

SAAESD Spring Meeting 2022 - Southern Mini Land-grant

May 16 – 19, 2022

Agenda

Monday, May 16

8:30 – 11:30	Optional tour, PVAMU
11:30 – 12:30	Lunch PVAMU
12:30 – 4:30	Optional tour, TAMU
5:00 – 6:00 <i>Century Prefunction</i>	Registration
6:00 – 8:00 <i>Chancellor's Suite - Kyle Field</i>	Welcome reception and dinner

Tuesday, May 17

6:30 – 8:00 <i>Century Prefunction</i>	Breakfast	
8:00 – 10:00 <i>Century IV</i>	SAAESD – ASRED Joint Session	
8:00 am	Joint Best Practices Session: <i>Preparing and responding to severe weather disasters at RECs and local offices</i>	
9:00 am	Leadership Engagement NIFA Update – Kevin Kephart, Deputy Director, Institute of Bioenergy, Climate, and Environment, USDA/NIFA	
9:20 am	BAA Initiatives Updates and Comments – Doug Steele, Vice President for Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources, APLU	
9:40 am	Budget Update and Discussion – Bridget Krieger, Senior Principal, Lewis-Burke Associates	
10:00 am	Break	
10:30 – 5:00 <i>Corps- for morning session</i>	SAAESD Spring Business Meeting	
10:30 am	1	Welcome and Introductions – Rob Gilbert <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review/Approve Agenda • Review/Approve minutes from September 28, 2021 Meeting • Approve Interim Actions • Meeting Rotation

10:40 am	2	<p>Multistate Research Committee Report –Nathan McKinney</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Status of Multistate Activities • 2022 ESS Award Nomination for Excellence in Multistate Research • SERA Administrative Advisor Assignments: SERA 41, 43 & 46
10:55 am	3	<p>Liaison Reports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NIFA Report – Kevin Kephart • SRDC Report – John Green • ASRED Report – Gary Jackson • Cotton Report – Don Jones <p>Questions on “Written Only” ESCOP Committee Reports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget & Legislative Committee Report – S Lommel • Communication & Marketing Committee Report – JF Meullenet • Science & Technology Committee Report – Susan Duncan • Diversity Catalyst Committee Report – Henry Fadamiro
12:00 – 1:30 <i>Century IV</i>		Lunch with S-CARET Representatives
1:30 pm <i>Reveille</i>	4	Strategic Roadmap Implementation Report – Implementation Working Groups
2:15 pm	5	Executive Directors Report – Gary Thompson (30 minutes)
2:45 pm	6	SAAESD Budget Presentation – JF Meullenet (15 minutes)
3:00 pm		Break
3:15 pm	7	<p>Program Reports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NRSP1 Renewal Report – Steve Lommel • S9 Plant Genetic Resources Conservation and Utilization – Bob Stougaard <p>AI Initiative Report – Susan Duncan</p>
3:45 pm	8	<p>General Discussion Topics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USDA/AMS Marketing Orders and Research and Promotion Programs • Data Sharing Proposal • Vegetable Consortium • NAS Blue Ribbon Panel • Academic Analytics and Rankings
4:15 pm	9	<p>Resolutions – Lesley Oliver</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SAAESD Excellence in Leadership Award Presentation – Rob Gilbert

4:30 pm	10	ESS Chair Engagement – Chris Pristos
5:00 pm		Adjourn Business Meeting – Rob Gilbert
6:30 – 9:00 <i>AgriLife Center and Gardens</i>		Dinner

