



The Kernel

A Maize Genetics Cooperation community dispatch
November 25 2024

Hello MGC members!

Welcome to the Fall 2024 edition of **The Kernel**, a semi-annual dispatch for and by the MGC community. The Kernel will be published twice per year by the MGC Board of Directors (BoD) to keep our community informed about important events and issues. The Kernel will also include articles, tributes, and notices from the community. **If you wish to distribute information to the MGC community**, such as conference or job announcements, funding opportunities, or tributes, use this link <https://forms.gle/vH9bfohBeqMiYvrw5>. You can also always find additional information about the [MGC](#), new [papers](#), or other community resources on the [MaizeGDB](#) website.

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1. The 2025 McClintock Prize Winner

Dr. Ed Buckler, Research Geneticist at USDA-ARS and Adjunct Professor in the School of Integrative Plant Science at Cornell University in New York, has been selected to receive the 2025 Barbara McClintock Prize for Plant Genetics and Genome Studies, in recognition of his fundamental contributions to our understanding of the genetic basis of phenotypic variation, influencing crop breeding programs across the world and greatly impacting research far beyond plant biology, including animal breeding and human genetics. More details can be found [here](#). The McClintock Prize and medal will be conferred during a ceremony in St. Louis, Missouri, as part of the 2025 Maize Genetics Meeting being held from March 6-9, 2025. The event will include a plenary address by Dr. Buckler to an international audience of meeting attendees.

2. ROOT & SHOOT Travel Awards

The ROOT & SHOOT Travel Award Application for student/mentor pairs is now open, which can cover travel to the 2025 Maize Genetics Meeting. At least one of the pair needs to be a member of SACNAS, MANNRS or AISES. Successful applicants will be reimbursed up to \$3,000 (per pair) for appropriate travel expenses. These awards are **open to international**



applicants. The deadline for the application is Dec 2, 2024. More information is available at this webpage: <https://rootandshoot.org/2025-root-shoot-travel-awards-now-open/> Follow @RootandShootRCN on Twitter (<https://x.com/RootandShootRCN>) for updates.

3. The MGM 2025 meeting registration is open

You are invited to attend the 2025 Maize Genetics Meeting at the Union Station, St. Louis, Missouri, USA, beginning with the evening meal on Thursday, March 6th, and continuing until noon on Sunday, March 9th, 2025. Several pre-meetings are anticipated in the morning/afternoon of Thursday, March 6th. More information about these meetings can be found on the Maize Genetics Meeting website. Further details about the program, registration for meeting and housing, abstracts, and transportation are available at the conference website:

<https://www.maizegdb.org/mgc/maizemeeting/2025/>. This website will be updated regularly.

LODGING and REGISTRATION deadlines are February 7th 2025 and January 8, 2025, respectively. Please pay special attention to the earlier deadlines this year. There are two separate registration procedures, one for lodging and one for the meeting. Abstract submission and preparation guidelines can be found [here](#).

4. Additional financial support for the 2025 MGM

There are five additional awards intended to broaden participation at the 2025 MGM. Use this [link](#) to review the criteria and to apply for: 1) MaGNET Awards, 2) The Expanding Institutional Access (EIA) Program, 3) The Disciplinary Breadth (DB) Award, 4) The Roots & Shoots Travel Award, and 5) The Broadening International Participation (BIP) Program. The deadline for many of these applications is December 2, 2024. Applications for student lodging support can also be found [here](#).

5. MaizeGDB Seeks Your Input for the Next Variant Data Release!

The Maize Genetics and Genomics Database (MaizeGDB) has partnered with researchers to analyze whole-genome sequencing data from 1,498 diverse maize inbred lines, traditional varieties, and teosintes using a standardized variant-calling pipeline against the B73 reference genome. Explore hundreds of millions of variant sites with our new [web-based tool](#) integrated with MaizeGDB resources. Read our preprint [here](#).

Help Shape the 2025 Release!

We're expanding our dataset to include 2,000 to 2,500 new maize accessions and want your recommendations to ensure broad utility and diversity. We plan to offer annual data releases and greatly value your feedback to enhance our resources. Complete our [short survey](#) to suggest accessions and prioritize data. Questions? Email us at carson.andorf@usda.gov. We plan to offer annual data releases and greatly value your feedback to enhance our resources.

6. MGC Budget update

The MGC fiscal year came to a close on June 30, 2024, and we're delighted to report that the MGC is on solid financial footing. At year-end our bank balance was nearing \$450,000, which



draws us ever so closer to pre-COVID financial stability. Our fiscal goal is to maintain a bank balance that allows us to prepay a meeting as needed, which we are very close to achieving. New this year, all committees have generated an annual budget request for FY25, which was then approved by the Board of Directors. This is the first step towards building financial transparency and maximizing the impact of the MGC. We are also now in the position to begin building new endowments to support the long-term trajectory of our community.

Please consider making a year-end tax-deductible contribution to the MGC:

<https://www.sciencesocieties.org/donate/MGCDON>

7. MGM venue 2027

The Maize Genetics Meeting Steering Committee worked with Conference Direct to identify potential Midwest venues for the 2027 meeting. Six cities were considered and bids were requested: Madison, WI; St Louis, MO; Indianapolis, IN; Chicago, IL; Des Moines, IA; and Omaha, NE. Based on availability during our typical late-February to late-March timeframe and venue cost (food and beverage minimums, space rental, etc), the list was narrowed to Monona Terrace in Madison, the Hyatt Regency O'Hare in Chicago, and the CHI Health Center in Omaha. The politics and social climate were investigated (data from Measure of America of the Social Science Research Council), with Chicago having the most diverse population in addition to limited violence and best overall rating. Chicago was ultimately chosen as it had superior travel accessibility from all parts of the US and for international attendees. In summary, the Steering Committee recommended and the Board of Directors voted to approve the Hyatt Regency O'Hare in Chicago, IL for the dates March 10-14, 2027.

7. Volunteers needed for a new Maize Genetics Nomenclature committee

Be on the lookout for a request to volunteer to become a part of a new Maize Genetics Nomenclature committee. We are especially interested to have students, post-docs, and early career faculty to help update the Maize Genetics Nomenclature rules. Here is your opportunity to help clarify and guide the future of the Maize Genetics Nomenclature.

8. The next issue of The Kernel

The next issue of The Kernel will have summary reports from the MGC BoD and the MGC Committees in preparation for the Community Session at the 2025 Maize Genetics Meeting. We anticipate this will be distributed in late February.

Thank you for reading the first edition of The Kernel. We welcome feedback, so please email us at bod.mgc@gmail.com.

To submit entries for consideration for the next edition of The Kernel, please use this link:

<https://forms.gle/vH9bfohBeqMiYvrw5>