



# New Ground

The College of Agriculture and Technology Newsletter



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## FROM THE DESK OF THE INTERIM DEAN

This semester has been a whirlwind! It feels like just yesterday I was writing syllabi, meeting new freshmen, having the first faculty meeting and getting settled into my first fall semester as the Interim Dean of the College Agriculture and Technology. Now it's time to turn in semester grades, prepare for fall commencement and look forward to 2013 and a new semester! It's also time to congratulate ourselves on our accomplishments as a college. I hope you will take time to read the articles about our college and what's been happening with our students, faculty and alumni since the last newsletter.



Dr. Donald Kennedy,  
Interim Dean

For the fourth consecutive year, student enrollment in our college has increased! This a very positive trend and we are working diligently to sustain this growth. With the help of Lindsay Penn (BSA 2006), we reorganized our Ag and Tech Ambassador program and have been actively seeking opportunities to recruit prospective students at career and college fairs, FFA events and local high schools.

Our students continue to participate in leadership and career preparation activities. Because of the generous support of alumni, private donors and sponsors of the New Ground Classic Golf Tournament, we are able to fund travel for students who want to attend conferences and study tours. These trips expand our students' knowledge of agriculture and allow opportunities for them to network with employers and agricultural leaders.

Recently, the Agricultural Business program received the Provost Award for Retention. This award is evidence that the CoAT is committed to student retention. The Agricultural Business program's retention rate was 60% in comparison to the university average of 40%. I congratulate our Agricultural Business faculty—Mrs. Lori Fenner, Dr. Paul Armah, and Dr. Bert Greenwalt—for receiving this well deserved award!

Many of our faculty are actively involved in research and have been successful in obtaining competitive grants to fund their work. A three-year Department of Energy Bioenergy grant has helped increase the research capacity of our college and put us in a position to lead in bioenergy research and education in the mid-south. Recently, our bioenergy researchers were awarded a USDA National Institute Food and Agriculture grant to continue their work in bioenergy research and education.

The CoAT faculty recognizes the highly technical nature of today's agriculture and is committed to ensuring that our graduates are adequately trained to meet industry demands for well-rounded and highly skilled employees. One initiative is to expand and enhance student training in precision agriculture and technology. Our goal is to make this a premier program in the state and region.

In November, we initiated a national search for a permanent Dean and plan to interview candidates early in 2013. I am optimistic about what the future holds for Agriculture and Technology at stAte!

Go Red Wolves!

Dr. Donald Kennedy, Interim Dean

## Students Visit Industries in St. Louis

The Agribusiness Club, along with Collegiate Farm Bureau and the Plant Science Club, traveled to St. Louis, Missouri, for their annual study tour. Thirty students along with Dr. Bill Humphrey and Dr. Paul Armah made the trip on Oct. 25 and 26. The group left early Thursday, Oct. 25 and made its first stop at Anheuser Busch. The group was led on an hour tour of the brewery where students were able to see the process of how grain is transformed into multiple Anheuser Busch products. The group also had the opportunity to visit with the famous Anheuser Busch Clydesdales and tour their stables. Overall, the students enjoyed their time at Anheuser. Later that evening, students gathered to dine and enjoy the downtown St. Louis area.

Friday morning was an early start for the group. Students and faculty began their day at Bunge North America, where they were greeted with hospitality and breakfast before Bunge employees began their presentations. A panel spoke to students on the importance of internships and how to prepare for a career whether with Bunge or another company. They gave students tips on school, interviews, and how to stand out to an employer. Students enjoyed the panel because it was an informal setting where they felt comfortable and could ask candid questions. Bunge also sent the students away with a nice goodie bag that included a laundry bag and USB drive.

After a stop for lunch, the group continued its study tour with a visit to Monsanto's Creve Coeur Headquarters. Monsanto spoke to the group about internship possibilities and gave a brief introduction to the company. After the brief introduction of Monsanto and its global perspective, the group was taken on a tour of the facility. They were able to tour the chipper and see how they take samples from seeds to find genetic traits. Monsanto uses this genetic information for research so they are able to produce a better product. Monsanto also showed some of the products that they produce and some new products that they just patented and will be for sale in 2014. The company is leading the industry in genetics and the ability to produce great seeds and better feed the world. Students were really intrigued by everything that Monsanto had to offer and are eager to return next year.

