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Institute for Sustainability, Energy, and Environment
OFFICE OF THE VICE CHANCELLOR FOR RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

Feb. 15, 2022

[Recycling 101: Start With Reduce, Reuse](#)

Did you know less than 10 percent of plastic is recycled each year? Or that cardboard contaminated with grease or food can't be recycled? In "Recycling 101," iSEE intern Maria Maring outlines what can and can't be recycled on campus, recycling rules and resources in Champaign-Urbana, and tips from sustainability experts about what you can do to recycle effectively and keep waste out of the landfill. Most important: Remember that recycling is just one of the "three Rs," and that "reuse" and "reduce" are just as important in shrinking your environmental footprint!



[CABBI Research Helps Foster New BioMADE Grant](#)



Congratulations to University of Illinois Professors Huimin Zhao, Vijay Singh, Christopher Rao, and Jeremy Guest, who have leveraged their expertise at the Center for Advanced Bioenergy and Bioproducts Innovation (CABBI) for a newly funded project. The Bioindustrial Manufacturing and Design Ecosystem (BioMADE) announced on Feb. 9 that it was awarding \$5.8 million in federal funds to 16 projects, among them the U of I's "New Technologies for Industrial Production of Succinic Acid." The U of I team also includes [Sustainable Ag Scholar](#), [Water Scholar](#), and 2021 iSEE seed funding recipient Xiao Su, an Assistant Professor of Chemical and Biological Engineering. The researchers will "develop new

innovative technologies and strategies for large-scale production" of succinic acid — and "demonstrate the feasibility of bioindustrial manufacturing on a pilot scale."

Model Predicts Soybean Response to Climate Change

A team including *Crops in silico* researchers Megan Matthews, Amy Marshall-Colón, Justin McGrath, and Stephen P. Long — all from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign — has modified the BioCro model to predict soybean growth and productivity as climate change increases atmospheric carbon dioxide levels and affects temperature, precipitation, extreme weather events, and soil factors. This information can be used to bioengineer crops that are adapted to climate change and help meet growing food demand. The accompanying paper, published in December 2021 in *in Silico Plants*, was titled "Soybean-BioCro: A Semi-Mechanistic Model of Soybean Growth."



Q Magazine: The Dark Side of Thrifting

When her clothing donation was denied at a secondhand store, *Q Magazine* author Nikki Palella was inspired to investigate behind the scenes of the thrifting industry. In "The Dark Side of Thrifting," she outlines the consequences of Western society's reliance on fast fashion, over-consumption, and clothing donations. Our unwanted clothes thread their way around the world, to the detriment of the environment, local industries, and people's livelihoods. Secondhand clothing and the thrifting industry, while well-intentioned and helpful to a small portion of society, can cause real pain.



iSEE GREENER CAMPUS UPDATE



Alpha Kappa Psi
Professional Business



University Housing Gender
Inclusivity Training



CU at Home "One
Winter Night"



Disability Resources &
Educational Services



Visit Champaign
County



Upcoming Events & Opportunities

February TED Talk: Sustainable Fashion. iSEE's February TED Talk: Eco-Edition event will focus on sustainability in the fashion industry, highlighting the problem of fast fashion and consumerism. It's co-hosted by Aerospace Engineering student Mona Fang, Co-Founder of Karma Trade, a sustainable fashion swapping service recently [featured in Q Magazine](#); and Marketing student Josh Jay James, Karma Trade's Chief Marketing Officer. Participants will view a prerecorded TED Talk on sustainable fashion, followed by a guided discussion!

7 p.m. | Tuesday, Feb. 22 | [Register](#)

Save the Date: Next ILO on Feb. 25. Join us for the next Illini Lights Out event, where students shut off lights in campus buildings on Friday nights to save energy! Volunteers meet at 5 p.m. at the Foreign Languages Building. [Sign up using this link!](#) Questions? Visit [Facebook](#) or email iseeinterns@gmail.com.

Crops in silico Virtual Symposium & Hackathon. The National Center for Supercomputing Applications (NCSA) will host this online event May 11-13. The keynote, other speakers and panelists, and poster presenters for the sixth year of this event will be announced later this spring. [Find updates and other details here >>>](#)

Wednesday-Friday, May 11-13 | [Register](#)

TODAY! INHS Biodiversity Seminar. J. Adilson Pinedo-Escatel, Postdoctoral Research Associate at the Illinois Natural History Survey (INHS), will discuss a field survey that showed a substantial decline in insect populations in Mexico over the past seven decades. The survey looked at the effects of deforestation, livestock, and agriculture on insect biodiversity.

4 p.m. | Tuesday, Feb. 15 | [Zoom](#)

INHS Seminar: Outcomes from the Nachusa Grasslands Restoration. Ecosystem restoration offers the potential to reverse losses in biodiversity and ecosystem functioning. Long-term monitoring is essential to determine whether restoration projects deliver on this potential and to provide insights into ecological mechanisms. Elizabeth Bach, Ecosystem Restoration Scientist at The Nature Conservancy in Illinois, will present long-term data collected across the 35-year history of the Nachusa Grasslands preserve in north-central Illinois.

4 p.m. | Tuesday, Feb. 22 | [Zoom](#)

Campus Landscape Master Plan Student Input Session. U of I Facilities and Services is developing a Campus Landscape Master Plan and wants student input! It's hosting a virtual stakeholder input session to allow students to provide their thoughts on the campus landscape vision for the future. This meeting will be recorded. After registering you will receive a confirmation email that includes the Zoom meeting hyperlink.

6-8 p.m. | Tuesday, Feb. 22 | [Register](#)

[Geothermal Urbana-Champaign 2.0 Starts Feb. 23.](#) Geothermal Urbana-Champaign is a public education and group buy program that makes getting geothermal heating and cooling easier and more affordable for Champaign, Piatt, and Vermilion County home and business owners. Register for a spring Zoom session to learn more! Spring dates include [Feb. 23](#), [March 29](#), [April 12](#) (co-hosted by iSEE and F&S), [May 2](#), and [May 23](#) (times vary). [Details>>>](#)

[Register for March 4 Midwest Climate Conference!](#) Students are invited to attend a free, virtual [Student Systems Conference](#) hosted by the [Midwest Climate Collaborative](#). Organized by students, this conference is a fantastic opportunity for students to connect with their peers across the region and learn about sustainability initiatives at other schools. Registration ends Feb. 24!
Noon-3 p.m. | Friday, March 4 | [Register](#)

[LEED Green Associate Training Offered Online.](#) Students can prepare for the [LEED Green Associate exam](#) through this online course offered by LeadingGreen and taught by a U.S. Green Building Council faculty member. Register for a live webinar or complete the on-demand recordings at your own pace. Questions? [Watch this introductory video](#) or email Lorne Mlotek at info@leadinggreen.com.

Live webinars Feb. 24, March 12, April 2, April 23, May 15 | [Register here](#)

Do you have a sustainability event to publicize? Use [this Google form](#) to submit it by 5 p.m. Wednesday for consideration in the following week's newsletter and our [Illinois Sustainability Calendar!](#)



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