

**March 2017**

**Call for Applications**

**MSc program in Plant Biology at Tel Aviv University  
in partnership with AICAT in the Arava**

Tel Aviv University, in partnership with the Arava International Center for Agricultural Training (AICAT) are pleased to **invite students to participate in the third cohort of an innovative MSc program that combines academics and practical skills**. The MSc degree in Plant Biology, with an emphasis in Food Safety and Security will take place in Israel and is a unique program designed for international students.

We would like you to announce the information and encourage your excellent BSc graduates who have a science background and good English skills to apply to the program.

Included is a short document detailing the program. We will be happy to provide any additional information.

Yours Sincerely,

**Dr. Eyal Blum**

Mayor, Central Arava Regional  
Council

**Professor Danny Chamovitz**

Dean, George S. Wise Faculty of Life  
Sciences, Tel Aviv University

**Hanni Arnon**

Director, AICAT

**Professor Nir Ohad**

Director, Manna Center Program for Food  
Safety & Security, Tel Aviv University

**Dr. Haya Kisos**

Academic Director, AICAT

**Maya Oren**

Program Coordinator, Manna Center  
Program for Food Safety & Security, Tel  
Aviv University

**Roy Patrick**

Program Coordinator, AICAT

**Maureen Meyer-Adiri**

Director, TAU International

## **The Graduate Degree Program**

A cooperation agreement was signed between AICAT and Tel Aviv University, initiating a program of studies toward a Masters degree in Plant Biology with an emphasis in Food Safety & Security at Tel Aviv University. The courses will take place in both the Arava and Tel Aviv, in partnership with AICAT. Graduates of this program will receive a **fully accredited MSc degree in Plant Biology with an emphasis in Food Safety and Security from Tel Aviv University**. The program is intended for students with relevant BSc degrees from recognized universities all over the world.

The program will be held over four semesters, with most of the studies physically taking place in the Arava. The summer semester will be an intensive session given in Tel Aviv. For most of the year, the students will live on farms in the Arava region where they will be able to gain hands-on experience 2-3 days per week, as part of their internship arrangement for tuition assistance.

The program will work in close cooperation with the Agricultural Research and Development Center (at the Yair R&D Station). Some of the lecturers will be researchers from the Center and students will conduct their practicum research with the assistance of R&D researchers.

The program will be academically supervised by Tel Aviv University and is of an equivalent level to the Hebrew-speaking program. Many of the programs' lecturers are tenured faculty members of Tel Aviv University.

## **Program Schedule**

**October 2017:** Arrival to Israel

**October 2017 - February 2018:** Preparatory Semester

Preparatory studies in Arava with a focus on:

- Improving English abilities
- Refresher Plant Biology, Genetics, and Biochemistry courses

**February 2018:** Internal entrance exams. These special exams, administered by Tel Aviv University, will test the candidates' academic levels

**Candidates who pass the exams will be accepted to the MSc program**

The program will continue as follows:

**March 2018 - June 2018:** First Semester – MSc studies in Arava

**July 2018:** Second Semester – Food Safety & Security Summer Institute, will take place at Tel Aviv University and will be taken with other international students

**October 2018 - March 2018:** Third Semester – MSc studies continue in Arava

**March 2018:** Completion of MSc degree and Graduation

## Eligibility

The program is open to **excellent** students who have completed an undergraduate degree in biology, agriculture, or a related field. Prerequisites include undergraduate courses in plant biology, genetics, and cell biology and a minimum GPA of 80 on a scale of 100, 3.0 on a scale of 4.0, or equivalent (based on US standards). Exceptions may be made in the case of an exceptionally strong application with a lower GPA.

Candidates will have a personal interview with representatives of the program from Tel Aviv University and AICAT.

## Application Process

1. Open a profile in the TAU International Student Portal and upload required documents. Student Portal link:

<https://portal.telavivuniv.org/login.php?accesscheck=/index.php>

If there is any issue with uploading documents, please contact: [foodsecurity@tau.ac.il](mailto:foodsecurity@tau.ac.il)

The following documents should be uploaded to the Student Portal by July 1, 2017.

