



Western Society of Weed Science Newsletter

360 Oak Avenue, Suite #140, Eaton, CO 80615

(303) 327-8016

info@wsweedscience.org

Summer 2026

IN THIS ISSUE:

President's Report

Student Liaison Report

2027 Call for Papers &
Posters

2027 Symposia

In Memoriam: 2012 Fellow
Dr. Jodie Holt

Elena Sanchez Memorial
WSWS Outstanding Student
Scholarship

About the Growing the Future
of Weed Science Scholarship

2026 Proceedings Update

Save the Date: Western
Invasive Weed Short Course
offered Spring 2027

Call for Distinguished
Achievement Awards

Roland Schirman Memorial
Travel Grant

Washington Report

Membership Renewal Form

Sidebar highlights:

- [Contact Us](#)
- [Officers & Executive Committees](#)
- [Publications](#)
- [Calendar of Events](#)



President's Report

The WSWS Board of Directors met August 4–5 at the Hyatt Regency in Irvine, California, for the summer board meeting. Board members who were unable to attend in person joined via Zoom, and we were joined by Patty York, president of the Western Weeds Coordinating Committee, to help plan our joint meeting. The meeting was productive, and I

want to thank all the board members, committee chairs, and other members who took the time to prepare reports and attend.

The board voted to appoint Jesse Richardson as the new Council for Agricultural Science and Technology (CAST) Representative and WSWS Board Member, with his appointment beginning after the CAST Annual Meeting this fall. I personally want to thank Greg Dahl for his many years of service to CAST and the WSWS.

The board also approved a joint meeting with the WSSA in 2028. This meeting will likely be held in San Diego, but the details are still being worked out.

I want to personally thank Colorado State University, South Dakota State University, the University of Idaho, the University of Wyoming, and Washington State University for sending students to the joint NCWSS and WSWS Weed Competition in July. The competition was hosted by Bayer Crop Science at the Gothenburg, Nebraska Water Utilization Learning Center.

The first-, second-, and third-place WSWS teams were UW, SDSU, and UI, respectively. The first-, second-, and third-place graduate individual awards went to Ian Waldecker (UW), Kiera Searcy (CSU), and Laura Rodriguez (UI), respectively. Ian Waldecker also won the Graduate Individual Written Calibration, Problem Solving, and Herbicide ID competitions. Sushmita Sharma (UI) won the Graduate Individual Problem Solving competition.

On behalf of the WSWS, I want to thank Bayer Crop Science, and especially Rodger Farr, for hosting the competition, and Milos Zaric of UNL for hosting a tour of the Precision Application Technology Lab after the competition.

Lastly, please consider nominating colleagues for a society award, as there are many deserving members. Nominations can be made for Fellow, Honorary Member, and Distinguished Achievement Awards.

WSWS Annual Meeting March 8 – 11, 2027, Irvine, California

Student Liaison Report – Olanrewaju Adeyemi

The WSWWS Summer Board Meeting was held in Irvine, California, where we also had the opportunity to visit and plan for the **2027 WSWWS Annual Meeting**, which will be held at the Hyatt Regency Irvine.

The Irvine location offers students several opportunities to explore the area if they are able to arrive early or stay after the meeting. One major attraction is Disneyland in nearby Anaheim, which may be of particular interest to students looking to make the most of their trip to Southern California.

Following recent concerns about presentation judging at the conference, we have recommended Ian Waldecker, a PhD student at the University of Wyoming, to serve as the student representative on the Student Presentation and Awards Committee. His involvement will provide a student perspective and help promote greater consistency and consideration of student concerns in the judging process.

We are also working with the WSWWS Diversity and Inclusion Committee to organize a student-focused webinar for this fall. The goal is to provide students with an opportunity to connect with professionals and learn more about career pathways in weed science, particularly those outside academia. We are currently discussing potential industry panelists, the format, and a tentative timeframe. More information will be shared as plans develop, so students should be on the lookout for announcements and opportunities to participate.

As always, we encourage students to become involved with WSWWS beyond the annual meeting. Serving on committees, participating in WSWWS activities, attending professional events, and connecting with members across different sectors of weed science are excellent ways to build professional relationships, learn about career opportunities, and become more engaged with the society.

We wish everyone a productive remainder of the summer and a successful start to the new academic year. Please feel free to reach out to the Student Liaison with questions, ideas, or suggestions for how WSWWS can continue to improve the student experience.

