



New Ground

The College of Agriculture and Technology Newsletter



Spring/Summer 2013 astate.edu/college/agriculture-and-technology Vol. 07 No. 02

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COLLEGE WELCOMES NEW DEAN

Provost and Vice Chancellor Lynita Cooksey announced at the college's Honors Banquet this April that the college will have its new dean effective July 1, 2013 – we welcome Dr. Timothy N. Burcham as our new dean!

Dean Burcham comes to us from the University of Tennessee at Martin, where he has served as professor and interim chair of the Department of Agriculture, Geosciences and Natural Resources. His professional interests include online education, water quality, biofuels, animal waste management and environmental engineering.



New Dean of the College of Agriculture and Technology, Dr. Timothy Burcham.

Dr. Burcham is an excellent fit for our college, with the ability to lead us forward in our agricultural technology and precision agriculture curricula, and our research efforts in bioenergy crops and in agricultural water quality and quantity. He also has experience in fundraising for new programs while at the University of Tennessee at Martin.

Dr. Burcham received his bachelor of science (1983) and master of science (1985) degrees from Mississippi State University with majors in agricultural engineering. He was awarded the doctor of philosophy degree in agricultural engineering from Clemson University in 1989. Dean Burcham is very familiar with agricultural production issues in the Southern U.S. states.

Dr. Burcham will be transitioning into his new position as dean of our college this summer, with the able assistance of interim dean Dr. Bud Kennedy. The college thanks Dr. Kennedy for his assistance with overseeing the college since July 2011, at which time former dean Dr. Greg Phillips stepped down from administrative duties and returned to the teaching and research faculty. The college also thanks Dr. David Beasley, dean of the College of Engineering, for serving as our interim dean July 2011 through June 2012. Dr. Kennedy served as interim associate dean from July 2011 through June 2012, then served as interim dean since July 2012.

Soil and Water Conference

The Arkansas Soil and Water Education Conference was held on January 31, 2013 from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. in the Convocation Center auditorium. The conference is held every year to educate farmers, producers, consultants and others that are interested in soil and water management. The conference is mainly to discuss current research efforts and to find real solutions to soil and water problems of our state and region.

This years speakers included Dr. Earl Vories, USDA- ARS, Fisher Delta Research Center, Portageville, MO; Mr. David Lamm, USDA-NRCS, Greensboro, NC; Mr. John Lewis, National Weather Service, Little Rock; Dr. Brian Haggard, Director and Professor, Arkansas Water Resources Center, University of Arkansas; Ms. Nancy Young, USDA-NRCS, Little Rock; Dr. Mike Daniels, University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service, Little Rock; Dr. Seth Dabney, USDA-ARS, National Sedimentation Laboratory, Oxford, MS; Ms. Alice Weeks, USDA-NRCS, Fort Smith; and Ms. Cynthia Edwards, Deputy Secretary of the Arkansas Agriculture Department.

The MRBI was one of the top priorities at this year's event. The MRBI or Mississippi River Basin Initiative is designed to improve the health of the Mississippi River Basin, including water quality and wildlife habitat. Through this new initiative, NRCS and its partners will help producers in selected watersheds in the Mississippi River Basin voluntarily implement conservation practices and systems that would avoid, control, and trap nutrient runoff. The program is also designed to improve wildlife habitat, and maintain agricultural productivity. The MRBI will build on the past efforts of producers, NRCS, and other State and Federal agencies in trying to preserve the river basin. The MRBI has 13 states enlisted in the program. The 13 participating states are Arkansas, Kentucky, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Louisiana, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Ohio, South Dakota, Tennessee, and Wisconsin. MRBI will be implemented by NRCS through the Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative, the Wetlands Reserve Enhancement Program, Conservation Innovation Grants, and other programs involving wetlands and conservation. Arkansas is working hard with the Extension Service and the USDA-NRCS to improve Arkansas Habitats and preserve our environment.

A highlight of the conference was the presentation by Mr. Lamm regarding soil health. He held up two pieces of soil, one from a farm which had performed conservation tillage practices for many years, and the other from a neighboring farm which had used conventional tillage during the same time period. One piece of soil completely fell apart when dropped into a flask of water – no soil structure whatsoever. The other piece of soil held its structure and absorbed water when dropped into its flask of water. Which one is the healthy soil? The one from the conservation tillage farm. Mr. Lamm also presented an in-depth workshop on soil health during the afternoon session, which the attendees really enjoyed.

