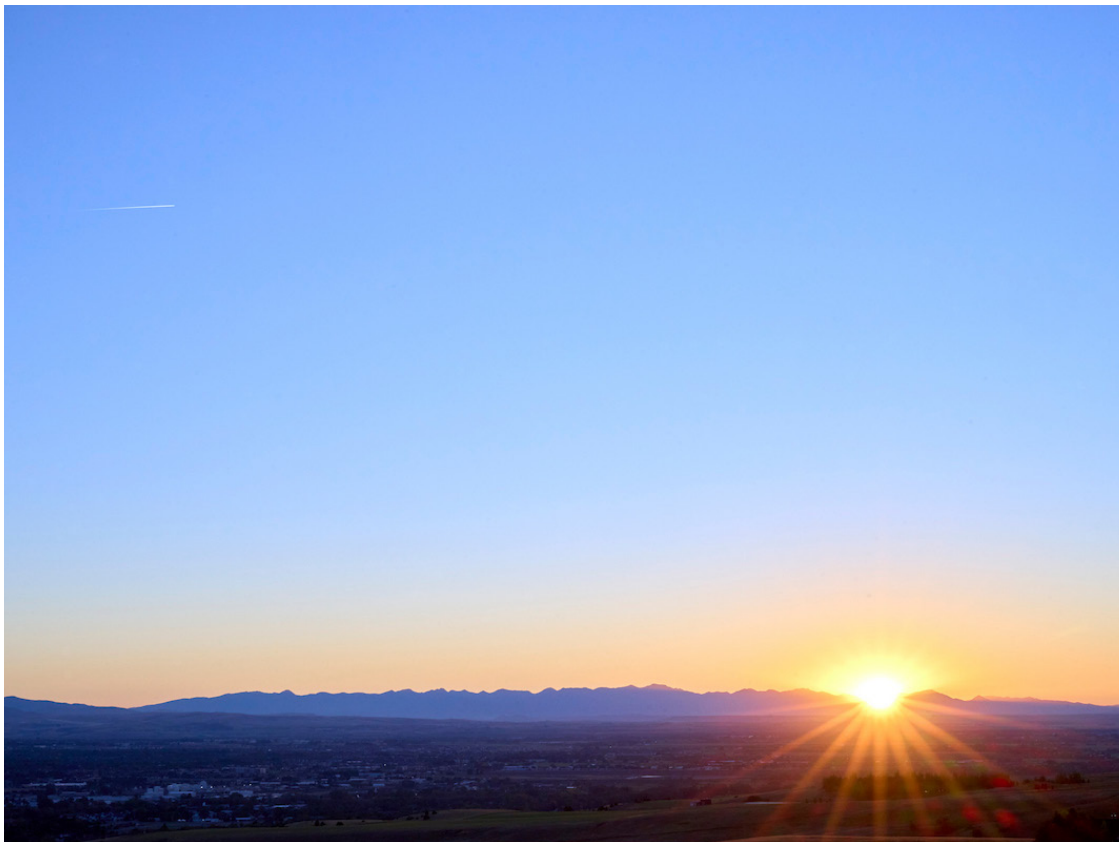


INSIDE AG | FEBRUARY 2026

In this Issue

- A Message from the Dean
- College of Ag in the News
- Faculty of the Month
- Accomplishments and Highlights
- Recent and Upcoming Events
- Publications and Grants



Welcome back, Bobcats! A new semester is underway - let's make it a fantastic one!

A Message from the Dean

Dear colleagues,

I hope your new semester is off to a great start. We saw some winter weather briefly in recent weeks – here's hoping it continues to pick up!

As you may know, Founders Day is around the corner. On Feb. 16, MSU will recognize 133 years since its establishment. On Feb. 17, we will celebrate the Founders Day Award winners, including two of our own faculty. Tony Hartshorn received the Excellence in Open Education Award, and Will Wetzel received the James and Mary Ross Provost's Award for Excellence. Please join me in congratulating Tony and Will for these well-deserved recognitions!

We will also have several students recognized on Tuesday, Feb. 17. I am proud of the outstanding students we have in the College of Ag, and I am thrilled to congratulate this year's winners, along with their faculty mentors. Faculty and staff play a critical role in students' achievements and success. We are so proud of all your hard work and your positive impacts on our community!

Yours in service,

Sreekala Bajwa

VP, Dean and Director



College of Ag in the News



APLU announces 2026 board of directors
(including our very own VP and Dean Sreekala Bajwa!)



