Science Societies

Soybean researchers set priorities in five-year strategic plan

March 9, 2025

Symptoms of iron deficiency chlorosis in soybean, a key stress that was identified as an area of need by the soybean research community. Photo by Mary Jane Espina, University of Minnesota.

Soybean is a major source of plant protein and oil, serving the world's growing demand for food, feed, fuel, and industrial products. Furthermore, it is a classical model system for plant physiology and molecular biology research. The soybean research community faces an ever-evolving landscape of challenges that require resources, tools, enabling technologies, and coordination to serve the needs of scientists working on fundamental questions in plant biology and applied technologies.

To this end, the Soybean Genomics Executive Committee coordinates the development of a periodic five-year strategic plan for the research community, written collaboratively by breeders, genomicists, geneticists, physiologists, pathologists, and bioinformaticians. In a recent article published in The Plant Genome, the team published the newest edition of the five-year strategic plan. The plan summarizes important achievements and resources developed in recent years. It also highlights areas of need and research opportunities that the community should prioritize, including re-establishing soybean as a major system for fundamental plant biology research. Topic areas include breeding, biotic interactions, physiology, functional genomics, biotechnology, genomic/computational resources, and ideas to enhance the recruitment and education of the next generation of researchers.

The strategic plan provides a framework to seek funding, attract talent, and establish new collaborations to tackle the biggest challenges facing sustainable soybean production.

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Stupar, R. M., Locke, A. M., Allen, D. K., Stacey, M. G., Ma, J., Weiss, J., … & O'Rourke, J. A. (2024). Soybean genomics research community strategic plan: A vision for 2024–2028. *The Plant Genome*, 17, e20516. https://doi.org/10.1002/tpg2.20516
