



**Science
Societies**

SSSA gears up for 2021 Annual Meeting

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The excitement is building as we finalize our plans for the Annual Meeting in Salt Lake City. The theme this year is “A Creative Economy for Sustainable Development” and challenges us to come up with new ideas for food, fuel, and fiber production while protecting our natural resources. As soil scientists, we have a major role to play in all

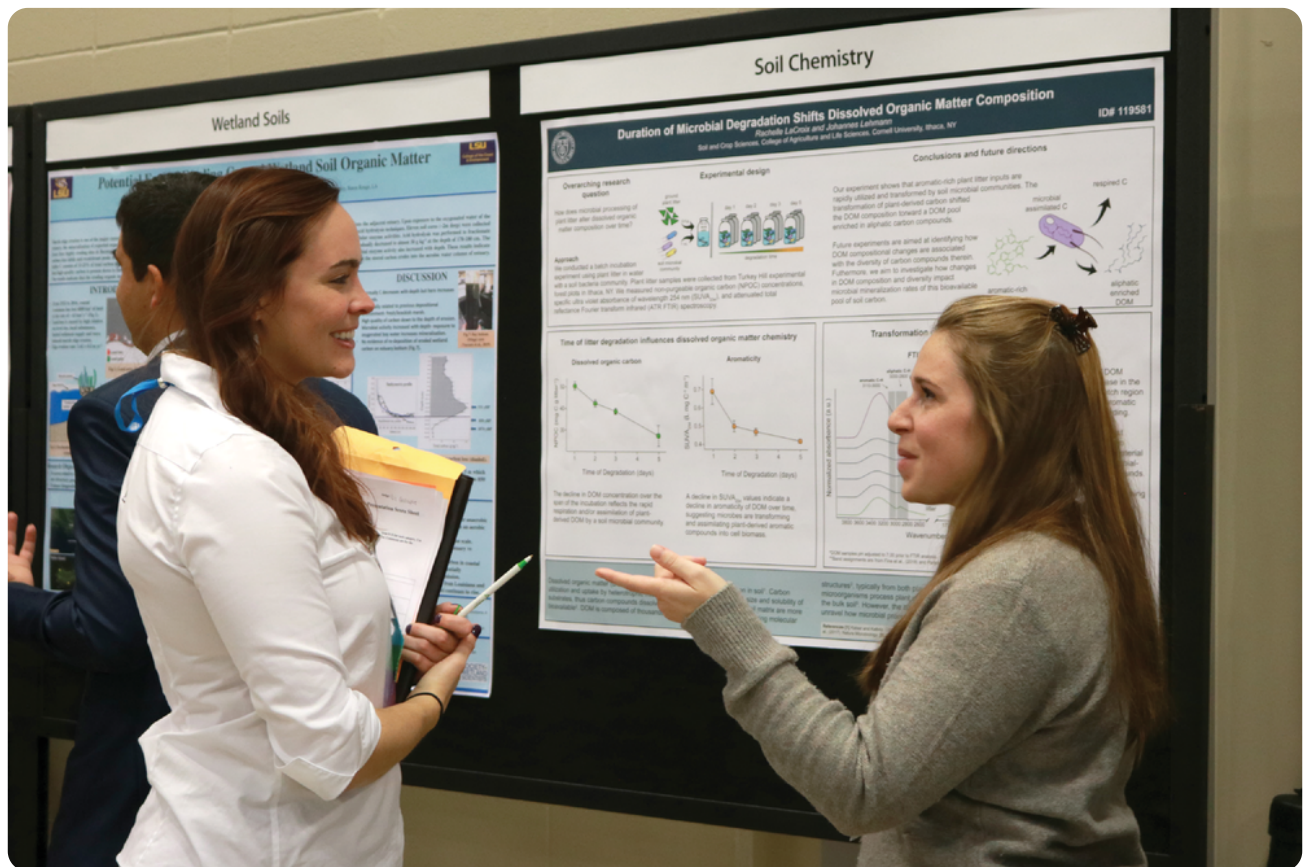
aspects of this theme, and I am looking forward to hearing your creative solutions for improving agricultural productivity and enhancing our environment.

As soil scientists, we understand that soil is a dynamic medium that interacts with water, plants, animals, minerals, and air; thus, soil impacts the total environment. We work at varying scales—from the molecular level to the field and even continental scale. Some of us go beyond Earth to help astronauts grow food in space and understand the regolith of other planets. These are just a few ideas from more than 30,00 abstracts that have been submitted for the meeting this year. Soil scientists use technologies ranging from simple to ancient, complex to cutting edge. Budget some time to visit the vendors in the exhibit hall and discuss your projects with them. Many companies hire scientists for their sales teams, so you could get valuable insights while addressing your technical needs.

For those of you presenting your work at the meeting, please consider publishing in one of the Societies' journals. Together, ASA, CSSA, and SSSA publish 13 peer-reviewed scientific journals—including six gold open access journals—in agronomy, crop, soil, and environmental science. To lead our efforts in maintaining high quality publications and striving for improved metrics, the SSSA Board approved Dr. Craig Rasmussen as our Editor-in-Chief (EIC). Craig has also been appointed the Interim Editor-in-Chief through 31 Dec. 2021 to serve the remainder of Dr. David Myrold's term after it was cut short by his passing in July. I appreciated all the applications for EIC and the amazing visions for SSSA publications that the candidates presented, and I look forward to future opportunities in publishing.

Presenting your work at the Annual Meeting allows you to get valuable insights and feedback from colleagues that may improve it work and help you polish your communication skills. Poster presentations are particularly valuable because you have

time to discuss your findings with other attendees and build professional networks. Oral presentations, on the other hand, are a great opportunity to showcase and improve your speech skills in advance of job interviews, but you may need to continue the conversation after the session is over since there is so little time for discussion.



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Professional Behavior

When you attend and present your work at our meetings, you can expect to be treated with respect, and of course, you should treat others the same way. Robust discussion arising from diverse viewpoints is fundamental to advancing science, so it's ok to disagree, but it is never appropriate to attack others personally because they are different from you. We're here as professionals to network and exchange ideas about

science, so there is no place for intimidating, inappropriately touching, stalking, making rude comments, or otherwise harassing others in any way.

Respectful behavior includes adhering to the time limits when you are speaking and giving others your full attention when they are speaking. Scheduling talks in discrete time blocks during the meeting is done so that attendees can move from room to room and hear various speakers during concurrent sessions. It may seem harsh when the moderator cuts you off when you exceed your allotted time, but that is necessary to keep all the talks on schedule. It is also why we don't just move talks up if a speaker has cancelled – the moderator may use that time for discussion or networking, but it isn't fair to those who wanted to hear a talk and came into the room at the scheduled time only to find that it was already over. If you like to move from session to session to hear specific talks, please be courteous and quiet as you enter and leave the room.

Creative Ways to Encourage Sustainable Development

Professional meetings pump millions of dollars into the economy through travel, hotels, restaurants, and tourism. Keep our meeting theme in mind as you visit Salt Lake City, and look for ways to recycle, limit waste, and use less. Every choice you make can affect sustainable development and the environment. Resist purchasing new clothes if fashion is your only reason, eat more plant-based protein, and conserve water, food, and fuel whenever you can. I look forward to seeing you all in November if you can make it, and if not, please join us virtually for the prerecorded keynote, lectureships, and internationally contributed oral and poster presentations. Thank you for your membership in SSSA.

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