# Southern Administrative Heads Updates and Highlights Summer Mini Land-grant, 2025

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Division of Research and Economic Development and 1890 Land-Grant Programs PO Box 1004 Wilberforce, OH 45384

937-376-6417 centralstate.edu

#### Southern Administrative Heads Updates and Highlights: Central State University

- Dr. Morakinyo A.O. Kuti resumed as the 10<sup>th</sup> President of Central State University on July 01, 2024.
- Dr. Amy Hobbs Harris serves as the interim Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs.
- Dr. Jose U. Toledo serves as the VP of Research and Economic Development and Director 1890 Land-Grant Programs.

#### **Research Update:**

- Central State has been recognized as a Research College and University in the 2025
   Carnegie Classifications of Institutions of Higher Education, in February of 2025.
- The Agricultural Research and Development Program (ARDP), the research division of the Land-Grant program at Central State University, continued its research efforts on the following critical issues during the Fiscal Year (FY) 2024, aligned with the USDA Strategic Goals. The research plans focus on four critical issues related to:
  - o (i) Plant and Animal Systems,
  - o (ii) Food Nutrition and Health Systems (FNH)
  - o (iii) Natural Resources and Environmental Systems, and
  - o (iv) Advanced Technologies and Commercialization Systems.
- Hired Dr. Jess Hartshorn, a Research Associate Professor of Forestry (Onboard on June 16, 2025)
- Hired Dr. Venkata Satish Rangu, a Core Analytical Lab Manager, started May 01, 2025

#### **Funding update:**

- USDA/NIFA, Evans-Allen funds to support agriculture research at the 1890 Land-Grant institutions
- CSU total funding: FY25 \$41,257,476 (until May 2025)
- Land-Grant External Funding \$21,584,112
- Research Extension and Development External Funds: \$7,661,555

#### **Extension update**

- In FY 2024, CSU Extension delivered programming in four areas:
  - o 4- H Youth Development,
  - Agriculture and Natural Resources,
  - o Community and Economic Development, and
  - Family and Consumer- Sciences. These programs offered 1,565 activities and engaged 28,071 participation contacts across 39 counties in Ohio.



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- CSU Extension coordinates a Community Health Worker program that is part of
  workforce development to provide opportunities for community members to gain entrylevel employment in the healthcare field. Participants must complete 100 hours of
  classes along with 90 hours in a community-based health practicum. This year, the
  program became accredited by the Ohio Board of Nursing.
- Over 50 youth participated in the first Urban Farmer Youth Symposium and 4-H Youth
  Day at Central State University campus in April. The youth were involved with the Urban
  Farmer Youth Initiative, where youth grew crops and learned about value-added and
  entrepreneurial opportunities with their produce. The youth showcased their products
  and networked with other urban farms in Southwest Ohio.
- Empowering individuals for socio-economic advance is a program through Central State
  University Extension. One of the activities is financial literacy classes to provide
  infrastructure for individuals to learn more about their personal finances, to advance
  toward potentially owning their own business.

#### Infrastructure update:

#### **Research Facility**

 The establishment of CSU's Research and Demonstration Complex is underway. A new Ag Research Building is being completed, and a soft opening is scheduled for September 2025. The 35,000 square foot facility will house 7 state-of-the art research laboratories associated with plant, soil, water, food, and nutrition related research.

#### **Storage Facility**

 NIFA has approved the construction of a \$4.1 million agricultural equipment storage facility, and construction is underway.



Clemson University College of Agriculture, Forestry & Life Sciences Southern Administrative Heads Section Meeting Update – February 2025 – June 2025

#### Leadership

- In addition to serving as dean of the college, Dr. Matt Holt was named Vice President of Public Service and Agriculture (PSA), encompassing Clemson's Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension, plus two state agencies: Livestock and Poultry Health and Regulatory Services.
- Dr. Soledad Peresin, from Auburn University, has been named to serve as the next Director of the Wood Utilization & Design Institute (WU+DI).
- Dr. Charles Privette, currently the chair of the Department of Agricultural Sciences (AS), has been named the Interim Director of the South Carolina Water Resources Center.
- Due to temporary budget limitations, the searches for chairs of the Department of Forestry and Environmental Conservation (FEC) and the Department of Animal and Veterinary Sciences (AVS) have been suspended.
- Drs. Kyle Barrett and Jim Strickland continue to serve as interim chairs of, respectively, FEC and AVS.
- CAFLS has nearly completed its new strategic plan for the college, working with a consultant company, Emergent Method.
- Clemson University is starting the process of searching for a new provost as Bob Jones will retire at the end of the year.

#### **Facilities**

- We continue to see progress on the facility/building for forestry and environmental conservation. It will be approximately an 85,000 sq. ft. mass timber structure, including teaching and research labs, offices, classrooms, and collaboration spaces. We are still on track to open it in Fall 2026.
- A new Poultry Science Research Center continues to move forward in the planning phase.

#### **Finances**

Clemson FY26 State Budget Ask resulted in:

- \$600,000 in recurring funding for Statewide Operational and Programmatic Support
- \$1 million in recurring funding for Food Safety and Nutrition Agents
- \$500,000 in recurring funding for Critical Vehicles & Equipment
- \$3 million in nonrecurring funding for Planned Maintenance and Critical Infrastructure

# LSU Agriculture IMPACT

Focused on research, teaching and extension to make advancements that will benefit current and future generations.

## Highlights of the Louisiana State University AgCenter & College of Agriculture

Southern Administrative Heads Section @ So. Mini Land-grant Meeting - Summer 2025

#### **Leadership Changes:**

- Dr. Matt Lee, VP/Dean, LSU Agriculture has been appointed the Interim LSU System President, as of June 1, 2025. LSU President Tate accepted the Rutgers University Presidency.
- Dr. Michael Salassi, Executive Associate Vice President and Director, Louisiana Agriculture Experiment Station, has been appointed the Interim LSU Vice President for Agriculture and Dean of the College of Agriculture, as of June 1, 2025.
- Dr. Glen Gentry, Southeast Region Director, will serve as the Interim Director, Louisiana Agriculture Experiment Station, as of June 1, 2025.

#### **National Titles:**

- Louisiana 4-H are the 2024 National Shooting Sports Team Champions. This is their fourth national championship in the past five years. Working toward our fifth!
- LSU College of Ag's Agricultural and Applied Economics
   Association (AAEA) Academic Bowl Team achieved an
   outstanding double victory by taking 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> place at the
   2024 Annual National Competition.

## LSU

#### **College of Agriculture**

#### **Spring 2025 Statistics:**

- 281 degrees were conferred at the Spring Commencement.
- 243 bachelor's degree recipients, 24 master's degree recipients, and 14 doctoral degree recipients.
- Graduating class represented 37 Louisiana parishes, 25 states, and 10 countries.
- 84% of these graduates began their collegiate journeys as freshmen.
- 74% female & 26% male

#### **Highlights**

- 100% placement for dietetic internships for 5 years.
- 94% of recent graduates report the College of Ag has prepared them for the job market.

**Commodity Boards Research Grants Rice \$1.33 Million** 

Soybean and Grain \$1.59 Million Sugarcane \$1.47 Million

# New Strategic Plan: Goals:

**--BOOST** Agricultural Production and Conserve Natural Resources.

-- **STENGTHEN** Louisiana's Rural Communities.

- -- SUPPORT Local and State Decision Makers.
- -- ASSIST Small Business Startups and Success.
- -- IDENTIFY Opportunities and Strategies for Market Growth.

