



Research, Education, and Economics (REE)
National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education, and Economics (NAREEE) Advisory
Board

Specialty Crop Committee (SCC) Meeting Notes – Thursday, June 8, 2023

SCC Members Present: Gregory Goins (Chair), Carlos Iglesias, Jim Tuinier - 3

SCC Members Absent: Donnell Brown, Marguerite Green - 2

NAREEE Board Staff Present: Kate Lewis, NAREEE Board Executive Director/Designated Federal Officer (DFO) and Michele Simmons, Program Support Specialist

I. Welcome, Roll Call, Approval of April 2023 meeting minutes

DFO Lewis welcomed the group and attendance was taken. A quorum was established amongst the SCC Members. The April 2023 meeting minutes were approved by consensus after minor edits were completed. The April minutes and agenda will be posted to the NAREEE Advisory Board Webpage.

DFO Lewis gave an update on the FY23 nomination package. The package that includes the SCC candidate slate is with the Secretary's office. There's a meeting scheduled with the Secretary office to discuss the package June 14th. DFO Lewis will keep you informed with any updates.

DFO Lewis gave a breakdown on how many Members should be on the SCC Committee at a given time. SCC is the smallest Committee, but going forward the number of Members will most likely increase from 7 to 9 Members. DFO Lewis is getting clarification on the number of SCC Members allowed. Dr. Marguerite Green, Dr. Iglesias, and Mr. Tuinier's terms will expire the end of September 2023. Dr. Iglesias and Mr. Tuinier reapplied, but Dr. Marguerite Green did not. We will be reviewing all of the applications received for the vacancies for the NAREEE Advisory Board, the SCC, and the Citrus Disease Subcommittee. We're planning for Secretary Vilsack to select NAREEE Board and Committee/Subcommittee (C/S) nominees in August/Sept 2023. You will be notified of the status of your appointment at that time.

II. Statement from Chair:

Dr. Goins informed the Members that he attended the in-person NAREEE Advisory Board Meeting on June 7, 2023. Dr. Goins found the meeting to be very rewarding and he's glad he was able to attend. One of the topics that was brought up was if hemp was on the SCC list of topics to review. We would love to see Hemp on the list, but the SCC can only make suggestions. He thanked DFO Lewis and Michele for their assistance in preparing him for the meeting.

III. Continued discussion about SCC's recommendations for 2023

DFO Lewis will send the slides that Dr. Goins shared at the NAREEE Advisory Board Meeting with the Members that touched on the background of the SCC and the look ahead for FY24. DFO Lewis stated that the SCC has one project that must be completed before the end of FY23. This Subcommittee has to provide some feedback on the National Institute of Food and Agriculture's Specialty Crop Research Initiative (SCRI) Program on how the program is going and/or your recommendations on how to optimize it. Between now and September the SCC will need to draft some correspondence to the Board and NIFA. You will need to figure out, given the legislative language of the goals of the SCC, if there's anything else you would want to approach in terms of recommendations for specialty crops and research that's outside of SCRI. You might want to wait until the FY23 and FY24 new Members are onboard to address working on another project. It's completely up to the SCC to decide.

Mr. Tuinier - I think we gave broad recommendations from last year. If we support our goals from last year, maybe express a few points, have the matching funds removed, it will help to have more people submit grants that are possible.

Dr. Goins asked if the hemp issue is too early or too hot of an issue to be brought up now or later?

DFO Lewis – There's a hemp group at USDA that put together a research strategy. The research plan is a draft which outlines what are the research needs for hemp? They are interested in the SCC to review the hemp research strategy and providing your commits as the SCC. If this Committee has the bandwidth, I think it would be a worthwhile endeavor.

Dr. Iglesias – I think industrial hemp would be an interesting activity. I agree with DFO Lewis that we have such a small group right now. I feel we should wait until we have a full Committee.

DFO Lewis will review the hemp research strategy and will confirm if she can share it with the SCC. I'll also confirm what the deadline is for feedback on the hemp strategy plan.

Mr. Tuinier – We can put together 4 bullets to discuss what we want in the letter. I think we need to keep the ball rolling from what was done last year.

DFO Lewis – I think it's a strategic step and makes sense. This Committee will most likely look different in larger numbers (maybe as soon as October 2023) to have the bandwidth to work on additional projects.

Dr. Iglesias asked how many vacancies need to be filled to make it to 7?

DFO Lewis – For FY23 I submitted 3 applications for the SCC. If all 3 are selected by the Secretary, that will bring the SCC Members to 8 for FY23. We received 3 new applications for FY24. The Secretary could pick 1 or 2 which could possibly bring the SCC roster to 9. Michele and I will start putting the SCC nomination package together for FY24 SCC Members. Hopefully, in October 2023 this Committee will have 9 Members.

DFO Lewis – What are the Committee's next steps?

Mr. Tuinier – I think the Committee should put together some bullet points of recommendations for SCRI.

Dr. Goins - We can work on the recommendations and the bullets in our next meeting.

DFO Lewis asked what are the Committee's next steps on the hemp report?

Dr. Goins- We can also discuss the hemp report at our next meeting in July.

IV. Wrap-up/Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 2:38 p.m. EDT.

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, July 13, 2023, 2pm EDT.