



Announcements/News:

Important Upcoming Dates:

Faculty Meeting—July 9, 3:00-4:15 pm

Zoom Link: <https://virginiatech.zoom.us/j/97740997903>

Staff Meeting—2nd Monday of the month, 12:00 pm -1:00 pm via Zoom (see email)

Donut Tuesday—TBA, 8:30 am at 311 Latham

Graduate Student Lunch with Director -TBA, 12:00 pm-1:00 pm at 311 Latham

SPES Social—TBA, 4:00 pm - 6:30 pm via Zoom (see email)

Congratulations Rhonda Shrader! Rhonda has retired after 42 years and 7 months of service. Rhonda plans to spend time with her family. You will truly be missed!





Announcements/News:

The School of Plant and Environmental Sciences (SPES) is excited to announce the launch of a new major in Ecological Restoration and a new BS degree program in Plant Science this coming academic year.

The new major in Ecological Restoration will be associated with our Environmental Science degree. Students enrolling in the major will learn how to restore and enhance ecosystems with emphasis on mined lands, wetlands, and retired agricultural lands. Students will be eligible to enroll in the major starting fall semester 2021.

The new Plant Science degree program is scheduled to take effect spring 2022 pending final approval. The new degree will replace the current Crop and Soil Environmental Sciences (CSES) and Horticulture (HORT) degree programs in SPES. Majors, and some Options, from the former degree programs will be offered under the new Plant Science degree. The new/modified majors will include: Crop and Soil Sciences, Environmental Horticulture, Landscape Design and Turfgrass Science, and a completely new major in Plant Science.

The discontinuance of the CSES and HORT degree programs **will not** impact current students enrolled in those degree programs or minors. The new degree will be phased in over the next four years allowing current students to complete existing programs. Any questions about the new major or degree program should be directed to: Dr. Ben Tracy, Associate Director for Undergraduate Programs (bftracy@vt.edu).

Faculty Awards:



Congratulations, John Galbraith! John was selected as a Soil Science Society of America Fellow. The Fellow designation is the highest recognition bestowed by the SSSA. Members of SSSA nominate worthy colleagues based on their professional achievement and meritorious service and annually only a select few are bestowed with the Fellow designation. John is included in the SSSA 2021 Awards Hall of Fame and will be recognized during the 2021 Annual Meeting at the Awards Breakfast on November 10.

Graduate Student Awards:

Weed Science Society of America Travel Award granted to Cynthia Sias for 2021. This award allows the graduate student to visit a research station of their choice and learn about how things operate and work as they build connections.

Cynthia is a PhD in Weed Science with Michael Flessner.



Graduates:

Pack, Erica Danielle (edpack) (advisor, Schmale)	PhD Spring 2021	Zearalenone contamination in swine feed and the effects on reproductive health
Brewer, John Richard (jbrew10) (advisor, Askew)	PhD Spring 2021	Optimizing Topramezone and Other Herbicide Programs for Weed Control in Bermudagrass and Creeping Bentgrass Turf
Liu, Danyang (dadanyan) (advisor, Samtani)	PhD Spring 2021	Evaluation of anaerobic soil disinfestation using brewers spent grain and yeast inoculation in annual hill plasticulture strawberry production
Poskaitis, Megan Kathleen (megankposkaitis) (advisor, Thomason)	MS Spring 2021	NON-THESIS OPTION
Craft, Jordan Michael (jcraft1) (advisor, Askew)	PhD Spring 2021	Factors governing zoysiagrass response to herbicides applied during spring green-up
Kiremit, Merve (mervek) (advisor, Welbaum)	PhD Spring 2021	Bacterial fruit blotch disease of cucurbits
Kaur, Navjot (navjot91) (advisor, Haak)	PhD Summer I 2021 PENDING	Genotypic characterization and fungicide resistance monitoring for Virginia populations of Parastagonospora
Hinkle, Caleb Daniel (calebh37) (advisor, Reed)	MS Spring 2021	Studies of Low-Nicotine Flue-Cured Tobacco production
Henderson, Caleb Aleksandr (calebah) (advisor, McCall)	MS Spring 2021	Identification of Disease Stress in Turfgrass Canopies Using Thermal Imagery and Automated Aerial Image Analysis
Daly, Emeline Hope (emelineh) (advisor, McCall and Kuhar)	MS Spring 2021	Phenology and Management of Annual Bluegrass Weevil on Virginia Golf Courses
Wei, Xing (xingwei) (advisor, Li)	PhD Spring 2021	Management of stem rot of peanut using optical sensors, machine learning, and fungicides



Graduates:

Nahiyah, Md Abdullah Al (aalnahiyah) (advisor, Mizuho)	MS Spring 2021	Efficacy of the biological control agent <i>Rhizobium vitis</i> ARK-1 against tumorigenic <i>Rhizobium vitis</i> , the causal agent of grapevine crown gall
Garcia Gonzalez, Jose Francisco (josefg1) (Rideout and Langston)	PhD Spring 2021	Investigating Management Alternatives for Southern Blight on Vegetables in the mid-Atlantic United States
Lakoba, Vasiliy Tarasovich (vtlakoba) (advisor, Barney)	PhD Spring 2021	Ecotypic Variation in Johnsongrass in Its Invaded U.S. Range

Grants:

Steve Rideout, Enhancing Regional Adoption of Anaerobic Soil Disinfestation for Soilborne Disease Management in High Tunnel Vegetable Production Systems. USDA-NIFA, CPPM. Subcontract with Ohio State University, Dr. Sally Miller PI, \$60,000.

New Employees:

Tianyou (Hope) Xu, M.S. student in Food Science and Technology, co-advised by Dr. Yun Yin and Dr. Jayesh Samtani

Baker Aljawasim, Ph.D. student, Dr. Jayesh Samtani

Publications:

Sarkar, S*, A.F. Ramsey, A. B. Cazenave, and Balota, M. 2021. Peanut leaf wilting estimation from RGB color indices and logistic models. *Front. Plant. Sci.* 18 June 2021, <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpls.2021.658621>.

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July 1, 2021