All in all, the trip was a success. The group of thirty students that traveled to St. Louis was one of the largest groups that have ever participated in the study group. The Agribusiness Club plans to keep the trip on the agenda for many years to come and looks forward to working with other student organizations so that more students have the opportunity to participate in the study tour.

Megan Davis, Sr. Agribusiness major, Carlisle, Ark.



## Students Attend National FFA Convention and ATA Conclave

On Wednesday, October 24, Agricultural Education majors Kasey Sims, Jonathan Goodson and Ella Ellingson, along with their Ag Ed professor and ATA Advisor, Dr. David Agnew, attended the National FFA Convention and the National ATA Conclave in Indianapolis, Indiana. Thousands of FFA members with their advisors and hundreds of ATA members as well as other collegiate students from all across the country attended. ATA events included the Program of Excellence Contest, Parliamentary Procedure Contest, Quiz Bowl Contest, and Debate Contest. There were also educational and professional development seminars provided for the collegiate members. This year our Alpha Gamma Chapter participated in the Program of Excellence event. Winning teams or chapters received a plaque for their team and a check for \$50.00 or \$100.00 at the Awards Banquet. One of the awards this year was a Lincoln MIG welder given to the overall team winner in each event.

When not involved with ATA activities, students could participate in the career show that covered all aspects of the agricultural profession and take advantage of an FFA shopping mall with a large selection of western wear, FFA clothing and instructional information. The Teachers' World Workshops included topics on animal science, horticulture, hydroponics, photosynthesis, genetics, organic agriculture, food safety, groundwater contamination, and floral design - all demonstrated using creative strategies for engaging students in the classroom. Curriculum information was provided by many of the teacher workshop programs including an excellent one on hunger.

Friday morning the debate teams gave their pro and con views on continuing alternative certification for teachers in the agricultural field.

Our local ATA chapter and the dean's office assisted with financial expenses for the trip. ATA officers for 2012-13 are Cody Cornett-President, Lucas Anderson-Vice President, Cory Tyler-Secretary/Treasurer, Kasey Sims-Reporter. New members initiated this fall included Stephanie Barrett, Matt Loggains, and Kasey Sims.

Ella Ellingson, Agricultural Education major, Trumann, Ark.



Left to right: Jon Goodson from Salam, Kasey Tinkle Sims from Mt. View & Ella Ellingson from Trumann



ATA fall 2012 members

## Agricultural Policy Class Visits Southern Tenant Farmers Museum



Agricultural Policy class visits Southern Tennant Farmers Museum.

Dr. Bert Greenwalt, Professor of Agricultural Economics, and 22 students enrolled in his Agricultural Policy course met off-campus at the ASU Southern Tennant Farmers Union (STFU) Museum in Tyronza on September 18. Ms. Linda Hinton, Assistant Director of the museum, lectured on the history of the STFU and conducted a tour of the museum exhibits. The STFU was organized in Tyronza in 1934 in response to the economic hardships of the depression. By 1938 the STFU had grown to over 35,000 members and moved its headquarters to Memphis. As an integrated organization in which women played a prominent role, the STFU provided an example for the post-war civil rights and women's movements. More information on the STFU Museum is available at [stfm.astate.edu](http://stfm.astate.edu).

## Agribusiness Receives the Provost Award

Dr. Lynita Cooksey, Provost and Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs and Research, awarded the 2012 Provost's Retention Award to the CoAT Agribusiness program. The award is in recognition of the program's three-year history of retaining and graduating a high percentage of incoming students. Ms. Lori Fenner teaches the CoAT's First Year Experience course which promotes study skills and habits that help students succeed. Dr. Greenwalt accepted the award on behalf of the Agribusiness faculty and the college.



Dr. Bert Greenwalt accepts the Provost Award on behalf of the college from Dr. Lynita Cooksey.

