



# Inside Ag | January 2024

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## A Message from the Dean

Dear Ag Family,

Happy New Year and welcome to the new semester!

It is always good to start a new year with some good news. Thanks to the efforts of all of our faculty and staff, our undergraduate student retention increased to 93% from Fall to Spring and 86.2% from Fall to Fall. Please continue the excellent work you have been doing by making student success a top priority. Some of our classes continue to have high DFW rates, so there is more work to be done.



I also want to take this opportunity to thank you for attending the all-college meeting on Jan. 9 and 10. Michelle Miley's presentation on AI in higher education and the research discussion groups generated a lot of interest, and I am grateful for your engagement and enthusiasm. If you have feedback, please let us know. I hope we can all continue these discussions to identify the most pressing challenges in Montana and beyond and address those problems through research and education.

I hope many of you had the chance to attend the Moral Courage College seminar and listen to Irshad Manji. These opportunities give us additional insight to navigate the complex world of higher education, and I thank you for spending your valuable time on broadening your horizons and continuing your own education. During the holiday break, I read the book "The Cancelling of the American Mind" by Greg Lukianoff and Rikki Schlott. If you want to learn about varying viewpoints toward American higher education across our society, I would recommend it.

Wishing you an excellent semester,

Sreekala Bajwa

## News from the College of Ag



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[MSU honors 40 students, mentors with Founders Day Awards for Student Excellence](#)

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*Montana State awarded grant to boost high-performance computing capacity*

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*Research team receives \$4 million to study interactions between wild and domestic sheep*

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## Announcements and Awards

### Announcements

#### **Indian Education for All of Us: From Jennifer Lachowicz, College of Agriculture Academic Diversity Partner**

Did you know that the Montana Constitution states “The state recognizes the distinct and unique cultural heritage of American Indians and is committed in its educational goals to the preservation of their cultural integrity”?

In 1999, the Montana Legislature passed a state law "predicated on the belief that all school personnel should have an understanding and awareness of Indian tribes to help them relate effectively with Indian students and parents, that educational agencies provide means by which school personnel will gain an understanding of and appreciation for the American Indian people.”

At MSU, this means faculty and staff complete Indian Education for All online training. Starting in 2023, all incoming faculty and staff complete this training during their orientation. If you started at MSU before then, **you can complete the training at your convenience** at <https://msubozeman-mt.vectorlmsedu.com/training/home>. The College of Agriculture is targeting 100% completion by all faculty and staff by May 2024. Help us achieve this goal and spread the word!

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*Faculty: Have you recently published a book? Mountains and Minds magazine is seeking titles by MSU faculty within the past year to feature in the magazine's spring edition. Contact Reagan Cotton with submissions.*

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A new season of **"Working Wild University"** podcast by **Dr. Jared Beaver** of the Department of Animal and Range Sciences is being released this spring. The new season "Imperiled" follows a successful first edition that had over 40,000 downloads across all 50 states! [You can learn more here.](#)

### New Faces in the College of Ag



Welcome to Dr. Joao Souza! Dr. Souza started as LRES's Assistant Professor of Soil Nutrient Management in January, replacing Rick Engel who retired in August 2020. Dr. Souza received his PhD in Soil Science from Oklahoma State University in 2021.



We had some wonderful visitors in the COA dean's office over winter break! Thank you to Melissa Hill's daughters Quinn and Zoey for stopping by to visit with Mandi and Mel. Quinn and Zoey received their own well-deserved Certificates of Excellence for their contributions to the Ag Advising Center during their visit!

## Awards



**Dr. Lisa Rew** of the Department of Land Resources and Environmental Sciences received the Outstanding Research Award from the Weed Science Society of America. She was recognized last week at the national meeting in San Antonio.



In last semester's Can the Griz food drive, the College of Agriculture collected the most food of any college at MSU! Thank you to everyone who donated to make this profound impact on our community. In total, Can the Griz collected more than 219,000 pounds of food and raised \$370,000 for local families in need.

