

TEXAS A&M
AGRILIFE
EXTENSION

TALL XIV

**International Trip
France-Belgium-Germany**

April 23 - May 5, 2016





Texas Agricultural Lifetime Leadership

“Preparing men and women in agriculture for leadership responsibilities.”



Texas Agricultural Lifetime Leadership

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Educational programs of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service are open to all people without regard to race, color, sex, disability, religion, age, or national origin. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating

Please visit our website at <http://tall.tamu.edu>

TEXAS AGRICULTURAL LIFETIME LEADERSHIP

MISSION

TALL will create a cadre of Texas leaders to help ensure effective understanding of and encourage positive action on key issues, theories, policy and economics that will advance the agricultural industry.

GOALS

To identify, challenge, develop and support emerging leaders.

To serve as a catalyst for mentoring and networking among agricultural leaders.

To increase personal involvement in state and local activities that contribute to the growth and enhancement of Texas agriculture and rural communities.

To heighten knowledge of current issues and encourage leadership in the development and implementation of sound local, state and national policy.

From farm and ranch to processor and supermarket, Texas agriculture faces unabated change. How it changes in response to current forces—such as environmentalism, new technologies, consumer issues, governmental regulation, and global markets—will profoundly impact agriculture for years to come.

The Texas Agricultural Lifetime Leadership (TALL) program helps people realize their potential for leadership during this time of critical change.

Educational Leaders

The TALL program enables men and women from all areas of agriculture to:

- Increase knowledge and understanding of agriculture and related industries in the context of today’s complex economic, political, and social systems
- Learn the processes of organizational decision-making and the role of political institutions
- Acquire a greater appreciation of how agriculture must interact with society as a whole
- Develop skills necessary for leadership at local, state, and national levels and put those skills into practice

Participating in TALL

The TALL program is designed for men and women to enhance their leadership skills. Each class consists of at least 24 people, all of whom are associated with agriculture. Participants come from every sector of agriculture and all parts of Texas.

Candidates apply for admission, indicating their reasons for wanting to participate. Successful candidates have demonstrated leadership potential and willingness to serve in decision-making roles upon completing the program.



Steven Akers
Abernathy, TX

Back To Nature/South Plains Compost factory representative and salesman, composting cotton burrs and cattle manure for lawn and garden industry and for farm fertilizer.



Jorge Luis Alvarez, Jr.
Santa Elena, TX

Ranch Manager at Rancho San Rafael, a wildlife production specializing in an intensive hunting enterprise for bobwhite quail and white-tail deer, cow/calf operation, and hay production.



Wes Chandler
Garrison, TX

Railroad tie supplier, K. L. Barton & Sons Tie Company; Owner/operator, Lightning C Cattle, commercial cow-calf & Brahman cow-calf producing F-1 Brafordts.



Lee Chastain
Arlington, TX

QA Analyst for Alcon, a Novartis Company in Fort Worth, and a partner of Mockingbird Hill Ranch, a fifth-generation, family-owned, registered Hereford cattle operation in Palo Pinto County.



Sandra Choate
Athens, TX

Vice President Marketing, Public Relations and Communication for AgWorkers Mutual Auto Insurance and AgWorkers Group of Companies. Co-owner/operator Bar Z Ranch a family owned farm producing commercial cattle and registered Brafordts in Henderson County.



Colin Chopelas
Corpus Christi, TX

Partner in Chopelas Farms, a family owned fifth-generation farm, producing cotton, corn, grain sorghum, wheat and sesame.



Dustin Cleavinger
Lazbuddie, TX

Crop Insurance Specialist for Ag Texas Farm Credit Services. Owner/operator of irrigated farm producing corn, milo, cotton, and wheat as well as cattle.



Barry Coker
Muleshoe, TX

Owner/Agent with Vic Coker Land Co., specializing in Agricultural Real Estate sales in Texas; Owner of C4 Cattle, a family cow/calf operation.



Matt Davis
Muleshoe, TX

Wilbur Ellis Company, Branch Manager, marketing retail agricultural inputs and services. Managing partner of stocker and feeder cattle operations in Castro and Bailey counties.



Scott Frazier
Chapman Ranch, TX

Managing partner of Frazier Farms (producers of cotton, corn, grain sorghum, and wheat), Thunder Cattle Company (commercial and purebred cow/calf operation), and Frazier Ag Service (agricultural risk management services).



Matt Gruhlkey
Amarillo, TX

Origination Manager for Attebury Grain, LLC overseeing the purchasing of wheat, corn, grain sorghum and cottonseed at all locations across Texas. Involved in Gruhlkey Farms in Adrian TX, a fourth-generation farm/ranch raising wheat, grain sorghum and black angus cattle.



Blaine Junfin
Quemado, TX

Kunafin “The Insectary.” Family owned and operated business in the production of beneficial insects. Sales/Consultant: Supplying/Developing biological integrated pest managment programs for animal agriculture, crop, orchard and greenhouse producers.



Steven Kahla
Waller, TX

Marketing, PR and Corporate Sponsorships Director, Rios of Mercedes, Anderson Bean and Olathe Boot Companies, Oldest Boot Company made in the USA.



Mariano Lerma
Waxahachie, TX

Deputy Director with the USDA’s Risk Management Agency, Dallas. Oversees reviews to determine compliance of federal laws, policies, and procedures; and to protect the integrity of the crop insurance program.



Brad Lubbers
Dalhart, TX

JBS Five Rivers Cattle Feeding supervisor of environmental affairs, Dalhart, TX. Works with company feedyards in Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, and Arizona to ensure environmental compliance. Co-Owner/Partner in family-owned alfalfa, sorghum, wheat, and corn farm.



Mary Thiel Luedeker
Georgetown, TX

Texas Animal Health Commission, Governmental and Industry Relations and Assistant General Counsel.



Michelle Moore
Kelton, TX

Owner/Partner in Grow Moore, LLC, selling and applying compost, fertilizer and chemicals; Owner/Partner in Moore Farms, producing cotton, wheat, feed and beef cattle.



Zane Nicholson
Blooming Grove, TX

Co-Owner/Operator of 3 N Farms, producing cotton, milo, sunflowers, wheat as well as cattle with cow calf herd, feeder cattle, stocker cattle. Also does custom harvesting and spraying.



Chloe Nunley
Sabinal, TX

4th generation rancher, Nunley Bros. Ranches, raising Santa Gertrudis cattle. Field representative with Superior Livestock Association. State 2nd Vice President for Independent Cattlemen’s Association of Texas.



Texas Agricultural Lifetime Leadership



Texas Agricultural Lifetime Leadership

Class XIV
2014–2016
Program Participants

MKT-2091

Supporting TALL

The TALL program is conducted by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, a member of The Texas A&M University System. This intensive leadership development program also depends on the backing of individuals in agriculture and agriculture-related industries and public-spirited citizens. We invite you to consider participating or encouraging others to join us in providing support for the Texas Agricultural Lifetime Leadership program.

TALL Advisory Board

TALL is guided by an advisory board of 24 outstanding leaders with the following officers:

Chairman—Jim Prewitt
Vice Chairman—Loy Sneary
Executive Secretary—Roddy Peebles

Alumni Association

At least 10 years of experience is needed to reach the educational level of TALL graduates. As a result, alumni of TALL become a valuable resource to rural Texas and the agriculture industry. Graduates use their new knowledge and skills to garner leadership roles. Many become active in local organizations, while others pursue even loftier positions.

TALL Mission Statement

TALL will create a cadre of Texas leaders to help ensure effective understanding and encourage positive action on key issues, theories, policies, and economics that will advance the agriculture industry.



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Educational programs of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service are open to all people without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information or veteran status.
1000 copies, February 2015



Jonah Parker
Cedar Park, TX

District Market Manager for Scott's Miracle-Gro covering San Antonio, Austin, Rio Grande Valley, and West Texas. Develops sales strategies with key customers such as Home Depot, Lowe's, and Walmart to provide product solutions to Texas lawn and garden consumers.



Rebecca Rivers
Lubbock, TX

FOX 34 Ag Day Lubbock, Producer and Reporter; Rivers Ranch, family-owned cattle production.



Joe "Cuatro" Strack IV
El Campo, TX

Owner and managing partner, J4 Fencing & Services & J4 Custom Builders, constructing AG fence and buildings throughout Texas. Also partner in Strack Whitetails, breeding whitetail deer.



Brad Stufflebeam
Brenham, TX

Received the 2012 Houston Mayor's Award: Champion of Food Justice. Owner/Founder of Home Sweet Farm, Houston's first Community Supported Agriculture Farm. Past President, Texas Organic Farmers & Gardeners Assoc. and USDA Advisory Board Member Southern SARE.



Travis Thorne
Bowie, TX

Capital Farm Credit, ACA, vice president/senior relationship manager providing financing to cow-calf and stocker operations as well as recreational land owners in North central Texas; family partner in Clayton Ranch, a purebred Angus cow-calf operation.



Eric Turpen
Littlefield, TX

Real estate broker at Clift Land Brokers, specializing in farm and ranch real estate throughout the Texas Panhandle and Eastern New Mexico. Owner/operator of a grain, cotton, and alfalfa hay farm.



Chad Wetzel
Tom Bean, TX

Owner/operator CLW Farm & Seed: dry-land wheat, corn, and grain sorghum production; seed sales; and custom application. Business manager for B&B Wetzel Farms: family farm growing wheat, corn, grain sorghum, soybeans, and cotton, and cow-calf operation.



Cody White
Lubbock, TX

CoBank, ACB, Relationship Manager - Regional Agribusiness Banking Group, providing financing to agribusinesses throughout Texas and New Mexico, and director - Texas Agricultural Coop Council.



Leah Wilkinson
Austin, TX

Director of Ingredients, Pet Food and State Affairs for the American Feed Industry Association, responsible for policy issues regarding feed ingredients, pet food and equine feed; handles state government affairs for the western part of the U.S.

Action-Oriented Program

TALL is a practical, action-oriented, two-year program in which participants meet eight times. Six of the meetings are held at different sites across the state.

Seminars with experts and group discussions enhance participants' knowledge and understanding of key subjects for today's agricultural leaders. Topics include leadership development, communication skills, economics and policy, international trade, agricultural institutions and agencies, urban/rural relations, and issues affecting agriculture, such as water and energy.

On-site tours and studies of agriculture-related businesses and industries help participants discover firsthand procedures and problems in production marketing and financing.

Meetings with leaders of government and business complement seminars on local, state, and national issues and are a focus of the first year of the program. TALL participants travel to Washington, D.C., and New York City for direct exposure to the varied social and economic conditions impacting agriculture.

International study is the highlight of the program's second year, with TALL XIV traveling to Israel. The tour focuses on international communications, ecology, government policy, economics, social problems, and educational opportunities. Participants return with greater insights into agriculture's global problems and challenges.



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Preliminary programme Frederick Travel TALL
France – Belgium - Germany from 23.04. to 05.05.2016

Contact Frederick Travel: Scott Allen, phone +1 519 745 1860 ext 303
Contact Reiseservice Vogt: Natalie Gundel, phone +1 7939 990827

1. day, fri 22.04.16: Departure from Texas (org. by Frederick Travel)

2. day, sat 23.04.16: Arrival – Get inspired by charming Paris

08:35 Arrival of the flight from Huston to Paris, CDG (15 pax)
Flight No AF 639 G

Earlier separate arrival: 3 pax (M. Chastain, M. Strack, Mrs. Wilkinson)

Meet and greet with your permanent English speaking guide [Voucher](#)
Mr. Hans Hühn, mobile +49 178 6805185

Meeting point: Arrival gate with a pannel saying “TALL”

Bus company: Röhler Touristik, phone +49 791 95008-0 [Voucher](#)
Your driver is Frank Röhler, mobile +49 176 61518734

Transfer to the Montmartre, ca. 25 km

The Montmartre with famous church Sacré-Coeur on its top is the highest altitude over Paris. At the long stairs you can marvel a great view over Paris. The former village used to be an attractive meeting point for artists and poets in the 19th century like Van Gogh, Renoir and later Picasso among many others. On the Place du Tertre nowadays street artists still show and sell their art work. Other famous places are the Moulin de la Galette or the Cimetière de Montmartre where you can still breathe the charm of the old days.

Time on their own e.g. to take pictures get a first impression of Paris a capital of culture.

