

Benjamin J. Averitt

Department of Crop and Soil Environmental Sciences, Virginia Tech

email: bjaverit@vt.edu

phone: 252-229-8388

Education

M.S. in Crop and Soil Environmental Sciences: 07/2013-05/2016

- Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech), Blacksburg, VA
- Focus: Plant Breeding and Genetics
- Thesis: *Survey of the agronomic and end use characteristics of low phytic acid soybeans*

B.S. in Plant and Soil Sciences (Agronomic Sciences Conc.) and B.S. in Plant Biology : 08/2008-05/2013

- North Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC

Research Experience

Research Associate

- Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA: 05/2016-present
- Designing, leading, and assisting with applied soybean genetics research
- Conducting lab-based analytical procedures in support of field soybean breeding program including: DNA extraction and purification, molecular marker analysis, and biochemical composition quantification
- Solving problems encountered during lab analysis to improve methods, quality of data, and efficiency
- Hiring, training, and supervising of multi-person undergraduate research staff
- Providing English-language editorial support of scientific and professional writing for native and non-native English speakers

Graduate Research Asst.

- Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA: 07/2013- 05/2016
- Designing and conducting research projects in field and laboratory settings to study low-phytic acid soybean varieties
- Conducting a variety of laboratory procedures in support of field based soybean breeding program
- Instructing and supervising undergraduate research staff
- Communicating scientific information for different audiences through various media including journal articles, posters, and seminars

Research Experience (cont'd)

Visiting Scholar

- Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences, Beijing, PRC: 06/2014-08/2014
- National Key Facility for Gene Resources and Genetic Improvement, Institute of Crop Sciences
- Collaborating on soybean genetic research to provide new insights, ideas, and information in a research group comprising multiple laboratories and researchers
- Providing editorial support for English-language written and oral communications for non-native English speaking students from a variety of language backgrounds

Undergraduate Research Asst.

- North Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC: 04/2012-07/2013
- Center for Applied Tobacco Genetics
- Assisting with field-based tobacco genetics research program
- Supporting lab work including tissue growth and collection, DNA extraction, and genetic analysis
- Performing independent molecular genetic screening for black shank (*Phytophthora nicotianae*) resistance in tobacco

Teaching Experience

Co-Instructor and Lab Coordinator

- Department of Crop and Soil Environmental Sciences, Virginia Tech: Spring '17
- World Food Crops and Cropping Systems (CSES 3444)
- Designing and teaching lab sections of a course designed to introduce students to the cultural implications and uses of the most important global food crops
- Collaborating with and coordinating 3 graduate teaching assistants to deliver an engaging and interesting lab course

Teaching Asst.

- Department of Crop and Soil Environmental Sciences, Virginia Tech: Spring '15
- Assisting in teaching World Food Crops and Cropping Systems (CSES 3444)
- Coordinating and teaching lab sections of a course designed to introduce students to the cultural implications and uses of the most important global food crops
- Presenting lectures on historic and modern small grain varietal development

Publications, Posters, and Presentations

Averitt, BJ; DP Taylor, DD Kuhn, and B Zhang. 2017. Developing a Protocol for Testing Low Phytic Acid Soymeal Based Feed on Pacific White Shrimp. *Int J Environ & Agri Sci* 1: 001.

Averitt, BJ and B Zhang 2016. *Effect of lpa1, lpa2, and mips1 mutant alleles on sugar composition in soybean*. Southern Soybean Breeders' Tour, Richmond, VA.

Liu, G; L Zhao, **BJ Averitt**, Y Liu, B Zhang, R Chang, Y Ma, X Luan, R Guan, and L Qiu. 2015. *Geographical distribution of GmTfl1 alleles in Chinese soybean varieties*. *The Crop Journal* 3(5): 371-378.

Averitt, BJ; B Zhang, and G Welbaum. 2015. *Increasing field emergence in low phytic acid soybeans by seed treatments*. ASA-CSSA-SSA International Annual Meeting, Minneapolis, MN.

Averitt, BJ; B Zhang, and G Welbaum. 2015. *Increasing field emergence in low phytic acid soybeans by seed treatments*. Virginia Tech Department of Crop and Soil Environmental Sciences Graduate Research Symposium, Blacksburg, VA.

Averitt, BJ; B Zhang, and D Kuhn. 2014. *Low-phytic acid soybean meal: enhancement of Aquaculture production, improvement of aquaculture economics, and protection of our natural resources*. ASA-CSSA-SSA International Annual Meeting, Long Beach, CA.

Affiliations

- Graduate Student Member of ASA and CSSA

Awards

- Cyrus McCormick Graduate Scholarship, Virginia Tech CALS: 2015-16
- Dr. Samuel S. Obershain Enrichment Fund Award, Virginia Tech CALS: 2014
- NC Seedsmen's Association Scholarship: 2010-11, 2011-12, 2012-13
- Norfleet Sugg Scholarship, NC Peanut Grower's Assoc.: 2011-12, 2012-13
- Winslow Foundation Scholarship: 2010-11
- Corn Growers Association of NC Scholarship: 2009-2010, 2010-11

Language Skills

- English- native
- French- beginner

Volunteer and Community Activities

- Raleigh Lodge #500, AF&AM, Raleigh, NC: 2009-2013
 - Mentored new members through degree advancement
 - Member of charity barbeque cooking team
- Crew 1117, BSA, Blounts Creek, NC: 2011-2013
 - Advisor
 - Guided youth led group of 40+ co-ed young adults in outdoors based skills and leadership development
- Troop 272, BSA, Havelock, NC: 2008-2013
 - Assistant Scoutmaster

References available upon request