

# 2025 Pre-Conference Newsletter





Southern Region

Parent Society      American Society for Horticultural Science      Member SAAS

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**About the Annual Meeting**  
**2025 Annual Conference**  
**January 31-February 2, 2025**  
**Irving, Texas**

SRASHS will meet in conjunction with the Southern Association of Agricultural Scientist (SAAS) in Irving, TX.

Tentative Program Schedule

The general schedule of the meetings will be:

**Friday**

- **Major Change:** Poster session set-up, and viewing
- ACB Club Share and tour
- Working Group Meetings
- HORT Administrator Meetings
- SRASHS Executive Committee Meeting
- National ASHS Board of Directors Meeting

**Saturday**

- **Major Change:** Poster session viewing, judging and take down
- ACB judging contest
- Working Group Meetings
- Extension, Education & overflow Sections
- Edmund, Childers, Barham, and Poster Judging competitions

**Sunday**

- ACB Business meeting & officer election
- Fruit, Vegetable, Floriculture and Ornamental Horticulture and Postharvest Commodity Section meetings.
- Business Meeting
- SAAS Board and General Meeting
- SAAS Social and Reception

See the Tentative Schedule at the end of the Newsletter.

**Notice the Major Change** that the Poster sessions are moved to Friday and Saturday. It is understood that many attendees arrive late on Friday, and they should put up their posters at whatever time they arrive. Poster judging will still occur on Saturday afternoon.

Pre-Registration and Registration Information

The cost of Registration is:

- \$130 Members, Faculty, and Industry
- \$40 Graduate student
- \$20 Undergraduate student
- \$20 ACB Club registration.

Pre-registration online prior to the meeting and registration at the meeting are the same rate. Pre-registration is fully refunded if you cancel at any time and for any reason. Therefore, everyone is **strongly encouraged** to pre-register online. If you pre-register online, cancellation refunds will be credited to your credit card.

## Pre-Registration Online (Strongly encouraged)

**Deadline:** Prior to and through the meeting.  
Go to the following URL to access the Southern Region ASHS Registration Site:

<https://ashs.org/event/2025-SR-Meeting-Registration>

Note: If you are not an ASHS Member, select Continue as Guest.

We would like to thank Tracy Shawn, Heather Hilko and ASHS Headquarters for supplying the online registration service and managing abstract publication.

## Registration at the Meeting

On-site registration will be available at the registration desk.

**Payment:** Check (personal, institutional, organization, foundation) or cash.  
Credit card only by online registration.

## Hotel Information and Reservations

(Book early - rooms often run out if you wait too late. You can always cancel.)

### The Westin Irving Convention Center at Las Colinas

400 West Las Colinas Blvd., Irving, TX 75039  
To make reservations by phone, call 877-619-2539 and be sure to ask for the Southern Association of Agricultural Scientists group rate. You can also say SAAS group rate. To make reservations online at the SAAS group rate click this dedicated link: [Book your group rate for Southern Association of Agricultural Scientists](#)

**Deadline to reserve at group rate:** FRIDAY, JANUARY 17, 2025, by 6:00 pm CST.

SAAS Group Rates: \$179 + tax double, single, triple or quad rooms. No resort fee.

Check in: 3:00 pm - Check out: 11:00 am

**HOTEL PARKING:** The Westin has a parking garage adjacent to the hotel. Self-parking is available for \$18/day. Valet parking is available for \$24/day. Prices include in-and-out privileges for in-house guests only. Rates are subject to change without notice.

**Group Rate** will be honored for 3 days before and 3 days after conference dates of Jan 30-Feb 4 for visiting/sightseeing, if available.

**Internet:** Complimentary internet in guestrooms for Marriott Bonvoy Members.

**Fitness Center:** Complimentary access to hotel's fitness center.

### Texican Court

501 W Las Colinas Blvd., Irving, TX 75039

To make reservations by phone, **call toll free 833-839-4226** (You MUST identify yourself as with Southern Association of Agricultural Scientists to obtain the group rate.)

