

# "You go to the field."

## U.S. Borlaug Fellows in Global Food Security



TEXAS A&M  
UNIVERSITY

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### ABSTRACT

When asked how do you become a successful wheat breeder, Dr. Norman E. Borlaug replied, "Well, you go to the field. You go to the field again, and then you go to the field. When the wheat plants start to talk to you, you know you have made it." The Nobel Peace Prize, the Congressional Gold Medal, and the Presidential Medal of Freedom were awarded to Dr. Borlaug for saving the lives of over one billion through his efforts. An example of how Borlaug's legacy continues today is through the U.S. Borlaug Fellows in Global Food Security Program at Purdue University's Center for Global Food Security, providing graduate students the opportunity to "go to the field" and become successful scientists in their own right. Funded by USAID, the Borlaug Fellowship provides graduate students the opportunity to collaborate with agricultural scientists in developing nations. The program fosters connections between scientists internationally, while furthering research and developing community around important agricultural themes, such as production, natural resource conservation, and development. With a focus on interdisciplinary and cross-cultural experiences, students benefit from the ability to practice their science on the ground in an international setting, preparing them to become important members of the global scientific community. Here doctoral candidate Sean M. Thompson of Texas A&M University was given the opportunity to "go to the field" during the 2013 field season in partnership with the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT). The primary objective of Thompson's project, *Estimating Wheat Root Biomass Using Ground Penetrating Radar*, is to define the capability of the non-destructive high-throughput tool to phenotype below ground crop biomass, in the context of higher yield and quality stability in wheat during drought stress. Research was conducted in Ciudad Obregon, Sonora, Mexico at CIMMYT's Norman E. Borlaug Experiment Station.

### THE U.S. BORLAUG FELLOWS IN GLOBAL FOOD SECURITY PROGRAM

The U.S. Borlaug Fellows in Global Food Security program is funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to expand the pool of U.S. food security professionals who have the scientific base needed to effectively study and manage the global landscapes in support of sustainable food systems. The intended objectives of the U.S. Borlaug Fellows in Global Food Security program are:

- To help train a new generation of interdisciplinary U.S. scientists with fluency in global food security and the skills to strengthen the capacity of developing countries to apply new innovations and technologies,
- To support the key research themes of the Feed the Future initiative and increase understanding of the links between agricultural production, nutritional status, natural resource conservation, and development,
- To foster cross-cultural understanding and dialog and the kinds of long-term relationships that are developed through on-the-ground collaborative work, and
- To work with international partners to sustain a growing global learning community.

### PROGRAM CONTACT INFORMATION

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### GRADUATE RESEARCH GRANT PROGRAM

The U.S. Borlaug Fellows in Global Food Security graduate research grant program supports exceptional graduate students who are interested in developing a component of their graduate research in a developing country setting and in collaboration with a mentor from an International Agricultural Research Center (IARC), or a qualifying National Agricultural Research System (NARS) unit.

The grants have a maximum value of USD 15,000 for students applying for 6-month long international research stays; USD 20,000 for 1-year long international research stays; and USD 40,000 for 2-year long international research stays. Students are expected to stay in residence in the host country for the majority of the time (85%) with some time available for short-term absences. Grant funds are not intended to cover all costs of the proposed research, and applicants are expected to leverage outside funding in support of their work plans.

Students applying for 1-year long research grants may split the year into two, 6-month long stays over a period of no more than 18 months. Fellows who do so still must spend 85% of their time during those two six-month long stays in the host country.



 **CIMMYT**<sup>MR</sup>  
International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center



PURDUE UNIVERSITY  
**Discovery Park**



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