13:00 Bustransfer to Place Charles de Gaulle, ca. 6 km

13.30 **Mme. Marie-Noelle Thomas, mobile +33 629436978 [Voucher](#)**
Meeting point: [Map](#)
Place Charles de Gaulle, corner Avenue Wagram

Guided city tour by bus (3 hours)

16.30 **4****-Hôtel Novotel Paris La Défense [Map](#)**
2 Boulevard de Neuilly Cedex, 1 Place de la Défense [Voucher](#)
92081 Paris, phone +33 1 41452323

Distribution of the Quietvox audiosystem
Emergency number: Nadia Quintas, +33 620 637187

Time to freshen up and relax.

18.30

Dinner at the hotel

Menu:

- Mixed vegetable salad
- Juicy roast chicken with roast potatoes and stuffed tomatoes à la Provencale
- Fruit salad

Beverages and other services on own pay (not included)

Night at Paris (1 of 4)

(-/-/D)

3. day, sun 24.04.16: Versailles – absolutist King Louis XIV Baroque Palace, 60 km

08:00 Breakfast at the hotel

**09:00 Guide Mme. Marie-Noelle Thomas, mobile +33 629436978
Meeting point: Hotel lobby**

Departure to the Versailles, ca. 30 km

10:00 Guided visit of the Versailles palace

12:30 Return to Paris, ca. 30 km

Free time for own discoveries at Paris like visits of the museums (e.g. Louvre, Musée d'Orsay), or a walk from Grand Arch - Champs Elysées - Eiffel tower

Lunch and dinner on owns direction

Night in Paris (2 of 4)

(B/-/-)

**4. day, mon 25.04.16: US embassy representative
- Marketing of Farm Products in Metropole Surrounding, ca. 65 km**

07:30 Breakfast in the hotel

09:00 Meeting with a representative from the the US Embassy, (org. by Scott Allen)
David G. Salmon, Agricultural Counselor, phone +33 1 43122329

Meeting room “Broadway” at the hotel

Beverages: Coffee, tea, juice

11:30 Time change

12:00 Transfer to Saclay, ca. 30 km

13:00 Lunch at Novotel Saclay,
Rue Charles Thomassin, 91400 Saclay
Phone: +33 1 69356600

[Map](#)
[Voucher](#)

Menu :

- Green salad and hot goat cheese on toast
- Boeuf bourguignon

Water and coffee included, further beverages and service on own pay

14:30 Transfer to Jouy-en-Josas, ca. 5 km

15:00 Farm visit at La Ferme de Viltain, Chemin de Viltain,
78350 Jouy-en-Josas, Silvia phone +33 139 563814

[Map](#)
[Voucher](#)

Visit with Monsieur Olivier Des Courtils et Monsieur Jean-Marie Hennequin :

Fram details :

- 50 ha of flowers, fruit, vegetables for selfpicking - Sustainable production
- Member of the direct marketers org. Chapeau de Paille for vegetable and fruit prod.
- Ca. 700 cattle , of which ca. 300 dairy cows, race: Prim'Holstein, milking caroussel
- Own dairy production e.g. yoghurt, cottage cheese, fresh and mixed milk beverages

17:00 Return to the hotel, ca. 30 km

Night in Paris (3 of 4)

(B/L/-)

5. day, tue 26.04.16: Rungis - Agriculture in the Region Centre, ca. 305 km

03:00 Breakfastbox incl. beverage

03:30 Transfer, ca. 30 km

04:30 Visit and breakfast at food market "Rungis",
2 place des Pêcheurs, 94150 Rungis
Phone: +33 383 501085

[Map](#)
[Voucher/QS](#)

GPS : 48.758067, 2.350330

Meeting with your guide, Nathalie, mobile +33 685201554
At Parking de La Marée (main entrance),

Attention:

Dress requirements: Walking shoes (slippery floor) and warm dress (walking in cold storage warehouses).

Hygienic equipment will be distributed on spot.

The Bus must be clean.

- Guided visit of the worldwide biggest wholesale food market "Rungis"
 - 232 ha in total, 72 ha built, 30.000 employees and buyers, 24.000 vehicles per day, own freight depot
 - 1290 enterprises work here, 520 of which are whole salers
 - Sold goods (sales halls): vegetables (9), meat (7), milk and dairy products (5), fish and sea food (1), additional halls for flowers
 - Annual turnover ca. 7,3 billion Euro (2013)
- Breakfast "Saveurs matinales/Terroir" at the market restaurant

09:30 Transfer to the Orléans, ca. 135 km

Time on their own in Orléans,
distance center – Chambre d'Agriculture, ca. 5 km

13:30 Meeting (Landwirtschaftskammer) at

Chambre régional d'agriculture du Loiret (siège social)
13 Avenue des Droits de l'Homme, 45921 Orléans
M. Girard, phone +33 238 719058, mobile +33 688 063413

[Map](#)
[Voucher](#)

Meeting with Mr. Xavier Girard, Chef de Service agissant
pour le Président par mandat de délégation, phone +33 238 719058

- Presentation about agriculture of the region and the goals and activities of the chamber of agriculture
- Focus on European environmental regulations: nitrogen directives, use of pesticides, water regulations and a few words about GMO

Structural dates of the region (2007):

- Sector agriculture and nutrition on place 2 of all branches regarding paid employees (20.400 = 12%, without fruit and vegetable production as well as storage of cereals etc.) – mainly in cereal and meat production
- 25.500 ag. enterprises with an average of 90 ha (= 2,4 mio. ha)
- Average yield 68 dt/ha wheat
- 59% still grass land – 67.500 dairy cows, 206.000 sucking cows, 98.900 goats

15:30 Return to Paris, ca. 135 km

Night at Paris (4 of 4)

(B/-/-)

6. day, wed 27.04.16: Consulting organisation – Innovative Production -
Brussels, ca. 375 km

07:00 Breakfast

08:00 Check out and transfer to Cambrai, ca. 176 km

Please remember to call restaurant before 9 a.m. for menu choice.

10:30 Visit at Avenir Conseil Élevage (Beratungsdienst)
5 Rue François Mitterrand, 59400 Cambrai,
phone: +33 327 726666

[Map](#)
[Voucher](#)

Der Bus soll bei ALDI gegenüber parken, falls das erlaubt ist.

Presentation by Mrs. Dominique Gavillon:

- Milk control and the network of Conseil Elevage (consulting)
- Details about the regional branch in North Picardie
- Services proposed to the breeders
- Organisation and financing of the organisation

12:00 Transfer, ca. 4,5 km

12:15 Lunch at Tabl'Hôtel, restaurant L'aquarelle, Petit Fontaine,
Route de Bapaume, 59400 Fontaine Notre Dame,
phone +33 327 818141

[Map](#)
[Voucher](#)
[Menu](#)

Menu : Choice according menu attached

13:30 Transfer, ca. 50 km

14:30 Farm visit at SCEA de la Fresnaie,
3 Chemin de Villiers Pol, 59530 Frasnoy
M. Géry Meausoone, phone +33 679 938764

[Map](#)
[Voucher](#)

- 150 dairy cows, 200 ha, 3 farm workers
- Biogas plant (4.500 t treated waste)
- Production of spirulina – 250m² bassins, 500 kg dried spirulina product ,
50% sold to locals

16:30 Transfer to Brussels, ca. 150 km

**18:00 Check in at Hotel Bedford, Rue du Midi 135, 1000 Brussel,
phone +32 251 27840**

[Map](#)
[Voucher](#)

(B/L/-) Night in Brussels (1 of 4)

7. day, thu 28.04.16: EU Agricultural Commission - Parlamentarium

07:30 Breakfast

08:15 Transfer, ca. 4 km

09:00 Visit at EU agricultural Commission,
Rue Wiertz 60, 1047 Brussels,
Mrs Aleksandra Ciszewska, phone +32 228 47767 (org by group)

[Map](#)

Meeting room: JAN6Q1

Meeting with:

Mr. Siekierski, head of AGRI Committee in the European Parliament

Mr. Grzyp, MEP specializing in the field of energy and environment

Mr. Wałęsa, MEP specializing in TTIP negotiations

Mr. Hetman, MEP specializing in regional development

11:00 End of meeting

14:00 Media-guided visit of the "Parlamentarium",
The European Parliament's Visitors' Centre, (ca. 1,5 hours)
Rue Wiertz 60, 1047 Brussels,
phone +32 2 283 2222

Time on their own

18:30 Dinner at Restaurant Chez Leon 1893, Beenhouwersstraat 18,
1000 Brussels, phone +32 2511 1415

[Map](#)
[Voucher](#)

They are only waiting for 15 minutes. Please call if late.

Menu:

Starter:

Little salad platter
or mussels soup

Main course:

Mussels à la Marinière , French fries
or ½ roast chicken, French fries, salad
or baked sea bream filet, French fries and sauce tartar
or Flamish beef goulash, French fries

Dessert:

Chocolate mouse
or caramel flan

Tap water, bread and butter on tables

Further beverages or services by own payment

Walk back to the hotel, ca. 1 km

Night in Brussels (2 of 4)

(B/-/D)

8. day, fri 29.04.16: Brussels Fertilizers Europe - Brussels

08:00 Breakfast

09:00 Transfer ca. 10 km

10:00 Visit at Fertilizers Europe asbl. [Map](#)
Avenue E. Van Nieuwenhuyse 6, 1160 Brussels
Hubert Kamola, phone + 48 81 5652116 (org. by the group)

Presentation about Trade Policy and Agriculture in EU - Fertilizers Europe.

12:00 Transfer, ca. 9 km

13:00 Lunch Au Stekerlapatte, Rue des Prêtres 4, 1000 Bruxelles [Map](#)
Phone +32 25128681

Menu:

- Paté à la maison
- Meat balls (pork) in tomatoesauce (speciality of Brussels quarter Marollen)
- Dessert trio (three different specialities)

Further beverages or services by own payment

City guide: Jan Peter Diemar, mobile +32 497 615767

Meeting point : at the restaurant

[Voucher](#)
[Map](#)

- Visit at Zaabär SA, chocolatier + épicier,
Chaussée de Charleroi 125, 1060 Brüssel
- Guided city tour (ca. 2 hours)

[Map](#)

19:00 Return at the hotel

Night in Brussels (3 of 4)

(B/L/-)

9. day, sat 30.04.16: Day tour Gent and Antwerpes, ca. 185 km

08:00 Breakfast

Meeting with the whole day local guide at the hotel

Guide: xxx, mobile xxxxx

09:00 Transfer to Gent, ca. 65 km

Guided visit at Gent

12.30 Lunch at a nice restaurant, xxx

Transfer to Antwerpes, ca. 60 km

Guided visit of Antwerpes and the harbour by bus

18.00 Return to the hotel, ca. 60 km

Night in Brussels (4 of 4)

(B/L/-)

10. day, sun 01.05.16: Cemetery and WW II Memorial – Aachen –

Dusseldorf, ca. 230 km

07:00 Breakfast

Check out

08:00 Transfer to Hombourg/Belgium, ca. 130 km

10:00 Henri-Chapelle American Cemetery and Memorial,
159 rue du Mémorial Américain, 4852 Plombières - Hombourg
Bobby Bell, phone tel +32 87 687173, mobile +32 479 560478

[Map](#)

Visit of Henri-Chapelle American Cemetery and Memorial, covering 57 acres,
rest 7.992 members of US military died in WW II (2 hours)

12:30 Transfer to Aachen, ca. 15 km

13:00 Restaurant Macaroni, Schmiedgasse 24, 52062 Aachen,
phone +49 241 30044

[Map](#)
[Voucher](#)

Menu:

- Conchiglie alla Primavera
- Tiramisu

Further beverages or services by own payment

Free time for own discoveries in the city which can to
be regarded as the historical origin of "Europe"

16:30 Transfer to Dusseldorf region, ca. 80 km

18:00 Check in in 4**-Mercure Hotel Düsseldorf City center,
Stresemannplatz 1, 40210 Düsseldorf,
phone: +49 211 3554 914**

[Map](#)
[Voucher](#)

18:30 Dinner at the hotel

Menu:

- Tomato soup
- Pork back steak with pepper sauce, broccoli and potatoes duchesse
- Chocolate mousse with rum cherries

Further beverages or services by own payment

Night in Dusseldorf (1 of 4)

(B/L/D)