.OUISIANA

-- INCREASE The Rural Talent Pipeline.

#### **Targets:**

- -- ACHEIVE TOP 10 AG SCIENCE RESEARCH RANKING
- -- **GROW** Youth Development Program Participation
- -- EXPAND Extension Educational Contacts
- -- BOOST Enrollment in the LSU College of Agriculture
- -- INCREASE Philanthropic Donations

#### Highlights:

- \$454 million in research expenditures over the past 5 years equals \$9 billion in returns to the economy.
- Economic Impact of Louisiana Sugarcane: 61% of Louisiana sugarcane acres are LSU AgCenter varieties equals \$972 million in annual economic impact.
- Economic Impact of Louisiana Rice: 62% of Louisiana rice acres are LSU AgCenter Varieties equals \$442 million in annual economic impact.
- Value of Extension: 1.4 Million Extension Contacts, 325,000
   Nutrition Community Health participants, 378,000 Ag &
   Natural Resources educational contacts.
- Value of Extension Talent Development: 117,000 youth engaged in youth programs—90<sup>th</sup> Annual Livestock show: over 1,700 4-H and FFA exhibitors showing 3,100 animals. AgMagic reached 10,000 youth in the Baton Rouge area in 1
- Value of Extension Talent Development: Through FFA
  and school-based ag education, 3,500 IBCs (industry-based
  Certifications) granted this past year.
- LSU Agriculture's Global Impact: 15 countries with active licensing, 11 countries have active MOUs, 42% of College of Ag graduate students are international.



#### Mississippi State University Division of Agriculture, Forestry, & Veterinary Medicine Update

May 29, 2025

#### **Division Leadership**

No Change

#### **Points of Pride**

- This past summer. We joined major agricultural and forestry interest groups to launch Vision 2030, an initiative to define key initiatives for the agriculture and forestry industries in Mississippi. Some of the initial projects include an initiative to focus on cross-laminated timber, identifying specialty crop opportunities, and forming a team of scientists to educate our agricultural community on artificial intelligence. Our value-added analysis reveals that 75% of the added value in our agricultural and forestry sectors occurs outside our state. Reports will follow in 2025.
- A strategic collaboration between Nancy Link and the MSU College of Veterinary Medicine will facilitate the construction of a state-of-the-art research facility and the recruitment of top faculty to advance pioneering research in the prevention and treatment of laminitis. This painful hoof disease can lead to euthanasia for affected horses.
- Mississippi State University and its Agricultural Autonomy Institute hosted the 4th Annual AI in Agriculture and Natural Resources Conference, bringing together national leaders in artificial intelligence (AI) and agriculture to showcase groundbreaking advancements and their practical applications in the field.
- Researchers, industry leaders, and policymakers gathered on April 22 to discuss collaborations in food science and agriculture at Mississippi State's "Food Science and Industry in Mississippi—Adding Value and Feeding the World" symposium.
- Mississippi State University hosted a groundbreaking conference exploring the critical intersection of food and agriculture as on a national security issue on March 21. It announced the establishment of the Food and Agriculture as Competitive Statecraft (FACS) Collaboratory.
- Mississippi State is partnering with John Deere through a master research agreement, establishing a framework for the university's Agricultural Autonomy Institute to help develop technology to automate critical steps in the production of cotton and other crops.
- The Mississippi Lumber Manufacturers Association has established the Mississippi Lumber Manufacturers Association Endowed Professorship in Innovative Wood Construction and Design at MSU. The endowment—housed in the College of Forest Resources' Department of Sustainable Bioproducts, with a joint appointment in the College of Architecture, Art and Design's School of Architecture—aims to drive innovation in mass timber manufacturing, construction and design, with a research emphasis on sustainable wood construction, strength and durability.
- Mississippi State University is fueling the future of food science with the establishment of the Reed Family Endowed Professorship and the university's newly created Food

- Science Innovation Hub within the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station.
- In a 2024 unanimous vote, the state legislature passed House Bill 1210, establishing the Dr. Elton Mac Huddleston Rural Veterinarian Scholarship Program in memory of the late former House member and veterinarian. The first two scholarship winners have been chosen to receive full in-state tuition and fees for four years at the MSU College of Veterinary Medicine for committing to practicing in a rural area of Mississippi for four years after graduation.

#### **Our People**

- Alex Thomasson, professor and head of Agricultural and Biological Engineering, was elected to the International Academy of Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering.
- Wes Schilling, a food scientist, has been named a Giles Distinguished Professor and Director of the Food Science Innovation Hub at MSU. He also received the American Meat Science Association Distinguished Research Award for his application of science to solve food industry challenges.
- Sandra Correa, assistant professor in Wildlife, Fisheries and Aquaculture, is serving on the U.N. Environment Programme's Multidisciplinary Expert Scientific Advisory Group.
- Margaret Khaitsa, a professor in the College of Veterinary Medicine's Epidemiology unit, serves on the Global One Health High-Level Expert Panel.

#### **College Enrollment and Instruction**

Preliminary data suggest Fall 2025 enrollment will be up from our record 2024 total enrollment to 3,778.

#### **New Construction**

A grand opening for Ballew Hall (formerly the Animal Science Building) for a CALS/MAFES administrative building was held this spring. Dorman Hall has been taken offline for a \$44 million remodeling project.

We are nearing the bid stage for a \$18 million large animal addition to our Veterinary College and a new laminitis research wing at CVM.

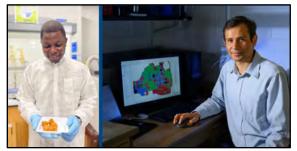
#### **Funding**

Our separately funded units received increases to cover the increased costs of retirement and health insurance, as approved by the Mississippi Legislature. Our units are planning for 2.0% raise pools.



#### 2025 CAES Updates and Highlights - "Where Science Meets Society"

 First Ph.D.s Graduate – The first students to graduate from the college's two-year-old Ph.D. program in the spring semester.
 Dr. William Oyom (on left) is graduating from the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences, and Dr. Arjun Thapa is graduating from the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Design.



- **Urban and Community Food Complex** Our \$15 million building at the N.C. A&T State University Farm, linking Food and Nutritional Science, Animal Science and Agribusiness curriculums with community food entrepreneurship, is on track to be completed this summer. Different areas will come on line through the rest of the year, including a creamery producing Aggie Ice Cream!
- "Brightleaf to Berkshires" program Eighteen farmers, who have been financially impacted
  by tobacco policy and societal changes, made the leap to swine production through N.C. A&T's
  "Swine School," learning how to raise Berkshire pigs using hoop structure barns. The group
  graduated from the semester-long classes this spring.
- SAS Uplift Award Crop scientist Harman Sharma, Ph.D., won the internationally competitive Community Upward Award for her work to help small-scale farmers use technology in crop production at the SAS Innovate Conference in May. N.C. A&T uses the \$1 million SAS Viya data analysis tool to make agricultural analytics available across the state to farmers and students.
- Two-Time Astronaut Scholar Breyana Robinson, an animal sciences major, was awarded the Astronaut Scholarship for a second time, the only female Aggie ever to repeat. The award was created by Mercury 7 astronauts. Only two other N.C. A&T students have ever repeated.
- Honoring the Dead The Landscape Architecture program designed interpretive benches to draw attention to the more than 100 African Americans buried in the cemetery with no nameplate or marker. As a result of media coverage, the city has started to tend the cemetery, landscaping it more closely.



