



ILLINOIS HEMP SUMMIT 2024

WED. MARCH 27, 2024

FEATURED PRESENTERS

EMILY FEBLES, Hemp Specialist
U.S. Domestic Hemp Production Program

Agricultural Marketing Service | U.S. Department of Agriculture

Emily Febles graduated with undergraduate degrees in English and Anthropology and a minor in Agriculture from the University of Florida. She obtained her law degree from the University of Iowa. Emily worked in Agricultural Extension and Animal Husbandry in the Peace Corps in Guatemala. Before joining the USDA, Emily worked with two states, Washington and North Carolina, in the creation and management of their hemp regulatory pilot programs under the 2014 Farm Bill. She has also worked as a Rules Coordinator for the Oregon Liquor & Cannabis Commission. Emily has been working with the USDA Domestic Hemp Production Program since July of 2020.

MIRANDA JOHNSON, GIS & Compliance Programs Specialist

Illinois Farm Service Agency | U.S. Department of Agriculture

Miranda Johnson is an Agricultural Program Specialist for the Farm Service Agency. Her areas of responsibility include compliance acreage reporting, disaster programs, non-insured crop disaster assistance program, loss adjusters, measurement services, tree assistance program, and organic programs. She attended Lincoln Land Community College for her associate's degree, and the University of Illinois at Springfield for her bachelor's degree. She resides in Divernon with her husband, their daughter and two dogs.

DOUG MILLER, Chief Executive Officer

Illinois Crop Improvement Association, Inc. | Champaign, IL

Mr. Doug Miller is currently the Chief Executive Officer at the Illinois Crop Improvement Association, an independent not-for-profit organization designated by law as the seed certification agency for the State of Illinois. In addition to domestic seed certification, the association offers services under the OECD Seed Schemes in cooperation with the USDA Agriculture Marketing Service. Building on its seed certification role, the association operates a full-service seed lab that tests over 800 kinds of seed, a greenhouse program, and an identity-preserved grain lab. All labs are ISO/IEC 17025:2017 accredited to ensure accuracy in testing. Doug has been with Illinois Crop Improvement since 1994, serving in various roles, including greenhouse, field inspection, and Puerto Rico services, before becoming CEO in 2014. Doug has a Master's in Plant Pathology from Kansas State University and an undergraduate in Botany from Eastern Illinois University. He is a past President of the Association of Official Seed Certifying Agencies (AOSCA) and represents AOSCA on the Policy and Procedures Advisory Board of the National Seed Health System. Doug is also a past president of the Society of Commercial Seed Technologists (SCST) and was the first Registered Genetic Technologist to serve as president. He also serves as the Chair of the Seed Quality and Testing group for the Seed Science Foundation and is the Executive Secretary-Treasurer of the Illinois Seed Trade Association.

Lunch will be provided!

JENNIFER TIMMERS, PH.D., Agriculture Instructor and Program Co-Coordinator

Illinois Valley Community College | Oglesby, IL

Dr. Jennifer Timmers graduated from Berea College, in Berea, KY with her bachelor's degree in biology before moving to Western Kentucky University to complete her Master's of science in agriculture. She studied agronomy at the University of Florida focusing of plant physiology and nutrition. She started at Illinois Valley Community College in the Summer of 2022 and hit the ground running restructuring the Introduction to Cannabis Production course and developing the Advanced Cannabis Production course offered as part of the certificate program at Illinois Valley Community College. Dr. Timmers has worked to increase hands on learning and industry networking opportunities for students in the program.

