



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

Executive Committee Conference Call – September 12, 2023, Meeting Minutes

Executive Committee Members Present: Dr. Kenrett Jefferson-Moore (Chair), Dr. V.M. “Bala” Balasubramaniam, Ms. Donnell Brown, Dr. Mario Ferruzzi, Ms. Liz Hobart, and Dr. Jane Kolodinsky - 6

Members Absent: Dr. Edmund Buckner, Mr. Richard De Los Santos, and Ms. Tandra Stevenson - 3

Guests Present: Dr. Deirdra Chester, Director, Office of the Chief Scientist (OCS), Dr. Jim McFerson, Chair, National Genetics Resources Advisory Committee (NGRAC), and Dr. Dan Roberts, Senior Advisor, for Renewable Energy, Natural Resources & Environment (Climate), OCS

Guests Absent: Ms. Marguerite Green, Dr. Mark Lawrence, and Dr. Ariel Ortiz-Bobea, and Ms. Annette Levi

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

I. Welcome from DFO Kate Lewis, Roll Call, and Quorum Check. Quorum was met. First order of business was to approve the August Minutes. The Board reviewed the minutes and had no comments or edits. DFO Lewis asked for a motion to approve the minutes. The August meeting minutes were approved by consensus, and no one opposed.

DFO Lewis introduced Drs. Deirdre Chester, Jim McFerson, and Dan Roberts to the group. She gave her appreciation and thanks to the Board for collectively providing their recommendations and comments on the Hemp Research Roadmap and the FY24 Specialty Crop Research Initiative. These were two work products that the Board worked on in July and August in a timely manner.

DFO Lewis asked Ms. Brown if she had comments since she is on the NAREEE Advisory Board and the Specialty Crop Committee (SCC).

Ms. Brown stated that enjoys being a part of the NAREEE Advisory Board and the SCC. The SCC is very engaged and enthusiastic. She also commended Dr. Greg Goins, Chair of the SCC, for his excellent leadership.

DFO asked if there were any questions regarding the work products. There were none.



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Dr. Chester gave remarks of appreciation for Dr. Edmund Buckner, Ms. Marguerite Green, Ms. Liz Hobart, Dr. Annette Levi, and Dr. Ariel Ortiz-Bobea. Their terms will expire at the end of September. She also wanted to note and acknowledge Ms. Liz Hobart for serving on the Board since 2018. Dr. Chester gave her appreciation and thanked Ms. Hobart for her service. She again thanked the Board for their commitment and for all of their hard work.

DFO Lewis also thanked the Board Members that are cycling off for their services. She let them know that they can contact her anytime for information about USDA or any specific programs going forward. DFO Lewis asked if there were any questions for Dr. Chester. There were none.

II. Remarks from Chair.

Dr. Jefferson Moore welcomed the group. She stated that she worked closely with Dr. Buckner, Ms. Hobart, Dr. Annette Levi, and Dr. Ariel Ortiz-Bobea. It has been a great experience working with them and they will be missed.

III. Next Steps

R&A Report Addendum on Ag Climate Adaptation and Mitigation

DFO Lewis asked Dr. Roberts to give an update on the Relevancy and Adequacy Report Addendum on Ag Climate Adaptation and Mitigation. He and DFO Lewis have been reviewing the Board's recommendations and lined them up with most recent updates from the REE agencies. They are finalizing a memo to send to the Secretary's office by the end of September.

DFO Lewis stated that it takes a little time to get a sense of what each REE agencies are doing what work on for Ag Climate Adaptation and Mitigation. We pulled the work that was related to any of the recommendations and then summarized it.

DFO asked if there were any questions or comments. There were none.

Discuss feedback to REE leadership team on FY23 priorities presented in Board Meeting

Dr. Jefferson-Moore gave an update on the feedback response letter from the presentations that the REE leadership provided at the June Board Meeting. The Ad Hoc Committee Members which consist of Dr. Balasubramaniam, Ms. Brown, Dr. Kolodinsky, Dr.



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McFerson, NGRAC, Ms. Stevenson, and she, have been working on a draft letter of our review of updates for a response to the REE leadership. The three major areas that will be highlighted in the letter are: 1. Provide an overview on the USDA's Science and Research Strategy. Dr. McFerson and Ms. Brown are working on that section of the response. 2. Dr. Jefferson-Moore is working on the leadership priorities and activities. 3. Dr. Balasubramaniam and Ms. Stevenson and I are working on the Relevancy and Adequacy Report. Once we have a consensus with the Ad Hoc Committee, we will send the letter to Ms. Simmons for review, editing and packaging. We can vote to approve the final document via email. The plan is to have the package to the Secretary by the end of September.