- Senator Gets Look at "Farm of the Future" Sen. Phil Berger visited the University Farm this spring and learned about "ag tech" through our work with drones. "A&T is paving the way for an incredible farming future in North Carolina," he said.
- Five Stars for Eight Years N.C. A&T's Child Development Lab earned a perfect rating for a record eighth year.
- "Where Science Meets Society" with a focus on next-generation agricultural technology with an eye toward its potential to help all audiences across the state, we are "Where Science Meets Society!"



The College of Agriculture and Life Sciences is focused on future-proofing the food supply, emphasizing workforce development, innovation for resilience, and advocacy for agriculture and life sciences. We value partnerships with Farm Bureau, the NCDA&CS, NC Grange, industry groups, and higher ed institutions across North Carolina.

#### **ACADEMIC PROGRAMS**



• Fall 2025 Admissions:

AGI admits: 172 (+29%)

Bachelor's admits: 1,716 (+11%)New enrolled undergrads: 670 (+13%)

• Dean's List: 1,271 students (Spring '25)

· Wolfpack Connect: New guaranteed admission path from community colleges for rural, high-need students

#### **EXTENSION**



- \$2.1B annual economic impact a 27:1 ROI for government partners
- 28,000+ programs reaching 1.5M contacts
- Hurricane Helene recovery: 12,500 hours, \$1M+ raised, aid to 120,000+ residents
- 4-H served 276,000+ youth (largest NC youth program)
- \$1.7M in new gifts and commitments curated
- · Volunteers contributed \$30M+ in time and services
- 200+ Extension websites saw 12.6M visits in 2024

## PHILANTHROPY



- \$46.4M in new gifts and commitments (FY25 to date)
- \$13.8M raised on Day of Giving (+102% YoY), with 1,825 gifts (highest total ever and led all Colleges)
- NC Agricultural Foundation investable assets: \$246.9M

## RESEARCH



- Three consecutive years of growth; \$121.8M in grants and contracts in FY24
  - FY25 is on pace to match or exceed that total
- Genome Editing Center launched and is located in the Plant Science Building
- · New state-of-the-art Egg Processing Center underway as part of Food Animal Initiative

#### **FACULTY & DEPARTMENTAL EXCELLENCE**

CALS faculty continue to earn high-profile recognition for teaching, research, and engagement:

- Marc Cubeta and Clyde Sorenson received top university awards for graduate and undergraduate teaching, respectively.
- Terri Long was awarded the President's Medal, and Ruben Rellan-Alvarez received the prestigious PECASE.

Departments also celebrated major milestones and rankings:

- Crop & Soil Sciences marked 100 years of statewide impact through research, education, and Extension.
- Biological & Agricultural Engineering remains among the top-ranked programs in the country for both graduate and undergraduate education.



Office of the Vice President and Dean 202 Agricultural Hall Stillwater, OK 74078 405-744-5398 agdivision.okstate.edu

Oklahoma State University Institutional Updates, Southern Administrative Heads Summer, 2025

#### Personnel

- Dr. Jim Hess was named the 20<sup>th</sup> president of Oklahoma State University which encompasses the OSU system with campuses in Stillwater, Tulsa, Oklahoma Cit, y and Okmulgee.
- Dr. Jason Harmon was named the new department head of Natural Resource Ecology and Management and begins in June 2025. Dr. Harmon joins OSU from North Dakota State University School of Natural Resource Sciences.
- Dr. Justin Quetone Moss, department head for Horticulture and Landscape Architecture, was named Director of the OSU Student Farm. In addition to the HLA department and the Student Farm, Dr. Moss directs the development and activities at the OSU Botanic Garden which is a public garden and includes research areas for turfgrass, among other projects.
- Hired 14 new tenure track faculty and 6 new non-tenure track faculty and this year in OSU Agriculture.

#### **Facilities**

- The Ferguson College of Agriculture completed the first academic year in our new home, Agricultural Hall.
- Improvements in laboratories are being implemented at the Robert M. Kerr Food and Agricultural Products Center as a result of a direct appropriation from the Oklahoma state legislature.
- Architectural and construction planning continues for a new Agronomy Discovery Center at the Agronomy Research Station in Stillwater. Fundraising is in full swing.
- An assessment of the animal unit facilities and infrastructure used by the Animal and Food Sciences academic program is being undertaken.

#### **Programs and Activities**

- A new strategic plan for OSU Agriculture was rolled out to the public, including stakeholders, producers and the legislature.
- The \$24.5M fundraising campaign for the Animal Excellence Initiative is ready to roll out. A successful campaign will provide funding for animal agriculture, primarily with synergistic human resource initiatives, key hires, and updating animal teaching farms. A new Beef Center of Excellence is a key part of the overall initiative.
- The fundraising for our \$20M Agronomy Discover Center is well underway. The Agronomy Discovery Center will include greenhouses, a headhouse and laboratories and will allow our faculty to continue to develop improved wheat varieties.
- The newest wheat variety, Orange Blossom CL+ was released bringing a strong resistance package, high yield potential, strong tolerance to leaf rust, stripe rust and spring freezes, and good milling quality. More improved wheat varieties are in the research pipeline that aim to improve nutritional value such as more fiber and anthocyanins, contributing to overall heart health, brain function and blood sugar regulation.



## **INSTITUTIONAL UPDATES**

INCE FEB 202

#### FROM ROOT TO FRUIT

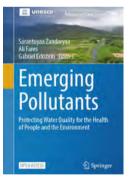
- Completed CAFNR Strategic Plan and NIFA Plan of Work, supporting the vision over the next five years including a new PhD program
- The Gov. Bill and Vara Daniel Farm and Ranch feature on the PVAMU homepage as part of the Excellence Lives Here series More than Land: Cultivating the Future
- · A record three speakers from CAFNR for the fifth TEDxPVAMU event





#### RESEARCH AND INNOVATION SUCCESS

- <u>PVAMU Office of Research & Innovation Month</u> featured two CAFNR days, <u>highlighting and recognizing excellence in</u> <u>research including students</u>, faculty, and research support staff
- Dr. Ali Fares international book launch event
- The <u>Meat Science Center for Innovation</u> weekly retail meat sales featured in the <u>Houston Chronicle</u> newspaper





- Research Storytelling Seminar Series on Tuesdays with faculty, postdocs, and several guests from Texas A&M University and other institutions
- Weekly Land Grant Seminar Series featured dynamic speakers covering innovative topics such as <u>Agletics</u> (Dr. TeKedra Pierre) and <u>AgriForensics</u> (Dr. Paris Favorite)
- International visitors from Liberia Booker Washington Institute
- First semester MS Nutrition students working with Dr. Jennifer Quinlan and <u>Food Security Research Center</u> team
- National Nutrition Month series of events led by Dr. Janet Antwi and team focused on student, faculty, and staff nutrition education
- Dr. Ram Ray receives PVAMU Presidential Award for Outstanding Achievements in Research
- Students shine at the annual PVAMU Conference for Interdisciplinary Research

