iSEE QUARTERLY REPORT: FALL 2022

IN RESEARCH

- From the I-GUIDE project:
  o An FAQ explains the goals of the project and how they relate to the real world.
- From the Agroecosystem Sustainability Center and SMARTFARM project:
  o A new ASC grant will fund a study of phosphorus leaching from streambanks.
  o NCSA recently featured ASC Founding Director and SMARTFARM Lead Kaiyu Guan’s goals and aspirations — and his work with supercomputers to help tackle issues of environmental quality and food security.
  o Researchers recently published a journal paper on agricultural nitrous oxide emissions in the Corn Belt.
- From our SCAPES/Agrivoltaics project:
  o An October visit from U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin of Illinois led to a lively conversation about the Solar Farm 2.0 and agrivoltaics.
  o Media coverage about SCAPES and other research at the Solar Farm 2.0 open house on campus.
  o Media coverage about the new agrivoltaics educational app being developed.
  o Profiles of Postdoc Paul Mwebaze and Project Manager Basia Latawiec.
- From the Illinois Regenerative Agriculture Initiative:
  o A video explaining the importance of eddy covariance studies.
  o Three new seed-funded projects — one receiving a second year of funding.
  o A ‘Voices on the Land’ performance that highlighted the IRAI annual public convening.
- From the Center for Advanced Bioenergy and Bioproducts Innovation:
  o A CABBI news item on a journal article that explored C₄ crop leaf traits.
  o Other papers published on increased seed oil and the “ethanol blend wall” created by the Renewable Fuel Standard’s design.
  o New videos on the summer science retreat, Bioenergy 101 tutorials, and the summer bioenergy internship; features on the impacts of the summer program for undergrads as well as the CABBI-advised undergrad team seeking a solution to the agricultural nitrate problem.
- From the Energy-Enhancing FEWS project:
  o The team’s hydrothermal liquefaction pilot reactor was used for a field campaign to treat algal blooms in Florida.
- From the I-FARM “Farm of the Future” project:
  o Robotics in the field media coverage in The News-Gazette.
IN EDUCATION & OUTREACH

- The Critical Conversation on Climate (In)Security in the Great Lakes Region was Sept. 19-20 in Chicago.
- Save the date for iSEE Congress 2023 — “Addressing Crises of a Planetary Scale: Lessons from Pandemics and Climate Change.”
- Q Magazine 4 print edition featured 14 student-written, professionally curated articles; Q 5.1 was published online in September with seven new articles. And we recently announced that three students have won cash prizes in our annual Janelle Joseph Environmental Writing Contest.
- The Environmental Leadership Program is completing fall recruitment of a second cohort for its Spring 2023 program. View a recruiting video.

IN CAMPUS SUSTAINABILITY

- iSEE is working with F&S, Housing, the Union, Athletics, and Coca-Cola on a “Don’t Waste” campaign that will include a Zero Waste Illini basketball game Nov. 14 at the State Farm Center.
- Sustainability Month events drew 60 people to the annual celebration, 185 to our Plastic Reduction Challenge, 80 to a campus trash pickup, and hundreds of interactions with students during Green Quad Day — at which 75 participants took an iSEE taste test to see if they could distinguish between bottled and tap water.
- A new drinking water and bottle use survey was sent to all of campus to help find ways to address “The Plastic Problem.”
- Three Fall Illini Lights Out events thus far (with one each scheduled for November and December) included a new record in October: 5,042 bulbs in 32 campus buildings. More than 120 volunteers saved campus as much as 8,697 kwh of electricity and $767 over the weekend — and as much as 6.2 metric tons of GHG.
- Green Certifications: One office and 17 events thus far in Fall semester.
- View the “Sustainability Tour” video on a few of the many sustainable sites on campus; also check out our Campus Bike Center and Campus Instructional Facility geothermal features.
- The U of I was recognized in 2022 AASHE Sustainable Campus Index.

OTHER INSTITUTE NEWS OF INTEREST

- In September, Madhu Khanna officially became the Alvin H. Baum Family Fund Chair & Director at iSEE, and Jeremy Guest became full Associate Director for Research.