

## UC Davis Plant Breeding Center and Student Farm awarded grant for Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) announced a \$999,955 Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative (OREI) grant for organic plant breeding at the University of California, Davis. The project, developed by the Plant Breeding Center and the Student Farm, will develop an experiential learning-based public plant breeding pipeline for organic cultivar development.



The project will focus on graduate student field training in plant breeding by means of developing cultivars for organic farming systems. Graduate students, the primary drivers of the

program, will work with the Organic Seed Alliance (OSA) to meet directly with organic producers and organic seed companies to discuss key breeding challenges for developing cultivars that will be useful to the organic community. Breeding projects will be organized into teams, with a graduate student project leader who works with the Student Farm staff, a project manager, and a faculty advisor to guide the logistical

development of the project. Once teams and advisors have been organized, breeding projects will begin on the certified organic farmland managed by the Student Farm. The projects will be important opportunities for students to gain necessary experience in the logistic, technical, and project management skills that graduates in plant breeding should be able to display while developing and delivering cultivars important to California organic farmers.

In February 2015, the OSA hosted the first California Organic Seed Summit. This invitation-only summit was an opportunity for organic seed growers and organic seed companies in California to



develop long-term strategies and actions that will build stronger organic seed systems in the state. As part of this summit, an organic breeding roundtable was held in conjunction with UC Davis researchers. A number of key breeding challenges arose as priorities, including organic breeding needs in tomatoes, beans, and peppers. With further input from organic farmers, the goals of the projects will be refined. The initial three projects will begin in the Spring 2016 quarter. Project teams are in the beginning stages of development, and an initial meeting with organic growers is scheduled for early November, 2015.

For more information on this project, or to join one of the breeding project teams, email [ampietras@ucdavis.edu](mailto:ampietras@ucdavis.edu). A website dedicated to tracking the projects is in development.

## UC DAVIS NEWS

### FALL IS THE TIME TO REPLACE LAWNS AND GARDENS WITH WATER-WISE PLANTS -UC DAVIS NEWS

If you allowed your lawn to die this summer to save water, now is the time to replace it with water-wise landscape plants, say landscape specialists from the University of California, Davis. Autumn, with its cooler weather and anticipated winter rains, is the best time in most areas of California for landscape planting.



“Fall is the best time of year to plant,” said Loren Oki, a statewide Cooperative Extension landscape specialist in the Department of Plant Sciences at UC Davis. “Many people think spring is the optimum time for landscape planting in California, but it’s better to plant in fall when there is more soil moisture and mild temperatures for several months. This allows roots to grow and expand before summer heat and dry conditions occur, which is stressful for new plants.”

[>>>read more](#)

### UC DAVIS AND PAKISTAN LAUNCH \$17M FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL PARTNERSHIP -PAT BAILEY, UC DAVIS NEWS

The new U.S.-Pakistan Center for Advanced Studies in Agriculture and Food Security, funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development, will make it possible for faculty members and graduate students from both countries to study and do research at each other’s campuses. The project also is designed to update curriculum and technical resources at Pakistan’s University of Agriculture, Faisalabad.



Present for today’s ceremonial launch were dignitaries from Pakistan, USAID and UC Davis.

“UC Davis has been partnering with colleagues in Pakistan since 2009, sharing expertise in agriculture from crop production to post-harvest handling,” said James Hill, associate dean emeritus of International Programs for the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences at UC Davis.

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Facebook: [Plant Breeding Center](#)

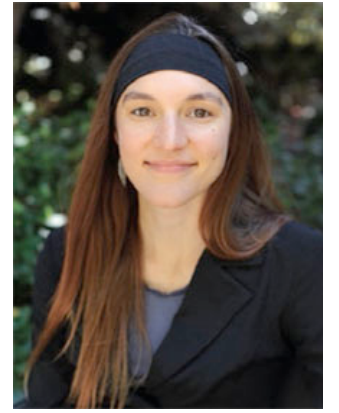


Twitter: [@UCPlantBreeding](#)

## OPPORTUNITIES AND EVENTS

### NOVEMBER 19TH, 12-1:30PM, PES 3001 THIRD THURSDAY BOOK SIGNING DR. LIZ CARLISLE LENTIL UNDERGROUND

A protégé of Michael Pollan tells the remarkable story of an unheralded group of Montana farmers who have defied corporate agribusiness by launching a unique sustainable food movement.



Liz Carlisle is a fellow at the Center for Diversified Farming Systems at the University of California, Berkeley. She holds a Ph.D. in Geography, also from Berkeley, and a B.A. from Harvard University. A native of Missoula, Montana, Carlisle is a former Legislative Aide to United States Senator Jon Tester. To register, click [here](#).

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### ASA, CSSA, AND SSSA ANNUAL MEETING November 15-18, 2015 Minneapolis Convention Center, MN

The 2015 Annual Meeting offers a unique opportunity as ASA, CSSA, and SSSA co-locate with the Entomological Society of America (ESA) to connect more than 7,000 scientists, professionals, educators, and students. For more information, or to register, click [here](#).

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### EUCARPIA 20TH GENERAL CONGRESS Plant Breeding: The Art of Bringing Science to Life August 29th-September 1st, 2016 Zurich, Switzerland

**Deadline** for abstract submission: February 28th 2016  
For more information, click [here](#).

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### NATIONAL NEEDS GRADUATE FELLOWSHIP

The University of California, Davis received funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) for a National Needs Graduate Fellowship (NNF) grant to fully support two Masters-level and two Doctoral-level Graduate Research Assistantships. The four positions are available in Fall 2016 through a joint collaboration of the Plant Breeding Center and the Horticulture and Agronomy Graduate Group. Candidates for NNF funding will be chosen from the entire pool of applicants to the Horticulture and Agronomy Graduate Group at UC Davis, with a focus on historically underrepresented minorities. For more information, click [here](#).

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