Wednesday, May 18 All Groups Joint Session

6:30 – 8:00 <i>Century Prefunction</i>	Breakfast
8:00 am <i>Century I&II</i>	Welcome to Texas – Mark Hussey, Vice Chancellor and Dean for Agriculture & Life Sciences
8:10 am	<p>Land-grant Universities’ Roles in Human Health</p> <p>This session will include a broad overview of the status and impacts of human health and nutrition in the South and discuss how Land-grant University food and agriculture programs in research, teaching, and Extension can contribute more effectively to potential solutions.</p>
10:00 am	Break
10:30 am	<p>Who is Our Audience?</p> <p>This session will focus on how we do business (best practices for providing the content) and on what we do (program content). Questions that will be addressed include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does population change, including shifts in population subgroups, affect the food and agriculture system? • How do people consume information/education of the type that Land-grant universities provide? • What changes are needed to address population shifts, and what tools /techniques/technologies are required to accomplish those changes?
12:00 noon <i>Century I&II</i>	Lunch
1:00 pm	<p>Recruitment & Retention of Diverse Faculty & Staff</p> <p>This session will provide participants with demographic trends of student enrollment and degree completion in agriculture, human science, and natural resources disciplines in the Southern region; along with an overview of current faculty demographics in Southern colleges of agriculture. It also will allow participants time to discuss how demographic changes may affect the future of each mission area and what collaborate actions might diversify disciplines or faculty/staff that are not currently racially, ethnically, or gender diverse.</p>
2:30 pm	Break
3:00 pm	<p>Climate Influences on Agriculture</p> <p>This session will involve a panel of experts discussing key issues in better understanding climate related challenges we face as a region and how Southern region priorities influence</p>

	the national agenda, engagement, and policy. Participants will engage in a discussion with the panel on effective strategies to address climate change issues in the South.
5:00 pm	Adjourn
6:30 – 9:00 <i>TAMU hotel</i>	Dinner

Thursday, May 19

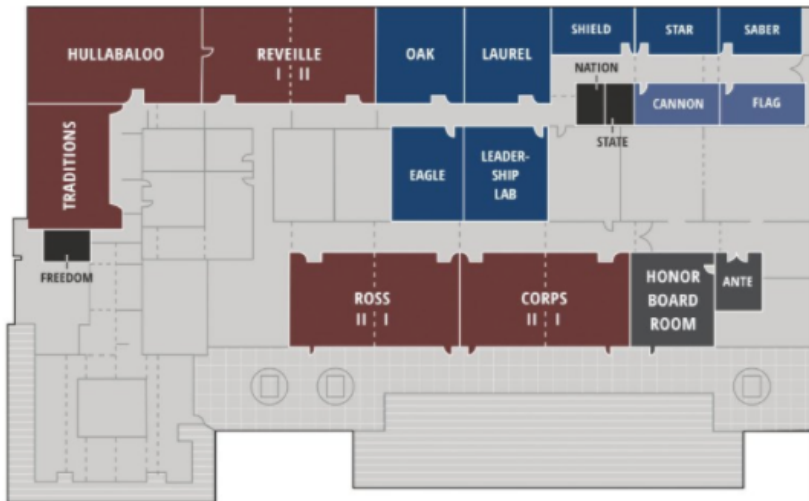
6:30 – 8:00 <i>Century Prefunction</i>	Breakfast
8:00 am <i>Reveille</i>	Executive Session- ALL COOs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FY 22 SAAESD Budget Discussion and Vote • Executive Director Performance Review
9:00 am <i>Century IV</i>	SAAESD – ARD Joint Session
	Discussion: <i>Proactive Steps to Build Strategic Partnerships</i>
10:00 am	Break
10:30 am <i>Century IV</i>	SAAESD – S-APS Joint Session
	Joint Best Practices Session: <i>Building the Pipeline from Undergraduate to Graduate Studies</i>
11:30 am	Adjourn

Upcoming Meetings:

