



United States Department of Agriculture
Research, Education, and Economics

Orientation Session

Michele Esch

Executive Director

National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education, and Economics Advisory Board

Beltsville, MD

December 16, 2015



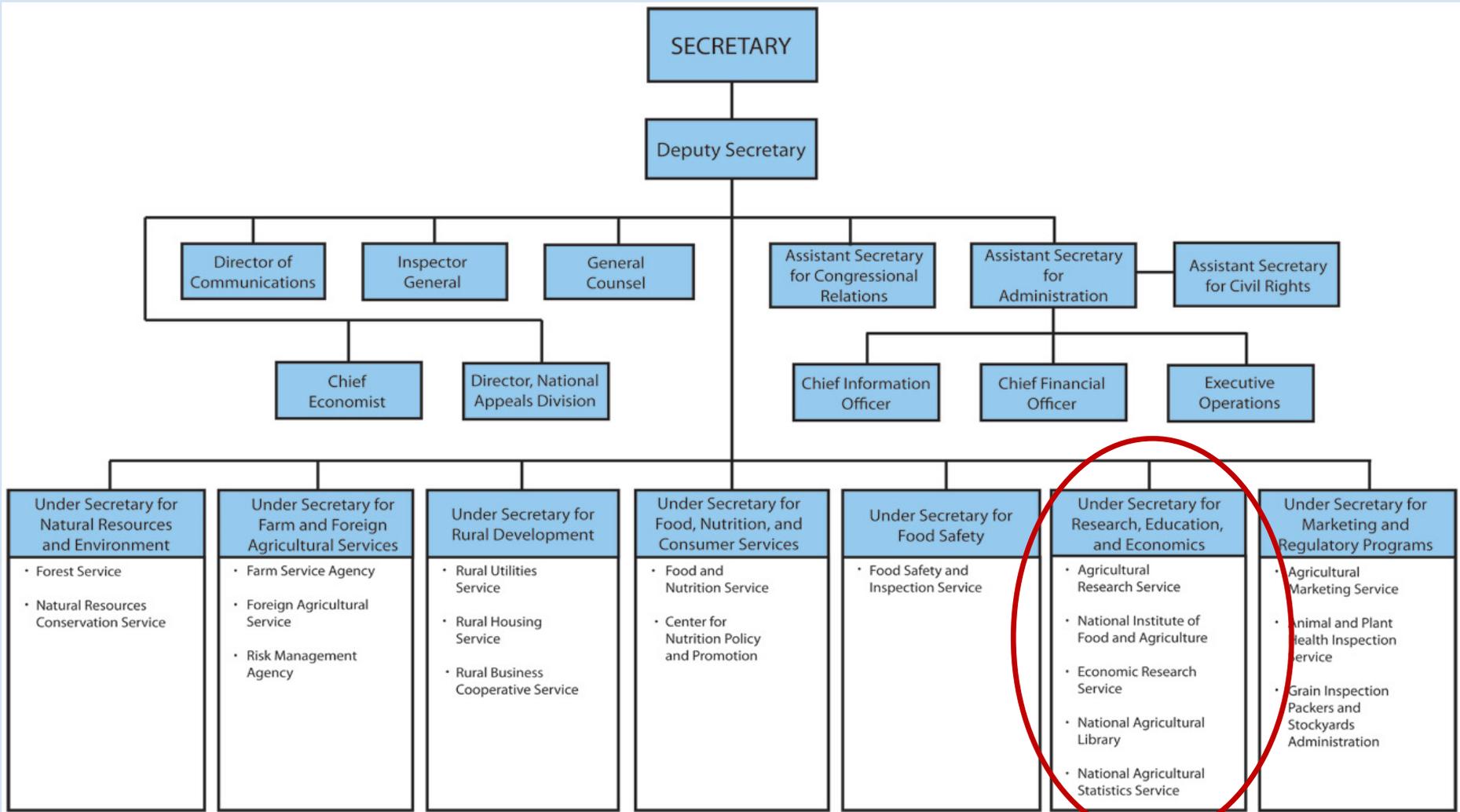


Overview

1. Organization of USDA – where does NAREEEE fit?
2. Purpose and Objective of NAREEEE
3. The Federal Advisory Committee Act
4. General Operating Procedures
 1. Membership
 2. Meetings
 3. Minutes
 4. Reporting Processes