# We ARE Ag

**ACADEMICS • RESEARCH • EXTENSION** 







#### **ACADEMIC MILESTONES AND HIGHLIGHTS**

- Livestock Show Team success at 2025 Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo
  - Our award-winning goat show team brought home more awards including Reserve Champion Junior Alpine, Champion Alpine Dairy Heard, Champion Junior Alpine Get of Sire, Champion Senior Get of Sire
  - Our world class goats from the <u>International Goat</u> <u>Research Center</u> are consecutively featured in the annual celebrity goat milking contest
- CAFNR graduates are change makers, entrepreneurs, and trailblazers, including the first graduate of MS NRES program, going on to educate, innovate, and serve in public, government, and private sectors















#### \_\_\_\_\_

**ENSION EXPANSION AND EVENTS** 

- Super successful Ag Day on The Hill events
- PVAMU Extension expansion to additional counties in Texas and upcoming community outreach events: Wellness in Houston Bright Futures STEM Camp; Research, Extension, and Apprenticeship Program (REAP); Camp Third-Coast; Show me the Money/Protect Your Legacy Financial Wellness Series; Mental Well-Being Conference; Multi-County EFNEP and FCH Summer Health and Wellness Program
- Agent Success Stories: Feral Hog Eradication (AgNR), Youth and Family Financial Literacy (4-H, CED), Mental Health (FCH)
- Foodscaping project flourishing in several areas on campus



# **SC State University Public Service & Agriculture Updates**









SC State University's leadership and the SC State Public Service & Agriculture (SC State PSA) traveled to The Gambia, West Africa, to further an ongoing agricultural extension partnership and academic exchange between SC State University and this West African nation, where 400 female farmers gained access to fresh water. Funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the 1890 Universities Foundation Center of Excellence for Global Food Security and Defense, a new solar-powered well and pump system was installed in the village of Illiassa, located in the North Bank Region of Gambia. Additionally, 49 new and renovated reservoirs were constructed throughout the village fields, with the water tank system having a capacity of 30,000 liters. SC State University also provided buckets and watering cans.

SC State PSA Associate Vice President and Gambian native Dr. Lamin Drammeh coordinated efforts as the university collaborated with Gambia's National Agricultural Research Institute (NARI) and the Ministry of Agriculture to carry out a needs assessment across the region.

A Handing Over ceremony commenced the international partnership.

On August 7, SC State University and the University of The Gambia (UTG) established a historic partnership to create research opportunities, facilitate student and faculty exchanges, and offer agricultural extension services. The leaders of both institutions signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU).

During a visit to SC State University, U.S. Deputy Secretary of Agriculture Xochitl Torres-Small learned about SC State University Public Service & Agriculture's climate-smart and artificial intelligence efforts, while on a farm tour. During the visit, Torres-Small toured the 200-acre research and demonstration farm, where extension agronomist Dr. Nana Kusi showed Torres-Small the farm's chickpea field, which his team is using to research the viability of chickpeas as a cover crop for local farmers to grow in the offseason while also providing a commodity they can market to consumers.

Using a specially outfitted drone, Dr. Joe Mari Maja, SC State senior researcher and director for the Center of Applied Artificial Intelligence for Sustainable Agriculture, also demonstrated for Torres-Small the university's artificial intelligence (AI) applications in agriculture and how they can provide farmers with critical information about their status of their crops.

Following her tour at the farm in Olar, South Carolina the deputy secretary made her way to SC State's main campus in Orangeburg, where she met with leaders and faculty members about the USDA's partnerships with the university. She also engaged with SC State's 1890 Ag Innovation Scholars, students who will fill roles in the nation's agricultural industry.

- SC State Public Service & Agriculture awarded 66 Agriculture Innovation scholarships and USDA 1890 National scholarships to students pursuing degrees in agriculture and agriculture-related fields for the 2024-2025 academic year. Thirteen scholars earned degrees that prepare them for demanding graduate programs at universities including the Medical University of South Carolina, Colorado State University, Georgia State, and SC State. Other graduates have begun their careers with the U.S. Department of Agriculture Farm Service Agency and SC State Public Service and Agriculture. SC State PSA plans to welcome 17 new Ag Innovation and USDA 1890 Nationals scholars for the fall 2024 semester.
- Randall Pickering, Jr., a then-junior agribusiness major, was selected as a 2024 USDA Future Leader. As part of this distinction, Pickering traveled to Washington, D.C. to attend various leadership sessions and the 2024 Agriculture Outlook Forum, which took place February 2024.
- In March, 10 students traveled to Chicago to attend the Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences National Convention, where then-senior, Marquez Wortham, was sworn in as Region 4 undergraduate vice president.
- In June 2024, seven students traveled to Nairobi, Kenya for an agricultural and cultural immersion experience.
- On March 18, SC State University Public Service & Agriculture and Mixon Seed Service, LLC announced a new cover crop seed mix product line joining the covercrop market.



# **SC State University Public Service & Agriculture Updates**









ReVive<sup>TM</sup> SC State Salad Mix and ReVive<sup>TM</sup> SC State 1890 Mix are unique cover crop seed mixes customized through the collaboration of SC State PSA and Mixon Seed Service, LLC to meet the needs of South Carolina farmers, particularly small, underserved and socially disadvantaged farmers.

The products are a result of the historic public-private partnership between SC State and Mixon Seed Service, LLC as part of the \$4.5M climate-smart commodities grant awarded to the institution by the U.S. Department of Agriculture — Natural Resources Conservation Service. The project is designed to address climate change mitigation through carbon sequestration and the reduction of greenhouse gases. The South Carolina Black Farmers Coalition is also a grant partner.

- In October 2024, SC State University hosted its first-ever Hackathon on campus. Twenty-eight students participated in the three-day event, featuring four teams that collaborated to utilize an open-source model for addressing real-world agricultural scenarios and challenges faced by farmers. Mentors and partners included the United States Department of Agriculture, Google, AgFirst Farm Credit Bank, AgSouth, and Palmetto Agriculture Council.
- The Family, Nutrition and Health team provided hosted a workshop to members of the Pee Dee Community Action Team. Agents presented a physical activity program to over 170 participants. One hundred percent reported that the learned at least one benefit of physical activity.

Across the state, the Family Nutrition and Health team have reached over 750 youth teaching them the benefits of drinking water and avoiding sugary drinks. Youth learned how to make their own infused water and make other nutritious snacks.

Through its Education Innovation and Support programmatic priority, SC State PSA exposes South Carolina middle and high school students to experiences that promote college and career readiness. Efforts are accomplished by hosting college-readiness summits and supporting after school programs with an emphasis on career and college readiness/ preparation. Most recently, 60 students from across the state of South Carolina participated in a college and career readiness tour located in the Atlanta, Georgia. Visits included Georgia State University, Morris Brown College and Georgia Institute of Technology.

#### **FACILITIES**

The Midlands Agriculture Research & Education Center will be housed on site at the SC State University Public Service & Agriculture Research & Demonstration Farm in Olar, South Carolina. The center will have approximately 14,000 square feet of research laboratories, office space for farm and support staff, one large multi-purpose room and collaborative workspace. The \$5M project is funded through the federal 1890 Institution Capacity Building Grants Program.

The building will serve as home to the new Center for Applied Artificial Intelligence for Sustainable Agriculture led by the senior research scientist and director, Dr. Joe Mari Maja. The pioneering hub will be dedicated to harnessing the power of data science and artificial i ntelligence to tackle the pressing challenges confronting small, limited-resource and minority farmers. To that end, the research & education center will contain residence suites for guest researchers and scientists to accommodate the often-long hours required in research. Finally, the center will feature space for a community garden and greenhouses.

