keep pace with our graduating seniors. As always, there are some things to remember that will make life easier for all of us.

**Degree Application:** The last day to apply for a degree to be awarded in December is Friday, September 30. Go to [http://graduation.tamu.edu/applica.html](http://graduation.tamu.edu/applica.html) for details. Feel free to check with me often to make sure your degree evaluation is clear. If you are taking a course elsewhere that will not be final by graduation, you can still walk the stage, but will not receive your diploma until TAMU receives your final transcripts.

**Preregistration:** Remember to preregister for spring classes. Preregistration will be from Nov. 17 through Dec. 6, and you should receive an e-mail well before then detailing when your 48 hour period will occur. Please make an appointment with me to discuss your spring classes before that 48 hour period so you don’t have to scramble to register before your registration window expires. Walk-ins are difficult to accommodate during the hectic days of preregistration and students with appointments get priority.

**Q-drops:** The last day for these is Friday, Nov. 4. Come to my office, 217 Heep, to fill out the form and make sure you are eligible.

**Help with classes:** The Student Learning Center offers Supplemental Instruction (SI) and tutoring free to TAMU students. Check them out at [http://slc.tamu.edu/](http://slc.tamu.edu/). If you are having difficulties, please let me know, as believe it or not, I might have some useful ideas. Don’t suffer in silence, and don’t forget to stop in and tell me if you are doing well, also.

**Student worker positions:** Check with our Job Board, [http://soilcrop.tamu.edu/job-board.html](http://soilcrop.tamu.edu/job-board.html) and look for notices near the elevators to see what student worker opportunities are available. Let me know if you have a specific area of interest.

**Internships:** I keep a notebook in my office containing internship opportunities we receive, and I’ve already started receiving them for next summer, so don’t wait until the last minute if you would like some real world experience that could be very beneficial to your career.

Lastly, please consider getting involved with our Agronomy Club and Turf Club. They post notices around the Heep Center when a meeting is approaching.
Congratulations Graduates!

Summer 2011 Graduates:

SCM – Soil & Crop Management, TMO – Turf Management
PSO – Plant Science

Christopher James Hooper – BS Agronomy – SCM
Brandon Scott Jones – BS Agronomy – TMO
Laura Jean Kolb – BS Agronomy – TMO
Weston Bryce York – BS Agronomy – TMO
Jeffery Alan Savage – BS Plant and Environmental Soil Science – PSO

Terry Joseph Felderhoff – MS – PLBR
David Kyle Whitmire – MS – PLBR
Kevin Lee Wagner – PhD – AGRO
Yujin Wen – PhD – AGRO
Meredith Kate Steele (Bilek) – PhD – SOSC

In Memory of Former Students

Jay R. Youngs ’54
Agronomy
Pittsburgh, PA

James R. Sterling ’42
Agronomy
Texarkana, TX

Winton Guy Covey ’59
Soil Physics
San Francisco, CA
Brazilians scientists visit the Department of Soil and Crop Sciences

A tour of Brazilian scientists was organized by Luis Avila e and José Noldin and was partially financed by Dow Agrosciences. The local site visit was coordinated by Scott Senseman.

Undergraduate –
Agronomy (AGRO) – 145
Plant & Environmental Soil Science (PSSC) – 4
Total - 149

Graduate –
Agronomy (AGRO) – 18 MS, 8 PhD
Plant Breeding (PLBR) – 15 MS, 27 PhD
Soil Science (SOSC) - 11 MS, 17 PhD
Food Science (FSTC) – 1 MS, 2 PhD
Molecular & Environmental Plant Science (MEPS) – 9 MS, 12 PhD
Water Management & Hydrology (WMHS) – 2 MS, 1 PhD
Total – 123

Grand total enrollment: 272
Dr. Wayne Smith is the Associate Head and Graduate Coordinator. Visit with Dr. Smith about your graduate program and other issues related to Soil and Crop Sciences.

Mark Hall is our undergraduate advisor for students who major or minor in Agronomy and Plant and Environmental Soil Science. If undergraduate students need assistance with registration or advice about classes, Mark is available to help.

Glenda Kurten works primarily with our graduate students, assisting with registration and student financial issues. She also can direct students to the Office of Graduate Studies, International Student Services and other offices that can assist grad students with particular issues.

May We Help You?

1. Plan ahead, arrive early and stay late.
2. Mark your territory close but not too close to the port-o-potty.
3. Dress to impress and support your team.
4. It is the duty of all tailgaters to be kind, hospitable and courteous to your fellow tailgater without regard to race, religion or sports team affiliation.
5. Always bring more food and drink than you intend to consume. Don’t be “The Moocher”.
6. No cooler is too big nor does any grill have too many BTU’s.
7. Always keep the griller of the meat happy with frequent beer refills.
8. Always offer food and (non-alcoholic) beverages to parking lot police officers to endear yourself to them for later.
10. Eat, drink and be merry tailgating.

PACK IT IN, PACK IT OUT!

We’re on the web: soilcrop.tamu.edu
Kathy Ferguson works with the Soil and Crop Sciences and MEPS graduate students. New graduate students need to see her for their orientation packets, to request access to our server or to be assigned a desk in our graduate offices. She also works closely with Mark Hall on the departmental scholarship process and can assist students in making contact with their class professors.