DFO Lewis thanked Dr. McFerson, Chair, NGRAC, for providing insight and content to the response letter to the leadership team. She noted that he took on additional responsibilities and how it added value and is really appreciated.

Dr. McFerson stated that it's been a pleasure getting to know the group and is looking forward to a productive next couple of years with NGRAC.

DFO Lewis asked if there were any questions on the REE leadership response letter. There were none.

Relevancy & Adequacy Committee update/next steps; timeline

Dr. Ferruzzi gave an update on the status of the relevancy and adequacy of the precision nutrition evaluation for FY23-FY24. Dr. Jefferson-Moore, Dr. Balasubramaniam, Ms. Hobart, Dr. Kolodinsky, Ms. Stevenson, and he are members on the Ad Hoc Committee. We recently met with the USDA-REE Precision Nutrition (PN) Working Group. Part of the challenge is defining the scope of USDA's interest in precision nutrition. The USDA PN Working Group shared their definition of PN. The next step is to agree on the scope of the questions for the USDA PN Working Group to go back and begin to define activities in this space. We will then evaluate the relevancy and adequacy. As we agree to these last questions, we will be doing an assessment of the information provided to us and drafting of our report. The Ad Hoc Committee will hopefully have the evaluation completed by November to vote on at the in-person meeting.

DFO Lewis asked if there were any questions on the PN work product.

Oppty to review 'Implementation Plan to Increase Public Access to USDA-funded Research Results



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DFO Lewis mentioned the Public Access Data Plan that she recently sent to the Board Members and the Chairs of the NGRAC, the Specialty Crop Committee, and the Citrus Disease Subcommittee. The plan is a draft that Dr. Cynthia Parr, Assistant Chief Data Officer, National Agricultural Library, presented to you all in our June meeting. USDA is looking for feedback on the plan. The milestones outlined in this plan are FY24 - FY25. The NAREEE Advisory Board is mentioned in the plan in the section related to stakeholder engagement. Dr. Parr mentioned that you all were provided some initial information about this in June of 2023. This working group at USDA will publish a Federal Register Notice (FRN) stating a formal comment period. Please share the plan with your colleagues at your organizations, and then consider providing feedback individually or organizationally. DFO Lewis will send an email to the Board once the FRN is posted.

DFO Lewis asked if there were any questions.

Dr. Kolodinsky mentioned to DFO Lewis that she appreciates the clarity on this plan about what the Board can share. She stated that the Implementation Plan to increase public access to USDA funded research results is really important information. Dr. Kolodinsky thanked DFO Lewis for providing information for the Board to direct folks in their organizations to the FRN for their input and feedback.

DFO Lewis also said that she thinks this is a very important project. It's most likely a key priority of USDA in their research area. She thinks it might be a couple of weeks when the FRN will be published.

November 2023 Board Meeting (NC)

Ms. Simmons provided the Board via email the draft agenda for the in-person meeting scheduled for November 13-15, 2023, to see if they had any input, comments, or suggestions to talk about at the meeting today. No one had comments or suggestions on the draft agenda. She spoke briefly about the logistics and the meeting location to be held at the North Carolina Research Center. Ms. Simmons is looking into getting a room block in Kannapolis, NC. She will be in touch with those details soon.

DFO Lewis mentioned to the Board that we may have to postpone the November in-person Board Meeting if we don't have a Congressionally approved Farm Bill (FB) in place by the end of September. If the FB passes, Ms. Simmons should have enough time to make travel reservations. She asked the Board to please take a look at the agenda to let us know if members agree with the topics and the flow.

DFO Lewis stated that the implementation of the Board and the charter is tied to the FB.



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The FB bill legislation from 2018 indicates that the Board remains active until September 30th, 2023. If we have no FB, the Board's operations will have to cease. She has notified all of the Chairs to let them know where we are at this point. If you have questions or you need to talk to Ms. Simmons and me individually, please send us an email or give us a phone call.

DFO Lewis asked if there were any comments or questions. There were none.

IV. Wrap-Up/Adjourn

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled to take place **on October 3, 2023, from 12 noon - 1 pm ET.**

The meeting adjourned at 12:58 pm ET.