- The SC State 1890 Research & Extension centers in Cayce, Florence and Anderson are undergoing upgrades. Supported by a \$6.75 million federal allocation, the Cayce center will become a research and outreach hub in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).
- SC State PSA's historic Camp Daniels is in the second phase of its redevelopment as an immersive nature center for youth and adult learners. SC State is completing roads, trails and infrastructure necessary to support nine new buildings planned for the camp. These will include youth cabins to complement the 260-acre camp's 15,000 square-foot leadership center and on-site pond for aquatic activities.

SC State University Public Service & Agriculture offers its programs to people of all ages, regardless of race, color,gender, religion, national origin, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital or family status and is an equal opportunity employer.





<u>Overview:</u> The Southern University Agricultural Research & Extension Center (SU Ag Center), and the College of Agricultural, Human and Environmental Sciences (CAHES), continues to advance its land-grant mission through education, research, and community outreach. The institution has experienced significant growth, innovation, and impact across agriculture, human sciences, forestry, aquaculture, and rural development.

#### **Division Leadership:**

- Dr. Orlando F. McMeans, Chancellor-Dean
- Dr. Renita W. Marshall, Vice Chancellor for Academics and Student Support-Associate Dean
- Dr. Tiffany W. Franklin, Vice Chancellor for Extension and Outreach (New Appointment)
- Dr. Clyde P. Bagley, Vice Chancellor for Research (New appointment)

#### Academic Excellence:

- Offers 3 B.S. degrees with 15 different concentrations, 1 post-baccalaureate, 1 M.S., and 2 Ph.D. programs across 4 departments.
- #GrowJags Every incoming freshman with at least a 2.5 GPA was awarded \$1,000.
- C.F. Industries Foundation- established a partnership to support STEM and awarded a \$40k scholarship to a Plant & Soil Science student.
- USDA 1890 National Scholars Program-25 scholars; one of the largest number of scholars among the institutions.
- Global Ag Scholars Program -10 students receiving training on international affairs and will travel to Kenya to study agriculture-related issues.
- Internship Two students selected for The George Washington Carver Research Internship Program at Iowa State University to study diverse food systems and agricultural processes.
- Fully accredited (ACEND) Dietetic Internship program. Participants now earn a master's degree.
- Enrollment has grown significantly, with a focus on Agricultural Sciences, Urban Forestry, and Human Sciences.
- Notable achievements include student placements in (7) veterinary schools, national internships, and esports championships.

#### Research and Innovation:

- Focus areas include ecological resilience, aquaculture, animal science, viticulture, and food innovation.
- SUN Beef Program and vineyard/winery initiatives promote local food systems.
- Technological advancements in soil health monitoring and aquaponics are underway.
- Expanding Precision Agriculture programming (Precision 'Agcademy' Drone Certification), transitioning from SU Ag Center to CAHES.

#### **Community Engagement:**

- The Cooperative Extension Program has served Louisiana for over 50 years.
- Youth development initiatives include drone/STEM programs, civic leadership, and livestock participation.
- Produce Giveaways combat food insecurity while supporting local farmers.

#### Facilities and Infrastructure:

- Major upgrades include a high-tech meat processing facility (MEATii), livestock arena, and safehouse shelter.
- Renovations and new constructions are addressing long-standing infrastructure needs.
- Technology upgrades and disaster preparedness facilities are in progress.



University of Arkansas System

### University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture Summer 2025 SRAHS Meeting Update

#### **EXTENSION**

- A multidisciplinary team of faculty and county agents conducted a flood damage
  assessment for eastern Arkansas in April, estimating damages of \$79 million. The team's
  innovative use of satellite imagery in conducting the assessment was featured in
  national coverage by NASA's earth observatory:
  <a href="https://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/images/154249/arkansas-farmers-face-lingering-floodwaters">https://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/images/154249/arkansas-farmers-face-lingering-floodwaters</a>.
- Recently filled ANR positions include extension/research post-harvest processing engineer, Dr. Kaushik Luthra, located at the Northeast Rice Research and Extension Center (NERREC). Dr. Yiting Xiao will be joining the Bio/Ag Engineering on-campus faculty in July with extension and research activities in agricultural production waste management. A search is ongoing for an extension/research Assistant Professor in soil fertility to be located at NERREC.
- The Division is partnering with UA-Fayetteville campus to pursue APLU's Innovation &
   Economic Prosperity designation. This will allow us to better integrate UADA's grassroots
   mechanisms for identifying and responding to local needs through its network of county
   extension offices and stakeholder groups with university-based research, innovation and
   workforce development.
- Recently filled Family & Consumer Sciences (FCS) positions include Dr. Lida Araghi,
   Assistant Professor and Extension Specialist in Nutrition & Food Science and Dr. Bryce
   Daniels, Assistant Professor and Extension Specialist in Health.
- FCS faculty awards: Dr. Laura Hendrix, was recently awarded the John W. White
   Outstanding Extension State Faculty Award; and Dr. Jessica Vincent received the NEAFCS
   Distinguished Award Winner, 2024. County Extension Agents Mary Beth Groce (Faulkner
   County) and Trudy McManus (Benton County) received NEAFCS Distinguished Service
   Awards for 2025.
- Arkansas 4-H established the Careers for Arkansas Livestock Leaders (CALL) Program
  with the goal of teaching leadership and workforce readiness skills through hands-on
  learning and networking with livestock industry leaders.
- The Arkansas 4-H SeaPerch Program will be sending four county teams the International SeaPerch competition in Maryland.



University of Arkansas System

#### **RESEARCH**

#### Leadership

- James Barton, DVM, was named new director of the Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory, https://aaes.uada.edu/news/james-barton-vet-diagnostic-lab/
- The Agricultural Experiment Station has an on-going search for an Associate Director for Research Development and Compliance
- UADA will be launching a search for a new Department Head to lead our Department of Food Science on July 1, 2025.

#### Research

- Despite federal delays is awards and RFA releases, research awards for FY 25 Q1-Q3 are \$36.4M, a 35% increase from FY2024 Q1-Q3 awards. The Arkansas Food Innovation Center (AFIC@MCO) was awarded \$5.2M from the Walton Family Foundation.
- Jason Norsworthy, Distinguished Professor was honored this year by the Weed Science Society of America with the U.S. Herbicide Resistance Action Committee's Herbicide Resistance Management Award. https://aaes.uada.edu/news/norsworthy-wssa-award/
- Seventeen Arkansas Agricultural Experiment Station researchers are among those ranked as the world's most-cited scientists, https://aaes.uada.edu/news/elsevier-top-cited-scientists/

#### **Facilities**

- Design of the new 60,000 sqft Food Science Research Center continues. Estimated costs of the facility are \$55M and construction is delayed until funding is fully in place.
- The Market Center of Ozarks that houses the AFIC@MCO, a UADA program, had its grand opening on May 29, 2025.

#### **ACADEMICS**

- Several leadership changes occurred in Bumpers College during the first half of 2025
  - o Dr. Lona Robertson, Associate Dean of Bumpers College retired May 31, 2025.
  - Dr. Jackie Mosley is the new Associate Dean of Bumpers College and began her new role on June 1, 2025.
  - Dr. Eunjoo Cho is the new Assistant Dean for Honors Programs in Bumpers College
  - Dr. Jeff Miller is the new Assistant Dean for International Programs in Bumpers
     College



University of Arkansas System

- Bumpers College Spring commencement was May 9<sup>th</sup>, with 487 undergraduates participating
- The transition to Workday Student is official and students used the new system to enroll for Fall 25 classes. There were several speed bumps during the transition, some of which are still being smoothed out.
- The University of Arkansas is fundraising for the Land of Opportunity scholarship program. The scholarships will focus on supporting Pell-eligible Arkansans. The university has raised approximately \$125M of the \$200M goal thus far.
- In November 2024, East Arkansas Community College (EACC) in Forrest City officially joined the UA System after receiving final approval from the Higher Learning Commission. This move made EACC the eighth two-year college in the system.
- Additionally, North Arkansas College (Northark) in Harrison is actively exploring a potential affiliation with the UA System.



