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Department Head Notes
Mercifully, spring is almost upon us. After another tough winter in Tennessee and a few snow cancellations and delays, many of us are looking forward to the spring season. All of our faculty annual reviews are finished, and I would like to thank all of you for helping me by getting your materials uploaded. This period has been truly inspirational to see the types of activities and the accomplishments that our faculty have made during the year.

Our curriculum review has been coming along nicely. A
committee chaired by Dean Kopsell has been working hard with the guidance of Dave Schumann, professor in the Department of Marketing and Supply Chain Management in the Haslam College of Business. His expertise in this process has been invaluable. Thanks to their leadership and a cooperative committee, they have drafted a core curriculum in the department for the faculty to react to getting us toward a strong, modern, cohesive departmental curriculum. Our curriculum committee includes Kopsell, Andy Pulte, Brandon Horvath, Hem Bhandhari, David Butler, John Stier, Garry Menendez, Brad Collett, and Dennis Deyton. Thanks for all of your hard work and congratulations on the progress that you have made up to this point.

Our Departmental Strategic Planning Effort has culminated into a document that we have shared internally that will provide us with a roadmap moving forward. Our faculty have drafted a set of priority objectives to focus on during the next three years in response to our Program Review. These objectives will be intended to advance our 1) undergraduate programs, 2) graduate program, 3) research, 4) extension, as well as 5) general departmental issues. Thanks to all of the faculty that have helped us move this program forward and I look forward to gauging our progress this coming year.

We are also doing our best to connect to our students, alumni, and partners through social media. Cynthia Walker has worked with LinkedIn to provide us another avenue to connect with interested folks and to provide a student the opportunity to begin their career by creating a resume and profile for professional networking. We will be posting jobs in this forum to provide a base for our students and alumni to find employment so be please let us help you by connecting with us. Please see later in the newsletter how to connect.

Please note our upcoming events and key dates that pertain to our department.
It looks to be a busy spring season. Best wishes on your planned work this spring and safe travels.

Scott Senseman, Professor and Department Head, Plant Sciences
scottsenseman@tennessee.edu » Twitter @UTPSDeptHead »

Congratulations!

Congratulations to Jeneen Abrams who placed second in the Student Poster Competition at the National Soybean Breeder’s Workshop held February 16-19 in St. Louis, Missouri.

Greg Breeden was this year’s recipient of the Tennessee Turfgrass Associations Professional of the Year. Congratulations, Greg. Well deserved!
Several awards were presented to our students and faculty at the **Southern Weed Science Society (SWSS)** in January held in Savannah, Georgia. Congratulations to:

- **Jim Brosnan** - Outstanding Young Weed Scientist
- **Garrett Montgomery** - Outstanding MS Student in SWSS
- **Austin Scott** - First place oral MS presentation
- **Shawn Butler** - Second place oral MS presentation
- **Eric Reasor** - First place oral PhD presentation
- **Trevor Israel** - First place poster PhD presentation
Congratulations to Larry Steckel who received the Weed Science Society of America (WSSA) Outstanding Extension Award in February at the annual meeting in Lexington, Kentucky. Well deserved, Larry. Also, congratulations to Daniel Farnsworth who received an Undergraduate Research Award for his waste disposal system. Great job, Daniel!

New Additions to the Department Family


Special Thanks
It has been a tough winter, but our sidewalks and steps have been quickly cleaned even in the most brutal snow and ice storms. Our facilities personnel were the ones spending the night to get off to an early start the next day to keep everyone safe. Next time you see these guys, thank them for their help and service. Thank you folks!

