

Sarah Hirsh

Background

I grew up in south-central Pennsylvania and graduated from a local high school in 2005. I continued my education at Grove City College, a small liberal arts college in north-western Pennsylvania where I received a B.S. with a double major in Biology and Psychology in 2009. I came to Iowa State University in July of 2009 to pursue a master's degree in Sustainable Agriculture and Ecology and Evolutionary Biology. I am working in Dr. Matt Liebman's lab and my home department is Agronomy.

Research Interests

I am interested in agroecology, conservation, and rural development and food security. My research at ISU is based at the Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge in Jasper County, Iowa. At Neal Smith, an interdisciplinary team of researchers is studying the ecological and socioeconomic effects of reintroducing perennial vegetation in agricultural systems. Multiple watersheds serve as experimental treatment groups for various crop and perennial buffer strip systems, in which prairie plants are integrated. My research will focus on the vegetative aspects of these systems and in particular the species composition and relative abundance of different plants in buffer strips and cropped areas.