

INSIDE AG | AUGUST 2024

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A Message from the Dean

Dear College of Agriculture and MAES,

Welcome to academic year 2024-25!

I hope you had a wonderful summer, whether you were focused on lab or field research, traveling, or spending time with family. I am excited to welcome a new batch of students, along with new faculty and staff, to our college.

While we don't have fall enrollment numbers yet, we are excited to welcome 11 new tenure-track faculty this academic year. With the two new faculty members who joined us in the spring, we have hired 13 new faculty members in 2024, and I am so excited to welcome these brilliant new academics! They bring a wealth of knowledge, ideas and excitement to elevate our research, teaching and service mission to new heights. We will start our onboarding program in September to help our new team members acclimatize, aid them in networking with their colleagues and support them to succeed.

This year, we continue to prioritize student success as our number one goal. The commitment of our faculty and staff to helping and engaging our students in and out of the classroom is the foundation for achieving this goal, and we are set up for continued success this academic year. As a part of this collaborative effort, please join us at 3 p.m. on August 27 in Leigh Lounge for our college's welcome back ice cream social.

I wish you all a successful fall semester and academic year,

Sreekala Bajwa



News from the College of Ag



MSU scientists publish novel immune research in Nature



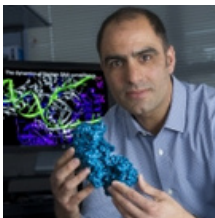
Mark Anderson publishes economic research on marijuana laws



MSU team studies methane-producing organisms in Yellowstone



MLS student Tami Peters receives national scholarship



Blake Wiedenheft receives regional award for research excellence



MSU ranked internationally for scientific impact

News from the College of Ag



MCB team conducts deep-sea research



MSU takes geospatial skills camps to eight rural communities



Student Josie Kaufman receives grant for international studies



MSU-led ballooning project studies effects of solar eclipses



Hayes Goosey receives funding to study grasshopper impacts on pulse crops

More MSU in the news:

- **Dr. Jess Kansman** of the PSPP department was featured in the Entomological Society of America's July newsletter! [Read her Q&A here.](#)
- The Ravalli Republic highlighted **ongoing work at WARC** with a USDA crop block grant that is helping provide mini-grants to producers. [You can read their coverage here.](#)

Welcome to our new faculty!

So far in 2024, we have hired 13 new tenure track faculty! We will be highlighting these new hires on our social media channels throughout the fall. New faces across the COA include:

Dr. Ricardo Pinto, Northern Ag Research Center, Precision Agriculture Specialist: Dr. Pinto brings extensive research and extension experience and is passionate about promoting sustainable agriculture through innovative technologies. His primary focus will be on precision agricultural management systems to increase efficiency and profitability for Montana farmers and ranchers. Dr. Pinto has a strong background in using UAVs (drones) and satellite remote sensing to improve crop monitoring, pest and disease management and overall yield.



Dr. Emily Sewell, Ag and Technology Education, assistant professor: Dr. Sewell comes to MSU after serving as a graduate teaching assistant working directly with preservice teachers in agricultural education at Oklahoma State University. Prior to her graduate education, she taught agricultural education for six years at a two-teacher program in Woodward, Oklahoma. Dr. Sewell credits the recruitment and retention efforts in agricultural education for her continued involvement in the profession. She is excited to blend her love for Montana with her passion for agricultural education.

Welcome to our new faculty!

Other new faculty include:

- **Dr. Hannah Speer**, Northern Ag Research Center, Assistant Professor of Animal Science
 - **Finn Tinsley**: Animal and Range Sciences, Towne Livestock Foreman
 - **Jack Magee**: Animal and Range Sciences, Research Assistant
 - **Taylor Kaltenbach**: Animal and Range Sciences, Research Associate
 - **Glen Collins**: Foreman, Red Bluff Research Ranch
 - **Dr. Joe Jensen**: Northwestern Ag Research Center, Cropping Systems Agronomist
 - **Dr. Anish Sapkota**: Land Resources and Environmental Sciences, Assistant Professor of Data Intensive and Precision Agriculture
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Awards and Achievements

- Our very own dean **Dr. Sreekala Bajwa** has been appointed to serve on USDA's National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education and Economics Advisory Board! This 10-member board provides expert recommendations to help ensure that USDA research is informed by the best available science.
- Congratulations to MSU Extension Beef Cattle Specialist **Megan Van Emon**, who was awarded the 2024 Distinguished Service award by the National Association of County Agricultural Agents in recognition of her Extension education programs!



Awards and Achievements



- Graduate student **Makayla Ogg** received the 2024 Dr. Janice Bowman Graduate Student Fellowship Award! Makayla earned her master's degree in ARS in 2022 and is currently working toward her doctorate. The fellowship includes \$5,000 to support all aspects of Makayla's research program and scholarship.