## Petting Zoo Another Successful Season

The Bill & Alice Nix Petting Zoo was held on Oct. 18, 19 and 20 at the ASU Farm. An estimated 2,000-plus youth and adults from the community were present. This year, we kept an accurate count of those going on the hayride and were surprised to learn that 1,800 youth and adults enjoyed a tour of the farm.

Also new this year, on Saturday, we invited students from the local FFA chapters to assist with the petting zoo. Schedules were conflicted that day due to the State Fair, but we had 16 students from three FFA chapters—Valley View, Westside and Northeast Arkansas Technical Center—who were honored with a reception after the event and presented certificates of appreciation. We plan to invite high school FFA chapters again in the spring. The collegiate FFA and Alpha Tau Alpha coordinated the involvement of the high school FFA members and their advisors. Dr. Kennedy, Interim dean of the college stated that he was very appreciative of the FFA members and their help. He hopes we can continue this relationship with future petting zoo activities.

## ASU Students Attend Agricultural Council of Arkansas Board Meeting

Dr. Bert Greenwalt, Professor of Agricultural Economics, and Megan Davis, Weston Cissell, and Art Singleton, College of Agriculture and Technology students, attended the Agricultural Council of Arkansas board of directors meeting in Dumas on August 21. The Agricultural Council of Arkansas is an organization which represents the interests of Arkansas row crop agriculture. Dr. Greenwalt is a member of the Agricultural Council board of directors.

The keynote speakers were Arkansas Secretary of Agriculture, Butch Calhoun, and Arkansas First District Congressman, Rick Crawford. The students visited with Secretary Calhoun during lunch and after the meeting met with Congressman Crawford, who is a graduate of the ASU College of Agriculture and Technology.



From left to right: Art Singleton, Weston Cissell, Congressman, Rick Crawford, Megan Davis & Dr. Bert Greenwalt

## 21st Annual Student Leadership Conference

On Sept. 14, the college hosted the 21st Annual College of Agriculture and Technology Student Leadership Conference. This year's Leadership Conference was held at the ASU Convocation Center and sponsored by local agricultural businesses and entities. More than 50 students attended the event, which focused on helping young student leaders prepare to become more effective leaders in their respective college student organizations. Alumnus State Representative Homer Lenderman provided the luncheon address.



## ASU Students Attended Conference for Women in Agriculture

Senior Agricultural Business majors, Megan Davis and Miranda Brink, traveled to New Orleans in September to attend the first Women in Agribusiness Summit. According to [womeninag.com](http://womeninag.com), "this thought-provoking summit series brought together a powerful group of global leaders in the agribusiness and food production industries to facilitate networking, professional development, and mentoring in a fresh and innovative format. Key women representing many areas provided participants with pertinent information about their unique challenges and experiences and enabled attendees to intimately engage in conversations that are important to them". The program was filled with inspirational and informational speakers from all sectors of agriculture.

Megan and Miranda attended a reception the night before the conference. While mingling with the crowd, they had the opportunity to meet the delegation with Dow AgroScience. Dow AgroScience sponsored a portion of the expenses of the conference for the women. "It was so great to meet the people who made it possible for us to attend this conference," said Miranda. Megan and Miranda learned they were some of the very few students attending the conference. "I was so proud to represent Arkansas and Arkansas State University," said Megan.

The conference began on Monday, September 17, with speakers such as Mary L. Shelman, Director of the Agribusiness Program at Harvard University. Mrs. Shelman spoke about how the role of women in agriculture has changed throughout the years and the importance of former women who paved the way for women in the industry. A "town hall" style panel shared their experiences and responded to a series of questions from the audience. "I really enjoyed the town hall panel because it allowed me to gain different perspectives on issues that are affecting agriculture," said Megan. The program also offered breakout sessions that were very informative.

Megan had the unique opportunity to be featured on RFD-TV while at the conference. She was asked to do the interview by Frances Pratt, co-chair of the summit. The interview was featured on a segment of the show "This Week in Agribusiness" on RFD-TV. "I was a little nervous about the interview just because of the scale of the audience it would be seen by, but I feel like it went well and that I did a good job representing ASU," said Megan. Megan was also mentioned in an article written about the success of the conference.