To make reservations online, go to the Hotel's website: [www.texicancourt.com](http://www.texicancourt.com).

**NOTE:** Cancellations must be made 48 hours before the scheduled day of arrival to avoid a one night cancellation fee.

**Deadline to reserve at group rate:** FRIDAY, JANUARY 17, 2025, by 6:00 pm CST.

**SAAS Group Rates: \$119/night for single/double; for triple/quad add \$20/person/night for the 3rd and 4th person.**

Check in 3:00 pm; check out is 12 Noon.

**AMENITIES: Group Rate** will be honored for 2 days before and 2 days after conference dates of Jan 30-Feb 4 for visiting/sightseeing, if available.

**Breakfast:** Complimentary Continental Breakfast served daily in the Two Mules Cantina.

**Wi-Fi:** Complimentary Wi-Fi in all public areas, overnight guestroom, and throughout the meeting and event spaces.

**Internet:** Complimentary Internet. However, some services are considered premium and may incur additional fees.

**Self-Parking:** Complimentary daily overnight self-parking based on availability.

(Note: If luggage assistance is needed, there is a portage fee of \$6 round trip fee that will be incurred by the guest. Gratuities go directly to the employee responsible for the delivery.)

## Things to Do in Atlanta:

Things to Do in Irving:

Toyoto Music Factory - [Events - Map showing restaurants, etc.](#) (within walking distance of hotels)

[Visit Irving website](#) - Things to do in Irving.

[The Mustangs of Las Colinas Museum and Visitors Center - Mustang sculpture exhibit](#) - (within walking distance of hotels)

## SAAS Web Site

<https://www.saasinc.org/>

Will post updates relative to hotel availability and meeting information.

## Future Meetings Sites

2026 – Louisville, KY

2027 – Oklahoma City, OK

## Instructions to Presenters

### Oral Paper Presentation Format:

Presenters must bring their presentation(s) as a PowerPoint presentation saved on a USB memory device. Contact Chair if you want to email your presentation. It is advisable to bring your presentation on at least two storage devices for redundancy. If you would like to bring your presentation on any other storage form, check with the Chair ahead of time to make sure their computer will accept that form.

### Poster Preparation Instructions

**Size, Format and Font.** Poster presentations must fit with a 48” x 48” size. Abstract titles, names, and affiliations should appear on the top of the poster. A simple sans serif-face font (e.g., Helvetica) should be used. Lettering for the title should be at least one inch tall. Lettering for text and illustrations should range in size between 6 mm and 12 mm. The authors’ names and affiliations may be somewhat smaller. Authors are urged to include photographs to assist in author identification.

**Content.** Do not prepare a poster as if it were a manuscript. Primarily, use tables and figures and use limited verbiage. Details of the work can be provided in discussions with interested parties.

**Display.** Mount your poster on the poster board that has the same number as your title in the program. Pushpins or Velcro buttons may be used to hang posters. Pins/Velcro must be supplied by presenter—they will not be available on-site.

**Poster Competition.** Undergraduate and graduate students wishing to participate in the poster judging competition should indicate their intent to the Chair of the Poster Section when they submit their poster title. Limited numbers may be accepted at the meeting, check with the registration table.

### Abstract Preparation Instructions:

In order to publish abstracts: 1) one of the authors must be registered for the SRASHS conference (or one of the other SAAS groups), 2) the paper or poster must be presented in a

conference session, and 3) the title must appear in the Conference Program. Prepare abstracts according to the “Instructions for Submission of Abstracts for Publication by ASHS” form at the end of the Newsletter. Each abstract must be submitted as a separate Word (.doc or .docx) file. If you use another word processing language, save, and submit the abstract as a rich text format (.rtf) file. Email your abstract to the Chair before the meeting or you may submit the abstract in a file format to the Chair at the meeting. The Chair may give a few days grace period to send the abstract by email after the meeting. To be published, all abstracts must be formatted properly.