College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences

#### **General Updates:**

- CAES celebrated the opening of the UGA Grand Farm with a groundbreaking ceremony on May 2, 2025. We were joined by Georgia's Agriculture Commissioner Tyler Harper, a number of state senators and state representatives, our UGA President Jere Morehead and UGA Provost Jack Hu, among over 200 other partners and guests.
- United States Secretary of Agriculture Brook Rollins visited our Iron Horse Farm in Watkinsville, GA on March 12, 2025. We cohosted this visit with the Georgia Department of Agriculture.
- Dr. Marin Brewer has been selected as the Department Head for Plant Pathology. She will begin in this role on July 1.
- We are in final talks to hire the next Department Head for Agricultural and Applied Economics.

#### **CAES Academics:**

- This spring, we graduated 327 undergraduate student and 78 graduate students in our spring 2025 convocation ceremony on May 8, 2025.
- A total of 151 CAES students are traveling abroad this summer in a variety of countries including Ecuador, Italy, Spain and Scotland.
- Six CAES students are participating in our CAES Congressional Agriculture Fellowship in Washington, D.C. this summer. They will complete nearly 3,000 hours of policy work over the course of 12 weeks.

#### **CAES Research:**

- CAES research expenditures have increased to an all-time high of \$66M, with federal award funding at \$64M.
- Dr. Robin Buell, Georgia Research Alliance Eminent Scholar Chair in Crop Genomics, was elected to be a member of the National Academy of Sciences (NAS). Dr. Buell is one of two CAES faculty who are members of the NAS.
- The Office of Research has organized a Grant Writers Seminar annually over the last three years and are currently exploring options to expand this program to support faculty members within CAES.

#### **UGA Cooperative Extension:**

- Georgia 4-H had its largest ever \$4 for 4-H Day, raising over \$133,000 to support Georgia's 4-H programs. We received donations from all 159 counties in Georgia.
- Over 8,000 Georgia youth registered for 4-H camp this summer across our five 4-H centers at Rock Eagle, Burton, Fortson, Jekyll, and Wahsega 4-H Centers, located all across Georgia.
- Dr. Yangxuan Liu has been selected to receive the 2025 Agricultural and Applied Economics Association (AAEA) Distinguished Extension/Outreach Program Award.
- This year, we rolled out a new tool for agents and Georgia citizens: <u>The Georgia Ag Impact Report</u>. This report, housed online, provides key commodity insights, county-by-county breakdowns, and teaching materials to be used by the public.



# **INSTITUTIONAL UPDATES**

#### **LEADERSHIP CHANGE**

Dr. Laura Stephenson is the new Vice President for Land-grant Engagement and Dean of the University of Kentucky Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment. She succeeds Dr. Nancy Cox, who led the college for over a decade.

#### RESEARCH

- » \$47.2M in external funding (FY2024); 500+ peer-reviewed publications
- » New \$280M Agricultural Research Building (263,000 sq. ft.) underway
- » Emerging focus areas include:
  - · Food as Health
  - · One Health
  - Local Food Systems
  - Forest Productivity
  - Companion Animals
  - Equine Science
  - Veterinary Vaccine Development
  - Al & Machine Learning
- » This momentum is further supported by The Bill Gatton Foundation's investment in faculty research, including two new endowed chairs, four Grand Challenge initiatives and support for cutting-edge research that will make life better for Kentuckians and communities across the globe.

#### **EXTENSION**

- » Presence in all 120 counties
- » 202,000+ youth enrolled in 4-H last year
- » 1,000+ individuals trained in addiction recovery support
- » 7,000+ producers supported with sustainable practices
- » Led disaster recovery in Eastern KY; created first recovery agent role
- » Meats & Foods Industry Advancement Center nearing final design
- » Robinson Center in Quicksand and the Research and Education Center in Princeton rebuilds progressing well

### **STUDENT SUCCESS**

- » Enrollment up 4.6%; strong grad/ postdoc growth
- » New buildings in 2026:
  - Martin-Gatton Agricultural Sciences Building (66,000 sq. ft.)
  - Renovated Scovell Hall
- » \$1.2M in scholarships awarded in 2024
- » Dual support model for student success: academic advisor + career mentor
- » 26% of our undergraduates were firstgeneration students in 2024



## University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture Highlights Mini Land-Grant Meeting — June 2025

#### **Leadership Additions/Changes**

- Justin Rhinehart, who has served UTIA as a professor in the Department of Animal Science and as Extension beef cattle specialist; assistant dean of agriculture and natural resources and community economic development; and interim dean of UT Extension, will now serve as the statewide leader of UT Extension. He assumed his new role on June 1, 2025.
- Brett Hubner joined UTIA as the associate vice chancellor of business and finance. Huebner is no
  stranger to UT Knoxville. He currently serves as the senior associate athletics director for facility
  enhancement and capital project management, and during his nearly eleven-year career with UT has
  also served as the senior associate athletics director and chief financial officer. Prior to joining UT,
  Huebner was the senior associate athletics director and chief financial officer with the University of
  South Florida.

#### Infrastructure and Equipment Upgrades That Are/Will Be Transformative

- The Governor and Tennessee General Assembly allocated \$45 Million to greatly expand STEM learning at our Clyde M. York (Crossville), Clyde Austin (Greeneville), and W.P. Ridley (Columbia) 4-H Centers. Lone Oaks Farm will build additional cabin and lodging facilities.
- Planning continues to construct a state-of-the-art 15,000-square foot Center for Protein Innovation
  (CPI) that will be located at the East Tennessee AgResearch and Education Center Blount Unit, near
  Knoxville campus. The facility will be used for workforce training, student experiential learning, and
  cutting-edge research related to meat processing, meat quality and safety, and meat products
  development. Groundbreaking is expected to take place in the fall of 2025.

#### **Global Impact**

- The UT Turfgrass Team won the national Excellence in Extension Team Award for its global impact and industry innovations. Presented by the US Department of Agriculture National Institute of Food and Agriculture (USDA NIFA), Cooperative Extension, and the Association of Public Land-Grant Universities (APLU), the award honors the team's excellence in research, technical assistance, and outreach education. Team initiatives include a certified lawn care professional program, an online weed identification app, and the TN Turf Tuesday series that provides continuing education during the growing season.
- In April UTIA turfgrass scientists, in collaboration with partners from Michigan State University, hosted the FIFA Pitch Research Field Day at the University of Tennessee attendees from FIFA Headquarters and the 2026 World Cup hosting cities in North America. FIFA leaders inspected the 4,000-square foot turf research and development facility (located at the East Tennessee AgResearch and Education

Center –Plant Science Unit) and met with the teams who are working to create the perfect pitches for the FIFA World Cup  $26^{\text{IM}}$ .