The first Women in Agribusiness was such a success that it will be held again next year. Details can be found at [www.womeninag.com](http://www.womeninag.com). The article that mentions Megan and other interviews is linked to the RFD-TV the website. By attending the summit, these young ladies hope to set an example and motivate more students to attend the conference next year.

Megan Davis, Sr. Agribusiness, Carlisle, Ark

### SPECIAL "THANK YOU" TO THE CO-SPONSORS OF THE LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE:

Jonesboro Chamber of Commerce-Agribusiness Committee, Craighead County Farm Bureau, AgHeritage Farm Credit Services, Farm Credit Midsouth, Crop Protection Services, Greenway Equipment Inc., and Poinsett Rice & Grain, Inc. Without their help this conference would not be possible.



Ms. Holly Harvill of Paragould, recipient of the Annual Leadership Scholarship

## Students Named to 2012 Who's Who Registry

Who's Who Among American College Students is one of the most highly regarded and long-standing honors programs in the nation, having earned the respect of faculty members and administrators at hundreds of campuses. Selections to Who's Who are made each fall by individual schools. Campus nominating committees, created to nominate eligible upperclassmen and graduate students, are composed of representatives from the faculty, administration and student body. This fall, the following from our college were among 40 students from across the university selected to Who's Who Among American College Students:

- Miranda Brink of Hardy (Agribusiness)
- Stephanie A. Overby of Little Rock (Animal Science)
- John (Art) Singleton of Monticello (Agribusiness)

Congratulations to these students on their academic and leadership accomplishments!

## Agriculture Teachers Assist the Next Generation of Agriculture Educators

Agricultural Education majors learned at the Nov. 7th meeting of the Alpha Tau Alpha (ATA) that they have big boots to fill. ATA advisor Dr. David Agnew, Professor of Agricultural Education, arranged for a panel of experienced Ag teachers to share some of their wisdom with Ag Ed majors. Steve Davis, Taylor Gwin, Bruce Fires, and Austin Kennon served on the panel to answer questions related to teaching Agriculture.

In spite of 26 years of teaching, Steve Davis told students, "I still ask questions. You will never figure it all out, but you can call other Ag teachers and ask as many questions as you can." Recalling his first year of teaching at Weiner High School, Mr. Davis said, "The first year you just want to survive." Davis now serves as the main Ag teacher at Newport. He warned that many Ag Educators become involved in teaching to the point of forgetting about personal lives. He told students not to forget the importance of family and said his priority was "my savior, my wife, my daughter, and my mustache." Bruce Fires, Buffalo Island Central, discussed working between two campuses. He travels from the high school to the junior high campus every day. Mr. Fires recommended studying areas that you are weakest in. For example, he said, "I didn't necessarily like reading all that well, but now I do. I have to." Austin Kennon, from Brookland, teaches agriculture as well as career orientation. "It is a great thing to be certified in more than one area," said Mr. Kennon as he spoke about teaching career orientation. His advice was to not be afraid to ask older teachers how to do things. "Always ask questions," he said, "I still call Mr. Davis with questions." Taylor Gwin, from Newport, was the youngest and newest teacher on the panel. As a first year teacher, students seemed to hang on every word he said about the interview process and having lesson plans prepared before showing up for student teaching. He told students to "keep all of your notes from class. Be able to pull them out, and keep many, many flash drives loaded with lesson plans. This first year is intense and stressful."

In addition to answering questions, the panel stressed the importance of bonds between Agricultural Educators. Steve Davis stressed that Agriculture teachers have a strong bond with one another by saying, "We can call each other for help. We are a brotherhood." It is important for students to know that experienced Agricultural Education teachers are willing to provide a community of support.

Kasey Tinkle Sims, Agricultural Education certification, Mt. View, AR

## 3rd Annual Renewable Energy Conference

The College of Agriculture and Technology hosted the 3rd Annual Renewable Energy Conference on Nov. 5 on the ASU-Jonesboro Campus. Representatives from industry, non-profit organizations, government and academia discussed a variety of issues affecting the development of renewable energy sector across the region. More than 100 delegates from Arkansas, Tennessee, Mississippi and Missouri participated in the conference.