Yours in Service,

Olanrewaju Adeyemi, Student Liaison
olanrewaju.adeyemi@usu.edu

Greesmanth Alluri, Student Chair-elect
allurig@oregonstate.edu

Contact Us

Newsletter Editor

Carl Libbey

wswwsnewslettereditor@gmail.com

Officers and Executive Committees

President

Nevin Lawrence

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

nlawrence2@unl.edu

Awards, Site Selection

President-Elect

Byron Sleugh

Corteva

byron.sleugh@corteva.com

**Program, Poster, Publications,
Student Paper Judging, Local
Arrangements**

Immediate Past President

Carl Coburn

Bayer Cropscience

carl.coburn@bayer.com

**Fellows & Honorary Members,
Sustaining Members,
Nominations**

Secretary

Liberty Galvin

Oklahoma State University

lbgalvin@okstate.edu

Necrology

Treasurer

Cody Creech

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

ccreech2@unl.edu

WSSA Representative

Pat Clay

Valent

pat.clay@valent.com

Legislative

CAST Representative

Gregory Dahl

Retired

gkdahl19@gmail.com

Member-At-Large -

Public Sector

Breanne Tidemann

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

Breanne.tidemann@agr.gc.ca

Finance

Member-At-Large -

Private Sector

Garrison Gundy

Valent USA LLC

garrison.gundy@valent.com

Herbicide Resistant Plants

Research Section Chair

Mirella Ortiz

Utah State University

mirella.ortiz@usu.edu

Research Section Chair-Elect

Shannon Clark

ENVU

shannon.clark@envu.com

Education & Regulatory Section Chair

Elizabeth Mosqueda

Madera Community College

elizabeth.mosqueda@madercollege.edu

Public Relations

Education & Regulatory Section Chair-Elect

Jeanne Falk-Jones

Kansas State University

jfalkjones@k-state.edu

Call for Papers and Posters

Byron Sleugh - President-Elect/Program Chair

The 2027 Western Society of Weed Science (WSWS) will take place **March 8 - 11, 2027** in Irvine, California at the Hyatt Regency.

This will be a joint meeting with the Western Weed Coordination Committee, and we are looking forward to an exciting program from this collaboration. **Title and abstract submission will open October 19th, 2026**, and the deadline for title submission is **December 18, 2026** and for **abstract submission it is January 8, 2027**.

WSWS will again be using Fourwaves to submit titles and abstracts, and for building the program. Please follow the guidelines when entering oral paper and poster titles. Pay particular attention to use proper capitalization and punctuation as will be outlined on the forthcoming title and abstract submission site link. All attendees are invited and encouraged to participate by presenting at least one paper or poster, and multiple submissions are welcome. We will continue to have oral papers and posters divided into projects:

- 1) *Weeds of Agronomic Crops*
- 2) *Basic Biology, Ecology, and Technology*
- 3) *Weeds of Horticultural Crops*
- 4) *Teaching and Outreach*
- 5) *Regulatory and Policy*
- 6) *Weeds of Range, Forestry, and Natural Areas*

Graduate and undergraduate students are strongly encouraged to enter the student paper and/or poster contests.

Oral paper presentations will be scheduled every 15 minutes in concurrent sessions. Maintaining a timely schedule is important for those who need to move between sessions. Therefore, presentations of 12 to 13 minutes are recommended to allow time for questions and transition to the next presenter. WSWS Poster size should not exceed 42-inches by 42-inches.

Symposia for 2027 Announced

The 2027 WSWS annual meeting in Irvine, California will host three symposia.

1. Group 14-Resistant Kochia
2. Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, and Remote Sensing Applications in Weed Science
3. Noxious Weed Designation in the West

More information in future newsletters.

In Memoriam: 2012 WSSWS Fellow

Dr. Jodie Holt

It is with great sadness and deepest sympathy that we share the passing of Dr. Jodie Holt, friend, colleague, mentor, professor, faculty member and Chair of the Department of Botany and Plant Sciences at UC Riverside, Dean, and Director of the UCR Botanic Gardens, who passed away April 27, 2026.

Jodie was a highly respected scholar and mentor who contributed to botany, ecology, invasive species, plant physiology, and weed science for over 40 years. Her journey in botany began with a passion sparked in her first botany course, leading her to earn a BS in Botany from the University of Georgia in Athens, followed by MS and PhD degrees in Botany from UC Davis.

She was always a source of inspiration, an advocate of the natural world, able to connect scientific concepts to everyday life, and as one student wrote “She opened our eyes to the awesome world of plants”. Her research focused on integrating biological knowledge and ecological functions with vegetation management, particularly in weeds and invasive species in agricultural and wildland ecosystems of the southwestern United States. Using physiological and ecological approaches, she studied plant invasion mechanisms at the individual, population and community levels to inform management strategies. Jodie had superior communication and presentation skills. She could take a complex plant invasion topic and explain her research clearly, in a manner that everyone in her audience could understand the need for and significance of the work – all in 15 minutes! In all, Jodie authored nearly 100 academic papers and book chapters, and co-authored three editions of the influential reference book *Ecology of Weeds and Invasive Plants*.

