

# AgAbroad Newsletter

INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS IN AGRICULTURE

## TASTE OF CULTURE

Did you know there is a week in November designated as International Education Week? International Week is celebrated worldwide during the third week in November. This joint initiative between the U.S. Department of State and Department of Education, promotes programs that support international education and exchange. Throughout the week, individuals and institutions are encouraged to participate in activities that bring global awareness.



To celebrate the week, the International Ag Ambassadors hosted an International Food Festival. On November 17th food from eight different countries were showcased from 11:30-1:30 in the lobby of Lilly Hall. The ambassadors organized the event with some of agriculture's 19 international exchange students. The exchange students selected a popular recipe from their home country.

After selecting the recipe, ambassadors partnered with the exchange students to make the food. The countries represented were Sweden, Honduras, Hungary, Australia, Ireland, Austria, China, and France through 12 different dishes. Held in Lilly Hall, the event was a huge success with many students, faculty, and staff stopping by to sample the selection of food offered. Several students inquired about studying abroad and learned about the programs being offered. The ambassadors plan to host the event again next year.

## INT'L COMPONENT OF 4-H

As we continue to grow into a global society, the importance of gaining worldwide knowledge increases. Therefore more opportunities are becoming available to students to go abroad. One of the ways youth can go overseas is through the largest youth organization in the U.S., 4-H. Most of us have heard of 4-H and while some of us participated for 10 years, but we might be unaware of the available international travel programs.

Indiana 4-H began the international component in 1951 when three 4-Hers went overseas. Between 1951 and today, international 4-H programs have taken Indiana teens to over 60 different countries. Each year an average of 25 of Indiana's 92 counties participate in international 4-H programs. From 2000-2009 over 700 Indiana 4-Hers and their leaders have had an international 4-H experience.

International 4-H offers inbound, outbound, and domestic international education opportunities. Youth participants



## NEW SUMMER COURSES

LINDA VALLADE

Welcome to the second edition of our newsletter. I hope you all have had a successful beginning to your new year and it continues throughout 2010. We are proud to announce that we have a couple of new programs beginning this year.

One is a short-term summer program in Romania. This is a service learning program that is being conducted in cooperation with Heifer International. Drs. Mark Russell and Paul Ebner, Animal Science, will take students to learn about sustainable development through the application of agricultural ecology, animal management, and agribusiness. Students will work on projects as team members alongside animal science, agriculture, and veterinary medicine students from the University of Agricultural Sciences & Veterinary Medicine of Banat, Timisoara, Romania. They will work in villages during the week and spend the weekends visiting historical and cultural sites. Plans are to expand this course to other countries where Heifer International is involved.

The other new program is a result of a recently signed exchange agreement with the National Taiwan University in Taipei. This program is an eight-week summer program. Students participating will have an opportunity to conduct research with a professor at NTU for the first four weeks. This research will be based on their major and area of interest. The next four weeks will be spent participating in a course where they will learn about various aspects of Taiwanese agriculture and culture. They will travel throughout Taiwan visiting the various campuses of NTU and cultural sites.

I hope you enjoy reading about the various activities and programs through our office. As always, if you have any comments, we would enjoy hearing from you.

range in age from 12-19. Primary opportunities are based on short term exchanges which are from 2 weeks to one month in length during the summer. Current partner countries include Japan, Poland, Norway, Finland, Australia, and Costa Rica.

This summer Indiana 4-H is offering programs in five different countries where youth are able to travel to Japan, Poland, Australia, Norway or Costa Rica. Indiana families with children between the ages of 14-19 have the unique opportunity to host a Japanese student for a month this summer.

If you are interested or know someone that is interested in the international 4-H programs, please call Linda Hines at 765-494-8433 for more information. Volunteers play a vital role in the 4-H program by coordinating local clubs and planning 4-H events. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer or leader, contact your county Extension office today.

# EARNING TOP HONORS



Photo by Tom Campbell

Dr. Gebisa Ejeta, Distinguished Professor of Agronomy, received exciting news this year as he was named the 2009 World Food Prize Laureate. His research focusing on sorghum significantly increased the production, availability, and food supply of the important grain in Africa. He developed sorghum varieties that are drought resistant and striga-resistant. Striga is a parasitic weed that attaches to the roots of sorghum plants and robs them of water and nutrients.

A native of Ethiopia, Dr. Ejeta understands the challenges of Africa's agriculture. He wants farmers to be able to feed their families and no longer be in poverty. His passion to study sorghum partly stemmed from the fact that sorghum is a staple in the diet of 500 million people living in sub-Saharan Africa. His first breakthrough happened in the early 1980's while he was working in Sudan; he developed Hageen Dura-1, a drought tolerant hybrid. He integrated his scientific findings through farmer education programs and soil and water conservation initiatives.