KARLA GAGE, PH.D., Associate Professor

College of Agricultural, Life & Physical Sciences
Southern Illinois University Carbondale

Dr. Karla Gage is an Associate Professor of Weed Science and Plant Biology in the Schools of Agricultural Sciences and Biological Sciences at Southern Illinois University Carbondale (SIUC). She completed BS and MS degrees in Biology at the University of Memphis and a PhD in Plant Biology with a focus on weed ecology at SIUC. Dr. Gage joined the faculty at SIUC in 2015 and enjoys teaching and research in applied management of agricultural systems. Dr. Gage's research focuses on weed control in midwestern US cropping systems in the rotational crops of corn, soybean, wheat, and sorghum, and industrial hemp. The Gage lab focuses on the use of Integrated Weed Management (IWM) to slow the evolution of herbicide resistance and suppress weeds. IWM is the concept of diversifying weed management to include cultural, mechanical, biological, and chemical weed control tactics in combination. Hemp could be used in a IWM program as a cultural control tactic, through the practice of diversifying crop rotations. The Gage lab has been cultivating hemp for research purposes since 2018 and continues to participate in yearly USDA cultivar trials. Research trials on weed control and competitive effects in hemp will be presented, as well as the results of a Weed Science Society of America study on the most troublesome and common weeds in hemp cultivation.

DOKYOUNG "D.K." LEE, Professor of Agronomy, Director of Online Programs

Department of Crop Sciences | University of Illinois

Dr. D.K. Lee is a professor of agronomy in the Department of Crop Sciences at the University of Illinois. His research features the discovery, improvement, and optimization of indoor and outdoor crop production. His primary focus is on crops that deliver renewable energy, feed, and fiber to a growing human population living in a changing climate. For the last five years, Dr. Lee has meticulously worked on genetic improvements and sustainable production for hemp flower, fiber, and grain. His current hemp research focuses on improving hemp genetics and developing best management practices for fiber and grain production. His hemp research has led to innovations and collaborations among educators, industry, and international partners. As the Director of Online Programs, he initiated and tirelessly managed the Cannabis Production and Management Certificate, which has produced over 100 graduates since 2021. His capacity to bridge interdisciplinary boundaries, as well as his leadership to unify faculty and students under common themes and activities, has had positive impacts on students, producers, agribusinesses, and consumers in Illinois, the United States, and all around the globe. His numerous contributions to our communities were recognized by his selection as a University Scholar in 2022.

DANA LANDRY, Field Research Specialist

Department Institute for Sustainability, Energy and Environment
| University of Illinois

Dana is a field research specialist for the Institute for Sustainability, Energy and Environment at the University of Illinois. She has a degree in environmental science with over 10 years of experience in research agriculture mostly focusing on entomology, pathology, and crop variety trials. While working for the University of Illinois, Dana is working on hemp fiber and grain production, investigating the effect of different nitrogen rates, planting dates, planting density, different cultivars, and variety trials. She also works for the CABBI (Center for Advanced Bioenergy and Bioproducts Innovation) project and provides aid in the research involved in the project.

She oversees agronomy of the research such as planting, fertilizing, and spraying in addition to a range of data collections in the field. She works with sorghum and perennial grasses such as switchgrass and miscanthus.

SHELBY HENNING, PH.D., Assistant Professor-Horticulture

Western Illinois University

Dr. Henning is an assistant professor of sustainable horticulture at Western Illinois University. Dr. Henning is the lead faculty member at WIU supervising the Cannabis Cultivation and Horticulture degree programs. His research initiatives center around hydroponic vegetable and medicinal crop production. Other research involves production of any high-value, underutilized, or emerging specialty crop at the commercial scale in controlled and field environments.

ANGELO BOMMARITO, Bureau Chief Cannabis Testing

Division of Cannabis Regulation | Illinois Department of Agriculture

Angelo Bommarito is the Bureau Chief of Cannabis Testing for the Division of Cannabis Regulation in the Illinois Department of Agriculture as of July 2023. His area of focus is to create a “reference” testing laboratory for the state of Illinois to enforce standardization efficiency within the Cannabis and Hemp testing laboratory network. The laboratory will also conduct independent label verifications, and assist in the investigation of customer complaints as warranted. Mr. Bommarito has previously served as the Director of Quality Assurance for the Illinois State Police – Division of Forensic Services, Forensic Science Command. Prior to that, he was a practicing forensic scientist, specializing in the identification and quantitation of controlled substances and illicit cannabis.