



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

Specialty Crop Committee (SCC) Meeting Notes – Thursday, June 13, 2024

SCC Members Present: Dr. Gregory Goins (Chair), Ms. Donnell Brown, Mr. Casey Foster, Dr. Lorin Harvey, Mr. Jack Karlin, Dr. Charlie Messina, and Mr. Jim Tuinier – 7

SCC Members Absent: Dr. Carlos Iglesias - 1

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

I. Welcome, Roll Call,

DFO Lewis welcomed the group and attendance was taken. A quorum was established amongst the SCC Members to have the meeting.

The prior minutes from the May 2024 meeting were approved after a motion and a second motion. All approved the minutes, and none opposed. Ms. Simmons will post the May agenda and minutes to the SCC website.

II. Statement from Chair:

Dr. Goins welcomed the Members. He discussed his visit with the NAREEE Advisory Board that took place in Kannapolis, NC from June 3-4, 2024. There's a Food Innovation Campus there that they share between University of SC, Chapel Hill, NC State University, and other universities. Dr. Goins gave the NAREEE Advisory Board an update on the SCC's work products. There were some suggestions from the Board Members regarding the SCC's recommendations for the Specialty Crop Research Initiative (SCRI). Dr. Goins asked DFO Lewis if she wanted to discuss the Board Members suggestions? DFO Lewis stated they could talk about that under new business.

III. New Business

Discuss NIFA FY25 SCRI program recommendations

Dr. Goins discussed for the SCC to talk about the Science and Research Strategy (S&RS) and their research for the REE mission area and their three-year vision outlining the top five ag and science research priorities.

Ms. Brown stated that she's also a NAREEE Board Member that attended the meeting in Kannapolis, NC. There was some discussion about the SCRI. It's the SCC's responsibility to ensure that the (S&RS') five priorities relate to their recommendations for SCRI. The Farm Bill's (FB) reauthorization, that both the House and the Senate have released their recommendations that SCRI is a part of. Food stamps and the SNAP (Supplementary Nutrition Assistance Program) might get more funding than SCRI. We can make recommendations on how the SCRI program can work better.

Dr. Goins stated that some of the Board Members talked about how the widespread specialty crops doesn't dominate and that it would be good to give them some additional funding and support.

Mr. Foster asked what was the funding for SCRI for the last fiscal year?

Ms. Brown stated that she thinks it was \$80 million SCRI and \$25 million for citrus.

Mr. Foster asked how many projects are funded per year on average?

Dr. Harvey stated 20% of all the applications are funded.

DFO Lewis stated there are 2 National Institute of Food and Agriculture's (NIFA) National Program Leaders for SCRI which are Drs. Thomas Bewick and Jessica Shade. They are in the final stages of evaluating the proposals and expect to be completed with their overview at the end of this week. This Committee will need that overview to answer questions in order to develop recommendations for the next fiscal year. You will probably have six weeks after that to frame up your recommendations for the SCRI. Once you all develop the recommendations as a committee, finalize them, they will be routed to the Board for their review and approval, then to the REE Under Secretary. You can find the SCRI's last 2 years recommendations on the SCC website [here](#).

Elect new Committee chair

Dr. Goins stated that it's been a privilege to serve as the SCC Chair for over two and ½ years. He stated that it's a very enjoyable task working with a group of very knowledgeable people. That helped to make being the Chair an easier job.

DFO Lewis thanked Dr. Goins for being the Chair. She presented and discussed with the Committee, the general operating procedures document which describes the Chair's duties regarding objectives and responsibilities. Some of these responsibilities include Chairs attending all meetings, ensuring that rules of order and conduct are maintained, and sign official correspondence. If the secretary is delayed in appointing Members to this committee, the Chair will continue to serve until new Members have been appointed. In this case, the Chair's term could possibly go over the 2-year length.

DFO Lewis explained the voting process. She stated a vote for the new Chair could take place today since there was a quorum and if no one else spoke up.

Mr. Karlin stated he was interested in being the new SCC Chair until October 2025. DFO Lewis asked if anyone else was interested? There was not. The Committee took a vote. There was a motion and a second motion. All approved the Chair nominee, and none opposed.

Mr. Karlin will be the new SCC Chair. DFO Lewis and the Committee congratulated and thanked Mr. Karlin. DFO Lewis informed him that there will be opportunities to cultivate and collaborate among the other committees and subcommittees. Mr. Karlin also stated that he is delighted to serve the academic and the ag community. DFO Lewis will be in touch with Mr. Karlin within a couple of weeks to discuss next steps.

IV. Wrap-up/Adjourn

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

The meeting adjourned at 2:56 p.m. ET.

The next meeting is scheduled for July 11th @ 2pm ET.