Dr. Ejeta earned his PhD in plant breeding and genetics at Purdue and joined the faculty in 1984. Through his twenty plus years of researching and studying sorghum, and working with leaders, farmers, and students, he has inspired others. He has made a huge impact on the lives of the people he has encountered and the millions in Africa. Dr. Ejeta does not plan on slowing down anytime soon as he will continue to serve humanity.

The 2009 World Food Prize was awarded to Dr. Ejeta at the Iowa State Capitol on October 15th.

Purdue College of Agriculture is thrilled to have a second Purdue researcher receive the \$250,000 World Food Prize within two years. Dr. Phil Nelson received the award in 2007 for his development of the aseptic

storage process for food. Dr. Ejeta is congratulated for his success on dramatically improving sorghum production in Africa.



Fortunately, the five Purdue students who attended the IAAS Conference were able to hear Dr. Ejeta speak on "Revitalizing Agricultural Research for Global Food Security" at Iowa State University.

# IAAS SUMMIT IN IOWA

During Purdue's fall break, five students including Julia Navarro, Kelli Kuehnert, Amanda Lodyga, Carissa McCay, and Ashley Hudson attended the International Association of Students in Agricultural and Related Sciences (IAAS) National Summit. Friday, October 9th, students traveled the seven and a half hour drive to Ames, Iowa where



they met over forty new faces. Students were present from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Iowa State University, University of Georgia, University of Missouri, Monterrey Tec in Mexico, CATIE in Costa Rica, along with other universities in the United States.

IAAS is an international, student-run organization with over 1,500 members from 46 countries around the world. "IAAS is a place where agricultural students from all over the world meet each other, experience new mentalities and cultures, travel and see new places and learn about all aspects of agriculture together with their future colleagues. The aims of IAAS are to promote the exchange of knowledge, information and ideas among students, and to improve the mutual understanding between countries and cultures. To do this, we organize activities like seminars, working camps, international meetings, exchange weeks, an international exchange program, small-scale development projects etc." - <http://www.iaasworld.org/>



With the theme of the summit as "Think Global, Think Local: Globalization's Effect on Agriculture," the students were able to open their minds to different thoughts and ideas. At the Growing Harmony Farm, the students learned about a 64-member Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) where the cooperative owners grow over 30 different vegetables and fruits to provide to their members during the growing season. At the farm, the students planted some garlic while experiencing the first sight of snow for the fall/winter season.

Fortunately, the World Food Prize festivities were going on at the same time as the IAAS National Summit. Students were able to experience the World Food Festival in downtown Des Moines tasting food from around the world. Another exciting opportunity the students encountered was listening to the 2009 World Food Prize Laureate, Gebisa Ejeta. Gebisa's lecture focused around revitalizing agricultural research for global food security.

A tour of an urban garden, Monsanto Seed Plant, and Iowa State University were also a part of the five-day summit. Students had ample time to meet others as well as discuss the many topics that were brought up about organics, sustainability, international development, growing locally, and other international agriculture subjects.

It wasn't all fun and games as there was a business meeting that shared the goals of IAAS and how to begin an IAAS chapter. Elections were held for the new directors. One of the purposes of attending was to decide if there was a desire or need to start an IAAS chapter at Purdue. After deliberating, the five students choose not to begin a chapter at Purdue just yet.

## PICS: IMPACTING AFRICA

Cowpeas, also known as black-eyed peas, an annual legume that originated in Africa is an important crop to African agriculture and its economy. It is a staple food for both humans and their livestock.



Unfortunately, it is estimated that 25% of harvested cowpeas in storage in Africa are damaged to pests. The bruchid beetle eats the cowpeas when they are in storage. Some growers use pesticides or other chemicals to kill the weevils. However, pesticides are expensive and when used improperly the chemicals negatively affect the cowpeas causing people to become sick or die. Through his research, Larry Murdock, a Purdue entomologist discovered that hermetically sealed bag technology stopped the weevils from reproducing and being active. This triple-bagging technology safely, effectively, and inexpensively eliminates the weevils.



This discovery led to the Purdue Improved Cowpea Storage (PICS) project, funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation for \$11.4 million. This five year project will impact the African countries of Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Ghana, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, and Togo. The goal of PICS is to have half of the cowpeas in West

and Central Africa stored with the triple-bag technology by 2011. PICS works with the manufacturers of the bag along with the supply chain to make sure the technology is available to growers. It is important that the growers are purchasing the correct hermetic technology. The development of this supply chain for the PICS bags is providing business opportunities to bag manufacturers, distributors, and vendors.