USDA Organization Chart





United States Department of Agriculture
Research, Education, and Economics



Under Secretary for Research, Education, and Economics

Agricultural Research Service

National Institute of Food and Agriculture

Economic Research Service

National Institute of Food and Agriculture

National Agricultural Library



United States Department of Agriculture
Research, Education, and Economics



USDA Research, Education, and Economics Mission Area

Dr. Catherine Woteki
Under Secretary/USDA Chief Scientist

Dr. Ann Bartuska
Deputy Under Secretary

ARS

Dr. Chavonda
Jacobs-Young,
Administrator

ERS

Dr. Mary
Bohman,
Administrator

NASS

Mr. Joe Reilly,
Administrator

NIFA

Dr. Sonny
Ramaswamy,
Director



NAREEE Advisory Board - Purpose

- Advise the Secretary of Agriculture, land-grant colleges and universities, and Congress on top priorities and policies for food and agricultural research, education, extension and economics.
- NAREEE's main objective is to contribute to effective federal agricultural research, education and economics programs through broad stakeholder feedback and sound science in its ongoing role as advisor to the Secretary of Agriculture.



NAREEE Advisory Board - Duties

- NAREEEAB provides consultation on:
 - long-term and short-term national policies and priorities consistent with the purposes specified in section 1402 for agricultural research, extension, education, and economics; and
 - the annual establishment of priorities that –
 - are in accordance with the purposes specified in a provision of a covered law (as defined in subsection (d) of section 1492) under which competitive grants (described in subsection (c) of such section) are awarded; and
 - the Board determined are national priorities.;



NAREEE Advisory Board - Duties

- Evaluates the results and effectiveness of agricultural research, extension, education, and economics with respect to the policies and priorities;
- Reviews and makes recommendations to the Under Secretary of Agriculture for Research, Education, and Economics on the research, extension, education, and economics portion of the draft strategic plan (required under section 306 of USC title 5)



NAREEE Advisory Board - Duties

- Reviews the mechanisms of the Department of Agriculture for technology assessment (which should be conducted by qualified professionals) for the purposes of—
 - performance measurement and evaluation of the implementation by the Secretary of the strategic plan required under section 306 of USC title 5;
 - implementation of the national research policies and priorities that are consistent with the purposes specified in section 3101 of this title; and
 - the development of mechanisms for the assessment of emerging public and private agricultural research and technology transfer initiatives, and
 - consult with industry groups on agricultural research, extension, education, and economics and make recommendations to the Secretary based on that consultation.