Dr. Lynita Cooksey, Vice Chancellor and Provost of ASU, welcomed the conference participants. Dr. Bud Kennedy, Interim Dean of the College, highlighted various renewable energy related teaching, research and outreach efforts undertaken by the college.

## Hoop House Project at the ASU Farm

Dr. Kennedy and Dr. Agnew became interested in developing a hoop house at the ASU farm after seeing one at the Harrisburg Middle School, funded through the Arkansas Children's Hospital. Some readers of the newsletter may recall that last fall I had an internship with the project at Harrisburg. An article and pictures were published in the Fall 2011 newsletter. Drs. Agnew and Kennedy knew that I was interested in this since I was also active in the ASU Garden Club. Dr. Agnew approached me and asked if I was interested in working on this project. Of course, I was very interested.

The original greenhouse, or hoop house structure, had been donated by Walmart on Highland Drive a few years ago and has been used for research by several faculty and students. However, in the last year or so it had become in need of some repairs and was sitting unused. Since it was not being used and only needed some minor repairs, it seemed logical that we try to make it into a working hoop house. The need and opportunity seemed clear. First, we repaired the house with a new covering; then the farm crew brought in fertile topsoil, and beds were laid out in the ground and prepared for planting. The soil was tested, a door replaced and a thermostat installed to help circulate some air and control the temperature.

Although we got a later start than planned, we have been planting and transplanting. Seeds/seedlings have been planted for a fall crop of cool season vegetables. In the spring a new crop of vegetable seed will be planted. This is an extension of what the Student Garden Club is doing on the farm with the raised beds located near the site. This year was the Garden Club's first season to have raised beds on the farm, thanks to Dr. Kennedy. We still have the garden spot on Stella Drive thanks to Dr. Rick Stripling at Student Affairs. Last spring we made improvements in the Stella site and it worked well for us this last season, which was our third summer growing season.

Any student interested in assisting in the growing and watering of the plants in any of the gardens is welcome. Dr. Agnew is the advisor on this project and advisor to the ASU Garden Club. The Farm Director and farm crew have been a great help with many of the larger and mechanical needs we have had along the way.

Ella Ellingson, Jr. Agricultural Education major, Jonesboro, Ark.



Before



After

## Longs Named Arkansas Farm Family of the Year

Heath Long, a 1994 graduate of the college, along with his wife Betsy and two daughters, 9-year old Shelby and 4-year old Sydney, were the 2011



Arkansas Farm Family of the Year.

Heath and Betsy own Long Planting Company: a rice, soybean and wheat operation near the community of Tichnor, south of DeWitt. Their farm consists of 2,230 acres of rented land, with 1,137 acres dedicated to soybeans, 869 acres of rice and 198 acres of wheat.

Heath is a fourth-generation farmer and was raised on the family farm. After graduating from ASU in 1994 with a degree in agriculture, he returned home and became a partner with his parents and brother in Long Farms, Inc. He married Betsy in 1998 and a year later formed Heath Long Farms, which they continued to expand over the next 12 years. Following his mother's death in 2009, Heath's father retired and last year, Heath and Betsy formed Long Planting Company. Heath was the Arkansas nominee for the 2012 Sunbelt Farmer of the Year.

Source: Reprinted with permission from Arkansas Farm Bureau

## Alumni and Public Service

Our college has the U.S. Congressional race covered. We are proud of our alumni and their commitment to public service. This year, both candidates for the First Congressional District running for the U.S. House of Representatives were graduates of our college.

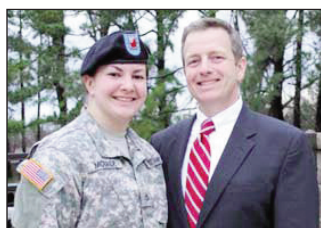
Rick Crawford graduated in 1996 with a degree in agribusiness. Crawford is a veteran and had spent the years just before the 2008 election in the farm news industry.