To her many undergraduate and graduate students, Jodie was an exemplary academic, an irreplaceable mentor, and amazing role model, and a good friend who was always available for support and guidance. Her lab was a warm, welcoming and dynamic place that fostered rigorous research, concise, clear writing skills, skillful public outreach, and frequent hilarity. Jodie trained strong academic skills, but also fostered professional skills, cooperation, and productive collaborations within and across a broad network of plant experts and organizations. She created a wealth of opportunities for students by providing the flexibility and support required for students to pursue careers in every sector. Jodie's mentorship had far reaching impacts, as her many successful lab members continue to thrive as notable professionals in private, public, educational, non-profit and academic realms. Jodie's leadership at the University of California, Riverside, has equally lasting impacts. Jodie served as Chair of the Botany and Plant Sciences department through several challenging years from 2003-2010, and was Divisional Dean of Agricultural and Natural Resources from 2012 – 2015. Although Jodie retired from UCR in 2015, she went on to lead the UCR Botanic Gardens from 2016 on. In all her roles, Jodie was valued for her professionalism, integrity, collegiality, and commitment to scientific excellence and the institution.

CONTINUED on pg 5 →

Business Manager

Eric Gustafson

IMI

360 Oak Ave, Suite #140

Eaton, CO 80615

info@wsweeds science.org

Constitution & Operating Procedures

Representative

Sandra McDonald

Mountain West Pest

sandra@mountainwestPEST.com

Webmaster & Web Editor

Brian Rutherford

368 Durham

brian@368durham.com

Student Liaison

Olanrewaju Adeyemi

Utah State University

olanrewaju.adeyemi@usu.edu

Student Liaison Chair-elect

Greeshmanth Alluri

Oregon State University

allurig@oregonstate.edu

Executive Director of Science Policy

Lee Van Wychen

National and Regional Weed

Science Societies

5720 Glenmullen Place

Alexandria, VA 22303

(202) 746-4686

Lee.VanWychen@WSSA.net

Publications

WSSWS ONLINE EDUCATION

WSSWS Publications

WSSA Journals Website Online

2026 Proceedings

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**Canadian Weed Science
Society Annual Meeting**
Nov. 23 – 26, 2026
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan
www.weedscience.ca

**North Central Weed
Science Society
and
Northeastern Weed
Science Society
Joint Annual Meeting**
Dec. 7 – 10, 2026
Columbus, Ohio
www.ncwss.org
www.newss.org

**Southern Weed Science
Society Annual Meeting**
Jan. 25 - 28, 2027
Corpus Christi, Texas
www.swss.ws

**Weed Science Society of
America Annual Meeting**
Feb. 8 – 11, 2027
Denver, Colorado
www.wssa.net

**Western Society of Weed
Science Annual Meeting**
Mar. 8 – 11, 2027
Irvine, California
www.wsweedscience.org

**Aquatic Plant Management
Society Annual Meeting**
Jul. 11 - 16, 2027
Austin, Texas
www.apms.org

JODIE HOLT CONTINUED from pg 4

In addition to her scholarship, leadership and mentorship, Jodie was a scientific advisor for James Cameron's blockbuster film Avatar. Jodie's work on Avatar became one of the most unusual and memorable chapters of her career, bringing together science, storytelling, and popular culture in a way that perfectly reflected her personality and passions. Recruited during the film's development, she worked with actress Sigourney Weaver, director James Cameron, and the production team to help create scientifically credible plant life for the fictional moon Pandora. She advised filmmakers on how botanists study plants in the field, developed scientific descriptions and Latin names for fictional species, and helped shape the ecological logic behind Pandora's alien environment. Jodie approached the work not simply as entertainment, but as an opportunity to inspire curiosity about plants and science.

Her legacy lives in the students she inspired, the colleagues she mentored, the staff she empowered, and the countless people and friends she inspired to look more closely at the natural world and see plants differently. We extend our deepest condolences to Jodie Holt's family, friends, colleagues, and all who knew her.

Elena Sanchez Memorial Outstanding Student Scholarship Program

The Western Society of Weed Science is pleased to offer the WSWS Outstanding Student Scholarship to promote greater student participation at the WSWS annual meeting and encourage new weed science research and future weed science careers. Scholarships will be awarded to three outstanding undergraduate and/or graduate WSWS student members who will attend and present at the WSWS annual meeting.

A total of \$3,000 (three \$1,000 scholarships) will be awarded to outstanding undergraduate and/or graduate WSWS student members currently conducting research relevant to weed science. The scholarship money may be used to defray research costs, as a stipend, and for travel to the WSWS annual meeting. To ensure scholarship money can be used for travel to the annual meeting, the deadline for applications is **Friday, October 2, 2026**. Selections will be made, and participants notified of the committee's decision by Friday, October 30, 2026.