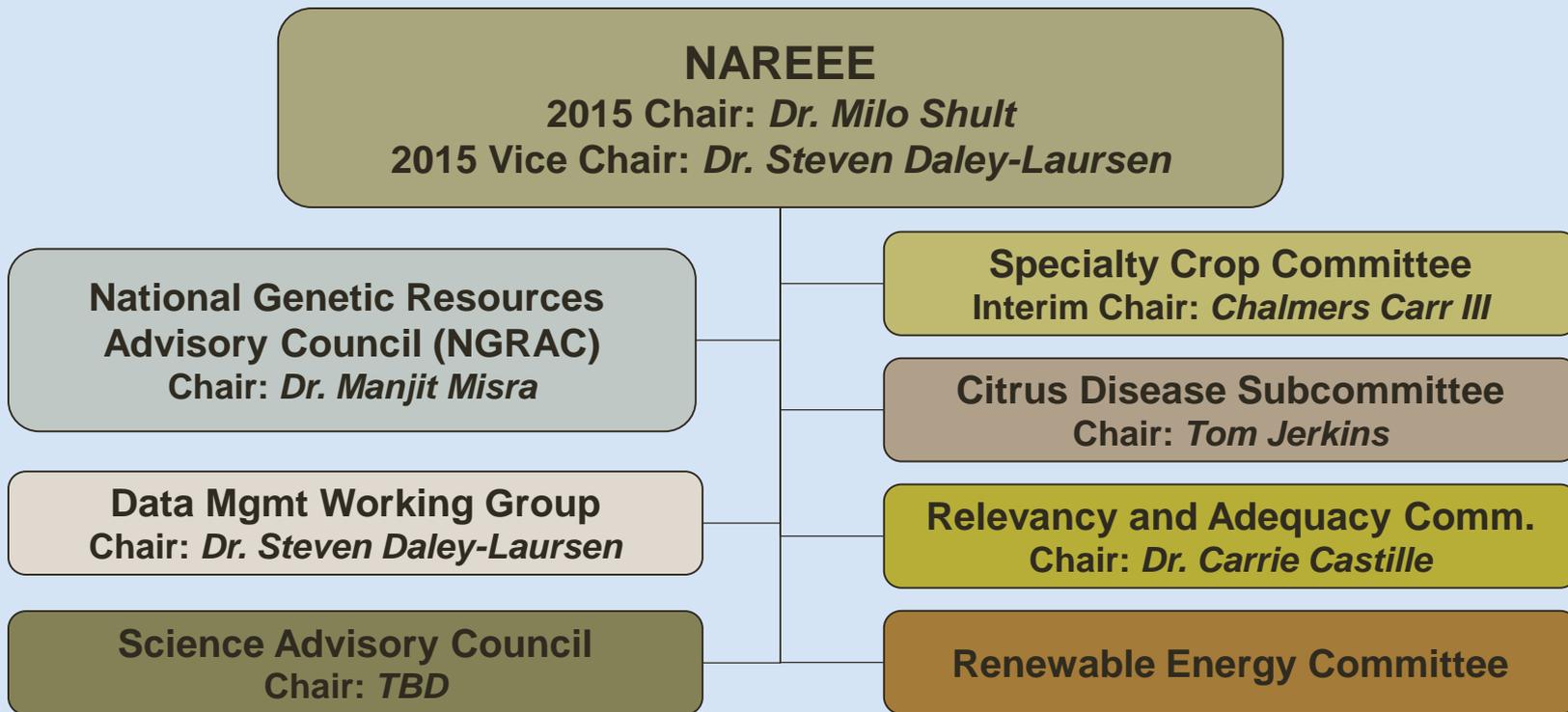


NAREEE Advisory Board - Duties

- 7 USC 7613 requires that the Advisory Board must review on an annual basis:
 - The relevance of all agricultural research, extension, or education activities conducted or funded by the Department to the established priorities; and
 - The adequacy of funding for those programs.



Subcommittees & Working Groups





Federal Advisory Committee Act

Committee, board, panel, or other similar group –

- Established by statute or established or utilized by either the President or an agency official.
- For the purpose of obtaining advice or recommendations on “issues or policies within the scope of an agency official’s responsibilities”.



FACA – Public Access and Transparency

- Generally, advisory committee meetings are open to the public and members of the public may submit written comments.
- Agencies must publish notices announcing advisory committee meetings 15 calendar days in advance of a meeting.
- There are few exceptions to these requirements:
 - When advisory committees are performing administrative or ministerial functions.
 - When subcommittees meet.
 - The agency can invoke an exception under the Sunshine Act to close a meeting (criminal investigations, internal personnel matters, national defense are a few exceptions)



FACA – Subcommittees

- *Committees could be considered in violation of FACA if recommendations are not routed back through the Advisory Board.* Such actions by any PC outside the oversight and approval of the Advisory Board are consequently inappropriate, potentially illegal and strictly forbidden.



FACA – Advisory Committee Materials

- 5 U.S.C. App. Section (10)(b) states:
 - The records, reports, transcripts, minutes, appendixes, **working papers, drafts**, studies, agenda, or other documents which were made available to or prepared for or by each advisory committee shall be made available for public inspection and copying.
 - This provision provides for contemporaneous availability of advisory committee materials.
 - A written Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request is not required.
 - Agencies may review requested material to protect information under various FOIA exemptions.
 - However, agencies may not withhold information pursuant to the deliberative process privilege under FOIA Exemption 5, which would normally protect drafts, working papers, and other predecisional, deliberative information. *See Disclosure of Advisory Committee Deliberative Materials*, DOJ, Office of Legal Counsel (Apr. 29, 1988)



NAREEE General Operating Procedures – Membership

- 25 Members each representing a specific stakeholder category as identified in the Farm Bill and six ex-officio members
- Members serve staggered terms
- Members have the responsibility for attending all meetings
- Bring your perspective of your representative group to the meetings!!