11. day, mon 02.05.16: "BAYER Day" , ca. 115 km

07:30 Breakfast

08:30 Transfer to Monheim, ca. 25 km

09:00 Visit at Bayer CropScience Research & Development Centre [Map](#)
Alfred-Nobel-Strasse 50, 40789 Monheim am Rhein
Contact: Judith Wehr +49 163 1750075

Visiting programme:

09:00 Arrival at R&D Center, Crop Science Division

09:15 Presentation on Bayer and the Crop Division by Judith Wehr

10:00 Site visit in groups (if necessary)

Group 1:

10:00 Visit Compound Logistic Center

10:30 Visit Biological Research Disease with Peter Dahmen

Group 2:

10:00 Visit Biological Research Disease with Peter Dahmen

10:30 Visit Compound Logistic Center

11:15 Visit Application Technology or alternative

12:15 Lunch at Bayer

13:30 Transfer to Rommerskirchen-Deelen, ca. 70 km

14:30 Farm visit at Forward Farm Damianshof [Map](#)
Damiansweg 1, 41569 Rommerskirchen-Deelen
Contact: Judith Wehr +49 163 1750075

Continue of BAYER visiting programme:

14:30 Visit Damianshof with Bernd Olligs and Andreas Lagemann-Kohnhorst

Site details:

High: 70 m below seas level

Perticipation: 790 mm

Average annual temperature: 10,1 °C

Soil: Louvisol from loess,
Soil vale number (?) / Bodenwertzahl: 95

Trials: 500 plots with beets, potatoes, winter wheat,
winter barley, leguminous plants, corn

16:30 Transfer back to the hotel, ca. 40 km

Night in Dusseldorf (2 of 4)

(B/L/-)

12. day, tue 03.05.16: Intensive vegetable production –

Farm Service/ Farming/ Marketing, ca. 160 km

07:00	Breakfast	
08:00	Transfer nach Willich, ca. 30 km	
08:30	Farm visit Stautenhof, Darderhöfe 1a, 47877 Willich-Anrath Phone +49 2156 911553	Map Voucher
	Visit of the closed organic system of farming, butchery, bakery, bistro and farm shop. The farm is as a demonstration farm member of a nationwide network.	
10:00	Transfer to the Straelen, ca. 30 km	
10:30	Versuchszentrum Gartenbau Straelen/Köln – Auweiler, Hans-Tenhaeff-Str. 40-42, 47638 Straelen, M. Andreas: phone +49 2834 704 -125	Map Voucher
	Visit of a vegetable research center	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Walk through the glass houses and see trials about substrate production and other earthless production with a specialist - Efficient water management in greenhouses and open field vegetable production 	
	Walk to the restaurant	
13:00	Lunch at Straelener Hof, Annastraße 68, 47638 Straelen, Phone +49 2834 91410	Map Voucher
	Lunch from the buffet incl. mineral water on the table	
14:30	Transfer to Niederkrüchten-Elmpt, ca. 35 km	
15:00	Farm visit at P. & P. Coenen, Hauptstraße 153, 41372 Niederkrüchten-Elmpt phone +49 163 4190758	Map Voucher Details
	Farm service, farming and marketing:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "P.&P. Coenen", contractor: consulting, fertilising, transports, soil preparation, seed, potato storage and distribution, harvesting, crop protection, forestry, complete field works, biofumigation - Paul Coenen, jun., farm: 500 ha crop and green land in Germany and partly in the Netherlands, conventional production of potatoes, beets, cereals, maize, vegetables, green land - Bauer Küppers Landwirtschaft KG: Potato direct marketing to retailer and wholesale 	
18:00	Transfer to Brüggen, ca. 5 km	
18:30	Farewell dinner at Genholter Hof farm restaurant Genholter Straße 61, 41379 Brüggen Phone +49 2163 6864	Map Voucher
	Seasonal 4-course dinner menu with asparagus fresh from the farm:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Spicy shrimps with white asparagus, Mediterranean vegetables and roast bread - Asparagus consommé (soup) with pieces of asparagus - Rose roast lamb back covered with herbs, potatoes and a small spring salad - Vanilla ice cream with straw berries 	
	incl. beverages (water, wine/beer/softdrinks) (Invitation by RS Vogt)	
20.30	Return to the hotel, ca. 60 km	
(B/L/D)	Night in Dusseldorf (3 of 4)	

13. day, wed 04.05.16: Field-water-management/cattle and horse prim breed
– Organic Production, ca. 145 km

08:00 Breakfast

09:00 Transfer to Köln-Weiler, ca. 40 km

10.00 Georg und Leonie Kellerwessel, Gut Dresenhofweg 57,
50667 Köln-Weiler, phone +49 173 5127770

[Map](#)
[Voucher](#)
[Details](#)

Ca. 420 ha, award winning beef cattle and horse breed

Participant of the group 'farming and water supply' - meeting with a representative

- Presentation of machinery
- Farm visit at with small Blonde d'Aquitaine breed (34 high breed beef animals) and horse farm (rental and own) - winner of diverse shows
- Light lunch on the farm

13:00 Return to the hotel, ca. 35 km

Please remember to give the receivers to your tour guide and leave the Quietvox audiosystem at the hotel!

Time for shopping in Düsseldorf by foot

18:00 Hausbrauerei „Zum Schlüssel“,
Bolkerstr.41-47, 40213 Düsseldorf,
phone 0211 8289550

[Map](#)
[Voucher](#)

Res. No. 16972

Room: Kleiner Banketraum

Menu:

- Smoked salmon served with potato roesti
- Düsseldorfer Senftrostbraten "Rump steak roasted with a onion-mustard-sauce with bacon beans and fried potatoes
- Baked mini apple tart with cinnamon and sugar

Incl. Water and a glass of dark beer

Walk back to the hotel, ca. 2 km

Night in Dusseldorf (4 of 4)

(B/L/D)

14. day, thu 05.05.16: Departure

03:00 Breakfast box

03:30 Check out

04:00 Transfer to the international airport in Dusseldorf, ca. 9 km

Say good bye to your tour guide and to Germany

06:40 Departure of your flight to Paris: Flight no. AF 1107 G (org. by Frederick Travel)

Changes in programme possible!
Km-distances without guarantee!

Friday, April 22, 2016
Steven Akers and Jorge L. Alvarez, Jr.

Our anticipated yet nerve-wrecking International trip to France, Belgium, and France was soon to embark at 4:00 p.m. from the Houston Airport. Our class of 29 was now down to 19, due to the prior terrorist attacks in Europe along with the negative impact of numerous emails amongst ourselves that aroused confusion, distress, and fear in our travel.

We met at the AirFrance terminal and waited as we all arrived to proceed through the TSA Security Screening. A few of us then enjoyed a quick lunch and some Polish Water at Pappadeaux.

With a mixture of nervousness and excitement in our faces, we boarded AirFrance Flight 639. We embarked on our journey, a 5,500-mile flight with arrival at Charles de Gaulle Airport in Paris, France. Our nine ½-hour flight included a not so scrumptious meal, a variety of movies, a crying baby sitting next Steven Akers, and a few of us snoring.



Once we arrived in Paris, we experience a delayed line through customs before we got our passports stamped. We continued downstairs, where we met our Tour Director, Hanse and we retrieved our luggage. We then proceeded outside to meet our 6 foot 11-inch bus driver, Frank and his motor coach. We loaded the bus, to find Cuarto sitting and greeting us with a smile.

Saturday Morning, April 23, 2016
Wes Chandler and Lee Chastain

After much anticipation, we finally gathered in Houston to catch our flight for our final TALL session. After visiting with some of the others in the class, it was obvious that there had been some mixed emotion, as well as some anxiety about the trip given the recent events in Paris and even more recently in Brussels. Despite any concerns we may have had, after gathering as a group, the nerves seemed to fade away as we began to visit in the airport restaurant while waiting for our flight to begin boarding. After the group had some time to cut up a little bit, we realized that two weeks together might be more than any of us could handle, but we were looking forward to it nonetheless.

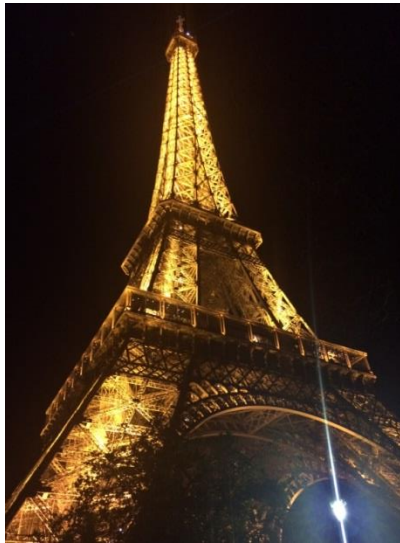


As we waited to board our plane, we asked some of our class members for any expectations or preconceived ideas of France Belgium, and Germany. Some of the responses given were regarding Germany being full of history, Paris being full of fashion and great wine, or the countryside in Europe not having the eye appeal that we see in Texas and all over the U.S.

Our flight was not an easy one- nine hours with limited legroom is enough to make anyone uncomfortable- but we finally landed in Paris and immediately met with Hans, our tour guide for the duration of our program. After landing, the mood of the group seemed to immediately improve, probably because we were all just glad to be off the plane. Hans showed us to the bus, where we met Frank, who would be our bus driver for our two weeks in the EU. At this point many of us were excited to finally be seeing Paris for the first time.

Saturday Afternoon, April 23, 2016
Sandra Choate and Colin Chopelas

After seeing the Sacré-Cœur Basilica and a great view of Paris, we made our way back to the bus pick-up location and loaded up for our city bus tour. Our guide for the afternoon and next morning was Marie-Noelle Thomas. She spoke very good English with a strong French accent but we managed to learn a great deal about the tourist attractions of Paris.



Eiffel Tower at night

Eiffel Tower

The Eiffel Tower was constructed in 1889 for the entrance to the 1889 World's Fair. It's named after Gustave Eiffel the engineer who designed and built the tower. It stands 1063 feet tall and was the tallest manmade structure in the world for 41 years until the Chrysler Building in New York was completed. It contains both stairs and an elevator that can be taken to three different levels. It contains two restaurants with great views of the city.

Arc de Triomphe

The Arc was commissioned in 1806 after a victory by Napoleon but wasn't completed until 1836. It is a monument to honor those who fought and died in the French Revolutionary and the Napoleonic Wars. The names of the French general and a list of victories are inscribed with the Arc. Beneath the Arc is the tomb of the Unknown Soldier representing those lost and not found during World War I.

Arc de Triomphe du Carrousel

This Arc was completed in 1808 and commemorates the victories of Napoleon from 1805. It stands 63 feet high and has 8 Corinthian columns of marble surrounding it.



Arc de Triomphe du Carrousel



Luxor Obelisk

Luxor Obelisk

The 75 foot tall Obelisk stands at the center of the Place de la Concorde. It is over 3,000 years old and originally was at the entrance to Luxor Temple in Egypt. It was shipped to Paris in 1833.

Louvre Museum

The Louvre is the largest museum in the world covering 600,000 square feet. The building was the Palace for the French kings until 1682 when King Louis XIV moved his home to the Palace of Versailles. In 1793, the building was officially commissioned as a museum for the historical artifacts of France. In 1989, the glass pyramid was added at the entrance. More than 380,000 artifacts are housed in the museum but the Leonardo da Vinci painting, the Mona Lisa, is the most popular in the building.

After a few hours on the bus we dropped off our tour guide, Ms. Thomas, who would meet us in the morning to lead our tour of the Palace of Versailles. Our bus delivered us to the hotel Novotel Paris La Defense which was located a few miles from the main attractions in Paris. Our group was very tired and anxious to get checked in and rest up for the next two weeks!



The Louvre Museum Entrance

Saturday evening April 23, 2016
Dustin Cleavinger and Matt Davis

Saturday afternoon, we were allowed to have time on our own. The class was enjoying their first night in Paris and we met up back at the hotel lobby where we had a French cocktail or beer. While speaking to the workers at the hotel, they seemed to be interested in where we came from and why we were there. Despite most people from Paris being less accommodating, these people were very friendly and taught us some of the local language, hotspots for travelers, and other pointers and tips. After visiting with them for an hour or more, we found many common grounds and enjoyed laughs about how life was the same in some areas and different in some areas when comparing the United States of America to the European Union and France. The night left us all with a feeling of relief about spending another day or two visiting their city.