Go to: [Elena Sanchez Western Society of Weed Science Outstanding Student Scholarship](#) for information and details on qualifications and how to apply. If you have questions, contact Curtis Rainbolt, WSWS Awards Chair (curtis.rainbolt@basf.com).

Growing the Future of Weed Science Student Scholarship

Dear Esteemed Colleague,

The Western Society of Weed Science's Diversity and Inclusion Committee graciously asks for your financial support for the *Growing the Future of Weed Science Scholarship*. This scholarship enables undergraduate students from diverse backgrounds to attend our annual meeting by supporting the costs of travel, registration, and lodging, thereby lowering the financial barriers that too often prevent talented students from accessing the transformative professional experiences of our annual meeting.

Beyond financial support, this scholarship is a vital opportunity to introduce young scientists—many of whom may not yet be aware of our field or our society—to the exciting and important work we do. In doing so, we aim to not only increase participation but also inspire new talent and ideas, serving to revitalize our membership and ensure the long-term health of the WSWS.

Your donation will make a direct and lasting impact by supporting the next generation of weed scientists and ensuring our society continues to reflect the diverse world we serve.

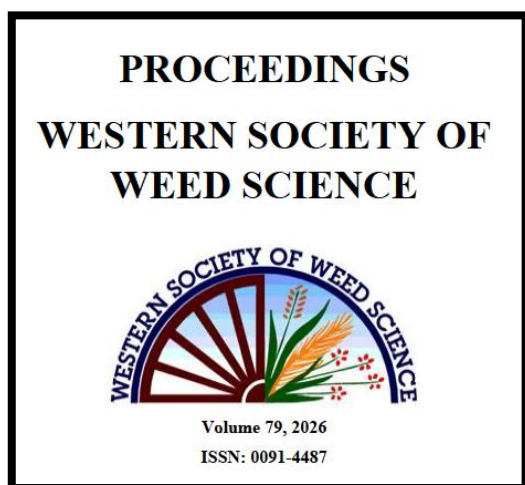
If you'd like to learn more about the impact of your support, please don't hesitate to reach out. Thank you for considering this important opportunity to invest in a more inclusive future for our field.

Warm regards,

The WSWS Diversity & Inclusion Committee

DONATE HERE: <https://wsweedscience.org/diversity-and-inclusion/>

2026 Proceedings



The Proceedings from the 2026 Tucson, Arizona 79th annual Meeting of the Western Society of Weed Science, have been posted to the WSWS website. You can view or download the Proceedings by following this link:

[WSWS 2026 Proceedings](#)

16th Annual Western Invasive Weed Short Course



The 16th Annual Western Invasive Weed Short Course will be held April 19-22, 2027, at the Sylvan Dale Guest Ranch in Loveland, Colorado.

Registration (\$875.00 by March 15, 2027; \$975.00 on March 15, 2027) includes educational program and daily refreshment breaks. Three lunches and three dinners are also included in the registration.

Registration opens November 3, 2025. Visit http://www.mountainwestpest.com/Past_Courses.php to learn more.

The continued partnership with [Sylvan Dale Guest Ranch](#) allows us to provide some unique training opportunities. One of the truly unique features of the Short Course is the ability to have a long-term restoration plot. Sylvan Dale has worked with us to establish a fenced site where we have been able to demonstrate weed management combined with native grass establishment. A twilight weed walk on the first night is a great way to see the ranch and start learning some weeds.



The WIWSC is an intensive study of current technologies and best management practices associated with noxious and invasive weeds in the western United States. Participants gain up-to-date knowledge specific to invasive weed management with interactive sessions.



The WIWSC will include sessions on:

- Weed management
- Herbicides
- Weed identification
- Public awareness of noxious weeds
- Other topics to be identified by the participants
- Time for individual interaction with instructors

Our target participants are local, state, federal government, and other land managers throughout the western region desiring a better understanding of weed management. WIWSC is designed to benefit both those new to invasive plant management and experienced professionals seeking a comprehensive update in western invasive weeds and their management.

The WIWSC instructors are members of the [Western Society of Weed Science](#).

Please contact Sandra McDonald, Course Coordinator, for additional information at 970-266-9573 or Sandra@MountainWestPEST.com.



2027 CALL FOR NOMINATIONS: DISTINGUISHED ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

Everyone knows of some skilled and outstanding weed scientists in the western region who have contributed a great deal over the years and deserve our recognition and appreciation. One way to recognize such persons is to nominate them for a WSWS award. Please take the time and nominate an individual for one of the awards listed below.

CRITERIA USED FOR EVALUATING NOMINATIONS: Awards are based on merit and impact on weed science and weed management practices. Applicants **MUST BE** a member of WSWS. Professional achievements and their impacts are the principal criteria for receiving these awards. There is no requirement that an award be given in any or every category. Past winners are not eligible again in the same category. An award may be given each year in both the private and public sectors for Outstanding Weed Scientist and Outstanding Weed Scientist – Early Career. Only one award may be given each year for Weed Manager and Professional Staff. Within the guidelines for each category, there is flexibility to fit the nominee.