Tony Hartshorn receives Excellence in Open Education Award



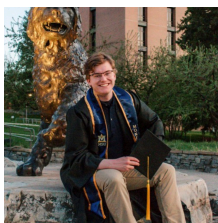
Will Wetzel receives James & Mary Ross Provost's Award for Excellence



Integrated Weed Management on the COA YouTube (created by doctoral students Sophie Lattes and Emma Kubinski)



Clinton native Caitlyn Franke awarded \$2,000 MVMA scholarship (from MVMA)



Q&A with pre-veterinary scholarship recipient Matthew Orvis (from MVMA)

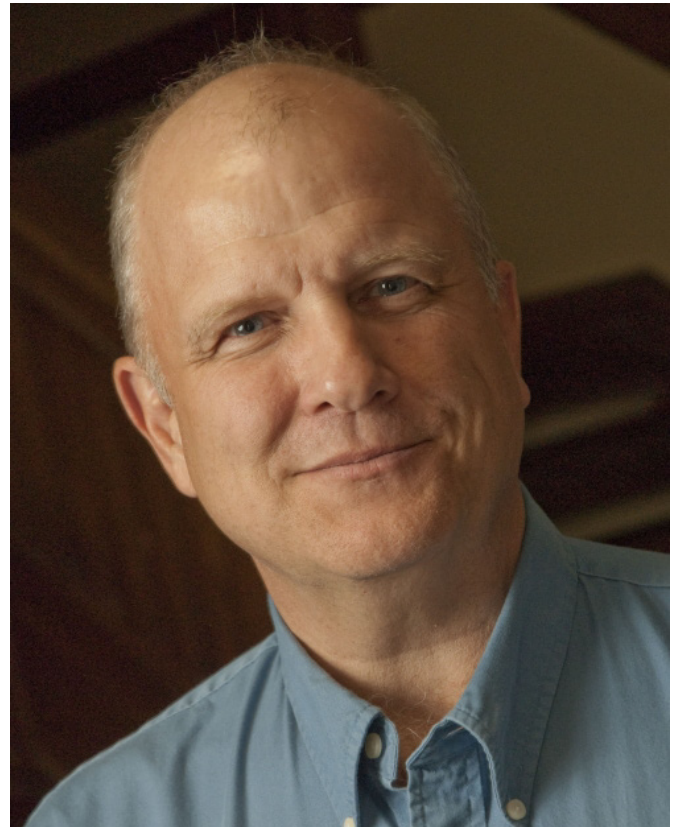
Faculty of the Month

The February Faculty of the Month is **Dr. Joe Atwood of the Department of Agricultural Economics and Economics!**

Dr. Atwood received a number of nominations from students. Comments included:

- "Teaches the most applicable class in the college of ag"
- "Cares more about his students than any other professor I've had"
- "Joe is the most caring professor who takes time out of his day to meet with students who have questions about anything, from class to life and grad school. I feel Dr. Atwood's class is one everyone should take in order to save, buy a house, retire and more."

Congratulations, Dr. Atwood!



Accomplishments and Highlights

We have several new faces to recognize in the College of Ag!

- The Department of Animal & Range Sciences welcomes a familiar face, **Dr. Noah Davis**, as assistant professor of grazing ecology and management.
- In Conrad, the Western Triangle Ag Research Center welcomes **Dr. John Cardoso**, assistant professor of agronomy!
- The Plant Growth Center has a new manager! Welcome to Connor Schmitz - be sure to stop by the PGC and say hello.
- **Dr. Shivali Banerjee** joins the Department of Land Resources and Environmental Sciences as an assistant professor in agricultural engineering and bioeconomies.

Wishing a very warm welcome to all our new colleagues. We are so glad you're here!

Reminder: Please continue to submit impact statements for your research projects! These short summaries help to reinforce the importance of agricultural sciences to governmental and funding agencies. Submission takes five minutes, and you can complete it by scanning the QR code or [visiting this webpage](#).



