**Ailing Zhou, Research Scientist and Research Project Team Lead, Syngenta Crop Protection LLC**

Ailing Zhou joined [Syngenta](http://www.syngentacropprotection.com/cropmain.aspx) in 2008 and is currently a Research Scientist II and Research project Team Lead. She leads a cross-functional project team to evaluate both water optimization and CarbYield late research leads for early product development. Before joining Syngenta, Ailing worked at Michigan State University (MSU) for seven years. She started as a laboratory technician and then a [Department of Plant Biology](https://plantbiology.natsci.msu.edu/) MS student in Dr. [Tao Sang’s](http://klpr.ibcas.ac.cn/en/news/374) laboratory at the Department of Plant Biology. Her research was focused on the identification of QTLs and genes involved in rice domestication. In 2007, she moved [to Dr. Dean DellaPenna’s](https://bmb.natsci.msu.edu/faculty/dean-dellapenna/) laboratory to characterize genes involved in the carotenoid cleavage pathway. During her time at MSU, Ailing contributed to four peer reviewed publications. She was awarded the [Stebbins Medal](http://www.iapt-taxon.org/index_layer.php?page=s_awardsstebbins) in 2006 from the International Association for Plant Taxonomy (IAPT) to recognize her contribution to a *Science* coverpaper entitled “Rice domestication by reducing shattering”. Between 1990 and 2001, Ailing worked at Zhangye Teacher’s College (now Hexi University) in China teaching Genetics, Microbiology and laboratory of Plant Physiology for over 1000 students.