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Carter Travel Award Conference Summary

AgriVoltaics World Conference 2025

My experience at the AgriVoltaics World Conference 2025 in Freiburg, Germany exceeded my expectations and provided invaluable professional development opportunities. The conference validated my research approach and opened exciting new directions for both my dissertation work and future research.

My oral presentation on heat stress metrics in agrivoltaic systems generated real interest from the international research community. The enthusiastic response confirmed that my work addresses a critical gap in the field, with multiple attendees commenting on the uniqueness and importance of focusing on occupational safety in agricultural settings. Most significantly, multiple different research groups approached me after my presentation to discuss potential collaborations at their field sites across diverse agricultural and climatic contexts. These conversations represent possible opportunities to expand my research globally and will substantially strengthen my research scope and impact.

I had the honor of chairing a conference session, which provided valuable leadership experience and enhanced my visibility within the agrivoltaics community. This responsibility allowed me to facilitate scientific discussions between leading researchers and demonstrated my growing expertise in the field.

The technical tour of established agrivoltaic fruit systems was particularly enlightening, exposing me to system designs I had never observed before. This hands-on experience helped me understand how my heat stress research could apply to fruit-based agricultural systems, directly relevant to one of the collaboration opportunities that emerged from my presentation.

Networking throughout the conference yielded unexpected insights. Conversations with leading researchers sparked ideas for expanding my methodology, particularly regarding increasing the scope of my interview-based research. Even interactions with sheep farmers attending the conference proved valuable, as they expressed interest in my work and shared how their livestock also benefit from solar panel shade, opening new perspectives on thermal comfort applications.

The interdisciplinary feedback I received from engineers, social scientists, and renewable energy specialists provided critical insights for refining my research approach. This diverse input is difficult to obtain elsewhere but proved essential for strengthening my methodological framework as I approach my final dissertation chapters.

This conference experience significantly advanced my professional trajectory by establishing my research within the international scientific community and building valuable collaborations that will enhance both my dissertation and future research opportunities.