



# ...A report to Soil & Crop Sciences Faculty by David Baltensperger



<http://soilcrop.tamu.edu> ✂ November 10, 2006

It is my goal that this evolve into a weekly update of departmental activities, but wanted to give a quick overview of my first month at Texas A&M.

First thanks to each of you for your patience in orienting me to the Aggie system and the special role each of you play. The first week was spent with A&M orientation, setting up the office and getting to know a few people, attending my first A&M seminar which featured our rice research at Beaumont, my first staff meeting, faculty meeting (we're still working on center faculty audio/video connection), Turf Club meeting and participating in Ag Convocation Awards presentation.

Week two was highlighted by participation in the Aggie 100 ceremony where one of our Former Students, Dr. Dan Rooney was honored for setting up a successful soil monitoring company. I met with fellow department heads, several faculty and TAMU Agronomy Society. Seminar featured Michael Grusak, USDA-ARS. We also developed equipment requests for TAES, computer enhancement funds and PUF funds for building renovations.

Week three found me in San Diego at the Industrial Crops & New Crops Conference. There I had an opportunity to catch up on the breadth of Bio Energy research and review the work of Dr. Mike Foster.

Week four found me in Uvalde for a session with the water group and a special meal at the Piccinni's, where I received word that my oldest daughter had delivered my first grandchild (Abbigail Rae Rowse, weighed in at 8 lbs 1oz; proud parents Stacey and Dana Rowse). The rest of the week was spent participating in the Bio Energy Conference in Lubbock and a Water Research meeting in Plainview.

Week five included an opportunity to review our EPA liaison program, a lot of mentoring by Gene Nelson and Mark Hussey, a tour of Brazos farm facilities and discussion with the director of the Borlaug Center. It also included the beginning of discussion on our departmental review approach, an opportunity to meet with campus based extension faculty, participate in the Appreciation Banquet and other Ag Council activities, a tour of our library facilities and uploading an ASA presentation.

This week I have focused on the departmental review, developing an internal departmental advisory group, reviewing building plans for soil testing, a seminar on tortilla quality as effected by amylase and another on predicting optimum defoliation timing for cotton. The department heads council meeting focused on new ideas for distributing budgets of TAES and COALS. I had a special opportunity to meet with our retirees and participate in round table discussions with Charles Leamons, Texas Seed Trade Association; Dr. Croon, Monsanto; Dr. Cantrell formerly with IRRI, Max Miller with John Deere and members of the corn industry.

---

Next week will find me at the ASA-CSSA-SSSA meetings in Indianapolis where we will be recruiting for four faculty positions and hosting the Aggie Mixer. I will be chairing the Book Publishing Committee, presenting a talk on bio energy and attending numerous A&M presentations. I will be in Amarillo the following week for the Farm and Ranch Show and the first of annual faculty reviews.

I hope to see you in Indianapolis, the Aggie Mixer at Giorgio's Pizza, 9 East Market Street from 5:30 to 7:30pm Tuesday, Nov 14.

**Future Events:**

- Seminar: Nov 15--- 4:00 pm, Weldon Nanson, Winter weed management options in rice: Nomusa Ngwenya Diamini, Effect of sorghum type and processing in the antioxidant properties of sorghum-based foods.
- Round Table Nov. 21—2:30 pm, Wenge Lin, Watermelon Breeder from Zhengzhou Fruit and Veg Res. Center in China.
- Departmental Review - December 6, 2006

*Thanks for all your efforts to help prepare for the departmental review.*



**TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY**

Department of Soil and Crop Sciences

Phone: 979-845-3041  
<http://soilcrop.tamu.edu>  
<http://www.tamu.edu>