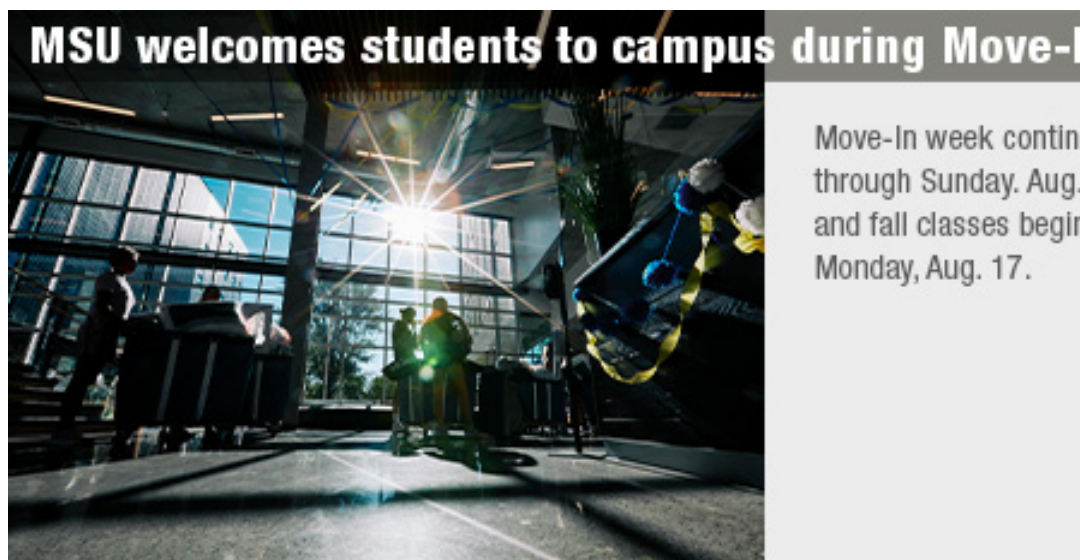




**MONTANA
STATE UNIVERSITY**

College of
**AGRICULTURE &
MONTANA AGRICULTURAL
EXPERIMENT STATION**

Inside Ag | August 2020



Welcome back to all of our faculty, staff and students! We hope your first week of classes was a success.

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A Message from Dr. Bajwa

Dear COA/MAES Family,

Welcome, once again, to the beginning of another semester. I know that this fall looks unlike anything we have seen before, but I am so proud of the work that faculty and staff from all corners of this university have put in to prepare for the

return of our students and the resuming of our classes.

I would like to once again offer my sincere thanks to all the faculty and staff who put in so much work to make our virtual field days such a success. We received many positive messages about the content we created, and I commend you for your adaptation and hard work to continue such incredible outreach efforts.

On that note, as we start another academic year, I would like to pick up again with highlighting our strategic goals and members of our community who are striving to make them a reality. In past newsletters, we have highlighted our goals of a people-centered environment, impactful research and development, and transformational teaching and learning. In this edition, we will note some of our faculty and staff who are contributing heartily to our goals of **inclusive and pertinent engagement and outreach**. Thank you to everyone who made submissions to Reagan Colyer for this newsletter. In September, we will be focusing our strategic highlight on **strategic stewardship of our resources**, and we welcome your submissions for that topic as well.

With the beginning of this new school year, constant adaptation is necessary on all of our parts. There is much we need to do, including continued focus on welcoming and engaging with all members of our community. This includes our marginalized populations and our minorities, people of color and LGBT community members. We each have a responsibility to welcome, engage with and amplify the voices of those who are not always heard.

We welcomed our students back with a welcome tent on the first day of class. Many of our students stopped by to have an ice cream or collect their "clean cat kit". Our new faculty onboarding program is set to start with their first meeting on **Aug. 28 at noon**. In September, our new faculty members will be joining with last year's group to discuss a book "Land-grant Universities of the Future" by Stephen Gavazzi and Gordon Gee. It is important to understand the mission, history, and challenges and opportunities facing the organization you work for. I recommend this book to everyone in our college.

I cannot thank you enough for the work that you all do to make Montana State University such an exceptional place to work and teach. I hope you will all continue to comply with the new protocols implemented for the safety and health of our community. Please continue to social distance, wear masks, wash your hands and stay home if you are ill. We are all in this together, and that is the only to move forward.

Sincerely,
Sreekala Bajwa



Upcoming Events

John Prisco will present "The Hidden World beneath the Antarctic Ice Sheet," as part of this semester's MSU Honors Presents Lecture Series. More information and a WebEx link will be forthcoming.

Strategic Plan Highlight - Outreach and Engagement

Thank you to everyone who submitted highlights of their engagement and outreach efforts for this newsletter! We are so proud of the work you continue to do, especially in the midst of a pandemic that necessitates considerable adaptation.

