



**RCAS Winter Meeting- Atlanta, GA
Westin Peachtree Plaza
Feb 4-6, 2024**

Online RegFox Registration Link for Winter Meeting
<https://rcas.regfox.com/winter-meeting-2024-atlanta-ga>

Hotel Information- RESERVATION DEADLINE IS FRIDAY JAN 19, 2024

2024 SAAS Conference Hotel

The Westin Peachtree Plaza
210 Peachtree Street NW
Atlanta, GA 30303

For Lodging Reservations

Go to (dedicated website for SAAS lodging reservations): <https://book.passkey.com/e/50578318>
or call **1-800-937-8461** and ask for **Southern Association of Agricultural Scientists' group rate**.

Deadline to reserve at group rate: FRIDAY, JANUARY 19, 2024, by 5:00 pm EST.

SAAS Group Rates: \$159/+ tax double/single/triple/quad rooms.

Check in: 4:00 pm - Check out: 11:00 am

AIRPORT: Hotel is approx. 10 miles (approx. 13 minutes) from Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport (**ATL**). Marta (subway) to Peachtree Plaza \$3.50.

Shuttle: Hotel does not provide shuttle service to/from airport. [Click here for transportation options.](#)

HOTEL PARKING: No self-parking available at hotel.

Valet parking: \$49/overnight with in and out privileges. For SAAS participants, an automatic 25% reduction will appear on your hotel bill if you valet park.

Several self-parking garages and lots are located near the hotel. Many options are available if you search online for "parking options near The Westin Peachtree Plaza Hotel."

HOTEL AMENITIES:

Group Rate will be honored for 3 days before and 3 days after conference dates of Feb. 2-7 for visiting/sightseeing, if available.

Internet: Complimentary internet in guestrooms for **Marriott Bonvoy** Members.

Fitness Center: Complimentary access to **WORKOUT Studio** including indoor/outdoor pool.

Valet Parking: A 25% discount will appear on your hotel bill if you valet park.

RCAS Winter Meeting Agenda – Monday Feb 4-5, 2024

Sunday, February 4th

- 1:30 PM Registration- Augusta G Conference Room
- 2:00 PM Executive Business Meeting
- 6:00 PM Dinner (on your own)

Monday, February 5th

- 8:00-8:30 AM Check-in & Refreshments- Chastain Room 1/2
- 8:30-8:45 AM **Welcome & Introduction** President RCAS, Jeremy Martin, NC State University
- 8:45-9:00 AM **Georgia Agriculture Update**
Nick Place, Dean & Director of the College of Agricultural & Environmental Sciences, University of Georgia
- 9:00-9:30 AM **Staff Retention and Housing Issues Faced at Research Stations**
Jeff Gore, Head of MSU Delta Research & Extension Center
- 9:30-10:00 AM **Break**
- 10:00-10:30 AM **“Climate Trends in the Southeast & How They Are Affecting Agriculture”**
Pam Knox, Director of UGA Weather Network
- 10:30-11:00 AM **“Emerging Technologies & Autonomous Applications in Precision Agriculture”**
Simerjeet Virk, UGA - Precision Ag. Extension Specialist
- 11:00-11:15 AM **Update - AI Center Gulf Coast Center, University of Florida**
Jerry Fankhauser
- 11:15-11:45 AM **Well Food Alliance Atlanta – Urban Agriculture Overview**
Fred Conrad, Senior Manager of Community Gardens
- 11:45 AM -1:15 PM **Lunch (on your own)**
- 1:15-1:45 PM **Montgomery Sheep Farm/Sun Raised Farms – a Solar Ag Venture**
Joel Olsen & Brooks Mixon
- 1:45-2:15 PM **Mark Issacs – Carbon Credits (Zoom)**
- 2:15-2:45 PM **Recovery After a Major Hailstorm – MSU Truck Crops Experiment Station**
Clay Cheroni
- 2:45-3:15 PM **Break**

3:15-3:45 PM **CleanSeed Project – Creating Sweet Potato Sustainability in MS**
Mark Shankle, Project Director, MSU North MS R&E Center

3:45-4:15 PM **Nebraska Summer Meeting Overview**
Doug Zalesky

4:30-5:00 PM **RCAS General Business Meeting**

- 1) Dean Place – Dean/Director of College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences at UGA
- 2) Dr. Simerjeet Virk – UGA Researcher leading UAV/ag technology studies. (Recommended by Ray)
- 3) Dr. Pam Knox – UGA Extension State Climatologist – Extreme weather issues/effects on ag production
- 4) Dr. Jeff Gore – MSU Head DREC – Staff retention and housing issues faced at research stations

TOUR INFORMATION- Feb 5-6, 2024

February 5, 2024 Spousal Tour

20 passenger Bus- Tour Guides- Becky Griffin, Community & School Garden Coordinator UGA & Freya Jones, Georgia Mountain REC Admin Support.

9:00 Depart Westin Peachtree Plaza Hotel. 210 Peachtree Plaza St NW, ATL GA 30303

9:30 Arrive at Atlanta Botanical Gardens. 1345 Piedmont Ave NE, ATL GA 30309

11:00 Depart

11:30 Ponce City Market- 675 Ponce De Leon Ave NE, ATL GA 30308. A community centered environment along the historic Ponce de Leon Avenue. Lunch will be on your own.

<https://www.poncecitymarket.com/>

2:30 Depart

3:00 Martin Luther King Homeplace and Ebenezer Baptist Church Tour. 501 Auburn Ave NE, ATL GA 30312

4:30 Depart

5:00 Arrive at Hotel. 210 Peachtree Plaza St NW, ATL GA 30303. Tour end.

February 6, 2024 Tour

- 8:00 Depart Westin Peachtree Plaza Hotel. 210 Peachtree St. NW, ATL GA 30303
- 8:30 Mercedes-Benz Stadium Tour and Urban Ag Interface. 1 AMB Dr. NW, ATL GA 30313
- 10:00 Depart
- 10:20 Trees Atlanta. 825 Warner Street, ATL GA 30310
- 11:15 Depart
- 11:30 Centennial Olympic Park walk through (drop off on Baker St NW) ATL GA 30313. Walk southwest to CNN Center. If poor weather, drop off the corner of Marietta St NW & Centennial Olympic Park Dr NW, ATL GA 30313
- 12:00 CNN Center Food Court- Lunch on your own.
- 1:00 Depart from 238 Andrew Young International Blvd NW, ATL GA 30313
- 2:00 UGA Griffin Campus-1109 Experiment St, Griffin GA 30223. Presentation from Assistant Provost and Campus Director Dr. Dean. Divided Groups Tours. Group A-Controlled Environment Greenhouse with Dr. Andre Ogden & Irrigation Demonstration & Outreach with Rolando Orellano. Group B- Turfgrass Research & Education Center with Dr. Clint Waltz and Mycotoxigenology & Postharvest Pathology Lab with Dr. Jake Fountain. Group C- Food Product Innovation & Commercialization Center with Dr. James Gratzek and USDA Seed Bank with Dr. Melanie Harrison.
- 3:30 Depart
- 4:30 Arrive and tour Real Life Center- 975 GA-74, Tyrone GA 30290. Non-profit farm in Tyrone GA distributing produce grown on the farm to the families of the Real Life Center.
- 5:15 Depart
- 5:45 Mary Mac's Tea Room- 224 Ponce De Leon Ave NE, ATL GA 30308. Traditional Southern Dining- Dinner and banquet in the Skyline Room, 70-100 guests
- 8:00 Depart
- 8:30 Arrive at Hotel. 210 Peachtree Plaza, ATL GA 30303. Tour End.