## Events in the COA

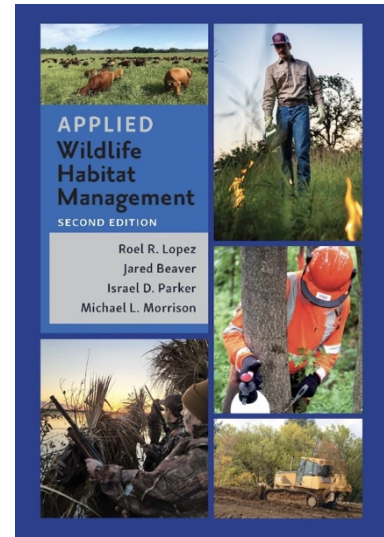
### Upcoming Events

- MSU's WellCheck series will be taking place once again this spring! You can schedule your wellness check in Billings, Bozeman, Butte, Corvallis, Dillon, Glendive, Great Falls, Havre, Helena, Kalispell, Miles City, Missoula, Moccasin, Sidney or Yellow Bay. More information at [wellness.mus.edu/WellCheck.html](https://wellness.mus.edu/WellCheck.html).

## Publications and Funding Opportunities

- You can find a full list of **recent publications** from [MSU's Library and Office of Sponsored Programs here](#).

- Recent COA/MAES publications include:
  - **Dr. Jared Beaver** of the Department of Animal and Range Sciences published a new textbook, "Applied Wildlife Habitat Management" earlier this month. The is meant to provide a practical guide for users of various levels and backgrounds. It provides a foundational base of wildlife management principles and translates emerging research and management ideas into a language that is most useful to on-the-ground managers.
  - Erdei, E., O'Donald, E.R., Luo, L., Enright, K., O'Leary, M., MacKenzie, D., **Doyle, J., Eggers, M., Keil, D.**, Lewis, J. and Henderson, J.A., 2023. Comparison of circulating and excreted metals and of autoimmunity between two Great Plains Tribal communities. *Journal of Autoimmunity*, p.103117.
  - **Doyle, J., Eggers, M.**, Martin, C., Young, S., Lefthand, M., LaFrance, J., **Chavez, M.** Addressing Water Contamination and Water Insecurity, Crow Reservation, Montana. NIAID NIH DEIA Quarterly Topic Meeting.
  - Meili C, El Dein MT, Jones A, Moon C, Andrews C, Kirk M, Janssen P, **Yeoman CJ, Grace S, Borgogna JC**, Foote A, Nagy Y, Khashef M, Yassin A, Elshahed M, Youssef N. 2024. Diversity and community structure of anaerobic gut fungi in the rumen of wild and domesticated herbivores. *Applied & Environmental Microbiology*.
- For current and upcoming **funding opportunities**, check out the [MSU Office of Research and Economic Development database here](#).
- Recent COA grants include:
  - **Chris Posbergh**. 2023 - 2028. Measuring the Climate Benefits and Emissions of Prescribed Sheep Grazing, and Promoting the Consumption of Climate-Smart Lamb. American Lamb Board.
  - **Sam Wyffels, DelCurto-Wyffels H, DelCurto T**, Boss D. 2024 - 2025. Utilizing sensory equipment to monitor cattle intake, health, and stress response to changing environmental conditions in a Montana feed yard. Bair Ranch Foundation.
  - **Lance McNew**. 2023-2027. Tactical Misinformation to Reduce Predation and Improve Reproductive Success of Ground-Nesting Birds in the Northern Great Plains. Lanceleaf Foundation.
  - **Christian Posbergh, Brent Roeder, Carl Yeoman**. 2024-2025. Assessing the prevalence of *Chlamydia abortus* in Montana Domestic Rangeland Sheep. Bair Ranch Foundation.



- **Megan VanEmon, Tim DelCurto.** 2024-2025. Impacts of forage quality, forage type, and energy supplementation on dry matter digestibility and ruminal nitrate release. Bair Ranch Foundation. \$65,524
- **Clayton Marlow.** 2023-2028. Human Trends in the Absoroka Beartooth Wilderness in Relationship to Grizzly Bear Range Expansion and Habitat Use. USDA Forrest Service.
- Tuddenham Sue (Johns Hopkins), Rebecca Brotman, Xin He (U. Maryland), **Carl Yeoman.** 2023 - 2025. The vaginal microenvironment in asymptomatic versus symptomatic Bacterial Vaginosis. NIH-NIAID

**Western SARE is accepting submissions for the [2025 Sabbatical Research and Education Program](#)** from January 29 until November 21. These grants provide an opportunity for faculty around the world to partner with producers, agricultural professionals, and researchers of the Western U.S. to conduct research, education, and Extension activities. Projects focused on unexplored topics in underserved communities and understudied geographic locations are of special interest. Applicants can request up to \$75,000 for one year.

## Contact Us

Have something you'd like to see in the newsletter? Reach out to the College of Ag communications director, Reagan Cotton, at [reagan.cotton@montana.edu](mailto:reagan.cotton@montana.edu).