Skyler Droke, Senior, Agricultural Business, Hornersville, MO



A map of the Mississippi River Basin Initiative generated by NRCS is shown. Arkansas scientists including Dr. Teague and Dr. Reba are working as advisors to regional producers.

Assessment Result Demonstrates Strength of College

In recent years the college has been asked to provide assessments of the effectiveness of our degree programs and courses. A few years ago we began a programmatic assessment of our agriculture curriculum, measured as a pre-test of entering freshmen and a post-test of seniors who have completed the majority of the Agriculture Core courses. Our Core emphasizes Agribusiness, Animal Science, Plant Science, and Soil Science. The ACAT nationally normed test for Agriculture is utilized for these purposes. The pre-test is given to true freshmen entering the college. For the 2012-2013 academic year, freshmen agriculture students achieved a 14 percentile in overall performance on the ACAT, a low score but not surprising for entering students. The post-test is given to juniors and seniors in the capstone seminar course upon completion of the majority of the other Core courses. For the 2012-2013 academic year, capstone students achieved a 61 percentile overall performance on the ACAT. These results indicate an improvement of 47 percentile points from the typical entering student to the typical graduating senior in this curriculum, which supports the intent of the curriculum to prepare a broadly trained agriculture professional.

Dr. Greg Phillips

AgriBusiness Conference

The 19th annual Arkansas State University AgriBusiness Conference was held on Wednesday, February 13, 2013 in the Arkansas State University Fowler Center. The ASU Agribusiness Conference was established in 1995 and provides current information on the trends and issues that are affecting current agriculture. According to Dr. Bert Greenwalt, Professor of Agricultural Economics and Director of the AgriBusiness Conference, "Our guests tell us the conference provides unique information not available from other sources in the region. It provides our students with a tremendous opportunity to learn directly from agricultural experts and newsmakers." The conference usually attracts over five hundred guests from Arkansas and surrounding states such as Missouri, Tennessee and Mississippi.

The morning session was kicked off by Jerry Roell, Director of John Deere FarmSight and WorkSight, who talked about the developments in agricultural technology that John Deere is currently working on. The audience enjoyed the futuristic video of how the next generation of technologies may help agricultural producers. Next, Dr. Joe Outlaw, Texas A&M University economist, discussed the 2013 Farm Bill and how it will impact Midsouth Agriculture. Dr. James Bullard, President of the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, discussed the U.S. Economy and Monetary Policy; he also touched on aspects of global macroeconomic uncertainty and its sources. Ending the session was Dr. David Schweikhardt, Michigan State University economist, who discussed the 2013 Farm Bill Debate. The current Farm Bill has been extended for one year, and he was unsure if the next Farm Bill would be put into effect this year.

Lunch was served from 12:00 to 1:30 in the Convocation Center. The luncheon speaker was Mr. Bart Chilton, Commissioner, Commodity Futures Trading Commission. His talk was entertaining and provided an insider's view of how the commodities markets had been distorted by speculators parking their funds overnight.

The afternoon sessions were divided into four separate sessions for different crops and livestock. In one session, Jeff Johnson, Allenburg Cotton Co., and Carl Brothers, Riceland Foods, discussed the cotton and rice futures market and what the outlook may look like. In session two, the livestock session, Adam McClung, Arkansas Cattleman's Association Executive Vice President, discussed the livestock market trends, outlook, and issues. In session three, Thomas Erickson, Bunge North America, Carl Brothers, Riceland Foods, and Bart Chilton, CFTC discussed the price risk management issues related to grain and other commodities. The last session, led by Ron Rainey, University of Arkansas economist, discussed the Market Maker program, which supports locally grown food.

This year's conference was presented and sponsored by: Arkansas State University College of Agriculture and Technology, The Judd Hill Foundation, AgHeritage Farm Credit Services, Arkansas Farm Bureau, Bunge North America, Busch Agricultural Resources, Farm Credit Midsouth, Glaub Farm Management, Greenway Equipment Inc., Helena Chemical Company, Liberty Bank of Arkansas, Riceland Foods Inc., Ricetec Inc., and the USA Rice Federation.