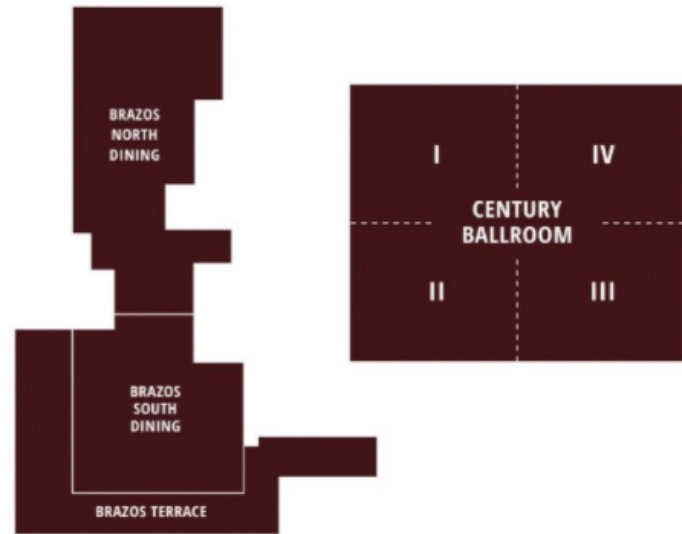
- Joint COPs, July 19-21, 2022, Omni Shoreham Hotel, Washington DC
- Joint ESS/CES-NEDA Annual Meeting, September 25-28, 2022, Baltimore, MD

Floor Plans

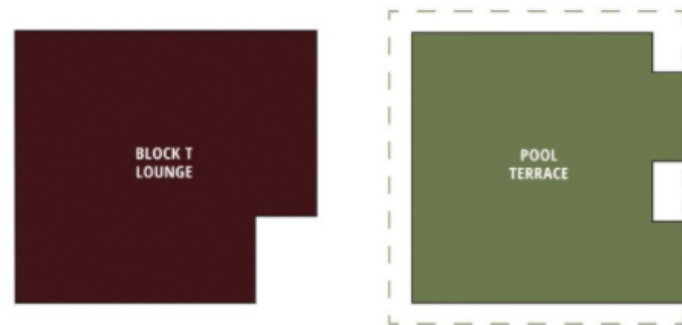
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SAAESD Fall 2021 Meeting Notes

Tuesday, September 28, 2021

Participants: In person: JF Meullenet- AR, Rob Gilbert- FL, Scott Sensman- OK, David Monks- NC, Nathan McKinney- AR, Keith Cobel- MS, Susan Duncan- VA, Lesley Oliver- KY.

Via Zoom: Mike Salassi- LA, David White- TN, Tom Zimmerman- VI, Loren Fisher- NC, Said Mostaghimi- VA, Randy Raper- OK, James Matthews- KY, Wes Burger- MS, Henry Fadamiro- TX, John Davis- FL, Michael Toews- GA, Damian Adams- FL,

Executive Director's Office: Gary Thompson & Cindy Morley

Other guests: Kevin Kephart, NIFA; Gary Jackson, ASRED; John Greed, SRDC; Frankie Gould, LSU; Dr. Carrie Castille, NIFA Director; William Hoffman, Chief of Staff; Faith Peppers, Director of Communications

Agenda #	Action Items
1	Agenda- Approved Spring Meeting Minutes- Approved Interim Actions- Approved
2	MRC- New MRC and AA Procedures developed by SAAESD Office Two members of the SERA Review Committee will serve on the MRC
3	By-Laws Revision- Approved (11-0)
8	Nominating Committee Report: Lesley Oliver Elected as Executive Committee Member-at-large Paula Agudelo Elected as SAAESD Chair-elect

Item	Agenda Item - Presenter
1	<p>Welcome and Introductions – Jean-Francois Meullenet</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approval of Agenda • Spring Meeting Minutes • Interim Actions • Introduction of new COOs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scott Senseman- Oklahoma State University • Jamie Matthew- University of Kentucky • Keith Coble- Mississippi State University (Interim) • Arthur Appel- Auburn University (Interim) • Tom Zimmerman- University of the Virgin Islands (Interim)
2	<p>SERA Review Committee Report – David Monks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendations, Discussion

