

Proposal from Texas A&M University to host the 2013 SASES Regional Meeting

March 2-3, 2013

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SCHEDULE

Friday, March 2

- 2-7 PM: Registration
- 4 – 6 PM: Tour of the Texas A&M University campus and agricultural research facilities
- 6 PM: Mexican dinner with a Mariachi band
- 7 PM: Speaker (TBA – an expert on Mexican culture/economics/etc.)
- 8-10 PM: Social – bowling, video games and laser tag at Grand Station

Saturday, March 3

- 8 AM -2 PM: Tours ¹
- 2-3 PM: SASES officer meeting
- 3-4 PM: Club President's Meeting
- 4 - 6 PM: International Agriculture Symposium²
- 6 -7:30 PM: Hunger Banquet³
- 8-11 PM: Social – a live country band and dancing

¹ Tours

Soils of the Brazos Valley and Central Texas – the tour will include soil pits near College Station and views of soils in surrounding counties. Guides will provide information about soil fertility and productivity of local soils.

Forage Systems of Central and East Texas – the tour will demonstrate the importance of winter pastures to the livestock industry with stops at local ranches.

Urban Soil, Plant and Environmental Sciences – this tour will showcase the influence of soil, plant, and environmental sciences in an urban setting. Stops will include those related to turfgrass, building sites dealing with soil and water related issues, environmental water quality, and the TAMU Howdy Farm (an urban, student organic horticulture farm).

Plant Breeding – Texas A&M University is a leader in plant breeding research and education. Stops will include the Borlaug Center (biotechnology), the USDA-ARS research facilities (cotton, perennial grass and pecans), as well as the TAMU plant breeding programs of corn, sorghum, cotton, wheat, perennial grass, and vegetables.

²International Agriculture Symposium

This two hour event will include speakers from the Borlaug Institute, CIMMYT, IITA, IRRI, and TAMU SCSC faculty that have been closely engaged with international agriculture research and development in the spirit of our most famous faculty member– Dr. Norman Borlaug.

³Hunger Banquet

This unique experience allows participants to actively engage in global hunger's uneven and cruel affliction of mankind. It will demonstrate the consequences of poverty and hunger as well as provide discussion points about solutions.

Venue

The Friday registration, dinner and speaker will be at the newly renovated Memorial Student Center (MSC) on the Texas &M University campus. The Saturday officer meetings can take place in the Heep Building on campus. The International Agriculture Symposium and Hunger Banquet will take place in the MSC.

Local Travel

Bus travel within a 50 mile radius of College Station will be contracted through the TAMU Transit System at a rate of \$80/hour. Buses will run from the hotels to campus venues.

Travel Options

College Station has a regional airport with multiple connecting flights (≥ 4) per day to Dallas (American Airlines) and Houston (Continental). The Austin airport is about 1.5 hours away and has most major carriers including Southwest Airlines. Houston has two major airports. The George Bush International is about two hours away from College Station (depending on traffic) and is a major hub for Continental Airlines and has connections with most other major carriers. The Hobby Airport in Houston is about 2.5 hours away (depending on traffic) and has Southwest Airlines. There are shuttle buses that travel from the Houston airports to College Station that are reasonably priced.

Lodging

College Station has several options for lodging. We are currently negotiating room rates. We believe we can secure double rooms for less than \$80 per night which will include a breakfast on Saturday morning. However, the NCAA Women's Basketball Tournament if scheduled for that weekend and we are meeting resistance. Because of the size of the group, two hotels will likely be used. Both will be close (within 3 miles) of the campus.

Budget

Item	Cost
MSC rental – two half-days	\$600
Registration material (200)	\$600
T-shirts (200) @\$10/shirt	\$2,000
Buses for local transportation. Six buses @ \$80/hour/bus for 15 hours	\$7,200
Friday dinner (\$10/student x 200)	\$2,000
Mariachi band	\$300
Friday social (\$15/student x 200)	\$3,000
Saturday lunch (\$10/student x 200)	\$2,000
Speaker fees and travel expenses	\$1,500
Hunger Banquet	\$500
Saturday night social (includes light food)	\$2,500
TOTAL=	\$22,200

Membership and Timeline

The Texas A&M University Agronomy Society has about 30 active members. Speakers and tours would be booked shortly (within a month) after our proposal is accepted.

Social Activities

Friday night's social will take place at Grand Station, which is a local bowling alley with video games, laser tag, and miniature golf. It has a large capacity with food and drinks available.

Saturday's social event will feature a local country music band and a dance floor. We will also provide some light food since some of the students will be hungry after the Hunger Banquet. Some members of the band are students in the TAMU Department of Soil and Crop Sciences.