I. OUTSTANDING WEED SCIENTIST

This award recognizes outstanding achievements in weed science from individuals in both the public and private sectors. Principle criteria for this award includes innovative or unique approaches that result in learning, ability to clearly communicate ideas, motivation of the intended audience, demonstrate excellence and creativity in research accomplishments, applying results to solve problems in weed science, the impact on weed management practices and principals of weed science, and recognition of accomplishments by peers and intended audiences.

II. OUTSTANDING WEED SCIENTIST – EARLY CAREER

This award is to be given to members in the private and public sectors with no more than 10 years of service after completion of their terminal degree. This award recognizes outstanding achievements in weed science early in the individual career with the same criteria as the outstanding weed scientist above.

III. WEED MANAGER

This award recognizes outstanding and sustained contributions in support of weed science activities. This award is intended for those paid by taxpayers and that are working in the public sector, such as employees of state departments of agriculture, weed boards, public land managers, and vegetation management personnel. The nominee must have been involved in the WSWS and weed science for at least five years at the time of nomination.

IV. PROFESSIONAL STAFF

This award recognizes outstanding and sustained contributions in support of weed science activities. Nominees will be restricted to individuals that work under the direction of university, federal, or industry scientists. These individuals may have titles such as researcher, research

associate, technician, support scientist, or specialist. The nominee must have been involved in the WSWs and weed science research, extension, or resident education for at least five years at the time of nomination.

NOMINATION DEADLINE: Nominations must be received by Sunday, **December 1, 2026**.

NOMINATOR'S RESPONSIBILITY: The nominator will submit a nomination package using the following format:

1. **NOMINATION AWARD:** Name of award the Nominee is nominated for.
2. **NOMINEE:** Provide name, title, complete mailing address, telephone number and brief biography that would be acceptable for publishing in the WSWs proceedings.
3. **PUBLIC OR PRIVATE SECTOR NOMINEE:** Indicate the appropriate sector.
4. **SUPPORT STATEMENT BY NOMINATOR:** A concise summary and accomplishments of the nominee.
5. **EDUCATION AND WORK EXPERIENCE:** Degrees, institutions, dates, and positions held.
6. **PARTICIPATION IN AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE WESTERN SOCIETY OF WEED SCIENCE:** Offices held, committees, papers presented, honors, awards.
7. **PROFESSIONAL AND SCIENTIFIC AFFILIATIONS OTHER THAN IN THE WSWs:** Memberships, offices held, committee activities, papers presented, honors, awards, state, regional and national organizations.
8. **PROFESSIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS:** Provide pertinent information relative to the award sought. This may include but is not limited to books written or edited, referred journal articles, technical information, research reports, extension material, products developed, patents, agronomic practices researched, innovations, creativity enhancement. List and explain the contributions made to the weed science profession by the nominee.
9. **LETTERS OF SUPPORT:** Obtain three (maximum) supporting letters for the nominee. Preferably these letters should not exceed one page in length. The nominator should obtain supporting letters from the different disciplines, i.e., faculty member or co-worker, individual not employed at same location, industry representative, university, government, or regulatory individual. Members of the Awards Committee are not eligible to write supporting letters.
10. **NOMINATOR:** Provide name, title, complete address, telephone number.

Unsuccessful nominations will remain active for three years; however, an updated nomination packet of holdover candidates is encouraged.

The nomination package, including the supporting letters, should be sent, by email, to the chair of the Awards Committee by Tuesday, **December 1, 2026**:

Curtis Rainbolt

curtis.rainbolt@basf.com

ROLAND SCHIRMAN MEMORIAL TRAVEL GRANT

The Western Society of Weed Science is pleased to offer the WSWs Roland Schirman Memorial Travel Grant to promote greater participation by county extension agents and county weed district personnel to attend the WSWs annual meeting and encourage additional weed science education and research efforts.

TRAVEL GRANTS

One \$1,000 travel grant will be awarded annually to an outstanding county extension agent or county weed district supervisor to be used towards travel-related expenses to attend the annual WSWs meeting. To ensure the award can be used for travel to the annual meeting, a recipient will be selected and contacted before the title submission deadline (typically around December 1).

ELIGIBILITY

Applicants must be employed within the WSWs region as a county extension agent or county weed district supervisor (see <https://wsweedscience.org/aboutus/> and scroll to membership for a list states/provinces included). Applicants must have a portion of their extension or weed district activities focusing on weeds or weed management education or research. Preferred candidates will have demonstrated an interest and involvement in activities promoting education or research on weeds and their management.