- The American Farm Bureau Federation earned a Power of Associations Silver Award for its Social Media Ambassador Program earlier this year. Through the program, Collegiate Farm Bureau social media ambassadors highlight happenings at an annual leadership conference. MSU senior **Haley Droogsma** (far right) was an ambassador for the National Young Farmer & Rancher Conference in Omaha. Haley has also been working as the digital communications intern for the Montana Farm Bureau Federation.



- Wishing a very happy retirement to **Dr. George Haynes** of the Department of Agricultural Economics and Economics! Dr. Haynes retired this month after an exceptional career in research, service and education. He also spent more than a decade as MSU Faculty-Athletics Representative, advocating for the wellbeing of MSU student-athletes both on and off the field of play. Thank you, George, for all you have done for MSU!

Recent Events

Thank you to everyone who has attended our **summer field days** so far! Events in Havre, Moccasin, Sidney, Conrad, Creston and Bozeman have all been huge successes. We have two more field days at the **BART Farm in Bozeman on August 29** and at **WARC in Corvallis on September 12**, so we hope you'll join us once more before the season is over.



Upcoming Events

- Faculty in the Department of Ag Econ and Econ are hosting, **“Economics in the 2024 Presidential Election.”** The course meets **weekly on Thursdays through October 31**, and is open to the public. Faculty will discuss the economics of the policy positions of the 2024 candidates on major issues from climate change to health care and beyond. [More information is available on the event website.](#)
- The **USDA will host a free webinar**, “Leveraging Extension and University Engagement: Developing and Implementing Novel Projects Using Transdisciplinary Approaches” on **Monday, September 9 at 11 a.m. MST**. The event will discuss methods of implementing and supporting multifaceted projects that feature a variety of perspectives in addressing the complex challenges facing food and agricultural systems today. [More information is available on the USDA website.](#)
- Save the date for the inaugural **Cattle Academy Conference set for Nov. 19-20 in Miles City**. More information is available on the [ARS department website.](#)

Publications and Funding Opportunities

Recent Publications

- **Brandon Tillett, David Baumbauer, Julie Ewen and Clair Luby:** [“Establishing an indoor agriculture system at a rural Montana PreK-12 school creates hands-on experiences for college seniors studying horticulture,”](#) Natural Sciences Education.
- **Eden Manuel, Amanda Bradbery, Sarah McCoski, Marques RS, Brent Roeder, Christian Posbergh:** “Variation in wool cortisol, progesterone, and testosterone in Targhee ewes across physiological states and varying production levels.” Sheep & Goat.
- **Jeff Mosley:** “Montana property taxes: Does my land qualify as agricultural land?” Lives and Landscapes Magazine, Spring-Summer Issue.

Recent Grants

- “Improving and Managing Adaptation of Barley to Abiotic Stress with Stay-Green Trait” (PI: **Jessica Torrion, Co-PIs: Jamie Sherman, Kent McVay, Paul Nugent**, in partnership with Maryse Bourgault)
- “Novel methods to enhance detection of equine gene doping agents and vectors” (**Amanda Bradbery**)
- “Long Term Whitebark Pine Monitoring in Northern Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem” (**Daniel Atwater**)
- “Immune status and gastrointestinal development in neonatal foals supplemented with anti-endotoxin IgY” (**Amanda Bradbery**)
- “Elucidating Gut Microbiota-dependent Health Impacts of Haskap Berries to Inform Agricultural Production Practices that will Maximize Bioactive Potential” (**Mary Miles, Brian Bothner, Zach Miller, Andrej Svyantek, Seth Walk, Zhuoyu Wang, Carl Yeoman**)

Funding Opportunities

- Western SARE 2025 Graduate Student Research and Education Grant Call for Proposals **opens September 4**. This program is for full-time graduate students, their academic adviser and at least one producer to implement projects that address identified needs in sustainable agriculture.
- Western SARE 2025 Professional + Producer Call for Proposals **closes October 22**. This program involves an agricultural professional and at least three producers implementing projects to address needs in sustainable agriculture. Projects must integrate research and outreach.
- Western SARE 2025 Farmer Rancher Call for Proposals **closes October 23**. This program focuses on advancing on-farm sustainability by funding innovative producer-driven research and outreach.
- Western SARE 2025 Local Education and Demonstration Call for Proposals **closes November 6**. This program will help increase the application and adoption of results and recommendations from previous SARE-funded research.
- Western SARE 2025 Professional Development Program Call for Proposals **closes November 6**. This program focuses on educating and training agricultural professionals to increase their understanding and proficiency in sustainable agriculture so they can train other professionals.