Department Head Notes

It has been another busy and productive fall in the department. Many of our faculty, staff, and students have been busy harvesting and getting ready for meetings. Many of our faculty attended the Agronomy Society/Soil Science Society/Crop Science Society Meetings in Long Beach, California, in November. There were some great presentations from our students and scientists. We were well represented.

As a result of our Program Review, which occurred in September, our faculty engaged in a strategic planning effort held at the University Conference Center on November 21, 2014. The session was moderated by William J. Taylor Professor in Business David Schumann of the Haslam College of Business and the Department of Marketing and Supply Chain Management. Schumann did an excellent job in keeping our focus on the main objectives. During this session, the faculty identified key priorities that we will be working toward as we move forward in the new year. The session was well attended and the level of engagement was excellent. I cannot thank the faculty and Dr. Schumann enough for their attendance and engagement during this process. We have a great deal of work ahead of us this coming
year, but we will also soon have a roadmap to guide us as we move forward.

Reporting season appears to be upon us. Please see upcoming events and key dates that pertain to our department. As we approach the holidays, please take some time to enjoy yourselves and your families as well as reflect on our collective good fortunes. We are truly fortunate to have the opportunities that we have to work and contribute feeding and functionally beautifying the world. Thank you all for what you do for the Department of Plant Sciences. Have a safe and happy holiday season.

Scott

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

Congratulations!

FACULTY AND STAFF HONORED

Congratulations to Debbie and Lee Ellis after a career of outstanding service to the Institute of Agriculture and the Department of Plant Sciences. Lee has been a mainstay at the Organic Research Unit for many years and Debbie has been a cornerstone of Vince Pantalone's soybean breeding program. All of this service culminated in the "Ellis" soybean variety that Pantalone has bred which is now the standard US Department of Agriculture high yield check for variety trials. High praise and well deserved. Here is to many years of health and happiness in your retirement, Debbie and Lee.
Congratulations to Amy Fulcher for receiving the New Extension Worker Award in UT Extension at the Extension Conference held in Nashville. Great job and well deserved, Amy!

Time Flies
Two of our people were honored recently at the UTIA Service Award ceremony on December 2.

Garry Menendez is an associate professor and a registered landscape architect. He received his MS degree in ornamental horticulture from UT and was recognized for his twenty-five years of service.

Cynthia Walker is our IT administrator. Cynthia has seen the history of our department evolve as she has evolved in her
expertise and service. She began her career in Comparative Animal Research at Oak Ridge but then transferred to the Department of Plant and Soil Sciences in 1982. She worked in laboratory analysis with several instruments while pursuing her MS in wildlife sciences prior to her aptitude for computers becoming apparent. She has been in the role of IT Administrator since the late 1990s. Cynthia was recognized for her thirty-five years of service during the ceremony.

Student Achievements

Congratulations to MS candidates Shawn Butler (plant pathology) and Austin Scott (plant sciences) for their award in the Boyd Venture Challenge. Shawn and Austin won $5,000 for their company, FarmSpec, to create a prototype of their Flex Roller Crimper technology.

Congratulations Graduates

Congratulations to our new graduates in Plant Sciences. Best wishes in your future endeavors, and please come back to see us.

BS in Plant Sciences
Christina Lynn Ash
Travis Hunter Ferrell
Chelsea Renai Johnson
Halee Kyle Ann Jean Jones
Eleanor Ivy Latham
Heather D. Lowery*
Greg Charles Meyer
Garrett Allen Montgomery
Brandon Michael Pedigo

Concentration
Landscape Design
Landscape Design
Biotechnology
Public Horticulture
Organic Production
Public Horticulture
Public Horticulture
Biotechnology
Horticulture Science and Production
Ruxin Tao

**MS in Plant Sciences**
- Whitney Desiree Crow
- Benjamin Lane Ford
- Mathew Christian Halter

**Master of Landscape Architecture**
- Angelike G. Angelopoulos
- Timothy Joseph Lysett

**Doctor of Philosophy**
- Jason Neil Burris
- Virginia Roseanna Sykes
- Matthew Scott Wiggins
- Wegi Aberra Wuddineh

*Summa Cum Laude*

**Landscape Design**

**Concentration**
- Weed Science
- Horticulture
- Plant Molecular Genetics

**Concentration**
- Landscape Architecture

**Concentration**
- Plant Molecular Genetics
- Plant Breeding
- Weed Science
- Plant Molecular Genetics

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**Special Thanks**

David Verbree left UT in November 2014. He has moved with his family to his wife’s hometown in Michigan and is working in the private sector in the area of computer programming. Verbree was doing a great job for us as an assistant professor studying irrigation and water issues in row crops. We thank him for his service and wish him the best as he moves forward in his new career opportunity. Best wishes, Dave!

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**Agronomy Society of America Meetings**
John Sorochan, students, and colleagues at the Agronomy Society of America Meetings in Long Beach, California, November 2014.

Faculty and students at our UTIA booth at the Agronomy Society of America.
Victoria Benelli presenting her work at the ASA Meetings in Long Beach, California.

Upcoming Events

**December 22-26** - Winter Holiday

**December 31** - Deadline for submitting contacts and impacts into SUPER

**January 1** - New Year's Day

**January 5-7** - Tennessee Turfgrass Association Meeting, Cool Springs, Tennessee [ttaonline.org/event-825662](http://ttaonline.org/event-825662)

**January 16** - Plant Sciences Faculty Meeting, 9:00 a.m., 410 Plant Biotech Building

**January 21-22** - Tennessee Soybean Promotion Board Meeting, Pigeon Forge, Tennessee
January 26-28 - Southern Weed Science Society Annual Meeting, Savannah, Georgia

February 9-12 - Weed Science Society of America Annual Meeting, Lexington, Kentucky

February 20 - Plant Sciences Faculty Meeting, 9:00 a.m., 410 Plant Biotech Building Sciences

February 26-27 - Master Gardener Winter School, Lane Agri-Park, Murfreesboro, Tennessee

March 16-20 - Spring Break

DID YOU KNOW?

One bale of cotton can produce 215 pairs of jeans.

Corn is used to produce over 1 billion gallons of ethanol each year.
One bushel of wheat yields sixty-four 1-pound loaves of bread.

Support Plant Sciences
Your ongoing support is essential to our success. Please visit tiny.utk.edu/advancePS to learn more about how you can make a difference.

Happy Holidays from the Department of Plant Sciences!

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