Skyler Droke, Senior, Agricultural Business, Hornersville, MO

Attendees at the ASU AgriBusiness Conference 2013 enjoy meeting in the Fowler Center foyer.



Visit to Washington, D.C.

Each spring Dr. Bert Greenwalt and selected students from the College of Agriculture and Technology travel to Washington, D.C. to visit with congressional leaders. This annual visit is conducted in conjunction with the regional Chambers of Commerce, who lobby our state's senators and congressmen on behalf of projects that would bolster economic development and stability in Northeast Arkansas. Our own agribusiness student Art Singleton has been serving as the Staplcotn Congressional Intern this year.



Interim Dean Dr. Bud Kennedy (left) and agricultural business major Art Singleton (right) meet with Congressman Rick Crawford (center) during Dr. Kennedy's visit in Washington, D.C. this spring to attend the Arkansas Congressional Delegation Breakfast.

New CADD Instructor Joins College

Beginning with the Fall 2013 semester, the college will have a new instructor of computer-aided drafting and design (CADD) in the Technology Program – please welcome Mrs. Yifeng Ren! She has extensive teaching experience both in China and the US, most recently serving as an instructor at Texas A&M University. She also has industry experience in both China and the US. The CADD option in the Technology Program is a strong component of the Technology curriculum, and graduates from the CADD option are in high demand in the manufacturing industries of our region.

Mrs. Ren will replace Mr. Michael Barrett, who has taught CADD courses for our college for the last few years. Mr. Barrett will continue to teach at the Jonesboro Public Schools Area Technical Center. The college thanks Mr. Barrett for his excellent service to our students!

Alpha Tau Alpha

The Alpha Tau Alpha (ATA) honor society, Alpha Gamma Chapter, had a busy spring semester in 2013. Fresh from the first annual Duck Hunting Expedition, the ATA started the New Year by expanding its social media presence with the creation of an official Facebook page. This was quickly followed by the Collegiate FFA (CFFA) and the CoAT Ambassadors joining Facebook to make it easier to keep up with group activities.

ATA President Cody Cornett, along with the CoAT Ambassadors, helped with the Arkansas Rice Producers' Meeting on Jan. 18, which was covered by the Jonesboro Occasions Magazine. Cody, along with Jay Throesch, also represented the College of Agriculture and Technology at the Student Infrastructure Meeting. Additionally, the ATA was well represented at the town-hall meeting held by Hunter Petrus and the rest of the SGA to discuss various activities on campus. The ATA members who attended were President Cody Cornett and Reporter Kasey Sims, as well as CFFA President and ATA member Ben Gander.

The busy start to the year continued with our first visit to area high schools to talk about the agriculture program at Arkansas State University. During the trip to Harrisburg, multiple members spoke to the students and answered questions about the college experience. Members who spoke to the students included Cody Cornett, Kasey Sims, Jon Goodson and future member Amber Winter. Also taking time out of his busy schedule to come speak was ATA Advisor Dr. David Agnew.

All these events took place before the first official meeting of the year, which was held on February 7th. This first meeting saw the induction of three new members—Ashley Jines, Ashley Bryant and Ben Gander. The ATA also had two members in their final semesters as student teachers: Henry Laxton taught at Paragould High School and Lucas Anderson was at Westside. Lucas also helped prepare meals for students at the Greenhand 360 Conference.

Kasey Sims, ATA Reporter, represented Alpha Gamma Chapter at the ASU Meet and Greet to welcome college professors and students from University of Arkansas, Southern Arkansas University and Mississippi State to the 2013 AgriBusiness Conference. Held at the Edge Coffeehouse on February 12, students were able to visit and talk about opportunities for graduate school and fellowships. Kasey was busy the next day as well, helping Cody Cornett with the ATA booth and silent auction at the conference.

The Agribusiness Conference was followed by a trip to the SGA Action Fund to request money for student activities. Delta Tau Alpha members Cody Cornett, Kasey Sims, as well as DTA President Jacky Murray went before the board to request assistance in paying for the trip to the DTA Convention. After the DTA hearing, Cody and Kasey stayed to represent the ATA to procure funds to help with college recruitment.