Sunday morning, April 24, 2016
Blaine Junfin and Matt Gruhlkey

Chateau de Versailles
France



(entry way to the grounds at Versailles)

As our international trip started its 2nd full day, our group took a bus to the historic and world-famous Chateau de Versailles just outside of Paris, France. Each of us had expectations of seeing something grandiose and spectacular that day. Little did we know that we would be blown away by the size and scale of the palace and grounds as well as the immense detail and opulence of the complex. It was a chance of a lifetime to see one of the world's most famous chateaus and grounds.

The Chateau de Versailles is one of the most beautiful achievements of 18th-century French art. The site began as Louis XIII's hunting lodge before his son Louis XIV transformed and expanded it, moving the court and government of France to Versailles in 1682. Each of the three French kings who lived there until the French Revolution added improvements to make it more beautiful.

The Hall of Mirrors, the King's Grand Apartments, the Museum of the History of France. The Chateau de Versailles, the seat of power until 1789, has continued to unfurl its splendour over the course of centuries. At first it was just a humble hunting lodge built by Louis XIII. But Louis XIV chose the site to build the palace we know today, the symbol of royal absolutism and embodiment of classical French art.

As our group toured the buildings and grounds, our tour guide gave us a great explanation of each of the most important rooms and what daily life would be like during the height of its splendor. This short trip to the Chateau was an awesome experience at a world-famous place. It was great to experience it with our friends in TALL.



(Hall of Mirrors)



(overlooking the gardens of Versailles)



(another view of the expansive gardens)

Sunday Afternoon, April 24th, 2016
Brad Lubbers and Mariano Lerma

Sunday afternoon we found ourselves back in Paris with the afternoon to spend on our own touring the city. Our dependable bus driver Frank dropped us off between the Eiffel Tower and the Louvre, with many in our group setting out for a bite of lunch. Within a few blocks our group had split into several smaller groups, stopping at various restaurants to sample to the local fair.

My group found a small café and proceeded to make plans for the afternoon. We were within walking distance of the Eiffel Tower, The Louvre, Notre Dame, and Pont des Arts (The Love Lock Bridge) to name a few. Our group finished lunch with only generic plans being made. Several other groups had finished lunch as well and the general group began a walk towards Notre Dame. What seemed like a few blocks turned into several, but before long we were standing in front of the Notre Dame cathedral. This was a spectacular site towering above the neighboring buildings. With it being Sunday there were a lot of people around the square taking in the sites. Our group separated once again with part of them wanting to go up into the upper levels of the Notre Dame cathedral and others who didn't. This was our second day in France and most of us were still suffering from a severe case of jetlag. A small group of us went to a nearby coffee and crepe' shop to rest a minute while the waited patiently to go up into the cathedral.

After a small break another fraction of our group decided that they would like to visit the Louvre and see the Mona Lisa painting. This group struck out with the guidance of Lee Chastain, as he had been in Paris a few days already able to navigate us directly to the Louvre. While walking to the Louvre we crossed the Pont des Arts, better known as the Love Lock Bridge where couples could profess their love for each other by placing a lock on a short chain link fence and throwing the key into the river behind it. This was another very quick stop as we were starting to run short on time to get into the Louvre.

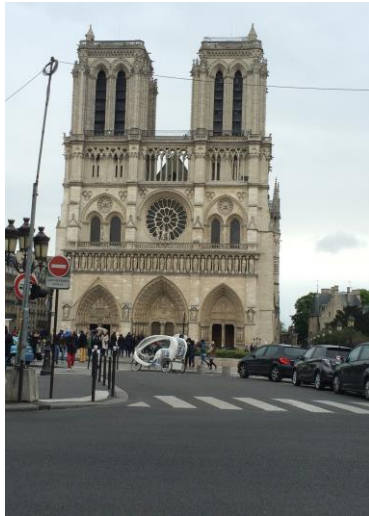
Shortly we were at the Louvre with only 30 minutes until the museum closed. We promptly paid our admission fee and quickly set out to find the Mona Lisa. To aid in our navigation there were small signs highlighting the way. In our effort to quickly locate the

Mona Lisa, we missed several of the signs and found ourselves at a dead end. With a small amount of panic setting in that we may have just wasted our entry fee we began backtracking to find our error. Soon we were on our way again and winding through new corridors trying to find the famous painting. A short ways further and we found what we were looking for, but we had lost Mariano. We admired the Mona Lisa, and I scratched my head because I was puzzled at how small it was, and then were on our way to see other exhibits with what little time we had left. Soon we found ourselves exiting the museum and luckily Mariano reappeared as we found the exit!

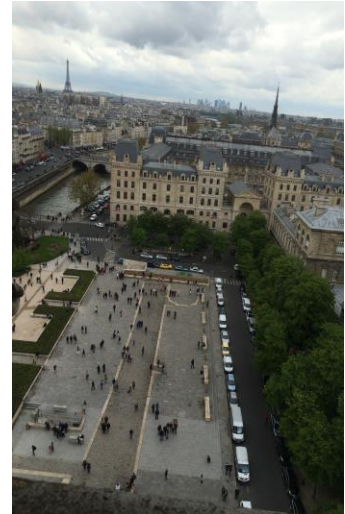
The group then decided that we should go find some dinner on the way to the Eiffel Tower. We set out towards the Eiffel tower and stumbled across a pub that served up a good cheeseburger and appetizers. We rested here a while before heading out again, the Eiffel tower seemed to be so close yet it took us an awful long time to walk there! Before we knew it, it was 9:00 p.m. and we were standing at the base of the Eiffel Tower watching the light show that occurred at the top of every hour from dusk until midnight. We all took a few pictures and then eagerly hailed an Uber to take us back to our hotel. We were all ready for a good night's sleep to continue adjusting for the time change!

Sunday Evening, April 24, 2016
Michelle Moore & Cuatro Strack

On this Sunday afternoon, I visited Cathédrale Notre-Dame de Paris. This famous Gothic cathedral was begun in 1163, and completed 182 years later in 1345. In 1793, during the French Revolution, it was deconsecrated as a

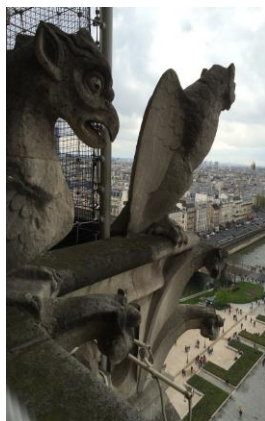


religious house, and dedicated to the Cult of Reason. Many of its treasures were destroyed or plundered, and Lady Liberty replaced the Virgin Mary on many of the altars. It was given back to the Catholic Church in April of 1802. and restoration began in 1845. It was again consecrated in

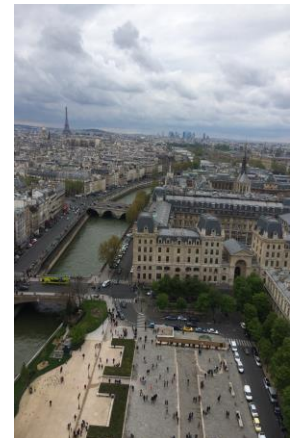


1864. WW2 caused more damage, and in 1991 a major maintenance and restoration project began that continues to this day. Dr. Jim, Lee and I climbed to the top of the cathedral. We climbed 387 steps up narrow, spiral staircases, but it was worth it the views from the top were incredible!

As you walk around Paris, you are left in awe of the size and



amount of grand buildings. From the Eiffel Tower, to the Louvre, to the Arc de Triomphe, the town was very grand. And most of the apartment buildings were 6 to 7 stories with shops on the bottom. After this, Dr. Jim and I joined Matt D, Cuatro, Jorge and Eric. We walked around, stopping in different places for a snack or a drink. We even found a Mexican place! We ended up at a seafood place, where we ordered up a couple of big shellfish platters. I don't think any of us were impressed with the food for the price! Finally back to the hotel, where we joined some of our class and visited about the day.



Monday morning, April 25, 2016
Eric Turpen and Brad Stufflebeam

In the morning our group met at the top floor meeting room of our hotel overlooking a remarkable view of the Paris landscape. Our meeting was with David G. Salmon, Agricultural Affairs Counselor with the USDA. The USDA's Foreign Ag Service works in 162 different countries and currently maintains 98 overseas offices. Mr. Salmon's work in France includes reporting information on the nation's agriculture, trade policy and assuring market access. Cooperating with producer groups, Mr. Salmon works to negotiate bilateral trade agreements.



David G. Salmon, Foreign Affairs Counselor, USDA



TALL briefing with Mr. Salmon

Currently, the French domestic Ag markets are struggling with competition in both meat and dairy industries. Roughly the same size as Texas, in the last 20 years France has lost 75% of their farmers, with 20% of new farmers having no previous Ag experience. Roughly 250,000 farmers now exist in the country, while they are anticipating to lose another 20% of farmers within the next five years. France currently rates number one in the European Union for producers of wheat and barley, and number two for rape (canola). Behind America, they are the number two exporter for processed foods to the EU with 80% of their exports being liquid (wine). Cranberry and sweet potato production are expanding markets.

Culturally, France is suffering from a large influx of immigration with a heavy tax burden of 50% on wages plus a 20% unemployment rate. The high costs of labor and regulation restraints are the greatest burden on industry.

There also exist a large mistrust of government among the population. Stimulated by Chernobyl, when the government worked to assure its population that they were safe from nuclear fallout and later the public awareness of the use of hormones in veal which destroyed the market practically overnight with boycotts. Today, due to public concern, GMOs and hormones are not allowed in the food supply, stimulated by NGOs and the press, boycotts create massive impact on markets which has led politicians to avoid the issues in fear of backlash of public opinion and re-election.

Monday afternoon, April 25, 2016
Steven Akers and Jorge Luis Alvarez, Jr.

We loaded our bus and traveled to Saclay, 30 km away to enjoy lunch at Novotel Saclay. As arriving at the location, our bus driver Frank



miraculously backed up our large bus into one of the smallest, narrowest parking spot ever. It must be talent; it would have been difficult just driving forward much less backwards. At the hotel, we had the opportunity to experience a French meal. We were served a green salad



and hot goat cheese on toast along with Boeuf Bourguignon.

After our meal, we departed 5 km away to Jouy-en-Josas for a farm visit, La Ferme de Villain. The owners, M. Oliver Des Courtails and M. Jean-Marie Hennequin, along with M. Courtail's wife, greeted us. The farm consists of 45 full time employees and a beef cattle operation of 700 head. We were taken to view their Holstein cattle operation, which consist of 300 head. They spoke how their cows were grouped by age in sheds, how they wear ankle monitors to track production, and AI readiness. They explained that they milk their dairy cows twice daily on a carousel and each cow produces 35 liters daily (9.25 gallons) (US average is 6-7 gallons per day-Midwest Dairy Association). They also explained how all of the cattle waste was collected and used as fertilizer on their fields.



The farm also has 50 hectares (123.5 acres) of farmland where they produce vegetables, fruit, and flowers, all which are self-picked. They also have a farm store on site, where they sell cheese, butter, cream, fruit, vegetables, wine, and ice cream, along with a meat counter with poultry, fresh beef, lamb, pork, and deli meat.

Monday Evening, April 25, 2016

Wes Chandler and Lee Chastain



Left on our own, to once again explore the nightlife of Paris, many of us set out on a mission to experience a taste of “traditional” French wine. We hopped on the Paris metro, from the stop closest to our hotel, (Plaza La Defense) which was the very last stop on the (Number One) metro line. Our destination was 68 rue Jean Jacques Rousseau, or the legendary O’Chateau Wine Bar. We chose this particular



venue because the bar had been consistently named as one of “the Best Wine Bars in Paris” by numerous agencies, and they had been the recipient of not one, but two, “Wine Spectator Awards of Excellence” since opening in 2004. The bar has been kind of been adopted by Parisians and visitors worldwide as a landmark destination in Paris for experienced wine drinkers. Always offering a unique combination of 40 wines by the glass, and hundreds more by the bottle, the bar touts that one could literally try a new wine every day of the year at O’Chateau. No matter what the trials and tribulations of operating a small wine tasting company in Paris may be... day after day, tasting after tasting, the shop’s greatest pride is that their clients consistently rate their experience at O’Chateau as one of their many highlights of their trip to Paris. More Happy Customers from Texas added to the list.