#### **Updates and Strategic Initiatives**

- Hurricane Helene struck Tennessee on September 27, 2024, following days of heavy rain in the mountains. The result was catastrophic flooding that wiped out major roads and interstates, infrastructure for cities and towns, homes, and farms. The hardest hit counties were Washington, Carter, Unicoi, Johnson, Greene, and Cocke. Damage to agriculture, forestry, and associated industries in Tennessee counties was estimated to be more than \$1 billion, and recovery will likely take many years. The University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture has assembled a multi-disciplinary team of specialists and researchers to develop science-based solutions for managing the flood-deposited sediments along the Nolichucky River and assisting farmers in bringing their fields back into production. This spring, field studies will begin to test different soil management strategies, seeding methods, and soil amendments, with the goal of improving seedling establishment and addressing nutrient deficiencies in key crops and forages. We received NIFA Rapid Response funding for Hurricane Helene and the Tennessee Department of Agriculture.
- The Herbert College of Agriculture graduated over 270 undergraduate students in May 2025. The exact number is still pending. They have until June 15 to confirm all degrees.



# Institutional Highlights February-May 20205

#### I. Noticeable achievements

- During the BAA/CARET conference in Washington, DC, the School of Agriculture (SOA) delegation along with the UVI President, Dr. Safiya George met with the Congresswoman Stacey Plaskett to solicit her support for Research and Extension Appropriations request.
- SOA was recognized by the College of Agriculture, Science and Education (CASE) in Jamaica at the ribbon cutting ceremony for the CASE Tissue Culture Facility. A plaque was presented to SOA which was represented by Dr. Thomas Zimmerman and Stafford Crossman. SOA was instrumental in providing technical assistance in the design and outfitting of the lab, and training of the CASE staff, at the School of Agriculture AES Biotechnology Lab.
- Dr. Carollyn Boykins-Winrow and Dr. Annette James led a group of five SOA students to the Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Related Sciences (MANNRS) Annual Conference and Career Expo in Memphis, TN-April 2-6, 2025.
- SOA hosted its first Annual Field Day on Sunday, April 27, 2025, from 1pm-4pm at AAS campus. The event highlighted and showcased research, extension, and academic programs work of the school.
- *Dr. Henry Awika* was appointed to serve a one-year term on the eLife Global South Committee on Open Science. The committee promotes visibility and impactful research by scientists in Global South regions. Dr. Awika is one of 13 international members contributing to this initiative.
- David Hensley successfully defended his dissertation research. Dissertation title: *Soil Hydrological Studies for Water Resource Conservation and Management in the Virgin Islands*. Institution: Auburn University, Alabama. The dissertation presentation took place on AAS campus, approximately 45 attendees from UVI and the community.

### II. Leadership and personnel changes

• Search for a new Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs is on going. Five candidates, two internal and three external are under consideration by the President, Dr. Safiya George.

- Mr. Samuel Joseph has been appointed as the interim Assistant Director for Fiscal and Personnel Affair/EEO Office of SOA replacing Ms. Raquel Santiago who has retired on March 31, 2025.
- Search is in progress for the Assistant/Associate Professor for AgBusiness/Economics position. Five candidates are under consideration.
- Search is in progress for the Assistant Director for Agriculture and Natural Resources in the Cooperative Extension Service.
- Search is in progress for SOA Student Recruitment Specialist position.

### III. Community focused activities

- In celebrating the 2025 Week of the Young Child, the 4-H/Family and Consumer Sciences Program promoted the benefits of good nutrition and wellness among young students to support early childhood development.
- The 4-H Family and Consumer Sciences Program partnered with the Virgin Islands Diabetes Center to educate selected diabetic patients in St. Thomas and St. Croix on healthy food preparation and informed nutrition choices.
- Pesticide safety education was conducted in various categories including CORE
  Pesticide Safety/IPM training, Industrial and Institutional Structural Health, and
  recertification training for certified pesticide applicators and people interested in
  becoming certified. Certified applicator exams were also administered.
- Different irrigation techniques were demonstrated to a group of Conservation apprentices and a youth led VI Farm Force under the umbrella of VI Women in Ag Association and a Vermont Conservation District.
- Internship for highs school seniors: Engaged with a local high school and the VI Department of Labor to train six senior high school interns in agricultural research.
- In collaboration with a local high school and the Virgin Islands Department of Labor, six (6) senior high school students successfully completed a 12-week internship in agricultural with hands-in research under the Animal Science, Biotechnology and Horticulture Programs.
- David Hensley Hosted and facilitated the Virgin Islands Water Data Synthesis Workshop on March 19-20 at Carambola Beach Resort, St. Croix. The event had 33 attendees, including several UVI employees.

## IV. Faculty, staff, and student achievements.

- Lamani Santiago, Eduardo Febres II, and Adeana Jackson. (February 15-17). Three UVI students, employed by SOA-CES IPM unit, created Agricultural games (insect crossword puzzles, matching pests with damage, 64 playing Pest, Damage, Insect Mouthpart cards, and 4 coloring pages) for the Agriculture and Food Fair display.
- Awika, H.& Ewer, J. (2025). *Establishment Radish: Choose how to Break-even and Profit*. Agrifest: 53rd Annual Ag & Food Fair of the U.S. Virgin Islands. 53 29-32.
- Davis, Kenneth Olasee. (2025). The protection of prime agricultural land in the U.S. Virgin Islands. 53<sup>rd</sup> Agriculture and Food Fair of the U.S. Virgin Islands, Bulletin 37, 42-44.
- Davis, Kenneth Olasee. (2025). The history and potential of tropical fruits as an industry in the U.S. Virgin Islands. 53<sup>rd</sup> Agriculture and Food Fair of the U.S. Virgin Islands Bulletin, 37, 33-36.
- *Davis*, Kenneth Olasee. (March 2025). Historical data collection on streams flow and land use pattern changes in the U.S. Virgin Islands. Ghuts, Grit, and Gills: Synthesis of Hydrologic, Water Quality, and Ecosystem Data for Climate Adaptation Planning Data Synthesis Workshop, Carambola Beach Resort, St. Croix, March 18-21.
- Dreves, Amy J. (March 4, 2025). 4-D USVI Farming for Success. 11<sup>th</sup> International Integrated Pest Management Conference in San Diego CA. (USDA-NIFA-CPPM-EIP 2021-2024 grant funded) at SERA3 meeting (Southern Region Information Exchange Group for IPM),
- Dreves, Amy J. (2025). Unhealthy soils lead to Plant pest problems. 53rd Annual Agriculture and Food Fair of the U.S. Virgin Islands Bulletin, 37, 50-55. Santiago, Lamani (Illustrator)
- Dreves, Amy J. (March 19, 2025). New DPNR-USVI Pesticide Regulation, and Pesticide Safety Technicians and Handler's Training. (Co-presenter, Nevlin Williams, Pesticide Program, Department of Planning & Natural Resources (DPNR), Division of Environmental Protection).
- *Dreves*, Amy J. (March 28, 2025). Pesticide safety education program (PSEP) training to VI-Certified Pesticide Applicators with expiring licenses.
- Dahl-Smith, Sarah. (2025). 4-H: Beyond ready to create the next generation of youth leaders. 53<sup>rd</sup> Agriculture and Food Fair of the U.S. Virgin Islands, Bulletin 37, 56-57.