Our second meeting of the year on February 20 featured the induction of Todd Blessinbach as well as our first husband and wife members, Eli and Jacy Long. Following the meeting was our first fellowship dinner at Colton's Steakhouse. Almost all our members, along with both agriculture education advisors, Dr. David Agnew and Dr. Kevin Humphrey, were in attendance. The following day on Feb. 21 was a busy one as well. High school students from Harrisburg received the grand tour of the campus from the ATA and CoAT Ambassadors.

Our final school visit came March 29 when Cody and Kasey made the drive to Mountain View and Timbo schools. In addition to talking to the students about college and the importance of agriculture, we also learned the importance of community involvement from the two ag teachers.

On Apr. 18, the ATA played a large role in the CoAT Honors Banquet at which Cody Cornett, alongside agbusiness major Amber Malin, emceed the event. Kasey Sims continued her role as reporter by being the official photographer at the banquet. The Alpha Tau Alpha also received second place in the Outstanding Student Organization Award. The membership of the ATA was also very involved with the Spring Petting Zoo on April 11, 12, and 13th. On the last weekend of April 19-21 ATA had a retreat planned to Mt. View. The excursion to the Batesville Speedway, where Cody was going to be driving, was rained out so we did not get started until Saturday morning at the parade which was the kick off to the Annual Folk Festival. Later we went on a private guided tour of Blanchard Spring Caverns with experienced park interrupter Kasey Sims. That evening Kasey's family hosted us at their farm where we had a cookout.

The ATA also received funds this spring from the ASU action fund to help fund participation in the state FFA Convention and to purchase a display board for the organization.

The ATA concluded an especially active and successful year with our own banquet held at Ron's Catfish where we celebrated the past year while making plans for the future. The officer team for the 2013-2014 year is a very promising group. The new president is Jon Goodson, Ashley Jines will serve as vice president, secretary/treasurer is Ben Gander and continuing at her post as reporter is Kasey Sims.

ATA members would like to thank our advisors, Dr. David Agnew and Dr. Kevin Humphrey, local agriculture teachers and area FFA members for making the spring semester a productive and enjoyable learning experience for all.

Cody Cornett, ATA President 2012-2013, Senior, Agricultural Education major, Drasco, AR



ATA students and advisors at the year-end banquet.

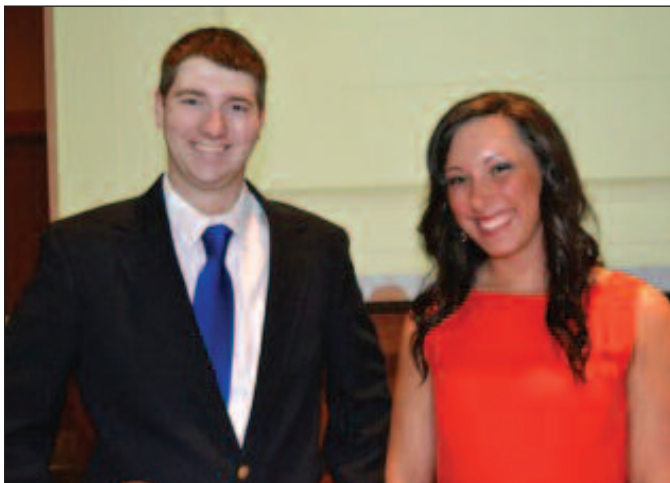


Jon Goodson (left) and Cody Cornett (center) talking about agriculture careers at Harrisburg High School.

CPS Provides New Scholarships!

This past year, Crop Production Services (CPS) pledged to provide a new endowed scholarship fund to the college in the amount of \$100,000.00! The first of these scholarships were awarded at this year's Honors Banquet. CPS is also providing input chemicals to the ASU Farm to assist in the college's teaching and research operations. Dr. Stacey Bruff and Mr. Ike Horner were recognized at the Honors Banquet as recipients of the college's Distinguished Service Awards for their efforts to make this new scholarship endowment a success!

Dr. Kennedy (left) congratulates Dr. Stacey Bruff (center) and Mr. Ike Horner (right) as recipients of the Distinguished Service Awards this year, and thanks them for establishing the \$100,000 CPS Scholarship Endowment Fund!



Cody Cornett (left) and Amber Malin (right) served as the emcees at the Honors Banquet.



