



# The AgriBulletin

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Department of Agricultural and Industrial Sciences



A bi-monthly effort to communicate the activities of faculty, staff, and students in the Department of Agricultural and Industrial Sciences, this month's issue highlights August and September activities.

### [\\$350,000 USDA Grant for Minority Recruitment](#)

- ✓ Bobby Lane, along with co-author Maya Durnovo, Dean of Workforce Programs at Houston Community College, recently received \$350,000 in funding from the USDA Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service to develop a model minority recruitment and retention program in agriculture and related sciences. Through the combined efforts of faculty and staff at the Guthrie Career Center of Spring Branch I.S.D., Houston Community College and Sam Houston State, the 30-month program will provide active learning experiences and retention activities designed to attract qualified underrepresented students to explore and pursue careers in agriculture.

### [New Holland Hay Baler Research](#)

- ✓ Bobby Lane, Roger Hanagriff, Joe Muller, and Stanley Kelley, with the assistance of recent graduate Eric Grahmann, presented the results from the first year's data from the New Holland baler study. The researchers are studying animal preference, field storage losses, and quality retention of bermudagrass and sorghum-sudangrass round bales using the unique Bale-Slice™ system developed by New Holland. The study is being continued through next summer.

### [Agricultural Consortium of Texas](#)

- ✓ Stanley Kelley attended the fall meeting of the Agricultural Consortium of Texas (ACT) at Coastal Bend College in Beeville. ACT is an organization consisting of all universities in Texas which offer Agriculture programs. Members discuss curriculum, legislative issues, and set common goals to improve agricultural education across Texas.

### [Centerville Master Gardeners](#)

- ✓ Bobby Lane provided training to the Centerville Master Gardeners group on September 1. His topic focused on the properties of soil and soil improvement.

### [Nanotechnology Conference](#)

- ✓ Doug Kingman and Bobby Lane attended the Nano TX '06 Conference on September 26-28 in Dallas. They explored the development of a Nanotechnology in Agriculture and Food Initiative at SHSU in an attempt to bring cutting edge research to campus while advancing educational objectives. Though most nanotechnology research is currently concentrated in electronics, communications, and medicine, it is believed that nanometer-sized particles (smaller than proteins) may be particularly useful in food safety, wastewater treatment, animal identification systems, and pest control strategies, among others.

### [Floral Design Class Gets Creative](#)

- ✓ AGR 299 (Floral Design) is a course planned to illustrate the identification and use of floral materials, techniques in design and construction, and review of the history and utilization of floral art in society. The laboratory portion of the course entails students creating their own personal arrangements from the chosen design type each week. Each student incorporates her or his own personal touch, which makes the final product unique. Examples of weekly designs include: free standing, vase, spray, basket, wreath, and others. Student creations are then displayed across campus in administrative offices and other venues.

Picture (L to R): Leah Curran, Larry Davis, Jason Reue, Tyler Berger, and an unidentified student assemble a mass/round design.



### [Horticulture Club Establishes Poinsettia Crop](#)

- ✓ The SHSU Horticulture and Crop Science Club started a crop of poinsettias. The crop is 650 pots and is scheduled to be ripe and ready for sale near the Thanksgiving holiday. The club members share the cropping responsibilities, and the funds generated from sales will be used for traveling to meetings and conferences.

### ExL in Ag Provides Insight to Freshmen

- ✓ ExL in Ag held their first meeting of the semester on September 20 with outstanding attendance. This retention-based program was developed by Stanley Kelley and Lesley Rakowitz and is designed to allow the Ag Ambassadors to serve as mentors to incoming freshmen and transfer students. Meetings focus on allowing students to break up into cohort groups with students from their respective majors and discuss issues they may be having, while also allowing them to meet new people and learn more about the department. Guest speakers are also invited to talk to the group on special topics. The September meeting focused on alcohol awareness and had two student representatives from the Alcohol Awareness Initiative address the group.



### Student Teachers Begin Field Experience

- ✓ Six students in agricultural science are preparing to enter the teaching profession by completing their twelve-week field experience from September 18-December 8. The students, their hometowns, and student teaching centers are:
  - ❑ Cari Brinlee (Howe) – Krum HS
  - ❑ Kelsea Kiker Broomas (Winnie) – Frankston HS
  - ❑ Amanda Duke (Goodrich) – Warren HS
  - ❑ Bobby Fowler (Crandall) – Edgewood HS
  - ❑ Ashley Guth (Spring) – Iola HS
  - ❑ John Slaughter (Conroe) – Humble HS

### Biodiesel Research

- ✓ Jordan Kiker, an undergraduate researcher, is leading a bio-diesel research effort. Jordan recently demonstrated his research on a Ford tractor that was fueled with peanut oil to a group of students and industry representatives at the Ag Mechanization Center. The oil had previously been used to fry fish and french fries. Researchers will utilize the tractor to determine differences in power output while fueled with alternative fuels such as vegetable oil, soybean oil, sunflower oil, and other forms of bio-diesel. Additional factors that Jordan is researching are fuel consumption rates, PTO horsepower output, engine wear, fuel system wear, and emissions output on different blends of bio-diesel. Supervising Jordan's efforts are faculty members Doug Kingman, Stanley Kelley, and Joe Muller.



Students Jordan Kiker (back) and Corey Brown (front) monitor the output of a tractor fueled by used peanut oil.

### Kelley Speaks to 4-H and FFA Group

- ✓ Stanley Kelley was the invited speaker to a workshop on Managing Cattle for the Show Ring for 45 Brazos County 4-H and FFA exhibitors and parents. Kelley discussed the daily activities of managing a beef project. The highlight of his program included a showmanship clinic in which each participant had the opportunity to practice exhibiting their steer or heifer as if it was a real show.

### Ambassadors Continue to Recruit

- ✓ Ag Ambassadors have been burning up the road recruiting new students for the university and department. The past two months have included Ambassador visits to Manor, Fairfield, Neches, Morton Ranch, Cy-Fair, and Waskom High Schools. They also visited with freshman and sophomore agriculture students at Blinn College in Brenham. Ag Ambassadors made 261 contacts in September alone.