NAREEE General Operating Procedures – Membership

- Officers and Executive Committee
 - 9 members of the Executive Committee, elected annually
 - Chair
 - Vice Chair
 - 7 additional members
 - Provide interim oversight to the Board's advisory functions to assure progress is being made.
 - Meet monthly
 - Administrative in nature



NAREEE General Operating Procedures – Meetings

- All meetings must observe FACA regulations!
- Typically meet face to face 2 times per year
- Additional conference calls as needed
- Executive Committee meets monthly for administrative and planning purposes
- Subcommittees meet monthly or quarterly or as needed
- Must have a quorum – greater than 50% of its appointed members must be present



NAREEE General Operating Procedures – Meetings

- Substitute participants may be allowed to listen for the sole purpose of note taking, with the prior approval of the Executive Director.
- Attendance by the public should be requested of the Executive Director to assure space availability.



NAREEE General Operating Procedures – Meetings

- All meetings will be held at the request of the Chair, with advance approval from the Designated Federal Official (*Executive Director*) and with an agenda approved by the DFO.
- The *Executive Director* must also approve any expenditures from the budget and authorize travel and per diem for members and other required individuals planning to attend a Board meeting.



NAREEE General Operating Procedures – Meetings

- Usual Order of Business:
 - Call to Order; Minutes of Previous Meetings - Correction, Approval, or Disposition; Announcements; Unfinished Business; New Business; Public Comment; and Adjournment
- Conduct of Meetings The Chair will preside over all Advisory Board and Executive Committee meetings, except as provided otherwise in the Operating Procedures. All meetings shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order, with exceptions as noted in operating procedures.



NAREEE General Operating Procedures – Meetings

- The agenda can be modified by the Chair at the beginning of an Advisory Board meeting at the request of any Advisory Board member.
- Time will be allotted on each day of a public meeting for statements by the public. Written statements may also be submitted by individuals or organizations within a reasonable time after a meeting.



NAREEE General Operating Procedures – Meetings

- Motions Substantive proposals shall be brought before the Advisory Board as a motion for consideration and action.
- "To Table" a motion: ("to postpone temporarily") represents a common practice for killing a motion, because the motion dies at the end of the current meeting, is no longer debatable, and cannot be amended. (2/3 vote)



NAREEE General Operating Procedures – Meetings

- Voting Majority vote will be the rule for voting in order to take action, unless otherwise provided by federal law, rules and regulations, rules of parliamentary procedure (FACA recommends Robert's Rules of Order), or the Advisory Board operating procedures. A majority vote is the vote of more than half (more than 50%) of the Advisory Board voting members.



NAREEE General Operating Procedures – Meetings

- **Voice Vote:** The Chair (presiding officer) will determine the result of a vote by the volume of voices. When in doubt, the Chair may call for the vote again, asking for a show of hands or other form of voting so a count may be made. During teleconference meetings, the Chair will call roll one by one to determine the vote as necessary.
- **General Consent:** Voting by general consent (also called "unanimous consent") on routine or noncontroversial questions saves time and expedites business by avoiding a formal vote. The Chair does not need a motion to give general consent to an action if the



NAREEE General Operating Procedures – Meetings

- Chair states, “If there is no objection, we will ...” If there are no objections by any member, the action is approved by general consent.
- Exclusion of Members From Voting A member having a conflict of interest (defined below) on a matter shall declare that conflict, shall refrain from participating in the discussion, and shall not vote on that matter.



NAREEE General Operating Procedures – Noting Dissent

- Disagreement by a member on the contents of a report may be noted at a member's request in that report, but must be received at the REE Advisory Board Office in writing during the drafting stage.



NAREEE General Operating Procedures – Minutes

- Minutes Official minutes shall be kept of all meetings. The minutes will be prepared under the direction of the Executive Director.
- Minutes shall reflect the advice and recommendations as a result of their independent judgment and should not be inappropriately influenced by any special interest, including the appointing authority.
- Minutes are written without attribution to a particular person.