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SERA-47 – (Approved) Strengthening the Southern Region Extension and Research System to Support Local & Regional Foods Needs and Priorities <p>Multistate Research Committee Report –Nathan McKinney</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects Approved <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S-1069 – Research and Extension for Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) Applications in U.S. Agriculture and Natural Resources • S-1090 – AI in Agroecosystems: Big Data and Smart Technology-Driven Sustainable Production • MRC Procedural Changes- See procedure document for full changes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Membership increase to 5 members (consistent with policies already in place) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 members of the SERA Review Committee will make up the two new members. • The MRC will now meet 4 times per year going forward and minutes from the meetings will be taken and posted on the website. • The MRC will now conduct mid-term reviews of those projects that are ready for them. • There is now a concise timeline that is standardized across all projects.
3	<p>SAAESD By-laws Revisions – Gary Thompson</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation, Discussion & Motion for approval • SAAESD Rules of Operation Proposal- See Power Point presentation for full highlights of changes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revised entirety of document to remove redundancy and remove references to documents that no longer exist. • Clarified membership and defined regular meetings • Clarified Officer positions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defined the Executive Committee “Member at large” to be elected from the Non-COO members of the association and will serve as their representative. • Defined the Standing committees and charged the MRC to be the “quality assurance mechanism for the Multistate Research Portfolio” • Changed the name of the document from “By-laws” to “Rules of Operation”
4	<p>Updates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NIFA update – Kevin Kephart • ASRED update – Gary Jackson • SRDC update – John Green • AI Initiative update – Robert Gilbert • 2022 Southern Mini-land Grant Meeting update – Gary Thompson
5	<p>Strategic Roadmap Implementation – Implementation Team</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Action Plan Proposal presented by the Strategic Implementation Steering Committee members. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative Discovery- David White & Henry Fadamiro • Enhancing Reputation- Michael Toews & John Davis • Strategic Alliances- Susan Duncan & Gary Thompson • Effective Communications- Frankie Gould & Cindy Morley
6	<p>NIFA Leadership Visit – Dr. Carrie Castille, NIFA Director, William Hoffman, Chief of Staff, Faith Peppers, Director of Communications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joined our meeting to share successes and gather feedback • Stressed NIFA’s commitment to partnership building & nurturing and their willingness to listen to needs. • Recognized the uniqueness of each region and the need to consider geographic innovations. • Successes shared: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50 new staff goal-surpassed. • Workforce looks like the people they serve. • Providing needed leadership. • NIFA is “Your Organization” and would like to hear from you. • They understand the need to get \$\$ out the door fast and they have increased the speed that they are doing that. • Asked how do we help brand capacity that emphasizes the input you have? Data. • Asked what are things that we need to work on collectively? • Emphasized that they are happy to support what we are working on.
7	<p>Resolutions Committee Report – Lesley Oliver</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resolutions for 5 retiring COOs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bob Godfrey • Kieth Owens • David Ragsdale • Robert Houtz • Keith Owens • Resolution for outgoing Chair- JF Meullenet
8	<p>Nominating Committee Report – Robert Gilbert</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive Committee Member-at-large <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leslie Oliver nominated and elected • SAAESD Chair-elect <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paula Agudelo nominated and elected
9	<p>Passing of the Gavel – Jean-Francois Meullenet</p>

