

DBT

The Douglas Bomford Trust

Award Winners

On 25th June, Nick August (DBT Chair) and Professor Paul Miller (DBT Emeritus Trustee) attended the Cranfield University School of Water, Energy and Environment prize giving ceremony.

Koeurtis Bankoue Nibunkeu received The Douglas Bomford Trust Award for the best student on an agriculture themed course who best demonstrated the application of engineering and technology for sustainable agriculture. Koeurtis graduated from the MSc in Food Systems and Management course. Koeurtis' thesis was titled "Critical evaluation of polymers to improve emergence and yield in high value horticultural crops". The aim of the thesis was to critically evaluate the

effect of polymers on emergence, stand establishment and yield of commercial salad onions (*Allium cepa*) and/or spinach (*Spinacia oleracea*).

Maria Fernanda Estrada Romero received The Douglas Bomford Trust Award for the best student on an environmental themed course who best demonstrated the application of engineering and technology for sustainable agriculture. Maria graduated from the MSc in Geographical Information Systems course. Maria's thesis was titled "In-field biomass measurement of Miscanthus bio-energy yield using remote sensing". Maria's objectives were to evaluate correlations between vegetation indices, such as NDVI, derived from multispectral drone images and Miscanthus crop biomass; Use point cloud data generated by aerial laser scanning to observe the shape, size, and volume of Miscanthus plants, and compare them with biomass measurements obtained in the field; and Implement methods to extrapolate and expand biomass measurements made in selected samples to the entire

Miscanthus crop. Unfortunately, Maria could not attend the Ceremony.

Travel Awards

Dr Holly Vickery, Dr Laura Palczynski, and Prof David Rose from Harper Adams University received a DBT travel award to attend the 27th European Seminar on Extension and Education, Vila Real, Portugal (30 June to 4th July 2025).

The award enabled them to present a paper (delivered by Dr Holly Vickery) on the use of Large Language Models (LLMs) to improve agricultural extension, considering opportunities and risks for overcoming the data-action gap on-farm. Science and technology plays a key role in precision farming, but farmers can often lack actionable insights from the collection of such data. They also attended plenary sessions devoted to this topic with presentations from University of Guelph, National Research Institute for Agriculture, Food and Environment (INRAE), Texas A+M University, and McGill University.



David, Holly and Laura.



Dr Holly Vickery presenting the paper on LLMs on behalf of the whole team.

The DBT travel award also allowed Holly, Laura and David to present other papers related to supporting farmers' mental health and wellbeing and on establishing a multi-actor call-action network. This would not have been possible without the support of the DBT. These papers were well received and will lead to future collaboration.

"We wholeheartedly thank the Trust for their support", Prof David Rose, Dr Holly Vickery, Dr Laura Palczynski.

For further information, see the Trusts website:

Or contact the Secretary David White via: enquiries@dbt.org.uk

You can also follow: [@BomfordTrust](https://www.instagram.com/BomfordTrust)

on 'X' and 'LinkedIn', for news , opportunities and events



L to R. Nick August, Dr M. Carmen Alamar (Senior Lecturer in Postharvest Technology, Cranfield University), Koeurtis and Paul Miller.



Holly and David were able to visit two livestock farmers, who discussed the use of technologies on the farm and the challenges, including poor infrastructure and lack of skills.