



## United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Research, Education, and Economics (REE)

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

### **Pollinator Subcommittee Meeting – Tuesday, January 28, 2025**

**Pollinator Subcommittee (PS) Members Present:** Dr. Christina Grozinger (Chair), Ms. Kelly Bills, Ms. Danielle Downey, Dr. Margarita López-Uribe, Dr. Ramesh Sagili, Dr. Daniel Schmehl and Dr. Hollis Woodard - 7

**Members Absent:** Mr. Darren Cox and Ms. Melanie Kirby - 2

**Ex-Officio Present:** Ms. Elizabeth Hill, USDA Honey Bee and Pollinator Research Coordinator, Office of the Chief Scientist (OCS), USDA – 1

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

**Guest:** - Christopher Crawford, AAAS Science and Technology Policy Fellow, (OCS) and Mr. Travis Averill, Livestock Branch Chief at USDA/National Agricultural Statistics Service

#### **I. Welcome, Roll Call, Quorum Check, and Minutes**

DFO Lewis welcomed the group, took roll call, and noted that the quorum was met. She also informed the group that the Board, its committees and subcommittees have the authority and the legislative backing to remain active until the end of September 2025. The continuing resolution is valid until mid-March. She will keep the PS informed about the FY25 budget as updates become available

DFO Lewis introduced Mr. Averill, Livestock Branch Chief of USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) to the PS and asked him to give a brief background of himself.

Ms. Simmons asked if there were any revisions to the September minutes. There was a minor edit on the September minutes which was noted. Ms. Simmons will make the correction. There were no further comments or revisions. She asked for a motion and a second, which was received to approve the minutes. All were in favor and no one opposed. Ms. Simmons will have the web team post the September minutes and agenda on the PS website.

#### **II. Report/Remarks from Dr. Christina Grozinger, Chair**

Dr. Grozinger stated that the PS had discussed topics they wanted to address as a group. She thought it would be a good idea to hear from Mr. Averill. He has helped to solve the pollinator crisis because the honeybee colonies are at an all-time high.

Dr. Grozinger mentioned that the PS had a discussion about the Pollinator Health Panel that took place November 2024 during the State of the Science Meeting. Hopefully, that topic will be added to the PS's February or March 2025 agenda. She also stated that a Member

from the National Genetics Resources Advisory Council will join the PS meeting in February or March to share information about the honeybee genetic resources.

Dr. Grozinger asked if there were any comments or questions.

A Member asked will the topic(s) that the PS select only be discussed at the monthly meetings or can there be subgroups that can be formed for discussion/action outside of the monthly meeting?

Dr. Grozinger stated that there can be other meetings outside of the monthly PS meetings which can also have discussion about the prioritization of the topics. Splitting up into subgroups would be a good idea.

DFO Lewis confirmed that separate meetings are allowed.

There were no other questions or comments.

### **New Business**

Mr. Averill discussed the 2022 Census of Agriculture (report on honeybee colony numbers) and the following:

- NASA has conducted six Census of Agriculture from 1997 to 2022
- USDA conducts the Census of Agriculture every five years. The survey for the Census of Agriculture is voluntary
- Census Methodology and Quality Measures for honey
- Bee and Honey NASS Survey Inquiry - December 2024
- Cost of Pollination NASS Survey Inquiry – November 2024
- Quarterly Colony NASS Survey Loss - January 2025

Mr. Averill provided the following links that were related to his discussion.

[https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/Methodology\\_and\\_Data\\_Quality/Honey/index.php](https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/Methodology_and_Data_Quality/Honey/index.php)

[https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/AgCensus/2022/Full\\_Report/Volume\\_1,\\_Chapter\\_1\\_US/usappxa.pdf](https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/AgCensus/2022/Full_Report/Volume_1,_Chapter_1_US/usappxa.pdf)

<https://portal.agcounts.usda.gov/>

Dr. Grozinger asked if there were any questions.

A member asked how are participants selected for the honeybee survey?

Mr. Averill stated that we list all producers that have five colonies or more. There's no bias in the process. If people don't reply to the survey we try to account for them in an estimation protocol. The survey can be completed via phone call, online, or mail.

A member asked what more can we do from this committee to optimize that survey?

Mr. Averill stated that more producers will need to participate in the survey.

A few PS members agreed to meet to write a short (1 page) set of recommendations on how to improve the survey completion rate and the reporting of the survey results, focusing on the NASS annual bee and honey survey.

Dr. Grozinger thanked Mr. Averill for meeting with the PS and for the information he provided.

Mr. Averill informed the PS that he can be reached by phone or email if they have further questions.

### **III. Old Business**

State Of the Science (SOS) meeting highlights/PS next steps

DFO Lewis stated due to the lack of time, the SOS topic couldn't be discussed. It was agreed that a separate meeting to discuss the SOS would be scheduled for February 10, 2025, at 2:30pm ET. Ms. Simmons will send out the calendar meeting invite to all PS members.

#### **Wrap-up/Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 3:39 p.m. ET.

The next meeting is Monday, February 24, 2025, ET.