After finishing our wine flights at the bar, our group felt we needed something to soak up the grape juice, so we voted on pasta, and found a quaint little Italian bistro just down the street named the Little

Italy Café. Although it was a rainy evening, we chose to sit outside underneath an awning. Given all of their outdoor tables were extremely close to each other, one could described the seating as cozy, but it created the perfect French dinning atmosphere for our meal. I most note that our service was excellent, the waiter spoke English, and I ordered the homemade Penne Putanesco on his recommendation. We retired early as our appointment at Rungis was at 03:00 am the next day.



Tuesday Morning, April 26, 2016
Cody White and Leah Wilkinson



Tuesday started with a 3 a.m. wake up call for our chance to get to experience a part of Paris that most Parisians probably do not know exist. Rungis is one of eighteen different food distribution markets throughout France; however it is by far the largest. The market moved closer to the airport in the 1960s to a 232 hectare property and is modeled after Hunts

Point and New Fulton Fish Market that we toured in New York City. The market sells 1.5 million tons of fruits and vegetables per year with 9 billion euro per year in sales. It is the only market in the world that has this variety of products from fruits and vegetables, dairy and cheese, meat and poultry and fresh flowers. Sixty five percent of the product sold goes to Paris, twenty five percent distributed to towns outside of Paris and the other ten percent is exported.

After suiting up we were off on our tour with Nathalie, who greeted the Texans by wearing her own cowboy hat! She guided us through the fish market (which is open from 3 to 6 a.m. every day and hence the reason for our early morning), fruits, vegetables, cheese, meat,



poultry and flowers. We had a much better understanding of the European's affinity with food by the displays and the 35 Euros for a pallet of strawberries! We finished our tour with breakfast at one of the many restaurants they have on the property. The traditional European breakfast of meats, cheese, bread and fresh squeezed orange juice was served and enjoyed by most.



We then loaded up the bus for a nice 135 kilometer drive to Orléans as Frank, our bus driver, provided a nice smooth ride for everyone to get in a nice little nap in order to be able to make it through the rest of the day!

Tuesday Afternoon, April 26, 2016
Sandra Choate and Colin Chopelas

Tall XIV had a few hours of free time to explore the city of Orleans where our group split up and visited several sights. After the 3am start of the day for us to attend the market, it was difficult to motivate us to get off the warm bus for lunch. The weather was the same as when we arrived, damp, cold and windy, but we all agreed that the feel



of Orleans was more of what we expected than that of busy Paris. We stopped for lunch in small groups at local restaurants throughout the old town section of the city. After we all made it back to the bus we transferred 5 km to our next speaker. We were greeted by two individuals for a round table discussion.

The first speaker was a Chamber of Commerce Representative for the region, as well as a farmer. He produced wheat, barley, corn (maze), sugar beets, and rapeseed (canola). The area he farmed in has lower rain fall than much of the region so much of the land is irrigated. Regulations are quite strict on water usage for irrigation but control does come from local water districts, similar to our system in Texas. He felt that French



farmers had little to no voice in the political system and were at the mercy of what legislation was imposed upon them. One example was in regard to farm workers. It can be very difficult to fire a worker once you have hired them and the wage they are paid is appropriate for the work but once the social payments are added in it becomes too expensive for the farmers to afford.

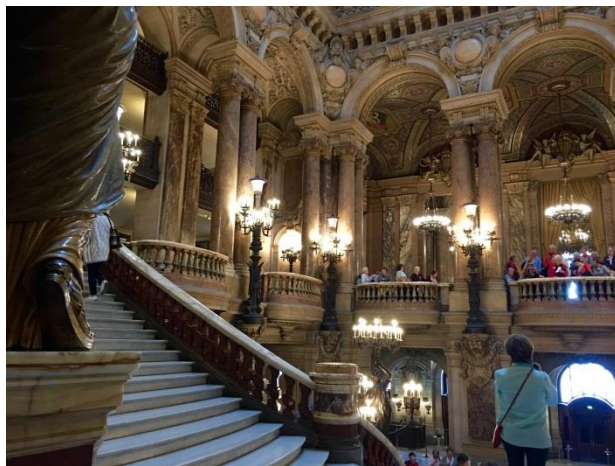
Mr. Girard works for an agency that provides tools to farmers in the region, such as soil testing and consulting. The association receives funds from a tax on farmers (50%) and from the fee paid for the services by the farmer.

The region covers about 1 million acres and receives an average of 27 inches of rainfall per year. The temperature ranges from just below freezing to 75-80 degrees Fahrenheit. The largest crop grown in the area is wheat, which makes up about 50% of the total crop land. With the use of irrigation the yields are very good, approximately 135 bushels per acre on the better soils. As we learned that throughout the EU farmers are heavily subsidized in comparison to US producers. French farmers receive approximately \$135 per acre in direct payments from the government but those payments have been reduced over time. Also, each producer is required to set aside 5% of their land in Conservation programs (CRP).

It was a very interesting meeting with the two French Agriculture experts that answered many of our questions regarding labor, regulations, and production goals. The TALL XIV class returned to the bus and made the trip back into Paris. Before arriving at the hotel we drove through a light snow shower coming back into the city!

Tuesday Evening, April 26, 2016
Dustin Cleaving and Matt Davis

In the weeks leading up to the International Trip, a classmate sent out an e mail to the cohort urging us to attend a ballet while we were in Paris. There was skepticism by most and most decided to pass on the opportunity, but a few of us purchased tickets and attended the ballet. As we sat in the hotel's lobby trying to get our group together, time



was running short on making it in time. The group gathered and walked out onto the street to a light sprinkling rain, someone said, "it will be fine, it's not but four blocks away!" Four blocks passed, the sprinkle became rain, then another four, it was pouring, and two blocks further, we decided to get on the subway and be more efficient in our route. As we arrived at the ballet, we made a whole lap around the building, which covered a city block, before we found the entrance. The guards did not

want to let us in as we were fifteen minutes late, I guess since we were covered in rain and had sad faces, they felt sorry for us and we entered the beautiful ballet hall. Upon finding our section, the seating helper was skeptical of our entry because we were late as well. We finally entered a dark ballet hall to see around ten dancers, in street clothes, not exactly doing what we thought ballet dancers did. After watching for 10 minutes, I began to put a story to the seemingly senseless pushing, falling and jumping the dancers did. This is when it became interesting. The dancers were telling a rather simple story by making motions on stage as well as being pushed away into the curtains. Upon exit, it was fun to hear the group's opinions of the show as we did not get to sit together. Some still wondered what exactly was going on and some had put together a story for the event, like I did. This experience proved to be worthwhile and definitely brought culture to those of us that would have never had an opportunity like going to a ballet in Paris, France.

Wednesday morning, April 27, 2016

Blaine Junfin and Matt Gruhlkey



*France Conseil Elevage (FCEL)
(National Ag Umbrella Organization)
Cambrai, France*

As our international trip started day five, our group left the historic city of Paris in route to Brussels, Belgium. On our way to Brussels we stopped off in Cambrai, France to learn more about Conseil Elevage, a French national umbrella organization of companies serving cattle and goat producers. Mrs. Dominique Gavillon, the marketing director and communications director, gave our group a very thorough overview of the structure of the organization and its goals.

Their overall missions are to represent their client's interests, promote their expertise, reinforce their actions and devise/disseminate innovation. The organization was started



in 1907. Dramatic changes began to occur starting in the 1970's. As time moved on, in the 1980's the organization adopted more technology and budgeting expertise to assist their member clients. Now the organization encompasses a wide array of areas of expertise. They give unbiased advice to their clients based upon data and analysis in order to improve the viability of their client's

operations. Conseil Elevage focuses on R&D, training via its advisors, new technology and assistance with regulations. The organization employs 1,220 advisors in the dairy/goat sector and 250 advisors in the beef cattle sector. There are 2,500 agents who assist the dairies in quality control of their milk. In addition, the organization employs 260 engineers for technology advancement. Conseil Elevage assists dairies that produce 2.5 billion liters of milk per year (10% of France's national production). This represents 600 billion euros per year in value. Conseil Elevage was a great host and truly enlightened our group on the challenges of animal agriculture in France and what they are doing to assist the producers.



Blonde d'aquitaine beef cattle

Wednesday Afternoon, April 27th, 2016

Brad Lubbers and Mariano Lerma

After leaving the French Producers Council we headed to lunch at Tabl Hotel restaurant L'aquarelle. Lunch was great we had a great 4 course lunch. First choice was salad/quiche, fish soup, or patte. Then veal, fish, chicken. Last a dessert with a nice variety. A great French lunch experience. (The wine wasn't bad either).



Next, we made our way over to the Cooperative Association of Seville agriculture exports. A business which consists of two brothers and a neighbors. The operation consists of 150 dairy (Holstein) cows that

produce about 1.4 million liters per yr. They also have 50 hectare of grass, 70 hectare of cereal grains, 5 hectares sugarbeets, and the rest of the land goes into corn silage production. The silage production remains on the farm



and is used in the rations for the dairy herd. In addition to the farming operation they also found a way to benefit for the waste produced on the farm. A Biogas plant with a



110kw capacity. The cows produce 9000 kg per cows per year in waste which goes into biogas treatment. An additional 50 tons from



onions and finally they get grass clippings from town. The

entire process is about a six week rotation from start to finish. French government requires an additional project to use the heat in order to get the bio gas subsidy. As a result they began producing Spirulina, which is a cyanobacterium (blue-green algae) that can be consumed by humans and other animals. Spirulina is considered to be a superfood, dried spirulina contains about 60% (51–71%) protein. We were told there



is approximately only 200 Producers of spirulina in France.



Wednesday Evening April 27, 2016
Michelle Moore and Cuatro Strack

On Wednesday, we moved on our tour bus from Paris, France to Brussels, Belgium. We were able to see lots of countryside, looking across rolling fields of wheat, canola, and potato. It is nice to see the small towns of the French countryside. We could view the town that almost all have a church steeple visible. Although current attendance in both France and throughout the EU is declining dramatically, their Christian heritage is prominent and visible with all the grand churches. We crossed into Belgium without a stop. No border check, no guards - just like driving from Texas into Oklahoma or New Mexico. After our arrival in Brussels, we settled into our hotel. Hotel Bedford. A few of us walked a couple of blocks to Houtsiplou, a local cafe. Dr. Jim, Sandra, Leah and I enjoyed our meal, complete with famous french fries. After our meal, we walked a few blocks to the Mannekin Pis, an iconic 17th-century fountain with a bronze statue of a small boy. Nearby were many small shops selling souvenirs, ice cream, and Belgian waffles.



I visited with Blaine the next day, and learned he and Matt D., Steven, and Wes went to eat, and were seated next to three independent videographers. They got to visiting about agriculture, asking questions and sharing information. They discussed concerns about GMOs and general ag practices. These reporters had never really heard from the perspective of inside the ag industry, and our guys were able to share with them the positive aspects of what agriculture really is and does.

Thursday Morning, April 28, 2016

Eric Turpen and Brad Stufflebeam

The European Union Parliament Building is the biggest structure in the Union. Each of the major political parties has its own building, and there is a common voting chamber building. There are 751 members of Parliament, of which they elect their own President. There are 14 official languages spoken in the voting chamber.



EU Parliament in Session

The EU has a seven year Ag Budget, which makes up 450 billion Euro or 40% of the total EU Budget. This is drastically more than the US Farm Bill Budget. Of the total ag budget, 2/3 are used for direct payments, and 1/3 of the money is used for development programs. The average direct payment is 260 euro per hectare. Belgium's are as high as 450 euro/ha., Poland is 200 euro/ha., and Germany is 350 euro/ha. The development programs focus on Eastern European Countries, and cost share for the modernization of farms. The idea is that it will bring the whole level of the EU up. The direct program payments have stipulations such as in the U.S. The producer has to be a good environmental steward and has to have cropping diversity. The direct payment has helped farmers in the EU stay profitable with the increases in production costs, huge dairy surplus, African Swine Fever in Pork, and the Russian Ag Exports Embargo. Direct Payments are constituting 50% of producers' net income.



The panel also discussed the overall financial health of the EU. Currently, Greece Portugal, and Spain have received large loans and bailouts. There is still money that has not been paid to them, and will not be until there are reforms in place. This help was given by the EU to help these countries from falling apart. The funding source came from France and

German Banks, and Ireland helped by buying some guarantees.