- Shoy, Carol. (2025). From soil to soul: An inspiring journey into agriculture for high school students. 53<sup>rd</sup> Agriculture and Food Fair of the U.S. Virgin Islands, Bulletin 37, 37-38.
- Hensley, David, Knappenberger, Thorsten, Lancellotti, Brittany, Brantley, Eve, Shaw, Joey, Dobre, Mariana, and Lindner, James. (2025). Runoff generation in ephemeral streams of the Virgin Islands: The case of Salt River, St. Croix. Journal of Hydrology: Regional Studies 56:102372. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ejrh.2025.102372
- Joseph, Samuel S., Zimmerman, Thomas W. (2025). Effects of flower bud pruning on jicama production in the Caribbean. Acta Horticulturae, 1422: 159–162. https://doi.org/10.17660/ActaHortic.2025.1422.19
- Zimmerman, Thomas W. (2025). 'Midnite': combining Caribbean and African Hibiscus sabdariffa. Acta Horticulturae, 1422: 163–166. https://doi.org/10.17660/ActaHortic.2025.1422.20
- Rios, Andrea. 2025. The Connection Between Sheep and Global Warming. (2025). Establishment Radish: Choose how to Break-even and Profit. Agrifest: 53rd Annual Ag & Food Fair of the U.S. Virgin Islands. 53: 45-49.
- Richards, Daryl A. Jr. and Thomas W. Zimmerman. (February 1, 2025) *Influence of Water-Soluble Fertilizer on Petunia Organogenesis*. Southern Association of Agricultural Scientists. Irving, Texas, January 31<sup>st</sup>- February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025.
- *Dr. Andrea Rios* attended and presented at a Small Ruminant Seminar at the University of Puerto Rico. She delivered two workshops: *Heat Stress and Small Ruminants* on 10 April 2025 and *Lamb Management from Birth to Weaning* on 11 April 2025.

#### V. Other achievements or activities

- Four University of Puerto Rico Students spent a week on St Croix to help the farmers through the AES Small Ruminant Livestock program. We were able to help three different farms and support the farmers with hoof trimming, parasite identification, and weighing. They worked with approximately 300 sheep over the course of three days.
- Three sheep were donated to the VI Department of Agriculture for training of the new butchers.



#### **Administrative**

- Dr. Renee Boyer appointed Assistant Dean for Graduate Research Programs
- Dr Chevon Thorpe appointed Assistant Dean for Student Success
- Mr. Jonathan Baros appointed as CALS Assistant Dean of Finance (August 2025)

#### **Leadership Searches**

- Head, Department Agricultural and Applied Economics
- Director, School of Plant and Environmental Sciences
- Head Department of Food Science (coming Fall 25)

#### **CALS Research**

- Research awards research expenditures increased 11% to \$60.4M in 2024.
- Research needs assessment of the Commonwealth was completed in 2024 to understand stakeholder needs and prioritize investments.
- \$705k in CALS Integrated Seed Grants and \$1.52 million in Pratt Foundation support for research in animal nutrition awarded.

#### Research Facilities:

- First step of facility wide improvement of <u>Agricultural Research and Extension Centers</u> (AREC) across Virginia has begun with planning underway for upgrades to Eastern Shore AREC in Painter, VA.
- New Hampton Roads AREC greenhouse was completed as a collaboration with Old Dominion University to house their orchid collection.

#### **CALS Global**

#### Global Agricultural Productivity Initiative

 <u>2025 GAP Report</u> will be launched on October 1 in Chicago.

#### **USDA Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities**

\$80 million <u>Alliance to Advance Climate-Smart</u>
 <u>Agriculture</u>, awarded under USDA's "Partnerships
 for Climate-Smart Commodities" continues under
 the "Advancing Markets for Producers" initiative.

#### **CALS Global (Cont.)**

 > 1,300 farms in AR, MN, ND, and VA, encompassing 202,000 acres have been engaged and the project has <u>distributed</u> ~\$10M in payments to producers.

#### **CALS Academic Programs**

#### 2025 Admissions first time student

- 4100 Applications (29.4% increase)
- 58.8% Offered Rate
- 850 Enrolled (before September census)
  - o Includes 50 associate and 100 transfer

#### 2025 Enrollment

- Total CALS: 3603 students
- Undergraduate enrollment continues to be steady (2960 students) with VT enrollment capped.
- Graduate student enrollment at 643 students.

#### 2024-25 Graduates

- 51 Associate, 721 Bachelors,
- 130 Masters, 47 Doctoral

#### **Scholarships**

- CALS awarded > \$1,00,000 in scholarships in 2024 to more than 500 students.
- 7 John Lee Pratt research-based awards to highly qualified CALS seniors with potential to pursue graduate studies in animal nutrition.
- New \$1,000,000 endowment to support internship programs.

#### **CALS Extension**

- 10-year strategic plan for VCE to be released July 2025.
- 3 area specialized agents in community engaged health were hired
- New positions were established including field marketing coordinators to work within districts to support communication needs and be part of the CALS marketing and communication team within CALS Advancement.

# **University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff School of Agriculture, Fisheries and Human Sciences**

As Arkansas's only 1890 land-grant institution, the **University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff School of Agriculture, Fisheries and Human Sciences** (UAPB-SAFHS) continues to empower communities through innovative research, education and impactful Extension programs.

#### Cultivating Innovation and Research

<u>Aquaponics Systems in the Classroom</u> – UAPB-SAFHS introduced classroom-based aquaponics systems to educate middle school students on sustainable agriculture and address local food insecurity.

<u>Aqua-Based Live Food Strategies for Poultry Industry</u> – Researchers at UAPB are exploring sustainable live food options derived from aquaculture to enhance poultry nutrition and industry practices.

#### Empowering Students and Alumni

Some of this year's outstanding graduates include <u>Ché Rochford</u>, an agricultural business major awarded the prestigious <u>Chancellor's Medallion</u>, <u>Henrietta Owusu</u>, an animal science major who is going on to pursue her PhD, and <u>Madison Purifoy</u>, a nutrition and food science major who – among many accolades – took first place in a competition at the National MANRRS Training Conference.

Student Graduates with Two Degrees from Two Ark. Universities – Thanks to the 3 + 1 Poultry Science Program, a student has earned a bachelor's degree in animal science from UAPB and a bachelor's degree in poultry science from the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville.

#### Community Engagement and Extension

<u>Landowner Uses Forestry Program to Preserve Family Heritage</u> – A landowner utilized UAPB's "Keeping it in the Family" forestry resources to sustainably maintain his family land.

#### Global and Industry Partnerships

<u>UAPB Partnering with Agricultural Sector of Ghana</u> – A collaboration with Ghanaian agriculture stakeholders aims to enhance rice production and industry development.

#### Youth and Educational Outreach

Kids on the Block Recognized by Pine Bluff City Council – The "Kids on the Block" community 4-H club received commendation for its positive impact on youth education and community engagement.

<u>Workshop Engages Students in Nutrition, Creativity</u> – The Feeding Brighter Futures nutrition and wellness workshop empowered students through interactive learning and creative expression.

#### Faculty and Staff Achievements

<u>Dr. Tracy V. Dunbar's Career Has Come Full Circle</u> – Dr. Dunbar, chair of the Department of Agriculture, reflects on her professional journey at UAPB, contributing to the institution's academic leadership.

<u>Dr. W. Jinnings Burruss Jr. Selected as Judge in Culinary Competition</u> – Dr. Burruss, professor of food service and restaurant management, has been selected as judge for the Arkansas Hospitality Association's 2025 ProStart Tournament.