Demonstrated activities may include bulletins, fact sheets, videos, social media and internet sites, popular articles, research and demonstration plots, field day presentations, participation with weed districts or noxious weed boards, presentations at grower meetings and conferences, training demonstrations, participation at local, state, or regional weed meetings, and educational efforts with farmers, ranchers, master gardeners, roadside or irrigation district vegetation managers or other groups involved with managing weeds.

Applicants are encouraged to become WSWs members and present at the annual meeting (see <https://wsweedscience.org/future-meetings/> for meeting details). Preference will be given to applicants who intend to present at the annual meeting. Applicants are limited to one award in a 2-year period.

APPLICATION PACKAGE

1. Completed Application Form (found at the end of this document)
2. One-page cover letter describing; a) how applicant is involved in weed management extension or research activities, b) how applicant's efforts will contribute to the field of weed science and the WSWs objectives (listed below), and c) what future contributions applicant hopes to make to the field of weed science.
3. One-page CV or resume summary highlighting recent relevant experience through education, work, internships, awards, honors, publications, leadership positions, or community activities.
4. Draft abstract for a paper or poster presentation at WSWs annual meeting (if planning to present)

5. Two letters of support from colleagues (such as a state/province weed extension specialist, University weed scientist, county weed board supervisor, state or federal land managers, state or regional biological weed control coordinators, or industry representative) that are familiar with applicant's efforts and contributions in weed-related extension or research.

SELECTION CRITERIA

Applicants will be evaluated by the WSWs Awards Committee based on the contributions of their weed-related extension or research efforts to the discipline of weed science and to the WSWs objectives (listed below), potential contributions to the future of weed science, and participation in extracurricular pursuits contributing to the advancement of weed science.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Applicants are encouraged to present their weed-related extension and/or research activities or programs at the WSWs annual meeting and are invited to share a brief summary (1 page maximum) of completed weed-related projects in the WSWs newsletter.

HOW TO APPLY

Applications must be submitted electronically. All documents [application form, cover letter, CV summary, draft abstract (if presenting) and two letters of support] should be compiled into a single PDF file (preferred) or into a single zip folder and sent to: Curtis Rainbolt (curtis.rainbolt@basf.com).

Deadline for applications is October 1. Incomplete applications will not be considered. Grant winner will be contacted prior to the WSWs title submission deadline (usually around December 1) and will be recognized at the annual meeting. For questions please contact: Curtis Rainbolt (curtis.rainbolt@basf.com).

WESTERN SOCIETY OF WEED SCIENCE

The Western Society of Weed Science is a professional and scientific society of western weed scientists, weed managers, and others. Membership is open to anyone, including federal, state, and local employees, private company personnel, crop consultants, growers, or others interested in a wide variety of weed science related information.

The objectives of WSWs are:

- To foster and encourage education and research in weed science.
- To foster cooperation among state, federal and private agencies in matters of weed science.
- To aid and support commercial, private, and public agencies in the solution of weed problems.
- To support legislation governing weed control programs and weed research and education programs.
- To support the Weed Science Society of America and foster state and regional organizations and agencies interested in weed control.

See application form next page.

**Roland Schirman Memorial Western Society of Weed Science Travel Grant
APPLICATION FORM**

INSTRUCTIONS: This application is to be completed by the applicant. Applications must be submitted electronically. All documents [application form, cover letter, CV summary, draft abstract (if presenting) and one letter of support] should be compiled into a single PDF file (preferred) or into a single zip folder and sent to: {current WSWs President}

Full Name:

Address:

City/State or Province:

County:

Zip Code:

Telephone:

Email:

Descriptive Title of Extension/Research Weed Program:

Objective of Weed Program (250 words or less):

WASHINGTON REPORT

August 15, 2026

Lee Van Wychen

HHS and EPA to Provide New Money for Innovative Weed Management Technologies

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), EPA, and USDA announced funding for plans to increase innovative weed management and regenerative agriculture techniques.

EPA will provide **\$30 million** for a “Grand prize challenge” for cost-effective **alternatives to pre-harvest desiccation use of pesticides**, which they view as a potential contributor to human exposure. This challenge is aimed to reduce usage of pesticides while providing new innovative tools for farmers to use. Read more [HERE](#). If you have research on cost-effective alternatives to pre-harvest desiccation use of pesticides on a given crop or crops, please contact Bill Chism at carlysbar@gmail.com

Under the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health (ARPA-H) will provide **\$100 million** “to identify new and innovative and cost-effective technologies that reduce reliance on chemical crop protection tools in order to improve human health, including the health of farmers, such as ***electrothermal and electrical weeding technologies, robotic weeding systems, precision mechanical weed control, thermal weed control, biological and non-toxic herbicides, mulching systems, and integrated systems.***”

Stanley Culpepper and I have had a couple meetings with ARPA-H and they are on a tight timeline (weeks, if maybe a month) to generate new technology in the categories mentioned above. They would like 2-page summaries of these ideas and are looking for future deliverables, not policy proposals. This could be a great opportunity for weed science to advance new and upcoming technologies. Please feel free to reach out directly to the ARPA-H primary point of contact: James Coburn at:

james.coburn@arpa-h.gov. Otherwise please contact Stanley: stanley@uga.edu or Lee: Lee.VanWychen@wssa.net for more information ASAP.