### Double Presentations

Students cannot present an oral talk or poster in the competition, and also present the same in a commodity section. Working Groups may allow double presentations, consult the Chair.

## Instructions to Section Chairs and Judges

### Section Chairs:

**The Section Chairs are responsible for bringing a laptop computer and projector for their Section.**

If this is a problem, there will be one or two projectors that can be checked-out at the registration desk – first come first serve.

### Judges:

**ACB Advisor:** Arranges judges for the J. Benton Storey Judging Contest.

**Collegiate Branch Section Chair:** Arranges judges for the Edmund Undergraduate oral presentations.

**Poster Section Chair:** Arranges judges for the undergraduate and graduate Poster judging.

**President-Elect:** Arranges judges for the Childers Masters and Barham PhD graduate oral presentations.

### Chairs collect abstracts:

All Chairs collect abstracts at the meeting or give the presenters a few days to submit abstracts to the Chair by email. The Chair emails abstracts to National ASHS Headquarters by mid-February; contact person and email address TBA. In order for an abstract to be published:

- The abstract title must appear in the Conference Program.
- The paper must have been presented orally or as a poster at the meeting. “No shows” are not published.
- One of the authors must be registered for the conference (Horticulture or any other SAAS section).
- The abstract must be formatted properly.

### **Southern Region Dues and Membership**

Dues can be paid through the ASHS web site. Southern Region-ASHS membership is separate from ASHS membership. If you want to pay dues and join the Southern Region-ASHS go to: (<https://www.ashs.org/store/ListProducts.aspx?catid=294320>)

If you are an ASHS member, you can pay your SR-ASHS with your National membership. If

absolutely necessary, dues can also be paid at the annual meetings. Dues are \$30. Notice: Dues must be paid to vote, to be elected to an office or to receive an award.

### **Fall 2023 Election Results**

Election results will distributed in a separate mailing in December.

<b>2024-25 Officers, Chairs and Committees</b>		
(Term of office is from end of 2024 meeting through 2025 meeting)		
<b>Officers</b>		
President	Christine Coker	christine.coker@msstate.edu
President-Elect	Sarah White	swhite4@clemson.edu
President-Elect-Elect	to be elected Fall 24	
Secretary-Treasurer	David Wm. Reed	dwreed@tamu.edu
<b>Executive Committee</b>		
Chair	Julie Campbell	julie.campbell@uga.edu
Vice-Chair	Chris Gunter	cc.gunter@ufl.edu
Member	Cheryl Boyer	crboyer@ksu.edu
Member	Daniel Wels	wellsda@auburn.edu
Member	to be elected Fall 24	
Member	to be elected Fall 24	
Member, President-Elect	Sarah White	swhite4@clemson.edu
<b>Nominations Committee</b>		
Chair, Senior Retired President	Matt Chappel	chappell@vt.edu
Member, Immediate Past President	Elina Coneva	edc0001@auburn.edu
Member	Amanda McWhirt	amcwhirt@uada.edu
Member	Andre da Silva	adasilva@auburn.edu
Member	to be appointed	
Member	to be appointed	
<b>ACB Officers</b>		
President	Madison Goepfinger	madi.goepfinger@tamu.edu
President Elect	Aidan Souder	aidansouder@tamu.edu
Secretary	Ann Bell	annbell@uark.edu
Treasurer	Niah Barbee	ananiahbarbee@siu.edu
Social Chair	Lucy Kainer	lucykainer@tamu.edu
Recruitment Chair	Tristen Taylor	tristen@tamu.edu
ACB Representative	Ginni Mikulcik	gmikulcik@murraystate.edu
Advisor	Gerald Burgner	gsburgner@tamu.edu
<b>Section Chairs</b>		
Education Section	Gerardo Nunez	g.nunez@ufl.edu
Extension Section	Jeremy Pickens	pickej@auburn.edu
Floriculture, Ornamentals and Turf Section	Anthony Bowden	abowden@uada.edu
Fruit Crops Section	Edgar Vinson	vinsoed@auburn.edu
Postharvest/Biotechnology Section	Renee Threlfall	rthrelf@uark.edu
Vegetables Crops Section	Ted McAvoy	ted.mcavoy@uga.edu
Poster Section	Ping Yu	pingyu@uga.edu
Edmond UG Comp. - Collegiate Branch	Carolyn Robinson	cwr0001@auburn.edu
Childers and Barham Grad Competition	Sarah White	swhite4@clemson.edu