Scott Ellington, is a 1987 graduate of the College with a degree in agricultural education. Ellington taught high school before going to law school and was elected prosecutor of the Second Judicial District in East Arkansas in 2010. Scott's oldest son, Jack, is a student in the agribusiness program.

We congratulate these and all our alumni for the positive role model they provide through public service.



Rick Crawford



Scott Ellington and daughter Jordan

## Crowson Honored at Homecoming Game

Niel Crowson of Jonesboro earned a bachelor's degree in agriculture from Arkansas State University in 1975. He is currently president of E. C. Barton and Co. Under his leadership, the company has expanded both its sales and profit centers, currently operating more than 125 locations in 16 states.

Neil served as a member of the Arkansas State University Foundation and is a current member of the Chancellor's Cabinet. He served as chair of the Arkansas Economic Development Commission and was chair of the Do It Best Corporation, president of the Jonesboro Industrial Development Corporation, president of the Jonesboro Jaycees, and vice chair of the Northeast Arkansas Regional Solid Waste Disposal Authority.

In 2002, Neil was selected as the Outstanding Business Executive of the Year by the Arkansas State University College of Business. He was also named the Outstanding Young Arkansan by the Arkansas Jaycees.



Mr. Neil Crowson

## Marion Fletcher receives FFA's VIP Award

Mr. Marion Fletcher, a 1963 graduate of the ASU agricultural education program, was recently honored at the 2012 National FFA Convention. Mr. Fletcher serves as the Arkansas FFA State Advisor. He was awarded a VIP Citation at the National FFA Convention & Expo in Indianapolis for his contributions to FFA and agricultural education. The VIP Citation recognizes the dedicated individuals who contribute to the FFA mission of student success through their hard work and cooperation. For more than 30 years, he served as the forestry career development events superintendent.



In 1969 Mr. Fletcher had the opportunity to join the state Department of Education as Area Supervisor of Agricultural Education, a post he held for 20 years. In 1989 he was named Acting State Supervisor and Program Manager of Ag Education and later that same year was promoted to lead that office. As a state advisor for Arkansas FFA, he has developed meaningful relationships with Arkansas FFA members and provided countless opportunities for those in the FFA and agricultural education. At a national level, Mr. Fletcher has served on the FFA Board of Directors. Congratulations, Mr. Fletcher, from all of at ASU!

# UPCOMING EVENTS AT ARKANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY

## SPRING SEMESTER 2013

Soil and Water Conference .....Jan. 31, (ASU Convocation Center)  
 Agribusiness Conference .....Feb. 13, (Fowler Center and Convo)  
 CoAT Career Fair .....Feb 19, (Agri Bldg. lobby)  
 Eastern District FFA CDE's .....March 13, (ASU campus)  
 Spring Break .....March 18-21  
 Scholarship Application Deadline .....March 1  
<http://www.astate.edu/college/agriculture-and-technology/scholarships/>  
 CoAT Honor's Banquet .....April 16, (Hanes Rooms - Convocation Center)  
 Farmers Market Opens .....May 5  
 Spring Commencement .....May 11  
 Summer I Session .....Starts May 29  
 Summer II session .....Starts July 1

- Our condolences to Dr. Lew Brinkley, whose father passed away in November at the age of 97.
- Dr. Jasper Hayles has moved to Alabama and built a new home on the old family farm.
- The College is expanding its internship program. If you are interested in offering an internship through your company, please email Dr. Bud Kennedy [dkennedy@astate.edu](mailto:dkennedy@astate.edu)
- Cody Cornett an Ag Ed Major has been awarded a \$500 CoAT Academic Performance Scholarship for the highest score on the Sr. ACAT exit exam fall 2012. He scored in the 99th percentile.
- Our condolences to the family of Dr. Wayne Tennille, former faculty in plant and soil science who passed away on January 18, 2013.
- Costa Rica trip planned for June 10-17 of 2013. Contact David Agnew for information on how you can participate or how you can assist students raise the money to participate.
- Your Spring 2012 newsletter is online at the following web address:  
<http://www.astate.edu/college/agriculture-and-technology/outreach-programs/>