The college filled the Centennial Hall at the Honors Banquet!

Honors Banquet 2013

The college's Honors Banquet was held on the evening of April 18, 2013 at the Centennial Hall in the Student Union. We filled up the room!

Cody Cornett and Amber Malin served as masters of ceremony. Sixty-four scholarships were awarded to students in our college this year. Eighty-eight of our students were recognized for maintaining high grade point averages (> 3.5 for undergraduates, > 3.75 for graduate students).

The outstanding graduating seniors in each degree were recognized: Art Singleton (Agricultural Business), Lucas Anderson (Agricultural Education), Mary Whitmire (Animal Science), Phillip Massey (Plant and Soil Science), Ken Beach (Bachelor of Applied Science in Renewable Energy Technology), and Rachel Bickley (Technology). Adam Cloninger was the Chancellor's Scholar. Carrie Edwards received the Olen P. Nail Award.

The outstanding members of student organizations included Miranda Brink (Agribusiness Club), Cody Cornett (Alpha Tau alpha), Ella Ellingson (ASU Garden Club), Kasey Sims (Collegiate FFA), and Jack Murray (Delta Tau Alpha). Kasey Sims also provided many of the pictures included in this edition of the newsletter. The outstanding student organizations were the Agribusiness Club (first place) and the Alpha Tau Alpha (second place).

Grayson Daniels was recognized as the Outstanding Young Alumnus. State Representative Homer Lenderman was congratulated as the Outstanding Alumnus. Ike Horner and Dr. Stacey Bruff were recognized with the Distinguished Service Awards.

Dr. Greg Phillips

Alumnus promoted to Brigadier General

Approximately 400 family, friends, fellow members and retirees of the Arkansas National Guard gathered at the National Guard Professional Education Center auditorium at Camp Robinson on Saturday, June 1, 2013, for the promotion of Col. Keith Klemmer of Russellville, to the rank of Brigadier General. Gen. Klemmer was also named the deputy adjutant general, the Arkansas National Guard's second-highest position. Gen. Klemmer is a 1987 alumnus of the ASU College of Agriculture and Technology.

Dr. Bert Greenwalt



Brigadier General Keith Klemmer (left) receiving his promotion and new position in the Arkansas National Guard.

Michelle Jacobs Completes Law Degree

Ms. Michelle Jacobs completed her Juris Doctor degree and graduated from the University of Arkansas School of Law in May 2013. She earned her BSA in Agricultural Business at ASU in 2006 and her MS in Agricultural Business at Mississippi State University in 2008.

A native of DeWitt, Arkansas, Michelle plans to practice agricultural law in Arkansas.

Dr. Bert Greenwalt

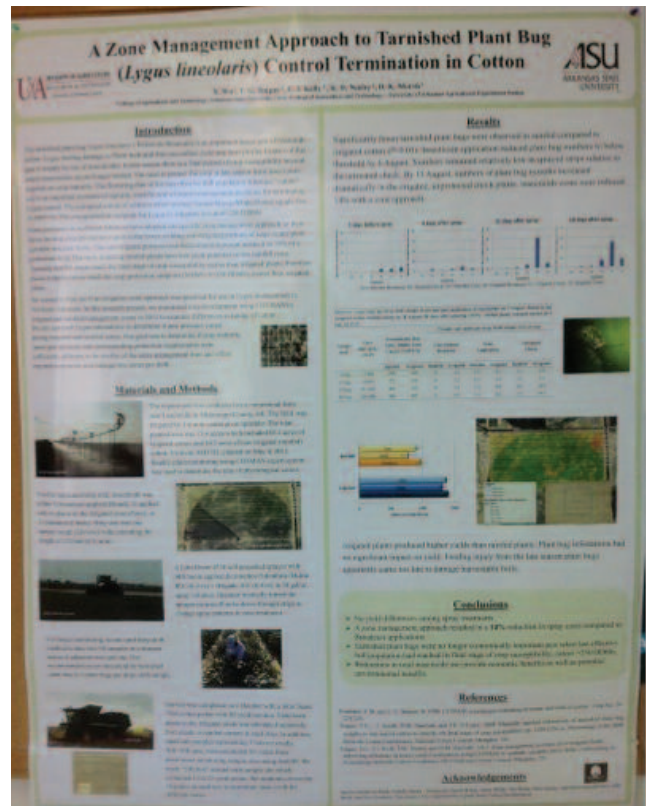


Dr. Bert Greenwalt (left) congratulates Dr. Michelle Jacobs (right) upon completion of her Juris Doctor degree this May.