As in the U.S., the E.U. has to continue to prove to the tax base the importance of agriculture. Their goal is to continue the European model of farming (Family Style, high standards, and environmentally friendly), while opening markets to the world. There is a big struggle on protecting the EU vs. the world market.

TTIP was another topic that the Ag Committee discussed. The EU and US have a very good relationship. The EU wants to enhance access to US markets for their products. They want to find a balanced agreement without compromising food safety levels. The challenge is going to be that the two countries have very different ideas on what food safety is. A major difference of the two countries is their risk management procedures. Those being, chemicals, GMOs, cosmetics, feed standards, and animal welfare. TTIP cannot include an uneven playing field, i.e. GMO legislation. The EU is big on Geographical Indicators. The US has this, but does not focus on it as much. The EU believes this protects traditional products. Examples are French Wine and Belgium Chocolate. TTIP can lead to the biggest free trade agreement in the world. A concern for the US is will they keep their end of the deal, as we are currently seeing them not upkeep their promises to import certain US Products. TTIP has some resistance in the EU because they recognize that they cannot compete with the US and other countries on a level playing field. A large reason for this is their extremely high energy costs. LNG from the US may help ease this. Another obstacle is the EU stance against GMO. This puts them at a huge production disadvantage. The committee sees the value in GMO, but recognize that it is a huge social issue that will be very difficult if not impossible to change. Europeans for the most part are well fed. It is hard for them to see the value of increased food production.

The public is largely against GMO, therefore the politicians, though they may see the benefit of GMO usage, have to vote against it to stay in office. Some leaders and parts of the public do not even want GMO feed stuff allowed in the



EU. This would critically stifle the animal industry as all of the soybeans that are imported are GMO. 90% of the experts say it is safe, but 10% have no evidence but are creating doubt. This is getting to be an increasing argument. Glyco-Phospahtes (Roundup) is getting to be another huge issue. Some EU media did a story on a scientist that said this causes cancer in the reproductive parts of men. If roundup approval is lost it will further put their agriculture behind. There is a huge fight between farmers and the public over this. Technological advances have met resistance with Europeans throughout history. When tractors were introduced, Polish farmers believed it would end agriculture. Perhaps there will be a social advancement through GMOs that will help them accept it, such as insulin production.

The Committee spoke about Environmental and Renewable Energy. There is currently a huge interest in shale gas. Poland is the leaders in this discussion. The people that oppose it make problems and quote US mishaps for reasons not to do it. In transportation, 20% has to come from renewable sources. Currently there is a large anti biofuel lobby, they are trying to reduce the blend rate. They say that the use of biofuels has led to the destruction of Rainforest. They are leaning towards biomass and cellulose ethanol.



In conclusion the Chairman discussed how globalized the world ag markets are. He mentioned that farmers in the EU do not understand what is happening in the world and that they can be their own worst enemy at times. They may have to admit and use the standards of other countries to be able to compete. EU farmers are growing a variety of goods versus huge commercial farms in other countries.

Thursday afternoon, April 28, 2016

Cody White and Leah Wilkinson

We split up for lunch after watching the Parliament voting in the general assembly. We met back up at the Parlamentarium for a walk through of the history of the European Union and Parliament. The use of technology in the exhibit areas was very fascinating and intriguing in how the messages were conveyed. The message of unity of the member states was strong and especially noticed as the U.K. will be voting soon to exit the EU.



After the Parlamentarium, we walked to the U.S. Embassy for our next meeting. As we walked, we passed the metro stop where the bombing had occurred several weeks ago. Besides for the flowers outside the metro stop, you would not have known the bombing had occurred there. Several took a



moment to stop and pay our respects both here and at the memorial in the town center.

We finished off our afternoon meeting with officials from the U.S. Department of Agriculture; Karisha Kuypers, the Agricultural Attaché to the EU from the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) and Marc Gilkey, the Attaché for Europe, Africa and the Middle East Region for the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS). While we did not meet in the official Embassy building, we did get a taste of the level of security protecting our Foreign Service professionals – from the steel enforced door, keeping our passports and having to shut off our cell phones when we entered the building. Karisha and Marc described their responsibilities within FAS and APHIS and the role they play to open and expand markets for our U.S. agricultural products.



Thursday Evening, April 28, 2016
Steven Akers and Jorge L. Alvarez, Jr.

We enjoyed an exquisite dinner at Restaurant Chez Leon in Brussels. The restaurant is a family owned restaurant that was founded in 1893. Leon Restaurants have expanded in time and have now opened 75 restaurants in the space of twenty-five years. Our dinner began with a choice of Little Salad Platter or Mussels Soup followed by a choice of Mussels a la Mariniere, ½-roast chicken, baked sea bream filet or Flamish beef goulash. We then had dessert; a chocolate mouse or caramel flan.

After dinner many of us walked back to our hotel, about 1 km away, where we either went to enjoy drinks at the bar or a good night's rest. Others from the group headed out for a stroll out to experience and explore Brussels.



Friday Morning, April 29, 2016
Wes Chandler and Lee Chastain

Our first stop after loading the bus Friday morning was to Fertilizers Europe Group in Brussels. We began with an introduction from Tiffany who gave us an overview of their operation. She shared that they employ 95,000 people and have 120 production sites. She also explained the role of each of their five committees, which work in conjunction with various working groups and task forces. We then heard from Ermis, who is the Senior Agriculture & Environment Policy Advisor. He spoke to us about their strategic pillars for EU trade policy. Fertilizers Europe advocates that the EU should adopt a multi-functional trade policy that fully integrates contemporary challenges into the trade policy body and



activity, which would effectively level the playing field for the industry. He also addressed international trade policy, and noted that he is not calling for an international managed economy but rather recognition that globalization and regional integration require joint policies in order to ensure an equal opportunity to all parties involved.





While at the Fertilizers Europe facility, we were given some informational packets with some very interesting facts. One comment that caught my attention was that in 1960, two people were fed from one hectare of land. In 2025, five people will need to be fed from one hectare of land. It seems quite evident that the role played by Fertilizers Europe Group will be vital in the years to come. With the world population set to reach 9.1 billion by 2050, global food production will have to increase by some 70% to keep pace with the growing demand. Most of the increases will have to come from better agricultural productivity, as the negative impact on climate change and bio-diversity is widely accepted. Changes in land use account globally for 12% of all greenhouse emissions.



Friday Afternoon, April 29, 2016
Sandra Choate and Colin Chopelas

Following a enlightening visit at Fertilizer Europe, we were treated to a wonderful lunch at Au Stekerlapatte, in the heart of the historic Marolles neighborhood. The restaurant



was filled with the spirit of Brussels through its typical Belgian decor. Our meal of meatballs and frites is a specialty Marollen quarter of Brussels.

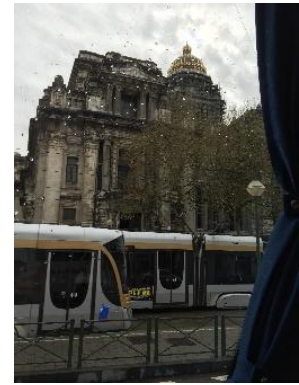
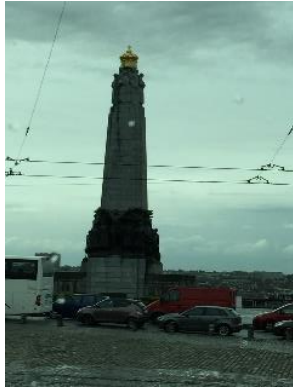
Well known for its chocolate; we could not miss an opportunity to visit with a chocolatier and epicier. The chocolate factory Zaabär was created at the end of 2007 by François-Jean Decarpentrie. “Zaabär”, name inspired by the Spices Bazaar of Istanbul, is an innovative concept: based on the association of Belgian chocolate and spices coming from all over the world. The spices that were incorporated into the Zaabär chocolates was entertaining and different. A wonderful demonstration of how chocolate is molded and a video explaining how it is produced added education to our fun. We each got to eat a Manneken Pis – that doesn’t even sound appetizing. Numerous classmates purchased chocolates to “take home to their family and friends”. It would be interesting to see how much actually made it home.



Brussels is a beautiful city and TALL XIV was given the opportunity to explore its beauty this lovely, rainy and cold Friday afternoon.



Some of the places we saw...



The Royal Palace of Brussels was a beautiful place although according to Jan no one actually lives there.



Our final stop before returning to the hotel was a chance to view Palais de Expositions and the Atonium two additions to the architecture of Brussels due to hosting the Brussels International Exposition in 1935 and Expo 58 – the 1958 Worlds Fiar, respectively, Most impressive of these was the Atonium consisting of 9 aluminum spheres connected by stars, ecolators and a lift enclosed in aluminum tubes. CNN has deemed it Europe's most bazar building.



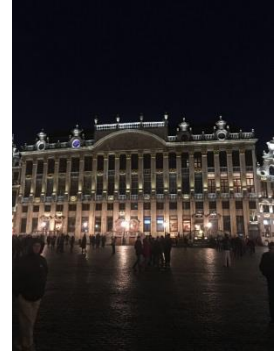
Friday Evening, April 29, 2016

Dustin Cleavinger and Matt Davis

We did the same thing this evening that we always do around this time....look for food! At this point in the trip we wanted to try to find something a little different than the



local food we had been eating. We found a Thai restaurant that wasn't far from our hotel and we decided to give it a try. Turned out to be pretty good, or maybe we were just that hungry. After dinner we wanted to do a little site seeing so we walked down to the Grand Place market square. The Europeans



began construction on the Grand Place almost 1,000 years ago.

It is no longer used for a "central market" like it once was but the buildings are still a VERY impressive site to see.

After walking around the Grand Place for a little while the evening was starting to come to an end. On the way back to the hotel we



decided to stop at the Manneken Pis Taverne to quench the thirst we had built up from all of the walking around we had done. The Manneken Pis is a very old (like most things in Brussels) tavern that is located right across the street from the popular Manneken Pis fountain. When we entered the tavern we started a conversation with



the staff. Upon finding out we were from Texas they were gracious enough to give us a grand tour of the tavern. They showed us the cellar where all of the beer is kept. The tavern was so old that it still had dirt floors and ancient brick walls in the cellar. The staff sent us away with several different beer glasses to take as souvenirs. It was a very fun evening!



Saturday Morning April 30, 2016
Blaine Junfin & Matt Gruhlkey

Great travel to Ghent through some beautiful parts of Belgium to arrive in Ghent to have a brief history from madam Carlee. Ghent is a city and a municipality located in the Flemish Region of Belgium. It is the capital and largest city of the East Flanders province. The city started as a settlement at the confluence of the Rivers Scheldt and Leie and in the Late Middle Ages became one of the largest and richest cities of northern Europe with some 50,000 people in 1300. Today it is a busy city with a port and a university. The municipality comprises the city of Ghent proper and the surrounding towns of Afsnee, Desteldonk, Drongen, Gentbrugge, Ledeborg, Mariakerke, Mendonk, Oostakker, Sint-Amandsberg, Sint-Denijs-Westrem, Sint-Kruis-Winkel, Wondelgem and Zwijnaarde. With 240,191 inhabitants in the beginning of 2009, Ghent is Belgium's second largest municipality by number of inhabitants. Walking through the city of Ghent is like walking through a historical painting, an architectural masterpiece of castles, cathedrals, churches and old merchant houses!



Saturday Afternoon, April 30th, 2016
Brad Lubbers and Mariano Lerma

While touring on this Saturday we had the opportunity to visit Gent and Antwerp. Along the way from Gent to Antwerp our tour guide arranged for a meal of Lamb steak and potatoes with crepes for dessert. This was a great lunch and we soon found our way on to Antwerp. Today we did not have our normal tour guide and we spent our time with Jeanne, a private tour director from Brussels. She did a great job of guiding us through the cities and pointing out landmarks and facts of the areas.

In the afternoon we visited Antwerp. Antwerp is a port city, one of the largest in the world. The port of Antwerp is the second largest port in Europe. This port was also key in the latter years of World War II as Hitler had not destroyed this port and it was instrumental in keeping the Allied forces well supplied. It is credited that this port city was crucial to the Allies defeating the German's.

As well as being one of the largest ports in the world, Antwerp is also home to four different diamond exchanges. It is estimated that approximately 80% of the rough diamonds in the area pass through Antwerp, as well as approximately 50% of the cut diamonds. This makes Antwerp a significant economic center in northern Europe.

