

Bruce Bugbee

Career Pathways Speaker
Utah State University



Seminar Presentation Details:

Date: Wednesday, Sept. 5, 2018

Room: W330

Time: 4:00-5:00 p.m.

Refreshments will be served at 3:45 p.m.

Host: Lance Seefeldt

Bio: Bruce Bugbee teaches plant nutrition, environmental instrumentation, and plant physiology at USU. He is a Fellow in the American Society of Agronomy and is known for his work with NASA to determine potential crop yield in controlled environments. Nine of his former students are now on the faculty at other Universities, and two work for NASA. In 2011 he received the Governors Medal for Science and Technology. Perhaps his pinnacle achievement is summarizing everything he knows in a 15-minute talk entitled, "Turning Water into Food."

ABSTRACT: I have been asked to explain how I expanded my hobby of modifying volt meters in my garage to a business enterprise that now employs 33 people. The best explanation I can give is that if you are curious about something, you start thinking about it and doing it nonstop until you eventually get good at it. The ability to focus also helps, like using a magnifying glass to ignite paper with sunlight. We all have at least 100 hours a week to think about something. By this standard, 40 hours a week is a part time job.

In my experience, a passion for science has been more valuable than what I could have learned in the college of Business. It helped to be able to start small and make mistakes without making bankers nervous. It helped that I had scientist friends who bought my initial instruments and then told their friends to buy them. Finally, the R and D employees all have at least one degree from USU, so it has been extremely helpful to be connected with the University talent pool.