Frances Mutscher provides clerical support for classes in our department. Students can check with her if they need to get with their class professor. She also will provide support for the student organizations in our department.

Jenna Haby joined Soil and Crop Sciences at the beginning of the fall semester as a student worker in the instruction office. She will help direct visitors to the right person in the instruction office and will help with clerical support of our SCSC classes.

Mike Foster Receives AAIC Award

Congratulations to Michael A. Foster (Research Scientist, Texas A&M University) on receiving this year’s 2011 Anson E. “Tommy” Thompson Career Achievement Award. This award is given to the person who throughout his or her career has made significant contributions to the development and/or utilization of industrial crops and/or products. Mike’s forty plus year career in industrial crops is highlighted by many milestones associated with promoting industrial crops. His service to the Association for the Advancement of Industrial Crops is exemplary and includes many leadership roles: secretary, division chair (Guayule and Natural Rubber, Natural Rubber and Resins), president, conference chair, representative to CAST, and editorial board member for Industrial Crops and Products. Mike also worked with lesquerella and several oilseeds (castor, canola, cotton, and safflower) for adaptation to west Texas. Mike’s leadership style coupled with his scientific skills has resulted in a career bursting with accomplishments that broke down barriers and resulted in industry changing breakthroughs for enhancing production of industrial crops.
Awards - Congratulations

Soil and crop science societies to recognize Texas A&M University faculty, students - By: Kay Ledbetter

Three individuals from the Texas A&M University soil and crop sciences department will receive awards at the American Society of Agronomy, Crop Science Society of America and Soil Science Society of America annual meetings Oct. 16-19 in San Antonio.

The awards and Texas A&M recipients are: Crop Science Society of America Fellow – Dr. Wayne Smith; Hank Beachell Future Leader Scholarship – Paige Graves; and the J. Fielding Reed Scholarship and the National Society of Consulting Soil Scientist Scholarship – Heather Watson.

Smith will join an elite group, as members of the society nominate worthy colleagues based on their professional achievements and meritorious service. Only 3 percent of the society’s active and emeritus members elected Fellow.

Smith is a professor, associate department head and plant breeder in the department. He earned his bachelor’s and master’s degrees from Auburn University, and doctorate from the University of Tennessee.

He teaches three courses and has directed 37 graduate students. His research focuses on cotton fiber quality improvement. He has released 121 improved germplasm lines and four cultivars. Smith is active in the Crop Science Society of America and the Beltwide Cotton Conferences.

“Dr. Smith has provided leadership in the cotton breeding world and this recognition – the highest by CSSA – is a tribute to the impact of his program,” said Dr. David Baltensperger, professor and head of the soil and crop sciences department.

Graves is a graduate student at Texas A&M University in the department of horticultural sciences. She earned a bachelor’s degree from Texas A&M in agronomy. Her research focuses primarily on root growth of pecan seedlings in response to nitrogen fertilizer rates.

The Hank Beachell Future Leader Scholarship, which Graves was awarded, is funded through the Agronomic Science Foundation. It was established in recognition of Henry A. Beachell’s commitment to advancing the knowledge of agriculture through his work in rice breeding and development. The purpose is to expand the agricultural knowledge of undergraduate students participating in activities that enhance their university studies.

Watson, who is picking up two awards, is a senior agronomy major at Texas A&M. She will graduate in December and plans to pursue a master’s degree in soil science. She has an undergraduate research project in soil physics working with electromagnetic induction to identify subsurface variation of soil properties associated with gilgai, a soil topographic feature associated with some soil types in Texas, Australia and Africa.

Her first award, the J. Fielding Reed Scholarship, is presented to an outstanding undergraduate senior pursuing a career in soil or plant sciences. It was established in recognition of Reed’s life-long commitment to advancing the knowledge of agriculture through his work in soil science and natural resources, and his passion for educating students. It is funded through the Agronomic Science Foundation.

Watson’s second award, the National Society of Consulting Soil Scientists Scholarship, was established to encourage undergraduate students to major in soil science degree programs. The scholarship recruits top quality students into nationally recognized soil science programs to meet the expanding and diverse needs of this field.

Congratulations to Edinalvo Camargo on receiving 2nd place for his poster presentation at the American Chemical Society Agrochemical Division Poster Contest.
HELPFUL HINTS FROM THE COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE

Sending large or confidential files without using email.

The new Exchange email system has a 48MB size limit on emails. This includes the sum of the content of the message and all attachments. To get around this limitation, try using FileX at https://filex.tamu.edu/.

Filex is designed for transferring large files or files that contain confidential or sensitive information. Simply upload files to a Filex folder, and add the email addresses of your recipients. Filex will then send an email to your recipients with a link to the file. Use the encryption feature to securely send confidential or sensitive information. The maximum file size is 2 GB.

The basics of using Outlook are fairly easy to figure out without any instruction but there are many other features there that will help make your communications and daily organization a lot easier.