### **Bachelor of Science in Agriculture (B.S.A.)**

- Agricultural Business (major)  
various emphasis areas
- Agricultural Studies (major)  
Agricultural Education (emphasis)  
Agricultural Technology  
Agricultural Science
- Animal Science (major)  
Various emphasis areas
- Plant & Soil Science (major)  
Various emphasis areas
- Technology (major):  
Technical Studies  
Technology Management  
Computer Aided Drafting & Design  
Computer Systems  
Manufacturing-Industrial Technology

### **Bachelor of Applied Science**

#### **Associate Degrees in:**

- Technology
- Food Technology

#### **Endorsements in:**

- Adult Education
- Career Education

*For more information, please contact us at 870-972-2085 or visit the College of Agriculture and Technology webpage at: <http://www.astate.edu/college/agriculture-and-technology/>*

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**Please remember ASU in your Charitable Giving.** If you would like to make a gift to the College of Agriculture & Technology or the scholarship fund, please complete the information below, or go to the ASU Web site: <http://support.astate.edu/OnlineGiving.htm> and complete the form online.

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**Send all gifts to the ASU Foundation, P.O. Box 1990, State University AR 72467-1990. If you have questions, you may contact the College of Agriculture at 870-972-2085 or the ASU Foundation Office at 870-225-8343**



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## PERSPECTIVES

### Faculty Kudos

**Rajesh Sharma** attended the Tennessee Renewable Energy and Economic Development Council (TREEDC) meeting at Christian Brothers University in Memphis on November 16.

### Alternative Fuels Project Funded

Faculty in the College of Agriculture and Technology at Arkansas State University have been awarded a \$276,877 research grant from the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, a division of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and will work with Phillips Community College of the University of Arkansas. The project is focused on building capacity for bioenergy research and outreach in East Arkansas and the Delta region. Faculty involved in the project are Dr. Steven Green, Dr. Elizabeth Hood, Dr. Paul Armah, Dr. Kevin Humphrey, and Dr. Greg Phillips. Drs. Green and Hood are project leaders. Project collaborators are Terry Turner of Phillips Community College, Dr. Julie Carrier of the University of Arkansas, and Kirk Minnick of Minnick and Associates.

According to Dr. Green, the goal of the project is to strengthen both institutions' ability to provide quality, dynamic, and innovative research and outreach in food and agricultural sciences in a sustainable way. This in turn will support future opportunities for economic growth and rural development in East Arkansas, the Delta region, and the state. Researchers will be working with a crop that is new to Arkansas, *Camelina sativa*, which they believe holds significant potential for the bioenergy industry. Research plantings have shown potential for this crop in the Delta region.

"We will conduct research and outreach activities associated with establishing *Camelina sativa* as a viable bioenergy crop in the region," Dr. Green said. "Our research focus will be on four areas: creating a genetically transformed camelina line with desirable yield and oil traits, selecting camelina varieties adapted to the region through field trials, evaluating the resulting meal and oil from processing the camelina seed, and optimizing processing." The research leader said outreach activities under the grant will focus on field days and demonstrations for farmers and potential end users, research symposia for scientists and researchers, providing internships for undergraduate students, and developing a camelina farmer network.

Dr. Green says, "This project will target and benefit rural agricultural stakeholders, farmers, researchers, college instructors, undergraduate research students, bioenergy practitioners, policy makers, state cooperative extension agents, and small business owners." Products anticipated to evolve from this project will include a "Camelina Grower Guide," to include agronomic information and a crop budget designed for growers in the region, along with fact sheets that include specific information for each of the anticipated end uses. "A high-yielding, transgenic camelina line will be developed as well as the scientific publications," he continued. "A farmer network and an oilseed cooperative will be set up to move the establishment of camelina along and sustain its production beyond the life of this project."

Researchers expect exponential growth in the number of farmers growing camelina and the number of acres in camelina production due to an increased awareness among potential end users of how camelina can be used and its value. Dr. Green further elaborated on the project by stating, "The establishment of an oilseed cooperative will enable us to sustain our efforts in supporting the camelina growers in the region. This project will showcase ASU College of Agriculture and Technology capacity and reputation as a research and outreach institution in the region."

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