Weed Science Societies Urge Practical Implementation of Regenerative Agriculture EO

A new presidential Executive Order (EO) directs USDA, EPA, and HHS to expand support for regenerative agriculture, precision technologies, and alternatives to older chemical crop-protection tools. It also calls for a federal research framework on cumulative chemical exposure and additional investment in technologies that reduce reliance on conventional pesticides while maintaining agricultural productivity. The Weed Science Societies joined a coalition of agricultural organizations [urging President Trump](#) for practical implementation of the new EO. Specifically, the coalition emphasized that existing law provides a strong framework for addressing these areas and that retaining a science-based decision process which retains diverse options for growers will advance

innovation in the U.S. and maintain our agricultural competitiveness. The letter encouraged the administration to implement the executive order through existing science-based regulatory frameworks, cautioned against redundant reviews or new policies that could create uncertainty for farmers and innovators, and reinforced how the Food Quality Protection Act of 1996 (FQPA) established a unified safety standard for pesticide residues on food. The letter called for engagement to ensure that any changes to pesticide regulations considered would advance both agricultural productivity and the availability of essential crop protection tools.

Weed Science Societies Support Letter Opposing Restructuring of USDA REE Mission Area

The six national and regional weed science societies joined 50 other stakeholder organizations in a letter to the House and Senate Agriculture Committees raising concerns about recent changes within USDA's Research, Education, and Economics (REE) mission area.

The letter warns that significant staffing reductions across REE agencies—including the Agricultural Research Service (ARS), National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), Economic Research Service (ERS), and National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS)—combined with proposed laboratory closures and reorganization efforts, risk undermining the nation's agricultural research capacity. In addition, the signatories point to delays in distributing congressionally appropriated research funds and inconsistent agency directives as factors disrupting ongoing research projects, slowing grant processing, and affecting university-based agricultural science programs.

The coalition urges Congress to conduct oversight hearings, require detailed accounting of workforce and funding disruptions, and ensure transparent implementation of any restructuring within USDA's REE mission area. [The letter can be found here.](#)

Meet the 2026-2027 Science Policy Fellows

Sally Reed is a second-year Ph.D. student in Plant, Soil, and Environmental Sciences with



a concentration in Weed Science at the University of Tennessee under the advisement of Dr. Larry Steckel. Her dissertation research focuses on

understanding and overcoming Group 27 herbicide resistance in Palmer amaranth.

Sally earned her B.S. in Crop Sciences from the University of Illinois. Beginning in high school, she spent her summers working for Monsanto and later Bayer, where she gained experience across multiple facets of row crop agriculture, from field research and agronomy to precision agriculture and supply chain operations. These experiences cultivated her interest in weed science and the challenges facing modern crop production. She then earned her M.S. in Plant Sciences from the University of Tennessee, where her thesis, *"Optimizing Corn Production in Tennessee: Enhancing Yield Potential and Nitrogen Use Efficiency,"* provided a systems-level perspective on crop production before she pursued her Ph.D. in Weed Science.

Through her work, Sally aims to develop practical strategies to help producers address herbicide resistance and preserve the long-term effectiveness of herbicides. Her passion lies in bridging the gap between

research, policy, and practice to support informed decision-making in agriculture. Sally is excited to serve as a Science Policy Fellow and looks forward to learning from and contributing to discussions surrounding agricultural and pesticide policy and its role in supporting the production of food, fiber, and fuel. She extends her gratitude to the WSSA and the Science Policy Committee for their continued support of student engagement in science policy.

Jacob Felsman is a third-year Ph.D. student at Michigan State University under the supervision of Dr. Christy Sprague. Jacob's dissertation focuses on the diversification of integrated weed



management in Michigan's dry edible bean production. He received his B.S. in Crop Sciences from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. While completing internships in the crop protection sector, he grew an interest in weed science. Upon completion of his B.S., he went on to pursue his M.S. in Agronomy at the University of Wisconsin-Madison under the direction of Dr. Rodrigo Werle. Jacob's goals through his research are to help crop producers diversify their weed management practices to be more resilient agronomically and environmentally, and to maximize profitability. Through this opportunity, Jacob is looking forward to learning more about the intersection of public policy and the scientific/agricultural sectors. Jacob would like to extend his gratitude to his advisors and mentors, past and present, for their guidance. He also thanks the WSSA for providing experiences like the Science

Policy Fellowship that help students grow both personally and professionally.