- Faculty from the MBI department are collaborating closely with Bozeman City-County Health Department and Montana DPHHS in researching and testing for COVID-19, led by **Seth Walk, Deborah Keil, Michelle Flenniken and Blake Weidenheft**. Assistant professor **Steve Swain**, research associates **Nicholas Pinkham** and **Michael Dills**, and postdoctoral fellow Paul van Erp have also assisted with that critical outreach.
- DATE's **Dusty Perry** hosted a week-long workshop for high school agricultural and technology education teachers. The attendees built a 10 ft. utility trailer and a 25 ft gooseneck dovetail. Due to the pandemic, many summer professional development activities had been canceled and many teachers were looking for alternative ways to gain new experience and skills. Dr. Perry engaged with 17 educators from around the state to fill that need!
- Work by **Jed Eberly, Pat Carr** and **Tim Seipel**, with the Montana Biocontrol Coordination Program examining Canada thistle biocontrol was featured by the Organic Advisory & Education Council, providing a platform for producers across the region to learn about biocontrol of that invasive plant!

- The Subglacial Antarctic Lakes Scientific Access (SALSA) Project, on which **John Priscu** serves as chief scientist, has reached more than 80,000 people with outreach efforts through its website and more than 5,500 people through social media engagement. John's team has also created several exceptional outreach videos which can be found [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#). (Vimeo password = LakeMercer2019)
- **Clain Jones, Kathrin Olson-Rutz, and Rick Engel** have been using a multi-pronged engagement and outreach approach for the past four years to increase awareness of soil acidification and provide strategies to combat it. They have worked with stakeholders to identify research questions and outreach approaches that best fit Montana. Their efforts recently culminated in [a video by MSU grad Nate Kenney](#) that features farmer-collaborator Brent Hanford on the causes of, and solutions to, soil acidification.
- **Cathy Zabinski** will be releasing book September 15! "Amber Waves: The Extraordinary Biography of Wheat, from Wild Grass to World Megacrop," seeks to make evolutionary genetics in our crop plants accessible to the general public, by talking about it in terms of a biography of wheat.

Upcoming Funding Opportunities

- [USDA NRCS Regional Conservation Partnership Program](#): Webinar **August 27**, Application due **November 4**.
- [NSF Innovations in Graduate Education](#): LOI due **September 14**, Application due **November 4**.
- [USDHHS Forecast: SARS-CoV-2 \(COVID-19\) Program](#)
[Activities](#): **Application schedule TBD**

Don't forget to email reagan.colyer@montana.edu with news and developments, including grants, awards, recognitions and research projects you'd like to see featured.

Recent COA/MAES Grants

- **Mary Burrows, PSPP**: "Montana: National Predictive Modelling Tool Initiative for wheat 2021," USDA Forest Service; "Wheat Diseases for Farmers," MWBC.
- **Chengci Chen, EARC**: "Statewide Pea Lentil and Chickpea Variety Evaluation in Montana," U.S. Dry Pea and Lentil Council.

- **Jason Cook, PSPP:** "Fusarium head blight resistance for Montana spring wheat," USDA; and "Development of Montana Adapted FHB Resistant Winter Wheat Varieties," USDA NIFA.
- **Ed Davis, LRES:** "Weed control research in pulse crops 2020," U.S. Dry Pea and Lentil Council.
- **Jed Eberly, CARC:** "Evaluating the effects of seeding rates and inoculant performance on nodulation weed suppression and relative yields of different lentil varieties grown in the northern Great Plains," Organic Farming Research Foundation.
- **Huang Li, PSPP:** "A transcriptomic-guided phenomic approach to develop new rust-resistant germplasm in wheat," USDA-ARS.
- **Carl Igo, DATE:** "A Retrospective Approach to Guide Agricultural Literacy in the 21st Century," USDA.
- **Michael Ivie, PSPP:** "2020 Exotic Woodborer and Bark Beetle traps," MTDA.
- **Jeffrey Littlefield, LRES:** "Enhance Mitigation of the Eastern Heath Snail Xerolenta obvia in Montana," MTDA.
- **Jamie Sherman, PSPP:** "Barley Breeding for Montana: Ensuring a stable malt supply with new traits to improve quality," American Malting Barley Association.
- **Adam Sigler, LRES:** "2020 - 2021 Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring Support," Montana DEQ.
- **Jovanka Voyich, MBI:** "CTRP Carry over Year 3 CEO Pop up," NIH.
- **Blake Wiedenheft, MBI:** "Repurposing Arc-capsids for delivery of designer RNA cargos for treating monogenic diseases," SurGene LLC; "Sewage Testing Contract," City of Bozeman; and "Understanding of the evolution and regulation of CRISPR," Burroughs Wellcome Fund.
- **Samuel Koeshall, LRES:** WSARE Graduate Student grant proposal: "Measuring intra-field variability in pea protein to understand influencing factors in Montana cropping systems."

Important Notices

The MSU Leadership Institute has created resources on COVID-19 and racial justice as they pertain to cultivating leadership, developing racial consciousness, building resilience, facilitating high-stakes conversations, and mobilizing positive social change. [You can find those resources here.](#)

COA/MAES in the News

[Quammen, Plowright debut online series Aug. 26 about the origins of pandemics](#)

[MSU researchers study how weeds become resistant to herbicides](#)
[Former White House economist to give virtual lecture Sept. 17](#)

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