



89th Annual Northeast ASPB Meeting, April 25-26, 2026

The College of New Jersey
2000 Pennington Rd, Ewing, NJ 08628

Day 1 – Saturday April 25, 2026 (Education Building Room 115)

11:30am- 12:00pm Arrival, check-in, set up (speakers need to load talks)

12:00pm- 12:15pm Welcome and logistical information

Keynote Speaker 1

12:15pm- 1:00pm

Hong Ma, PhD

Professor of Biology, Huck Chair in Plant Reproductive Development and Evolution, Pennsylvania State University

Title: “Novel factor and mechanisms controlling RNA splicing and genome-wide conservation of exon-intron structure across angiosperms”

15-minute talks, Session 1

1:00pm- 1:15pm

Hussain, Z: Structural and Functional Characterization of TomEP, an Extensin Peroxidase from Tomato

1:15pm- 1:30pm

Braynen, J: Integrating Transcriptomics and Ionomics to Dissect Iron Use Efficiency and Heat Stress Responses in Sorghum

1:30pm- 1:45pm

Schaeffer, F: Sex-Dependent Microbiome Assembly in Spinach

1:45pm- 2:00pm

Sah, S: Bacterial *otsA* Expression Modulates Carbon Partitioning to Enhance Oil Accumulation in Camelina Seeds

2:15pm- 2:45pm

Coffee Break and Networking

15-minute talks, Session 2

2:45pm- 3:00pm

Gupta, S: Elucidation of the molecular mechanism underlying Nickel hyperaccumulation in the natural hyperaccumulator plant *Odontarrhena chalcidica*

3:00pm- 3:15pm

Winograd, B: Genetic basis for sugar variation in floral nectar underlying an early intraspecific pollinator shift

3:15pm- 3:30pm

McCahill, I: Understanding the drivers of altered leaf investment under rising CO₂

3:30pm- 3:45pm

Maguire, J: Comparing ALMT6 and ALMT9 Transport Properties at the Single Molecule Level

- 3:45pm- 4:00pm **ASPB Information Session - Hong Ma, ASPB Past-President**
- 4:00pm- 4:15pm Liao, C: Breeding Okra (*Abelmoschus esculentus*) for Enhanced Seed Oil Content and Identification of Underlying Genetic Determinants
- 4:15pm- 4:30pm Ammari, M: Elucidating stress-induced epigenome reprogramming in crop and medicinal plants
- 4:30pm- 4:45pm Tressel, L: Pre-domestication Dynamics of a Key Regulator Gene for Seed Dormancy in Barley
- 5:00pm- 6:30pm **Poster Session (Education Building Room 212)**
 Odd numbered posters present 5:00-5:45
 Even numbered posters present 5:45-6:30
- 6:30pm- 8:00pm **Dinner and Networking (Education Building Room 212)**
- ~8:30pm **Optional gathering at Riverhorse Brewing**

Day 2- Sunday April 26, 2026 (Physics Building Room P101)

15-minute talks, Session 3

- 9:00am- 9:15am Wang, D: Small RNAs from Ackiller1 directed RNA-directed DNA Methylation for active Ac elements in maize
- 9:15am- 9:30am Beltran, J: Engineering Modular Synthetic Biosensors for Multi-Output Responses Across Different Plant Species
- 9:30am- 9:45am Brenner, E: Exploring circumnutation in Arabidopsis flowering stems
- 9:45am- 10:00am Tan, H: Advancing Hyperspectral Reflectance Technologies for Potato Virus Y Detection and Host-Virus Dynamics Studies

10:00 am- 10:15am **ASPB Ambassador Information Session**

10:15am- 10:45am **Coffee Break and Networking**

Keynote Speaker 2

10:45am- 11:30am **Guillermo Jimenez-Aleman, PhD**
 Assistant Professor of Chemistry and Environmental Science, New Jersey Institute of Technology
 Title "Weaponizing nutrition: Essential fatty acids and a dual defense mechanism in plants"

11:30pm- 12:00pm **NE ASPB business meeting and awards presentation**

12:00pm **Closing**