Senate Unable to Advance Farm Bill on August 6

The Senate Agriculture Committee was unable to advance a farm bill August 6th after Democrats unanimously opposed the measure due to disagreements over Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) cost-sharing requirements for states. Chairman John Boozman (R-Ark.) proposed a one-year delay for SNAP cost-sharing requirements, while Democrats pushed for two years. The impasse prompted an indefinite recess until at least September, extending uncertainty around the long overdue farm bill.

The committee considered several amendments, most of which split along party lines, including a failed amendment from Sen. Cory Booker (D-N.J.) to overturn the Supreme Court's *Monsanto Co. v. Durnell* decision. Prior to the markup, the WSSA joined a coalition of stakeholder groups in a [letter to the Senate Agriculture Committee](#) urging them to reject any amendments to undo the recent U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Monsanto Co. v. Durnell*. The 7-2 decision reflects broad support across the Court's ideological spectrum, which affirmed that under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA), the EPA is the primary authority for pesticide labeling when it has made a definitive safety determination, rather than a patchwork of state court decisions or state labeling mandates.

The Senate proposal would reauthorize more than 60 USDA research, extension, and education programs, many administered by the National Institute of

Food and Agriculture (NIFA), with no major changes affecting the Agricultural Research Service (ARS) or the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI). In its current form, the bill does not include significant new investments or policy changes for these core research programs, nor does it address USDA's ongoing reorganization of its Research, Education, and Economics mission area.

Weed Science Societies Oppose USDA APHIS Move to Limit Biotech Regulations to PPQ

The six national and regional weed science societies along with the American Society of Plant Biologists (ASPB) and the American Society of Microbiology (ASM) responded to request for information RFI on Modified Organisms subject to the Plant Protection Act. The [linked letter's](#) central point is that genetically engineered organisms should not be regulated simply because of the method used to produce them, but that APHIS should continue to maintain meaningful oversight when an organism, trait, or use pattern may pose a plant-pest or plant-health risk.

The letter is particularly relevant to WSSA because USDA is considering whether oversight currently handled through 7 CFR part 340 and APHIS Biotechnology Regulatory Services (BRS) should instead be shifted toward 7 CFR part 330 and Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ). The letter argues that such a shift would be disruptive unless PPQ develops a transparent, science-based, risk-based framework comparable to BRS. The letter also emphasizes that BRS has specialized biotechnology expertise and experience that should not be lost.

APHIS has an opportunity, through this Request for Information (RFI), to reaffirm and refine a risk-based approach to the regulation of GE organisms under the Plant Protection Act and Coordinated Framework. We strongly recommend that APHIS (1) continue to maintain risk-based oversight of GE plants, insects, and microorganisms under 7 CFR part 340; (2) refrain from shifting oversight to 7 CFR part 330 unless and until PPQ has developed a transparent, science-based framework comparable to BRS's; and (3) ensure that any future changes to regulatory responsibilities preserve protections for public health, international trade, and public trust while enabling timely deployment of beneficial innovations.

Culpepper Selected for EPA Farmer Advisory Committee

EPA [announced](#) 21 new members of the Farm, Ranch, and Rural Communities Advisory Committee (FRRCC), which provides independent advice and recommendations to the EPA on environmental issues affecting agriculture and rural communities. Appointees bring expertise in row-crop production, soil health, conservation, and agricultural innovation, perspectives to inform EPA's likely work on policies affecting nutrient management, precision agriculture technologies, technical assistance for rural communities, and balancing environmental stewardship with long-term farm viability.

Lee Van Wychen, Ph.D.
Executive Director of Science Policy
Weed Science Society of America
5720 Glenmullen Pl,
Alexandria, VA 22303
Cell: 202-746-4686

2026 Membership Renewal Form

To pay by credit card, please login to your account at www.wsweedscience.org

IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO ATTEND THE ANNUAL MEETING BUT WANT TO REMAIN A MEMBER, FILL IN THE INFORMATION BELOW AND SEND \$30.00 FOR DUES TO THE ADDRESS PROVIDED.

Last name	First name	Affiliation	
Mailing address	City	State	Zip code
Phone # w/area code	e-mail address		

Classification: Student ___ University ___ Federal Agency ___ State Agency ___
Private Industry (manufacturing and sales) ___ Private Industry (consulting) ___
Unemployed ___ Retired ___ other (specify) _____

Send to: WWS/IMI,
360 Oak Ave, Ste #140,
Eaton, CO 80615

Questions? info@wsweedscience.org or (303) 327-8016



Western Society of Weed Science Objectives

- ❖ To foster and encourage education and research in weed science.
- ❖ To foster cooperation among state, federal and private agencies in matters of weed science.
- ❖ To aid and support commercial, private and public agencies in the solution of weed problems.
- ❖ To support legislation governing weed control programs and weed research and education programs.
- ❖ To support the Weed Science Society of America and foster state and regional