Check out the following links for a collection of tips created by the Agrlife IT dept. as well as general info on the migration project and service offerings.

http://first-call.tamu.edu/migration.php
http://agrilife.org/it/updates/
http://agrilife.org/it

- Scott -
The mission of the Texas A&M Agronomy Society (“Agronomy Club”) is to increase and disseminate knowledge concerning soils, crops and the environment as well as the conditions affecting them. We seek to foster a spirit of cooperation and mutual helpfulness among students in Agronomy and allied fields, and to provide an opportunity for a wider acquaintance with agronomic workers and experiences within the fields of Soil and Crop Sciences. An important part of our mission is to provide leadership opportunities and training for officers and members of the T.A.M.U. Agronomy Society.

The Texas A&M Agronomy Society (“Agronomy Club”) is looking forward to another active school year! We need your participation to keep our club a strong, vibrant and nationally recognized chapter of SASES (Students of Agronomy, Soils and Environmental Sciences) the national student organization affiliated with the Soil Science Society of America, Crop Science Society of America and the American Society of Agronomy. One of our first activities for the fall semester will be a trash pickup along south Longmire Drive which we are responsible for as part of College Station’s Adopt-A-Street program. We will be planning for participation in the upcoming national SASES meetings in San Antonio, TX., and conducting tailgating sales of our caps, shirts and koozies to raise funds. We also have an active educational program for students at the Still Creek Ranch Home for Boys and Girls. There are lots of opportunities for social interactions and community service as part of our regular activities.

Please watch for the announcement for our regularly scheduled meeting of the Agronomy Society (Tuesday evenings, 5:30 PM, 440 Heep Center) and make it a point to come out and become an active member! Regular meetings will likely be held on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month during the fall semester. If you have any questions, please contact club President Dianna Fisher (dfisher2493@gmail.com) or Drs. Dave Zuberer or Steve Hague (DZuberer@ag.tamu.edu, SHague@ag.tamu.edu) club advisors. Hope to see you at a future meeting!
2011-2012 Officers

Ryan Heine-President
Bill Hardin-Vice President
Michael Frantzen-Treasurer
Garett Dishman- Secretary
Kyle McFarland-Member services

Club Advisors: Dr. David Chalmers and Dr. Richard White - both have their office in 233 Heep

This year the Aggie Turf Club has planned a number of activities for the semester and great speakers from many different parts of the turfgrass industry. For much of the Fall semester, students will be preparing to compete in the Golf Course Superintendents of America (GCSAA) 2011 Turf Bowl. As a GCSAA student chapter, students get the opportunity to go to the Golf Industry Show (Orlando FL from February 9-11) to compete in the 17th Annual GCSAA Collegiate Turf Bowl and network with industry leaders. The Turf Club would also like to send a group of students to the Sport Turf Managers Association (STMA) Skills Challenge in Austin Texas (January 11-15, 2011) so, if you are interested in Sports Turf, we would like to see you at our next meeting when the application will be handed out. We hope to see you there!

Look for postings of Turf Club meeting announcements, tailgates and activities.

If interested in taking a look at the club or joining visit with or e-mail:

Ryan Heine (Rheine5@yahoo.com)
Dr. White (rwhite@ag.tamu.edu),
Dr. Chalmers (dchalmers@tamu.edu)

Upcoming in early October - Travel Applications due for participation in GCSAA (Orlando) and STMA (Austin) conferences representing the Turf Club. Dates for team study sessions will also be arranged.

Take a look at the website - soon to be updated: http://turfclub.tamu.edu/
Faculty Advisory Committee

A subcommittee met on September 7th, to discuss and start the process of revising a new strategic plan based on a number of key considerations that include:

◆ Critical mass losses through departing support staff and VSP faculty
◆ New budget
◆ New opportunities that might provide Intellectual Property and Indirect Costs
◆ Thinking beyond traditional positions to be refilled
◆ Endowed chairs and professorships available

The subcommittee includes Larry Redmon, Seth Murray, Kevin McInnes, Terry Gentry, and Scott Senseman. We are in the process of formulating how this process might work and methodology that might be used. If any faculty have ideas, please share them with one of the subcommittee members.

- Scott Senseman
Tailgate Bash

Music by - Nolan Pick and the Sawdust Junkies

SOIL & CROP SCIENCES

TAILGATE BASH 2011

OCTOBER 14 th
The Night Before
AGGIES
vs. Baylor Game

BBQ BEER
LIVE MUSIC
DANCING

Tickets
$12 Per Person
$10 TAMU Students
$5 Children
10 and Under

Ticket Information:
979.845.3041
soilcrop.tamu.edu

Tickets go on sale October 1st

We’re on the web! http://soilcrop.tamu.edu - Ticket information 979-845-3041
Soil and crop science societies to recognize Texas A&M University faculty, students -

By: Kay Ledbetter

The Hank Beachell Future Leader Scholarship, which Graves was awarded, is funded through the Agronomic Science Foundation. It was established in recognition of Henry A. Beachell's commitment to advancing the knowledge of agriculture through his work in rice breeding and development. The purpose is to expand the agricultural knowledge of undergraduate students participating in activities that enhance their university studies.

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