Upcoming Events

**April 3** Spring Recess

**April 24** Classes End

**April 25** Tennessee Healthy Hardwoods, Forest Resources AgResearch and Education Center—Highland Rim Forest, Tullahoma
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<tr>
<th>Date/Span</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 27</td>
<td>Study Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 28-May 5</td>
<td>Final Exams</td>
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<td>May 6, 7, and 8</td>
<td>College Commencement Ceremonies</td>
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<td>May 7</td>
<td>Graduate Hooding</td>
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<td>June 16</td>
<td>Fruits of the Backyard, Middle Tennesse AgResearch Center, Spring Hill</td>
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<td>June 25</td>
<td>Tobacco, Beef and More, Highland Rim AgResearch Center, Springfield</td>
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<td>July 9</td>
<td>Summer Celebration, West Tennessee AgResearch Center, Jackson</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 4</td>
<td>Steak and Potatoes, Plateau AgResearch Center, Crossville</td>
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**Special Events**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>May 1</td>
<td>Garden Gala, UT Gardens, Knoxville</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 9-10</td>
<td>Blooms Days, UT Gardens, Knoxville</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 23</td>
<td>Summer Color (a green industry event), UT Gardens, Knoxville</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 25</td>
<td>Fall Gardeners' Festival, Plateau AgResearch Center, Crossville</td>
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DID YOU KNOW?

The 2014 soybean crop yield of nearly 4 billion bushels set a record, as did the average number of bushels per acre harvested (47.8). The majority of U.S. soybeans are turned into soybean meal to feed livestock and poultry. Iowa uses about 13 percent of the total meal produced or 3.9 million tons (USDA, United Soybean Board).

Support the Department of Plant Sciences

Your ongoing support is essential to our success. We have some young people who could be trained in our graduate program if we had more funds to pay stipends, tuition, and fees. Many grants do not support tuition and fees that our scientists are able to garner. There is a substantial need for future scientists in plant science related disciplines, particularly at the MS and PhD levels. Providing opportunities for young people is one of the best things that we do. If you can help us build on this, please visit advanceutia.com/advancePS to learn more about how you can make a difference.

Plant Sciences on the Go
Larry Steckel discusses the impact of weed resistance to herbicides to a captive audience of growers.

UT turfgrass students get prepared for the Sports Turf Management Associations (STMA) Field Expert Student Challenge in Denver, Colorado.
John Sorochan discusses shade management on turfgrass at the STMA Meeting in Denver, Colorado.

Jim Brosnan receives the 2015 Outstanding Young Weed Scientist Award at the 2015 SWSS Annual Meetings in Savannah, Georgia.
Tom Samples talks turfgrass and soils at the Tennessee Turfgrass Association Meeting in January.

Trade Show at the Tennessee Turfgrass Association Meeting in Franklin, Tennessee, in January.
Our plant sciences students and faculty had a strong week in Savannah, Georgia, for the Southern Weed Science Society Annual Meetings.
Tyson Raper organized a great Cotton Focus Meeting in Jackson, Tennessee, in February at the DoubleTree Inn. The event was well attended and the information was excellent. Great job, Tyson.
Natalie Bumgarner and Chris Cooper organized a great Extension Master Gardener Winter School in February as well. Thanks again, Chris, for keeping us going in our transition. And thanks, Natalie, for getting off to such a great start in your new role. This was an excellent event.
SWITCHGRASS III
Prairie & Native Grass International Conference

September 30th – October 2nd, 2015
Knoxville, TN

Conference Location:
Downtown Knoxville Hilton Hotel
501 West Church Ave. Knoxville, TN 37902

www.switchgrassconference.com
Hem Bhandari and Neal Stewart will be hosting a Prairie and Native Grass International Conference in Knoxville this fall (Click here for more information). The conference will focus on switchgrass as a dominant species of the tallgrass prairie and savannah ecosystems as well as dedicated lignocellulosic bioenergy feedstock, but, the conference will also include other species of the tallgrass prairie. Congratulations to Bhandari and Stewart for getting this conference to come to Knoxville.

Department of Plant Sciences LinkedIn Page

Here is a great way to stay in touch with our department’s alumni network! Add University of Tennessee Department of Plant Sciences as education to your LinkedIn profile. Click here to connect with us.

Plant Sciences Publications

In response to our county agents’ requests to learn more about the science that has been done in our department, we have compiled an impressive list of more than 100 peer-reviewed articles that our scientists have published in 2014. We also have several new Extension publications. Click here to view the list of our publications. If you have other requests of types of articles that you would like to see, please let us know and we will be happy to provide a link.