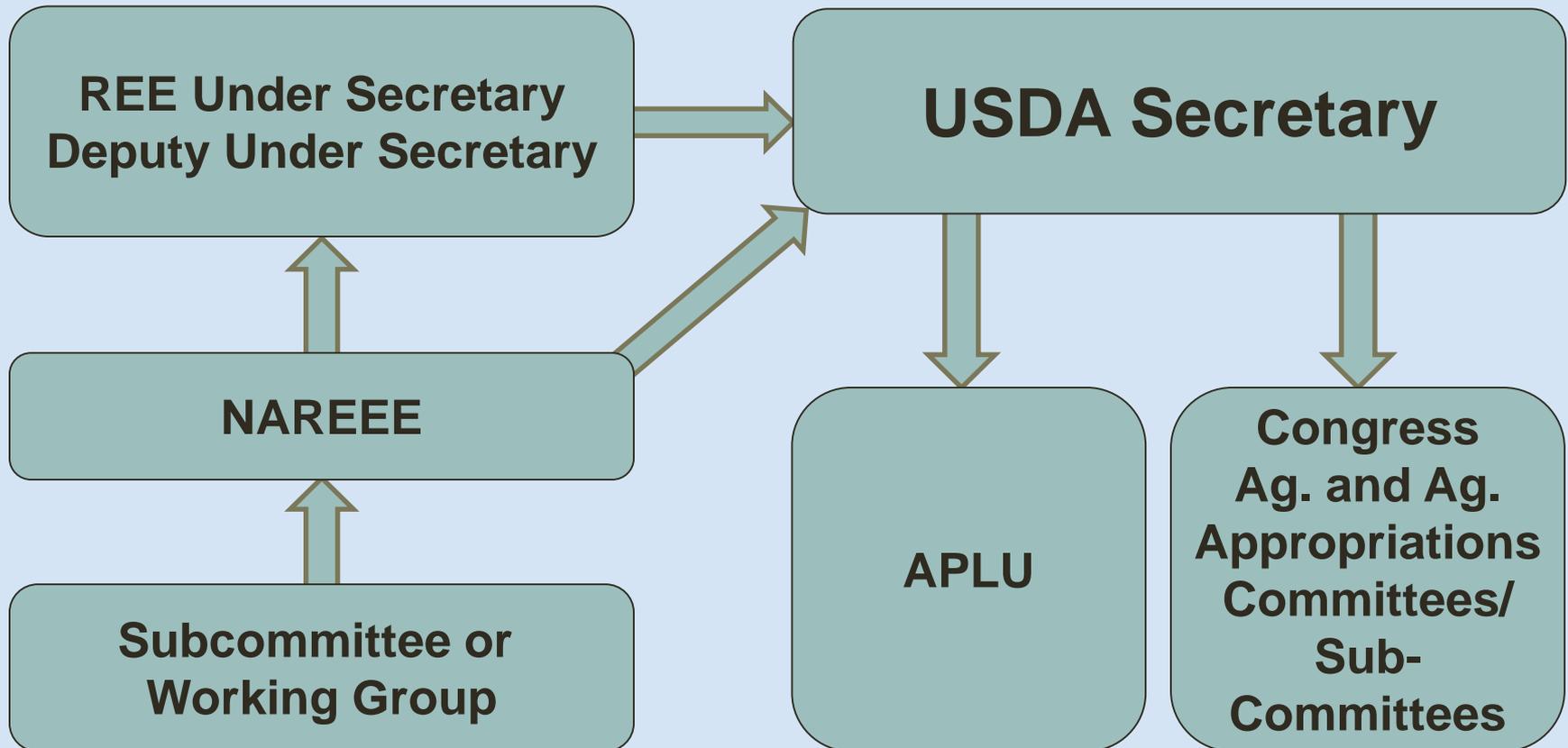


NAREEE General Operating Procedures – Reporting Process

- All recommendations must be routed back through the full Advisory Board and deliberated on in a public forum.



NAREEE General Operating Procedures – Reporting Process





United States Department of Agriculture
Research, Education, and Economics



Questions

Michele Esch

Executive Director/Designated Federal Officer

REE Advisory Board Office

United States Department of Agriculture

1400 Independence Ave., SW

Whitten Building, Room 332A

Washington, DC 20250-2255

Tel: (202) 720-8408 or -3684

Cell: (301) 369-9891

E-mail: Michele.Esch@ars.usda.gov