- Resume
  - University transcripts
  - University diploma
  - Academic letter of recommendation
  - Short (one page) essay in English explaining the student's background, why are they interested in the program, and what they expect to do with the degree once completed
  - English proficiency exam results (TOEFL or IELTS) if university degree was not taught in English
  - Passport photo
  - Passport scan
2. Demonstrated Command of English: Since the program is taught in English, all applicants must prove their English-language proficiency validated through a TOEFL or IELTS exam. Please note that scores are usually sent out one month after the exam, therefore students must take the exam ahead of time.
  3. Interviews: In June, representatives of Tel Aviv University and AICAT will interview qualified students who have submitted the required documents listed.

## Program and Application Fee

- Total tuition for Preparatory Semester: \$850 including health insurance. Students will cover \$850.
- Total tuition for the degree in the framework of this program is \$15,500. Students will pay \$5,000, **and a scholarship will be given to all students for the balance**
- Students' share of tuition will be paid throughout the program and before its completion.
- Students will be able to practice in farms (paid practicum) 3 days per week; the rest of the time will be devoted to studies.
- Flight tickets will be paid by the student
- Each student must have a laptop
- Student must pass a medical checkup

## Academic Program

Courses	Semester Hours
Biochemistry and Genetics	Preparatory Semester
Introduction to Plant Biology	
Spring Semester	
Principles of Experimental Statistics	3
Scientific Writing	2
Student Seminar	1
Structure and Function of Plant Roots	4
Photosynthesis - Theory and Practice	3
Practicum	2
Summer Semester	
Introduction to Food Security	3
Plant Response to Abiotic Stress	2
Food Security & Public Health	2
Bioethics and Biotechnology	2
Fall Semester	
Developmental Plant Biology	4
Seminar - Selected Topics in Plant Sciences	2
Student seminar	1
Marine Biology	4
Practicum	3
TOTAL	38

## About the Partners

### Tel Aviv University

[Tel Aviv University](#) is Israel's largest university, attracting over 30,000 talented students and renowned faculty members from around the globe. The university has a strong interdisciplinary focus and collaborates closely with leading institutions worldwide.

The campus is located in Tel Aviv, which is known for its entrepreneurial atmosphere and large number of start-up companies. With the growth of high-tech industries, the Tel Aviv metropolis has become an international hotspot for business and innovation – an ideal setting for an enriching study experience.

### Manna Center Program for Food Safety & Security

The International MSc Program in Plant Science is housed in the [Faculty of Life Sciences and is operated by the Manna Program](#) for Food Safety and Security at Tel Aviv University. The Manna Center Program seeks to bring together researchers from diverse academic disciplines to promote innovative research, to forge ties with professionals and academics around the world, and to prepare the next generation of scientists and policymakers to guide global food security issues.

### AICAT

[The Arava International Center for Agriculture Training](#) ("AICAT") currently accommodates 1,000 students from academic teaching institutions in East Asia (Myanmar, Nepal, Indonesia, Cambodia, Thailand, Vietnam, Laos), as well as Africa (Ethiopia, Ruanda, and South Sudan). The Center operates within the framework of the Central Arava Regional Council; the main goal is to impart professional agricultural knowledge and skills in modern and advanced farms.

The new MSc program meets a growing demand on the part of international students to pursue academic studies in Israel reflects the region's expertise, and takes advantage of the regional capacity to provide both accommodation and practical experience in modern agriculture and science. In addition, the program could contribute to the global need for depth and specialization in growing food for the world's population and finding a solution for the global problem of food insecurity.

### The Yair R&D Center

The program works in close cooperation with the Agricultural Research and Development Center in the Arava. The Center is a leading scientific research and development center established in 1986, with the aim of advancing sustainable methods of cultivation in the arid region, raising the quality of the produce, finding new crops and opening new markets. This unique Center combines practical research in the fields of sustainable agriculture, water management and aquaculture – providing critical knowledge to the regional farming community as well as to other countries around the world.