

Southern Plant Board

President: Awinash Bhatkar, Texas (512) 463-5025
Vice President: Kenny Naylor, Oklahoma (405) 522-5879
Secretary-Treasurer: David Gianino, Virginia (804) 786-5525

Contact Address: Texas Department of Agriculture
Plant Quality Program
P.O. Box 12847
Austin, Texas 78711

SPB Meeting Contact Address

NCDA&CS –Plant Industry Div.
Attn: Plant Protection Section
1060 Mail Service Center, Raleigh,
NC 27699-1060

2025 Southern Plant Board – Annual Meeting Invitation May 12-15, 2025

Dear Southern Plant Board Members and Guests:

We are delighted to host the 2025 Annual Meeting of the Southern Plant Board from May 12-15, 2025, in the historic riverfront city of Wilmington, North Carolina. The planning process for this year's meeting has provided challenges to test our adaptability and we are excited to offer a conference agenda packed with valuable learning and networking opportunities. These sessions are designed to further our mission of safeguarding agriculture, horticulture, forestry, and the environment.

Accommodations/Room Rates

Aloft Wilmington at Coastline
Center 121 West Vine Street
Lexington, KY 40507

Click this [link](#) to book your room online. **Hotel reservations must be made by April 21, 2025.**

- The SPB Meeting room rate is \$189.00 per night. If your agency requires your room charge meet the federal per diem rate, please contact Tamika Johnson (Tamika.Johnson@ncagr.gov) or Michelle Kordecki (Michelle.Kordecki@ncagr.gov) for hotel booking instructions. Hotel room rates are subject to applicable state and local taxes, which currently totals 13%.
- If you wish to extend your stay beyond the meeting dates, or if you have issues booking your room, contact the hotel directly at 910-377-7600 and reference Special Rate Group-SPBSPBA.
- The last day to make room reservations at the conference rate is April 21, 2025.
- Check-in time is 4:00 PM and check out time is 11:00 AM. The hotel will provide complementary luggage storage for early arrivals and late departures.

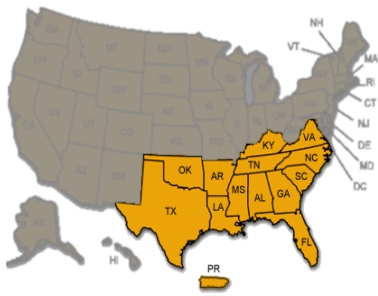
Transportation and Parking

The nearest airport is Wilmington (ILM), which is about 5 miles away from the Aloft Wilmington at Coastline Center. Transportation to and from the airport are the responsibility of the traveler. The hotel does not provide a shuttle.

Parking at the Aloft is \$20.00 per day (self-parking) or \$25.00 per day for valet.

Member States

Alabama – Arkansas – Florida – Georgia – Kentucky – Louisiana – Mississippi
North Carolina – Oklahoma – Puerto Rico – South Carolina – Tennessee – Texas – Virginia



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Registration

Registration for the event will be \$500, per attendee. To register online for the 2025 Southern Plant Board Meeting [Click here](#). Registration is only available online and there is no early registration discount, but we encourage you to register early, please. If payment cannot be made online, please go ahead and register and then contact [David Gianino](#) for steps to pay with a check. **All registrations must be completed by April 25, 2025.**

Meeting Schedule

Monday, May 12, 2025	Registration and Evening Reception (tentative)
Tuesday, May 13, 2025	General Session and Breakout Sessions
Wednesday, May 14, 2025	Morning Sessions, Afternoon Activities
Thursday, May 15, 2025	Business Meeting and Breakout Sessions Adjourns at Noon

Climate

The average high temperature in Wilmington during mid-May typically reaches the low 80s, with lows in the 60s, offering ideal beach weather. If you decide to extend your stay, you'll be treated to beautiful nearby beaches. While 80-degree highs are common, temperatures can also dip into the 50s and 60s.

Be sure to pack comfortable footwear and an umbrella or raincoat (just in case), as there's a picturesque riverwalk and a wide variety of amazing restaurants near the hotel.

Local Tours

On the afternoon of Wednesday, May 14 you will have the opportunity to select one of two tour options.

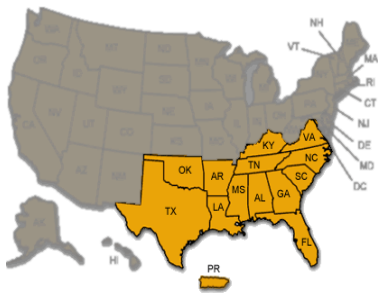
- 1.) **Boat Tour**- a short 15 minute walk from the hotel down the riverwalk to board a tour boat to enjoy the sights of Cape Fear River on the Black River Nature Cruise
- 2.) **Venus Flytrap/Native Carnivorous Plant Tour**- you will board vehicles to travel about 45 minutes to The Nature Conservancy Green Swamp Preserve to see threatened carnivorous plants in an unique ecosystem. You can read more about the preserve [here](#). Sturdy waterproof shoes and hiking clothes are recommended. The tour will be on a trail.

Note: Wilmington is in the eastern time zone.

Door Prizes

If you would like to donate a door prize representing your state or agency, we will be collecting them

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at the Registration Desk. A door prize form will be provided so proper credit can be given to the donor.

Tabling at SPB

For those that are interested, we will have 6 ft display tables available at no cost. Please indicate if you would like to have a table on the registration form.

Contact Information

If you have questions or concerns regarding registration, Wilmington, or the meeting as a whole, please contact Joy Goforth. Phone 919-707-3753 or 704-650-0400 or via email joy.goforth@ncagr.gov.

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