Our group departed the bus for a short visit of one area of the port city. Here the large group again separated into many smaller groups to see the sights. Soon we were back on the bus and headed back to Brussels. This would be our last night in Brussels before checking out of the hotel and moving on to Dusseldorf for the final few days of our trip.

Saturday Evening, April 30, 2016
Michelle Moore and Cuatro Strack

After our day in Ghent and Antwerp, we returned to our hotel, where we broke up for dinner. Several had been to a Thai restaurant the night before, and wanted to go again. They we joined by most of the class, and we all took off to eat. As we walked to the restaurant, we passed the Brussels Stock Exchange. This has been the site of a spontaneous memorial to the victims of the terrorists' bombings on March 22. This very human and empathetic gesture, however, has been usurped by some wanting to make a political statement. It was to see a gesture of sympathy taken over by another agenda.



Brussels Stock Exchange (French: Bourse de Bruxelles, Dutch: Beurs van Brussel)

After our dinner, Blaine, Colin, Jorge, Brad S., and I walked to the Brussels Beer Project. This is a collaborative project using co-creation to become more innovative & daring and to bring fresh air into a sometimes too conservative Belgian craft brewing scene. There the guys tried some of their craft beers. Soon it was time to call it a night.

Sunday Morning, May 1, 2016
Eric Turpen and Brad Stufflebeam

Our group got on the road early on a cold Sunday morning, our destination would be the Henri Chapelle American Cemetery in Belgium. As we anticipated this memorable visit in honor of our fallen heroes of World War II, the cold foggy weather across the countryside provided a quiet sullen trip which would prepare our mood.



Upon our arrival, we were met by Superintendent Bobby Bell, retired US Navy. Mr. Bell gave us a powerful and humbling tour beginning with the story of our American troops invading Normandy and the valiant march of the US First Army across Europe and ultimately the Battle of the Bulge as they advanced on toward Germany. After a visit in the Chapel, Mr. Bell walked our group among the headstones of the cemetery, stopping numerous times, he shared the valiant stories of men who had all sacrificed for the war, all heroes in their own right. It was a powerful visit that left us all reflecting on the impact and realities of war with the cost paid by many brave men for our freedom.

The Henri Chapelle Cemetery consists of 57 acres settled in the beautiful rolling hills of the Belgium countryside. With 7,992 burials, 450 are soldiers missing in action. According to the American Battle Monuments Commission, "The cemetery possesses great military historic significance as it holds fallen



Americans of two major efforts, one covering the U.S. First Army's drive in September

1944 through northern France, Belgium, Holland and Luxembourg into Germany, and the second covering the Battle of the Bulge. It was from the temporary cemetery at Henri-Chapelle that the first shipments of remains of American war dead were returned to the United States for permanent burial. The repatriation program began on July 27, 1947 at a special ceremony at the cemetery when the disinterment began. The first shipment of 5,600 American war dead from Henri-Chapelle left Antwerp, Belgium the first week of October 1947. An impressive ceremony was held, with over 30,000 Belgian citizens attending, along with representatives of the Belgium government and senior Americans.”

As our time at the Cemetery came to an end, our group gratefully thanked Mr. Bell for the remarkable and powerful tour that he provided for our group. His passion and respect for our servicemen was genuine and compelling. We boarded the bus for another quiet and reflective segment of our journey.



Sunday Afternoon, May 1, 2016

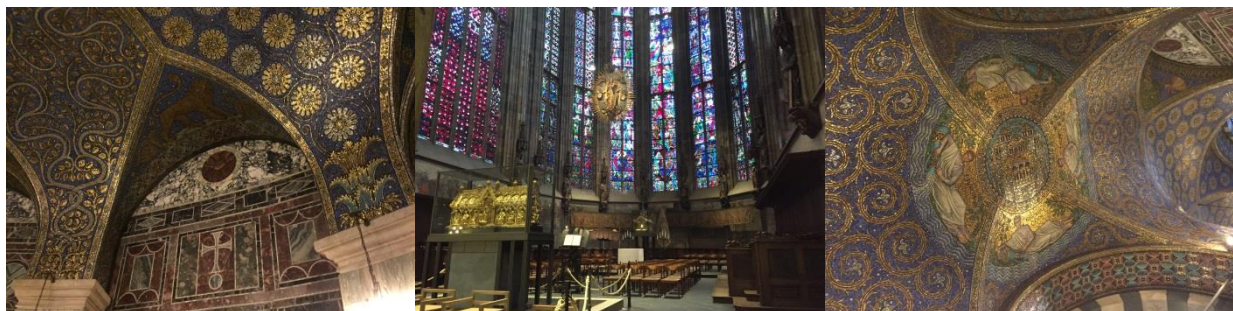
Cody White and Leah Wilkinson

After an inspiring visit to the Henri- Chapelle American Cemetery and Memorial we crossed the border from Belgium to Germany and realized the seamless transition between countries that occurs in the EU. We travelled to Aachen, Germany for lunch and a leisurely afternoon. The group ate lunch at an Italian restaurant in the city center. While most were hoping for some German food, the pasta meal was a nice change of pace and most enjoyed a German beer with their meal.

After lunch, we were on our own to explore the city. The city of Aachen has a population of 240,000 and the city center was pretty busy with shoppers. Some groups found a display around the Ratskeller that described the agricultural history of the city under Charlemagne.



Europe is full of beautiful cathedrals but one of the most beautiful ones is in Aachen. The Aachen Cathedral was built in the 800's and serves as a pilgrimage for thousands. The cathedral is full of significant relics all linked to biblical narratives, including the swaddling clothes of baby Jesus. The cathedral serves as the resting place of Charlemagne. Some of the windows were destroyed in World War II and have been replaced. The mosaics in the ceiling were tremendous to view and were one of a kind.

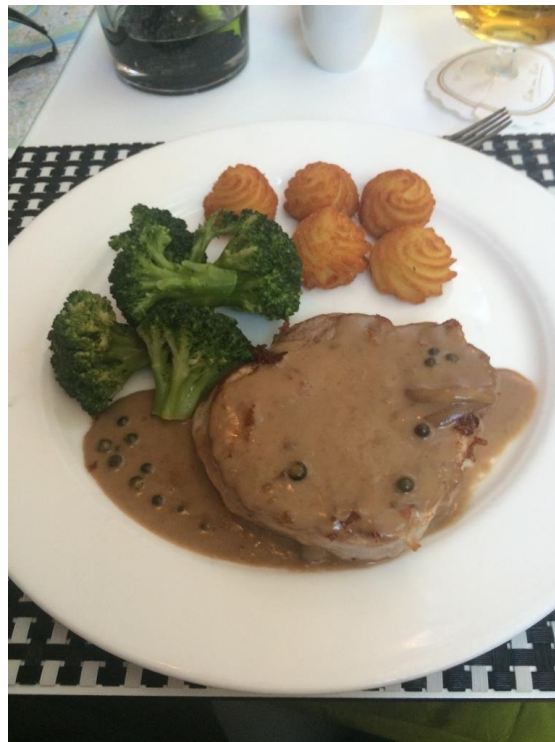


After our time in the city, we loaded back on the bus to finish our trip to Dusseldorf. From the farm land we can see from the bus windows, we have picked a good region in Germany to learn about their agriculture.

Sunday Evening, May 1, 2016
Steven Akers and Jorge L. Alvarez, Jr.

We are now headed to the Dusseldorf region, about 80 km away. We checked into the Mercure Hotel Dusseldorf City. After we checked and got comfortable in our rooms, we then proceeded to dinner at the hotel. We enjoyed a rich tomato soup, followed by pork back steak with pepper sauce, broccoli, and potatoes duchesse. Our delicious dessert was a chocolate mousse with rum cherries.

After dinner many of us went out for a stroll to explore the night in Dusseldorf, while others called it a night.



Monday Morning, May 2, 2016
Cody White and Leah Wilkinson

Day 11 started with breakfast and we then began our short 25km trip to Monheim for Bayer CropScience Headquarters. We were met by our guide, Judith Wehr, who informally introduced herself with an abrupt “Excuse me, Excuse me sir! Please no cameras allowed on the property!” as Cody attempted to get a picture of the Bayer CropScience Headquarters sign located just inside the gates.

Judith then led us to a conference room where she provided a brief overview of Bayer. The company was founded over 150 years ago in 1863. Bayer is a life sciences company that is currently divided into 4 business operations: Pharmaceuticals, Consumer Health, Crop Science and Animal Health. The company has over 116,000 employees and exceeded €46.3 billion in sales for 2015. €10.2 billion or 22% of this was from the CropScience division of the business.

We were then toured two different sections. Peter Damman in the R&D department described the research process for fungicides. Although it was technical, Peter was passionate about his research. He emphasized the lengthy process from identifying an effective fungicide, through the various stages of testing and then ultimate approval for use in production. Judith showed the Compound Logistics Center that provides samples to the researchers as requested. They typically add 150,000 compounds annually to the facility that currently warehouses over 2.5 million different compounds. The compound is extracted in small quantities by automation. The precision automation was truly impressive and a prime example of the superiority of German engineering.

The concern over feeding a growing population with decreasing availability of agricultural land was expressed throughout our visit. They are providing great solutions by offering products and technologies to make the agricultural economy more productive. Before lunch, Judith graciously permitted a picture of the sign!



Monday Afternoon, May 2, 2016

Sandra Choate and Colin Chopelas

Following an informative and interesting tour of the research facilities at Bayer Crop Science; the TALL XIV members were treated to a lunch fit for royalty. The meal presentation was impressive and the food was delicious. We were honored to have Dr. Mathias Kremer; of Bayer Crop Science join us for lunch and offer a brief welcome.



Our afternoon adventure included a tour of one of Bayer's ForwardFarming cooperatives, Damianshof near Rommerskirchen, Germany. This farm has been owned and farmed by Bernd Ollings' family for six generations. He, Judith Wehr, and Andreas Lagermann-Konhrst were proud to show us the research that Bayer is doing to build sustainable agriculture. They first showed us test plots for numerous trials. They went in depth on the management and testing practices that were implemented as we toured through these smaller plots that cover approximately 3% of the farm. We continued our tour of the farm through the larger fields as well. By comparison Damianshof is a relatively large farm for the region reaching 283 hectares. It is a partnership with Bernd and 2 other colleagues. Crops grown on the farm include winter wheat, sugar beets, potatoes, winter barley and oil seed rape. It was decided that yield was comparable to yield in the United States – at the same latitude and climate – not truly comparable to any of our Texas producers.

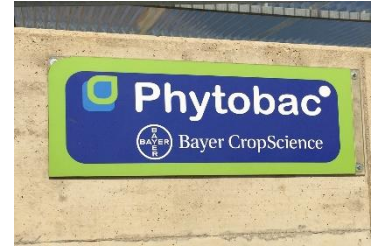


Bernard also spent time talking with us on how the surrounding landscape had changed since his father had farmed on this land. Within sight of the fields you could see three coal powered electrical plants as well as a “mountain” that we formed as the surrounding land was mined. I questioned as to whether reclamation was required but at this point there does not appear to be any regulation on that. Germany is working toward “cleaner” energy which was evident by the windmills.

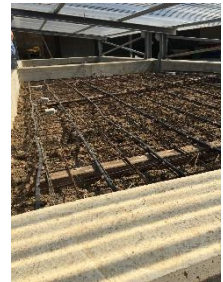
We were allowed to explore through barns and equipment and we were introduced to



one of Bayer's biological agricultural cleaning systems. The Phytobac™ system ensures that contaminants cannot get into sewage systems or nearby bodies of water when spraying equipment is filled or cleaned



on the farm. It is an innovative process that actually takes the waste and wash water through normal microbial biodegradation; however at an accelerated rate. The water is eventually allowed to evaporate while enzymes break down the residual fungicides, herbicides and insecticides. Fun fact – if you go to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-DJ9JliLeRc> you can watch Bernrd demonstrate the Phytobac facility on his farm. We were there!