Kudos!

One of our college's international students, Yachi Wu, won second place in the undergraduate science division at "Create at Astate" for her research poster. "Create at Astate" is the research and creativity symposium conducted annually at the campus. The title of her poster is "A Zone Management Approach to Tarnished Plant Bug (*Lygus lineolaris*) Control Termination in Cotton." The zone management approach resulted in a 14% reduction in spray costs to control tarnished plant bugs in cotton. The poster is currently displayed in the hallway on the main floor of the Agriculture building. Yachi works under the supervision of Dr. Tina Teague, and Dr. Keith Morris contributed to this project as well.

Yachi Wu and Dr. Tina Teague's research poster on tarnished plant bug control in cotton.



UPCOMING EVENTS AT ARKANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY

FALL SEMESTER 2013

Agriculture & Technology Leadership Conference	September 13
College Open House	September 19
ASU Nix Petting Zoo	October 17-19
Camelina Field Day	October 18
Fall Break	November 25-30
Eastern District FFA Leadership CDE's	December 3
Fall Commencement	December 14

- 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
- 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 2013 newsletter is online at the following web address:
ASstate.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: <https://secure.astate.edu/give/z> and complete the form online.

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| <input type="checkbox"/> General Scholarship Fund | <input type="checkbox"/> Student Leadership Conference | <input type="checkbox"/> Equine Center |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Dr. Jasper A. Hayles Scholarship Fund | Other, Please Explain or Specify _____ | |

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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SEED, SOIL & OIL...

From ancient times until the early 1900s, camelina was commonly used to produce lamp and cooking oil, animal feed, and to supplement food grains. Dr. Steve Green, associate professor of Soil and Water Conservation, is reviving production of camelina, experimenting to determine which varieties are best adapted to Arkansas.

Green’s main research interests are in bioenergy cropping systems and soil sustainability. With funding from the U.S. Department of Energy, Green launched a bioenergy cropping systems farm where he is testing several types of plants with bioenergy potential, including 16 – 20 varieties of camelina. The research team is also exploring the effects of different inputs (i.e. chicken litter, municipal biosolids) on soil quality and the dynamics of plant nutrient use. Green explains the questions driving his research, “Can we take a waste product from another sector of society, use it as a resource, and get better or same yields as chemical fertilizer? Or in doing so, can we at least enhance the structure of the soil, reduce erosion and get environmental benefits that are useful to society? How will these modifications affect bioenergy crop yield and soil quality, and how can we best balance these needs?”

All plants grown on the bioenergy farm could potentially be used for biofuel production. When produced responsibly and developed as part of an integrated approach to sustainable, renewable, efficient energy, biofuels have important economic, environmental and national security potential. Biofuels can be sourced and consumed locally, creating jobs, boosting rural economies and reducing the need for fuel transport. In addition to decreasing carbon and greenhouse gas emissions, growth of winter crops for biofuel production can enhance soil health and sustainability, improving year-round crop yield and reducing pesticide and herbicide use. Incorporating biofuels into our transportation fuel supply will reduce our nation’s dependence on imported, non-renewable fossil fuels and help moderate fluctuating oil prices that are vulnerable to a myriad of global political crises and natural disasters.

Through interaction with local farmers, Green has learned “Arkansas farmers want to grow their own fuel so they can better predict their fuel costs. If they plant a winter bioenergy crop and locally refine it into biofuel, farmers can predict and plan for fuel costs with much greater accuracy than when using diesel alone.” Arkansas rice production in 2012, for example, consumed an estimated 28 – 41 million gallons of diesel fuel. At that level, a spike in the price of a barrel of oil can have tremendous economic impact – an impact that can be cushioned by incorporation of locally produced and refined biofuels.



To find out more, pick up a copy of the latest *Measure Magazine*.
 To find out more about Dr. Steve Green, [scan here!](#)

Do you have a story, idea, announcement or update on a promotion or award you or someone else has received? If so send it to the newsletter!
 Email us at agri@astate.edu

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