Adjourn

Interim Actions

Spring 2022

- SAAESD Signed onto SoAR letter to Senate Leadership with full support of SAAESD Executive Committee
- Scott Senseman, OK, appointed AA for S1082
- SAAESD Rep on the TOAC- Will Davis, Assistant Professor of Ag Economics at Mississippi State University approved by the Executive Committee
- SAAESD Rep on the SRDC Board of Directors- Gary Thompson, approved by the Executive Committee
- Ralph Noble, Dean of Colleg of Ag, Family Science and Tech at Fort Valley State University appointed AA for SCC81
- The Executive Committee approved the nomination of Cythia Nichols (UTK) to represent the southern region on a working group to provide input into the development of the Financial Module for the NIFA Reporting System
- Paula Agudelo appointed to the Joint Cotton Breeding Committee
- Scott Willard appointed to the Southern Region Aquaculture BOD replacing Wes Burger
- Jamie Larson appointed to the ESCOP Diversity Catalyst Committee replacing Wes Burger
- SAAESD sponsored the poster competition at the AI Conference
- SAAESD responded to NIFA's request for input on "the impacts of climate change in the southern region and how those impacts are effecting programming within the region"
- SAAESD Signed on to USDA Research Support letter encouraging House and Senate members to support increased investments to advance agricultural research in the USDA

Spring Meeting Schedules

SAAESD Spring Meeting Schedule

2022 - SAAESD schedule - TX

2023 – MS

2024 - ASRED schedule - KY

2025 – TN

2026 - SAAESD schedule - PR

2027 – VA

2028 - ASRED schedule – OK

2029 – NC

2030 - SAAESD schedule - AR

2031 – GA

2032 - ASRED schedule – FL

2033 – VI

2034 - SAAESD schedule - LA

2035 – SC

2036 - ASRED schedule – AL

2037 – TX

ASRED Spring Meeting Schedule

2022 - SAAESD schedule - TX

2023 – Retirees - GA

2024 - ASRED schedule - KY

2025 – Retirees - MS

2026 - SAAESD schedule - PR

2027 – Retirees - NC

2028 - ASRED schedule - OK

2029 – Retirees - SC

2030 - SAAESD schedule - AR

2031 – Retirees - TN

2032 - ASRED schedule - FL

2033 – Retirees - VA

2034 - SAAESD schedule - LA

2035 – Retirees - VI

2036 - ASRED schedule - AL

2037 – Retirees - AR

ESS Chair and Meeting Host

The ESS Chair Elect is elected from the Southern Region during the 2023 Fall ESS Meeting and hosts the 2024 Fall ESS Meeting

ESS Chair Regional Rotation: W – NE – NC – S – ARD



2022 Joint COPs Summer Meeting

“Moving Into The New Normal”

July 19 – 21, 2022

**Omni Shoreham Hotel
2500 Calvert Street, NW
Washington, DC**



AGENDA

Tuesday, July 19, 2022

12:00 noon – 4:00 pm	Registration
1:00 pm - 5:00 pm <i>Presidential Board Room</i>	Board on Human Sciences (BoHS) Board of Directors Meeting
3:00 pm – 5:00 pm	ECOP Breakout: Professional Development Committee Presiding: Chair, John Lawrence, Vice President for Extension and Outreach, <i>Iowa State University</i>
3:00 pm – 5:00 pm	ECOP Breakout: Program Committee Presiding: Chair, Brent Hales, Director of Cooperative Extension, The Pennsylvania State University
3:00 pm – 5:00 pm	Committee on Legislation and Policy (CLP)
6:30 pm – 8:00 pm	<i>Opening Session & Dinner</i>

Wednesday, July 20, 2022

7:00 am – 8:00 am	<i>Breakfast</i>
7:00 am – 4:00 pm	Registration
10:00 am – 10:30 am	<i>Morning Break</i>
8:00 am – 12:00 noon	Academic Programs Committee on Organization and Policy (ACOP) Meeting

Administrative Heads Section (AHS)
Executive Committee Meeting

Board on Human Sciences (BoHS)
Business Meeting

Extension Committee on Organization
and Policy Committee (ECOP) Meeting
Presiding: Chair, Wendy Powers, Associate
Vice President, Agriculture and Natural
Resources, *University of California*