In August 2009 as part of the PICS project, four extension agents, Adrienne Held from Warrick County, Maria Restrepo from Pike County, Jeremy Weber from Franklin County, and Bill Horan from Wells County traveled to Africa along with Jim Murren, the International Extension Program Coordinator. The purpose of the 14 day experience was to educate field technicians in Nigeria about the triple-bag technology. The five representatives did several presentations on how to use the technology. During part of the time with the technicians, they did a role play of how to introduce the technology to growers. They shared how some growers would be against incorporating the bags into their storage process. A total of 650 field technicians were taught how to use the bags and they each gave a demonstration in 10 villages.

More than 45,000 PICS bags have been used in village demonstrations and the technology has shown itself to be very effective. Cowpeas in all of the PICS bags were as good during demonstrations (in April and May) as they were at harvest time (October and November), except for occasional bag damages due to rodents.

The PICS project is broadcasting radio messages for building awareness regarding the PICS technology. Messages are broadcast on community radios in local languages. Through research by Purdue University, it has been shown that radio is key and effective in reinforcing the PICS technology message in rural villages. The PICS technology has also used TV messages in some areas for disseminating the technology, but few rural West Africans have access to TV. The project is looking into cell phone video as an alternative way to reach rural West Africans with visual information.



## INT'L HARVEST

Fall is an exciting time of year as classes begin, colorful leaves fall, harvest takes place, and of course we cannot forget the start of football season. Purdue students, alumni, faculty, staff, families, and fans come together at Ross Ade Stadium to cheer on the Purdue Boilermakers. Homecoming is especially enjoyable as Purdue welcomes back alumni. Purdue has a full week of activities to celebrate homecoming including a kickoff cookout, parade, pep rally, fireworks, and family and alumni events.

Hopefully you have had the opportunity to attend one of Purdue's Homecoming Parades. The parade features floats from student and community organizations. As homecoming was approaching this year, the International Ag Ambassadors considered having a float. After gathering the rules and finding out the theme was "Celebrations around the World," they could not say no.

The ambassadors quickly sketched a design, developed the budget, and gathered the supplies. After many fun hours working together on the paper-mache globe at FarmHouse Fraternity, the details of the float all came together. The theme of the float focused on celebrating harvest around the world. Crops were gathered and placed on the float to highlight the various products worldwide. To complete the float, a tractor was used to pull it thanks to the generosity of Purdue Farms. On the night of October 2nd, the ambassadors shared some of their Boilermaker spirit by walking with their float in Purdue's Homecoming Parade.



A float was created for the Homecoming Parade.

The parade started at Purdue's airport and concluded at Slayter Hill for the pep rally. During the pep rally, the winners of the float competition were announced. The ambassadors rejoiced in receiving 2nd place for the best float.

# PERSPECTIVE ON PURDUE

SASHA BROADSTONE

According to a recent report from the Institute of International Education, Purdue enrolled 5,479 international students this fall, fifty-six percent of whom are pursuing graduate degrees. This gives Purdue the second largest international student population among U.S. public universities. Currently the United States has the world's largest international student population, at nearly 600,000 students. So why are so many people choosing to expand their education and broaden their life experience in the United States? As an International Agriculture Ambassador at Purdue, one of my responsibilities is to welcome international students and help integrate them into the Purdue culture. At the end of the fall semester, I was invited to attend a going away party for the international students. Naturally, I asked a few questions:

*Q: Why did you decide to study in the United States?*

A: Purdue is an internationally recognized school. It offers many different choices of study and cutting-edge research opportunities. It is also very welcoming to international students. For European students, the US is also a more affordable place to live in the current global economy.

*Q: Did you feel welcome here?*

A: Absolutely! Everyone is so open and friendly.

*Q: What was the best part about Purdue?*

A: The entire infrastructure of the community-based lifestyle of Purdue's campus was great. It isn't too spread out, like most city-based universities in Europe. It is safe to walk around at night. It has awesome facilities for students, like the CoRec, laboratories, and computer labs. Also, everyone is so proud to go to Purdue.

*Q: What did you think about the professors?*

A: They were all very talented and knowledgeable. In France, the professor/student relationship is extremely formal; it was refreshing to have comfortable and helpful interactions with the professors.

It was fascinating to hear all the things that we experience everyday be so different for international students. I had never even realized how bizarre it is that a prescription drug commercial is on TV every 10 minutes, even though we need a doctor to prescribe a medicine. Or how much the automobile has shaped our present landscape, activities, and economy. I also enjoyed hearing that many students had taken full advantage of their short time here. They explored the country, probably more extensively than most Americans, and made life-long friends from around the globe. When thrust into a new environment, they were able to learn new things about themselves and about things that all people have in common. It was refreshing to listen, take a step back and truly see how our 'normal' and familiar way of life can look so strange to other people and cultures. I'm happy that the world hasn't homogenized quite yet, and small gems of diversity can still be found. In a classroom and walking around our campus, new perspective is just a conversation away.

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