Recent and Upcoming Events

In partnership with the Center for Faculty Excellence, the Registrar's office is holding a luncheon for new faculty on **Friday, Feb. 27 at 12 p.m.** to learn about the Registrar's services. Topics will include essential systems regularly used by faculty such as NavMSU and DegreeWorks. [Learn more and register here.](#)

Towne's Harvest **CSA shares** are available for 2026! Learn more below and grab your share [on the THG website.](#)

Fresh • Local • Certified Organic
18 week subscription of veggies
10-12 types of veggies in each box
Unique veggies not found in stores
Supports sustainable AG education

Jun 10-Oct 14
Reg share: \$650
Student rate: \$540
Over a \$35 value each week

Sign up & more info at:
www.townesharvest.montana.edu

Publications and Grants

Recent Publications

- Berrios-Ortiz, L., Kubinski, E., Lattes, S., Menalled, F., Ebel, R. "The edible weeds feast: an experiential assignment for agroecology, food systems, and weed science higher education." *Frontiers in Sustainable Food Systems*.
- Hannay, D., Chorak, G.M., Harkess, A., Clevenger, J., Cuperus, J.T., Hale, H., Akozbek, L., Meharg, Z., Carey, S., Myers, Z., Queitsch, C., Stamatoyannopoulos, A., Thum, R.A. "Trait Mapping Utilizing a Newly Constructed Genome for Allohexaploid Invasive Eurasian Watermilfoil Reveals a Non-Target Site QTL Associated with Fluridone Resistance." *Evolutionary Applications*.
- Smalling, K.L., Bradley, P.M., Romanok, K.M., Doyle, J.T., Eggers, M.J., Martin, C., Barnhart, E., Binette, P., Castro, E., Chavez, M., Ewing, S., Gordon, S.E., Fields, M.W., Gray, J.L., Groshong, A.M., Hwang, C., Kanagy, L.K., LaFrance, J. W., Loftin, K.A., Long, C.M., McCleskey, R.B., Meppelin, S.M., Richards, C.L., Schreiner, M.L., Shikany, J.I., Tesfamariam, M. "Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) and other contaminants of concern in tribal waters of Montana." *Environmental Science: Processes & Impacts*.
- Romanok, K.M., Bradley, P.M., Smalling, K.L., Doyle, J.T., Eggers, M.J., Gray, J.L., Hladik, M.L., Kanagy, L.K., McCleskey, R.B., Meppelink, S.M., Richards, C.L., and Roth, D.A. "Target-chemical concentrations and microbiological results in surface water and tapwater, Montana, 2022-23." U.S. Geological Survey data release.
- Romanok, K.M., Smalling, K.L., Bradley, P.M., Barnhart, E.P., Eggers, M.J., Doyle, J.T., Meppelink, S.M., and Schreiner, M.L. "Concentration results for per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) analyzed in fish tissue, bed sediment, and biofilm samples, Montana, 2023." U.S. Geological Survey data release.

Publications and Grants

Recent Publications (continued)

- Breyre, A. M., Merkle-Scotland, E. J., Yang, D. H., Hanson, K., Jagani, S., Tolckoff, A., & Gunaga, S. "Do not resuscitate (DNR) emergency medical services (EMS) protocol variation in the United States." The American journal of emergency medicine.
- Gunaga, S., Yang, D. H., Hanson, K., Merkle-Scotland, E. J., Jagani, S., & Breyre, A. M. "Statewide and Regional Variation in Hospice and Palliative Care Protocols in Emergency Medical Services in the United States." Prehospital Emergency Care, 1-7.
- Dylan G Stewart, Jared T Beaver, M Lucas Cooksey, Chad Grantham, Brian L Pierce, Roel R Lopez, Stephen L Webb. "Effects of drop net and helicopter net-gun capture on movement, space use, and survival of white-tailed deer." PLoS One.
- Lauren M. Porensky, Sally E. Koerner, Amanda R. Williams, Megan L. Van Emon, Kevin R. Wilcox, Kimberly J. Komatsu, John D. Dietrich, Kurt O. Reinhart. "Multi-year drought has persistent forage quality and quantity effects that can be intensified by heavy grazing in semiarid rangelands." Agriculture, Ecosystems & Environment.
- DG Stewart, JT Beaver, ML Cooksey, C Grantham. "Does Temporary Baiting Affect White-Tailed Deer Space Use and Movement? New Insights Leveraging Subhourly Location Data." Ecology and Evolution.

Recent Grants

- Wilmer Cuervo Vivas, Faculty Excellence Grant: "Developing a cost-effective and rapid method to quantify in vitro methane emissions using a portable sensor."

Publications and Grants

Funding Opportunities

- **Western SARE** has two grant opportunities open: the Sabbatical Research and Education program and Graduate Student Research and Education program. The deadline for both programs is **March 6, 2026**. Please check the Western SARE website for full details. If planning to submit a proposal, PIs should notify the OSP Research Administrator for Western SARE, Jennifer Nesbitt. For general inquiries, please email wsare@montana.edu.

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.