

February 2012
Virginia Soybean Board Project Proposal

Project Title: Hiring a new soybean breeder for Virginia Tech

Term of Project: July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013

Project Leader: (Temporary until a new soybean breeder is hired)
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Funds requested: \$56,801

Project Objective: To secure funds to enable Virginia Tech to 1) attract a high-quality soybean breeder candidate, and 2) provide funds to enable the breeder to begin building a successful program.

Locations and Facilities: The new Virginia Tech soybean breeder will conduct research activities on the Virginia Tech campus, at the CALS Kentland Farm, and at the Eastern Virginia Agricultural Research and Extension Center in Warsaw. Tests of advanced breeding lines are conducted at Tidewater, Northern Piedmont, and Southern Piedmont ARECs, with additional research at the VCIA Farm in Mt. Holly.

Budget: (see attached VT OSP budget)

Salary Personnel	\$ 41,012 (Technician salary, 12 mo.)
Fringe benefits	\$ 15,789 (University fringe benefit rate of 38.5%)
Total	\$ 56,801

Estimated Total Cost of Research: \$400,000 (including funds requested from VSB)

Justification: Soybeans are grown on more than half a million acres in Virginia, and annually are worth around \$100 million in the state. In support of this vital industry, Virginia Tech continues to be committed to a public soybean breeding program. The primary objective of the soybean

breeding program is development of improved public soybean varieties for Virginia. The soybean breeding position is currently open following the departure of Dr. Rainey. However, the department and college are committed to the short-term and long-term success of the soybean breeding program. Therefore, we are conducting a national search, have identified top candidates, and will soon be conducting interviews. In the interim, the program will remain fully staffed and the 2012 field season will go forward.

We are requesting funds from VSB to enhance the start-up package we are able to offer to the candidate of choice. The potential Virginia Tech start-up contribution could be up to \$300,000 from university, college, and department sources. This will provide equipment, student support, and other necessary enhancements to the research program. We are also requesting up to \$50,000 from the Virginia Crop Improvement Association for equipment costs. With this proposal, we request \$56,801 from VSB to fully fund a technician position for one year to work for the breeder. This commitment from the VSB will help position us to attract our candidate of choice to Virginia Tech. This is a one-time request to VSB to enhance our start-up offering to the candidate of choice. Start-up commitments are critical for attracting top candidates and putting them on a path to success.

We are requesting funds for personnel, but if the VSB would instead prefer to fund other areas of support (e.g. equipment, student support, etc.), we would be happy to discuss amending this request.

Expected Outcome:

1. Hire an outstanding soybean breeder who will conduct a successful research program on breeding soybean cultivars adapted to Virginia, and teach and mentor students in the Department of Crop and Soil Environmental Sciences.

Specific Objective:

1. Attract an outstanding soybean breeder to Virginia Tech and create conditions conducive to success of the program