Experiment Station Committee on
Organization and Policy (ES COP) Meeting

International Programs Committee on
Organization and Policy (ICOP) Meeting

CARET Executive Committee Meeting

12:00 noon – 1:00 pm

Luncheon

1:30 pm – 3:00 pm

“Emerging Topics in the Global Arena” Session

1:30 pm – 3:00 pm

Communications and Marketing (CMC)
Committee Meeting

1:30 pm – 3:00 pm

Budget & Advocacy Committee (BAC) Meeting

3:00 pm – 3:30 pm

Afternoon Break

3:30 pm – 5:00 pm

Joint COPs General Session

- Section Reports
- FANR Update

DINNER ON YOUR OWN

Thursday, July 21, 2022

7:00 am – 8:00 am

Breakfast

8:00 am – 12:00 noon

Registration/Information Desk

8:30 am – 10:30 am

Joint COPS General Session

➤ Advocacy and NIFA Updates

10:30 am

Adjourn

11:30 am – 2:00 pm

BAA Policy Board of Directors Meeting
(Working Luncheon)

Multistate Research Committee Report Spring 2022

Presenter: Nathan McKinney

Background:

The MRC is composed of Nathan McKinney (Chair, 2023), Susan Duncan (2022), Tim Rials (2022) and two representatives of the SERA Review Committee, David Monks (2025) and David White (2025)

The following is a current status report, prepared by Cindy Morley, of Multistate Research Funded activities. This information is also available on the SAAESD web site.

Multistate Activities' Status

Projects Terminating 9/30/2022

S0294-Postharvest Quality and Safety in Fresh-cut Vegetables and Fruits-Scott Senseman, OK

S1070-The Working Group on Improving Microbial Control of Arthropod Pests- Paula Agudelo, SC

S1071-A framework for secondary schools agriscience education programs that emphasizes the STEM content in agriculture- Lesley Oliver, KY

SCC81-Sustainable Small Ruminant Production in the Southeastern U.S.-Ralph Noble

SDC102-Integrated Research in New-Media Marketing for Rural Agricultural and Natural Resources Enterprises-Damian Adams, FL

SERA 27-Nursery Crop and Landscape Systems- Tom Zimmerman, VI

SERA 3-Southern Region Information Exchange Group for IPM- ES – David Monks, NC

SERA 6-Methodology, Interpretation, and Implementation of Soil, Plant, Byproduct, and Water Analyses- Nathan McKinney, AR

Projects up for Mid-term Review 2022 (those that end in 2024)

S1085-Cover Crops for Sustainable Southern Agroecosystems

S1086-Enhancing sustainability of beef cattle production in Southern and Central US through genetic improvement

SCC76-Economics and Management of Risk in Agriculture and Natural Resources

SERA 41-Improving Production Efficiency of the Beef Cow Herd in Southeastern

SERA 43-Southern Region Integrated Water Resources Coordinating Committee

SERA 45-Crop diversification opportunities to enhance the viability of small farms

SERA 46-Framework for Nutrient Reduction Strategy Collaboration: The Role for Land Grant Universities

SERA 48-Turf

Projects Terminating 9/30/2023

S009-Plant Genetic Resource Conservation and Utilization-Bob Stougaard, GA

S1072-U.S. Agricultural Trade and Policy in a Dynamic Global Market Environment-Michael Salassi, LA

S1073-Biological Control of Arthropod Pests and Weeds-Saied Mostaghimi, VA

S1074-Future Challenges in Animal Production Systems: Seeking Solutions through Focused Facilitation-Wendy Powers, CA

S1075-The Science and Engineering for a Biobased Industry and Economy-Tim Rials, TN

S1076-Fly Management in Animal Agriculture Systems and Impacts on Animal Health and Food Safety-David White, TN

S1077-Enhancing Microbial Food Safety by Risk Analysis-Steve Lommel, NC

S1078-Cognitive Influence on Teaching, Learning, and Decision Making Around Critical Agricultural and Natural Resource Issues-Susan Duncan, VA

S1079-Peanut Variety and Quality Evaluation for Development of Virginia-type Cultivars with High Oleic Trait, Flavor, and Rainfed Production-David Monks, NC