Monday Evening, May 2, 2016

Dustin Cleavinger and Matt Davis

This evening we were looking for a place to sit down and visit. By this point we had worn out shoes and filled memory cards with thousands of photos. We were a couple of days from going home and found the perfect place in Dusseldorf to hang our hats for a couple of ours. We ended up, under the leadership of Steven Akers, finding the Original Schlüssel, one of the oldest bar/restaurants in Dusseldorf. They are known for the excellent German food and Alt Bier. Their Alt Bier is stored in wooden kegs and served by the platter. They gave us a long table on their patio across from the restaurant so we could all sit together. It was the perfect place to have great food, excellent beer, and even better conversations as we laughed and reminisced about the last 2 years that we had spent together. Great evening with great people!



Tuesday Morning, May 3, 2016
Blaine Junfin and Matt Gurhlkey

It was interesting pulling up to a farm location seeing what looked to be a nice looking farm with construction that looked pre 1600s like most structures in Europe. Christoph met us as we exited the bus and looked like a farmer that had just finished morning chores on the farm with work boots, pants, coat and a couple smudges of manure.



This was looking to be what I thought a normal organic farm visit with a basic diversification of free range chickens, pork, beef, and lamb. At least that was the



thought until you entered the super market of Christoph and his family. Let me tell you about Christoph history a little before we tell you about the surprise. In late 90s the expansion of the farm had to change and had to increase due to the scale of economy in order to survive.

In '97 the family made another big decision to implement an all organic farm. Which was another big change and risky one due to the fact that organic was not widely accepted market and very costly



market. First 3 years of transition was very harsh and struggle on the family, during the first 3 years' lawyer, accountants and family advised maybe they should take another direction. They were determined to push on and saw opportunity for their farm



and pushed on and time, economy, the evolution of the client has definitely proven to be a positive for their operation.

Today they have 40 full time employees, 20-part time employees, total closed organic system in farming, butchery, bakery, bistro and farm shop. The farm is as a demonstration farm member of a nationwide network.



Tuesday Morning, May 3, 2016
Blaine Junfin & Matt Gruhlkey

We then traveled on from Organic closed farming system to another type of challenging system; the high-tech world of research greenhouses. With Auweiler and Straelen to give us the tour of this massive 8000m sq. meter facility, with research 50% being paid for by government subsidies and other 50% by private funding. Green house has over 36 different sections to research various vegetables, trees, and ornamentals. With a mind shift in Europe the main concerns land on the usage of water along with more green products to minimize pesticides and fertilizers.

Looking to enhance conventional techniques or experimenting with new products. Green house is surrounded by a town but fits in with landscape



of town and actually gives a nice touch to the neighborhood.



With production in the greenhouse varies from vegetable crops (cucumber, tomatoes, & bell peppers), ornamentals and landscape trees the facility manages to make anywhere from 1-5-euro profit per sq. meter on each crop. Facility construction costs a million euro per hector of state of the art



greenhouse built. We were fast to learn the greenhouse environment is very different from that of a backyard garden. The very things that make greenhouse growing more controlled and convenient also make it more demanding. In a greenhouse, you control temperature, humidity, soil aeration, soil moisture and drainage, fertility levels, and light—but you don't control everything.

There are Pests and Diseases in The Greenhouse that require special care. And while a high degree of environmental control offers a tremendous amount of latitude, it also means taking on some new responsibilities.



Tuesday Afternoon, May 3, 2016

Brad Lubbers and Mariano Lerma

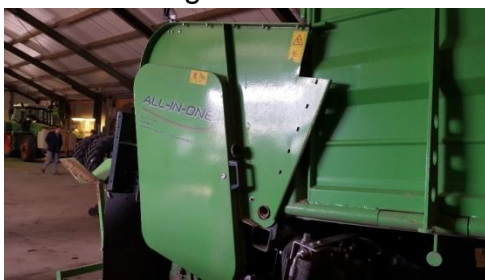
After touring the nursery, we walked over to have lunch at Straelener Hof. Once we finished lunch we made our way back onto Franc's tour bus. On our way to farm tour, we stopped to view some Charolais cattle. This producer informed us he direct markets his cattle to the butchers.



Next we moved on to our last farm visit of the day, Paul Coenen, the operation consists mainly of himself his wife and youngest son, they also about 40 full time employees. Mr. Coenen operates about 600 hectares of total crop land. The location in which were visiting is wholly own by the family. He stated that began farming a potatoes producer. Specialize in potatoes for fries and salad. In addition to the potatoes, they are getting ready for to harvest 250 hectares of silage. They will fertilize and cut again. There are biogas farmers who also provide manure as a form of fertilizer. He is mainly a custom harvester or planter.

Mr. Coenen gave us a tour of his some of his machinery, he has an all in one machine that does everything from planting, fertilizing to harvesting, a 14 row combine harvester. Mr. Coenen believes that since technology has improved so fast his 11 yr old machine is like a 100 yr old. He

also stated he gets additional incentives from the green party because he is so diversified (he plants at least 6 crops). 10 percent should be in clover or peas. His round bales were his gateway into larger production. He would sell



straw bales to mushroom producers and in return, they get the “waste” from mushroom production to use as fertilizer.



The green party pays 260 per hectare. He suspects that if it continues being dry he will have to irrigate potatoes. He has 4 potato harvesters. He stated that he is not allowed to keep seed potatoes but even if so they feel they can buy better seed than they could retain. Additionally, he stated that they are not allowed to cut the seed potatoes. He noted that he plants 10 varieties of potatoes with yields of ranging between 40-80 tons per hectare. He plants 250 seeds per hectare. Finally Mr. Coenen stated that he gets 130 euros at premium but right now 83 euros per 100 kg.



Tuesday Evening May 3, 2016
Michelle Moore & Cuatro Strack

We sat down this evening to a lovely meal at Genholter Hof farm, a small town restaurant. This was yet again a lovely meal. It was a seasonal 4-course meal arranged by our travel agency, RS Vogt. We took this time to reflect on the trip, and also to discuss our scribing duties, our graduation and its obligations, and the graduation party at Dr. Jim's. We also discussed who we wanted to represent our class on the TALL Alumni Board. We chose Matt Davis. He will be a good person to represent us. After our dinner, we loaded up on our tour bus and headed back to our hotel in Düsseldorf.



Wednesday morning, May 5, 2016

Eric Turpen and Brad Stufflebeam

This morning we toured a farm owned by Georg and Leonie Kellerwessel. The farm includes 430 hectares of land, 50 head of cattle, and around 50 head of horses. The farm also boards horses for locals. The land and improvements is owned by the Capital of Cologne Germany, but is leased to the Kellerwessels on a long term lease.



The farm is a beautiful farm located 3 km away from the Ruyne River. Being this close to the river there is a lot of variation in the soil. The farm is 90% cropland and 10% pasture land. Sugar beets, rapeseed, wheat, barley, and corn are grown on the farm. All of the operations on the farm are done with their equipment and staff, except for sugar beet and corn silage

harvest which is hired out. The corn silage and sugar beets are grown for biogas production. The wheat and barley go to the elevator. They also make a lot of hay, which helps support their livestock operation.

Livestock is an integral part of this operation, and the owners take pride in producing quality cattle and horses. At any one time they will have 2-3 working horses, 8 -10 in training, and numerous guest horses on the property. The farm actively breeds and raises a very good line of Hanoverian horses. This breed is especially known for waling softly, which is great because 99% of them are ridden by women. The horses are also used for some therapeutic activities. All of the horses are bred using AI, and the only hormones used are to synchronize them for breeding. This farm is well known for its quality genetics and recently sold a foal for 20,000 euros.





Supreme genetics of Blonde d'Aquitaine cattle are raised on this farm. The owner prefers this breed because it is good for crossbreeding. The breed is well known for its easy calving and better quality beef than Charolais or Simmental breeds. The breeding program is intensive, and high quality embryos are placed in recipient Holsteins. There are only 20 cows

in production. One major reason for the low count of cows is they want to maintain a high demand for their genetics. Their calves will sell for 3 – 5,000 euros each, and the bull named Emperor sold for 10,000 euros. Their annual net turnover from cattle operations is 100,000 euros per year.

We toured the barns, livestock, and the equipment of this farm. It was a very nicely kept farm, and had very impressive equipment. As with most of the farms we toured, the equipment was new and advanced. This farm focuses heavily on educating and training the next generation of agricultural producer. They utilize a lot of seasonal and full time help from interns and students. This allows them to have a ready supply of labor, and to help educate future agriculturalists. It was evident in listening to Mr. Kellerwessel, that they are serious about teaching.

After the tour we were treated to a nice meal in the back yard of the Kellerwessels. We were given wine from the area, and special beer brewed in Cologne. We were then fed a very nice tomato soup, followed by excellent spaghetti. It was a treat to be able to have such good food and to introduce ourselves to them and their employees, and to learn more about their lives.



Wednesday Afternoon, May 4, 2016

Wes Chandler and Lee Chastain

With a rare free afternoon, most of the class took advantage of their last few hours in Germany to purchase treasures and/or trinkets as personal souvenirs to take home for themselves or for beloved family members. Most of our purchases were made on Königsallee Boulevard, given that our hotel was only blocks away. Königsallee is literally translated as "*King's Avenue*." This boulevard is noted not only for shopping, but also for its beautifully landscaped canal that runs through its center. Dug in 1804, and fed by water from the Düssel (a small right tributary of the River Rhine), the canal highlights how the city got its name; as Düsseldorf means "the village of Düssel." As for its many fashion showrooms and luxury retail stores, concentrated shopping can be enjoyed along both of its sides. Nicknamed Kö by the locals, it is by far Düsseldorf's busiest, upscale shopping street. Because so many major designers have a presence on Königsallee, the list of those present reads like a "who's who" of the most elite international brands. Products offered in this district range from luxury fur coats to high-end electronics, and a full gamut in between, including all of manners of tourist-y memorabilia just right for the taking.

My purchases from the historic Koenigsallee district included assorted postcards and an authentic child's replica home jersey of the **Düsseldorfer Turn-und Sportverein Fortuna 1895**, a second tier German association football club local to Düsseldorf, for my son. Additionally I purchased another assorted box of fine German chocolates for my wife.



Wednesday Evening, May 4, 2016
Steven Akers and Jorge L. Alvarez, Jr.

It was now time to do a little shopping in Dusseldorf. Many of us went to the Berkenstock Shoe Store, while others walked around town, or went to enjoy some drinks.

We later met up to have dinner at Hausbrauerei Zum Schlüssel. There we were served a fine meal that began with smoked salmon served with potato roesti. Our main course



was “Dusseldorfer Senftrostbraten” which was a rump steak roasted with an onion-mustard sauce with bacon beans and fried potatoes. For dessert, we enjoyed a baked mini apple tart with cinnamon and sugar. At dinner, we were

graced by the company of Dr. Andre Michalczyk. He is a

history professor in Germany, who is writing a book and conducting a study in South Texas on Polish immigrants who migrated to Texas. He expressed his thoughts and views about the European idea, union, and immigration. He also spoke about his teachings as a professor at the university and about his family coming from different countries.



Thursday Morning, May 5, 2016
Wes Chandler and Lee Chastain

We had to be ready to leave our hotel at 3:30am Thursday morning to depart for the airport. Some had gone to bed at a decent hour the night before; however, that can't be said for the entire group. Needless to say, it was pretty quiet in the hotel lobby that morning. After a quick box breakfast, we loaded Frank's bus for the last time, and told him again how much he was appreciated over the duration of our trip. It was probably the most quiet bus ride of the entire two weeks. At this point, although our experience in Europe had been unforgettable, everyone was ready to get back home. We got through airport security with limited trouble, even though Steven Akers tried to take a pair of scissors home, and Jorge Alvarez was taken to a back room, although for what reason we still don't know.



We had to fly from Germany back to Paris before boarding our final plane back to Houston. The long plane ride to Houston was relatively uneventful, as most of the group did more sleeping on the way home than they did on the way to France. This time the flight had multiple empty seats, so several people were actually able to spread out some and have a little more leg room. Lee Chastain had actually taken some great video clips from each class member prior to our flight, to get an idea of how their thoughts and perspectives have changed from the beginning of the trip to now.

When the plane finally touched ground, we headed straight to the baggage claim, where everyone at that point went their separate ways. Normally upon parting ways, it's been tough to say goodbye to our classmates, but after two weeks together, we had seen more of each other than we ever thought we would. This trip was full of so many opportunities that most of us will never get to experience again. It would be impossible to put a value on this program, but our hope is that the success of this program will only continue to grow, and that we can continue to develop leaders who can look at the issues with a new perspective and understand them from all angles in order to better lead our industry.