<b>Working Groups Chairs</b>			
Horticultural Administrators		Chris Gunter	cc.gunter@ufl.edu
National Sweet Potato Collaborators		Tristan Watson	twatson@agcenter.lsu.edu
Southern Fruit Workers,	Co-Chair	Rachel Itle	ritle@uga.edu
	Co-Chair	Amanda McWhirt	amcwhirt@uada.edu
Watermelon Research Group,	Chair	Josh Freeman	jfreeman@triestag.com
	Vice-Chair	Melissa Acevedi	melissa.acevedo@hmclause.com
<b>Awards Committees</b>			
Miller Distinguished Educator,	Chair	Brian Jackson	brian_jackson@ncsu.edu
	Member	Carolyn Robinson	cwr0001@auburn.edu
	Member	Bruce Dunn	bruce.dunn@okstate.edu
Miller Distinguished Researcher,	Chair	Renee Terrell Threlfall	rthrelf@uark.edu
	Member	Kevin Crosby	kevincrosby210@hotmail.com
	Member	Daniel Leskovar	d-leskovar@tamu.edu
Covington Extension Award,	Chair	Gary Bachman	gary.bachman@msstate.edu
	Member	Mark Hoffman	mark.hoffmann@ncsu.edu
	Member	Chery Boyer	crboyer@ksu.edu
Hutchison Young Extension,	Chair	James DelPrince	j.delprince@msstate.edu
	Member	Andre da Silva	adasilva@auburn.edu
	Member	Jeb S. Fields	JFields@agcenter.lsu.edu
Krezdorn Doctoral Writing,	Chair	Christine Coker	christine.coker@msstate.edu
	Member	Jennings, Katherine M.	katie_jennings@ncsu.edu
	Member	Penny Perkins-Veazie	penelope_perkins@ncsu.edu
Smeal Leadership,	Chair	Patricia Knight	tricia@ra.msstate.edu
	Member	Daniel Leskovar	d-leskovar@tamu.edu
	Member	Shad Nelson	shad.nelson@tamuk.edu
Extension Communications,	Chair	Chris Marble	marblesc@ufl.edu
	Member	Jim DelPrince	j.delprince@msstate.edu
	Member	Ping Yu	pingyu@uga.edu
Childers Outstanding Grad Student,	Chair	Elina Coneva	edc0001@auburn.edu
	Member	Christine Coker	christine.coker@msstate.edu
	Member	Sarah White	swhite4@clemson.edu
Outstanding ACB Club & Club Member		Gerald Burgner	gerald.burgner@ag.tamu.edu

# Instructions for Submission of Abstracts for Publication by ASHS

## To Publish Your Abstract in *HortScience*:

- The abstract title must appear in the Program.
- The paper must have been presented orally or as a poster at the meeting.
- One of the authors must be registered for the conference.
- The abstract must be formatted properly.

## Submission of Abstract

**File Format:** Each abstract must be submitted as a separate Word (.doc) file. If you use another word processing language, submit abstract in rich text format (.rtf).

**Deadline:**

- 1) At meeting: Give disk with file to the Chair of the session.
- 2) Email abstracts as an attached file to the Chair of the session prior to the meeting or within a few days after the meeting. See the Program for the Chair's email address.

## Abstract Format

**Length:** Limit the abstract body to about 2000 characters.

**Font:** 12 point, Times New Roman or similar

**Format:** Format abstract as below. Asterisk denotes presenting author.

### Example Format

#### **Molecular Marker-Derived Genetic Similarity Analysis of a Segregating Blackberry Population**

Eric T. Stafne\*<sup>1</sup>, John R. Clark<sup>1</sup>, and Kim S. Lewers<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>316 Plant Sciences, Department of Horticulture, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, AR 72701, <sup>2</sup>USDA-ARS Fruit Lab, 10300 Baltimore Ave., BARC-West Bldg. 010A, Beltsville, MD 20705

A tetraploid blackberry population that segregates for two important morphological traits, thornlessness and primocane fruiting, was tested with molecular marker analysis. Both randomly amplified polymorphic DNA (RAPD) and simple sequence repeat (SSR) markers were used to screen a population of 98 genotypes within the population plus the two parents, 'Arapaho' and 'Prime-Jim'<sup>®</sup> (APF-12). RAPD analysis averaged 3.4 markers per primer, whereas SSR analysis yielded 3.0 markers per primer pair. Similarity coefficient derived from the Dice index averaged over all individuals was 63% for RAPD markers, 73% for SSR markers, and 66% for RAPD and SSR markers together. The average similarity coefficients ranged from a high of 72% to a low of 38% for RAPD markers, 80% to 57% for SSR markers, and 73% to 55% for both. Comparison of the parents indicated a similarity of 67% for RAPD markers, 62% for SSR markers, and 67% for both. This is similar to a previous study that reported the similarity coefficient at 66%.

Although inbreeding exists within the population, the level of heterozygosity is high. Also, evidence of tetrasomic inheritance was uncovered within the molecular marker analysis. This population will be used to identify potential markers linked to both morphological traits of interest. Further genetic linkage analysis and mapping is needed to identify any putative markers.

## Tentative Program Schedule

### 2025 Program at a Glance

The Weston Irving Convention Center	Friday, January 31												
	8:00	9:00	10:00	11:00	12:00	1:00	2:00	3:00	4:00	5:00			
Prefunction Area	7:00 open <span style="float: right;">Registration</span>												
Prefunction Area	Poster Room Set-up				Authors set-up posters as they arrive				Poster Viewing				
Harmony A	National Sweetpotato Collaborators												
Melody 2	Southern Fruit Workers												
Melody 3	Watermelon Research Group												
Rhythm Boardroom							Horticulture Administrators						Executive Com.
Harmony B	ACB Club Share and Networking				ACB Activities, Tour, Meal or TBA				ACB Mixer TBA				
Harmony D	National ASHS Board of Directors												
Saturday, February 1													
	8:00	9:00	10:00	11:00	12:00	1:00	2:00	3:00	4:00	5:00			
Prefunction Area	7:00 open <span style="float: right;">Registration</span>												
Prefunction Area	Poster Viewing				Author at Poster Even Number				Author at Poster Odd Number				Remove Poster
Harmony E/F	Judging Contest Set-Up				J. Benton Storey Horticulture Judging Contest				ACB Scoring				
Harmony A	National Sweetpotato Collaborators												
Melody 3	Watermelon Research Group												
Harmony B	Education			Extension			Education or Extension Overflow if needed						
Harmony D	Commodity Section Overflow if needed						Commodity Section Overflow if needed						
Melody 1	Edmond UG Oral Paper Competition						Childers or BarhaM Overflow if needed						
Melody 2	Childers M.S. Oral Paper Competition						Barham PhD Oral Paper Competition						
Sunday, February 2													
	8:00	9:00	10:00	11:00	12:00	1:00	2:00	3:00	4:00	5:00			
Prefunction Area	7:00 open <span style="float: right;">Registration</span>												
Junior Ballroom B	ACB Business Meeting				Business Mtg/Awards Prog.								
Meeting Room 1	Vegetable Crops Section												
Meeting Room 2	Floriculture,Ornamentals & Turf Section												
Meeting Room 4	Fruit Crops Section												
Meeting Room 3	Postharvest & Biotechnology Section												
Junior Ballroom B							SAAS Board Mtg			SAAS Business Mtg			
TBA													SAAS Social