S1080-Improving Soybean Arthropod Pest Management in the U.S.-Henry Fadamiro, AL

S1081-Nutritional Systems for Swine to Increase Reproductive Efficiency-Jamie Matthews, KY

S1082-Aging in Place: Home and Community in Rural America-Scott Senseman, OK

S1083-Ecological and genetic diversity of soilborne pathogens and indigenous microflora-Nathan Slaton, AR

S1084-Industrial Hemp Production, Processing, and Marketing in the U.S.-Lesley Oliver, KY

SCC84-Selection and mating strategies to improve dairy cattle performance, efficiency, and longevity-Neil Schrick, TN

SERA 17-Organization to Minimize Nutrient Loss from the Landscape-Nathan McKinney, AR

SERA 18-Rice Technical Workers Group-Michael Salassi, LA

Projects up for Mid-term Review 2023 (those that end in 2025)

S1087-Sustainable Practices, Economic Contributions, Consumer Behavior, and Labor Management in the U.S. Environmental Horticulture Industry-Susan Duncan, VA

S1088-Specialty Crops and Food Systems: Exploring Markets, Supply Chains and Policy Dimensions-J.F. Meullenet, AR

S1089-Advanced Understanding and Prediction of Pollutants in Critical Landscapes in Watersheds-Saied Mostaghimi, VA

SCC33-Cooperative Variety Testing Programs-Robert Gilbert, FL

SCC80-Imagining the Future of Plant Breeding-Bob Gilbert, FL

SERA 35-Delta Region Farm Management and Agricultural Policy Working Group-J.F. Meullenet, AR

SERA 5-Sweet Potato Collaborators Conference-David Monks, NC

Action Requested: For information

Optimal Timeline for New and Renewed Multistate Project Proposals

(All projects initiate on October 1 and terminate on September 30)

Calendar year prior to project initiation

- **September 30:** Writing Committee submits a “request to write a proposal” in NIMSS by uploading the Issues and Justifications section. An Administrative Advisor (AA) will be assigned after submitting a proposal request. Effective 2021, all S-projects will retain the same number designation upon renewal, unless otherwise requested.
- **October:** MRC meets to review “Request to Write.”
- **October 30:** Begin to upload the remaining proposal sections in NIMSS.

Calendar Year of project initiation

- **March 15:** Final Project Proposal due in NIMSS along with a list of five suggested peer reviewers. SAAESD invites participants to the project via NIMSS.
- **March 30:** SAAESD office sends the proposal for peer review.
- **May 15:** Proposals are back from peer review. The SAAESD office sends the peer reviews to the AA to be relayed to the writing committee.
- **June 15:** Writing committee responds to the peer review and edits the proposal as appropriate. A document is e-mailed to the SAAESD office that gives a point-by-point response to each of the comments made by the peer reviewers and the changes made to the project in response to these comments. This document will be shared with the MRC to aid in the review process. The revised proposal is uploaded into NIMSS.
- **July:** MRC meets to review projects up for review. Projects that are unable to be reviewed by the MRC at this meeting may not be able to be renewed for the October 1 start date.
- **August:** The Writing Committee responds to MRC review and edits the proposal as appropriate
- **September:** SAAESD reviews all revisions and makes any remaining project decisions
- **September 30:** Old projects expire.
- **October 1:** New projects begin.

Southern Rural Development Center Liaison Report

John J. Green, SRDC Director and Professor

SAAESD Spring Meeting

at the Mini Land-Grant Conference
College Station, Texas
May 2022



Overview

- **Regional Rural Development Centers**
- **Current Priorities and Plan of Work**
 - Developing Pathways to Resilient Communities
 - Building Strategic Partnerships
 - Mobilizing Resources around Emerging Issues and Opportunities
- **Items for Further Consideration**
 - Using Findings from the Listening Survey and Virtual Sessions
 - Next-Steps with Heirs Property – Apply to Form a Southern Extension/Research Activity (SERA)



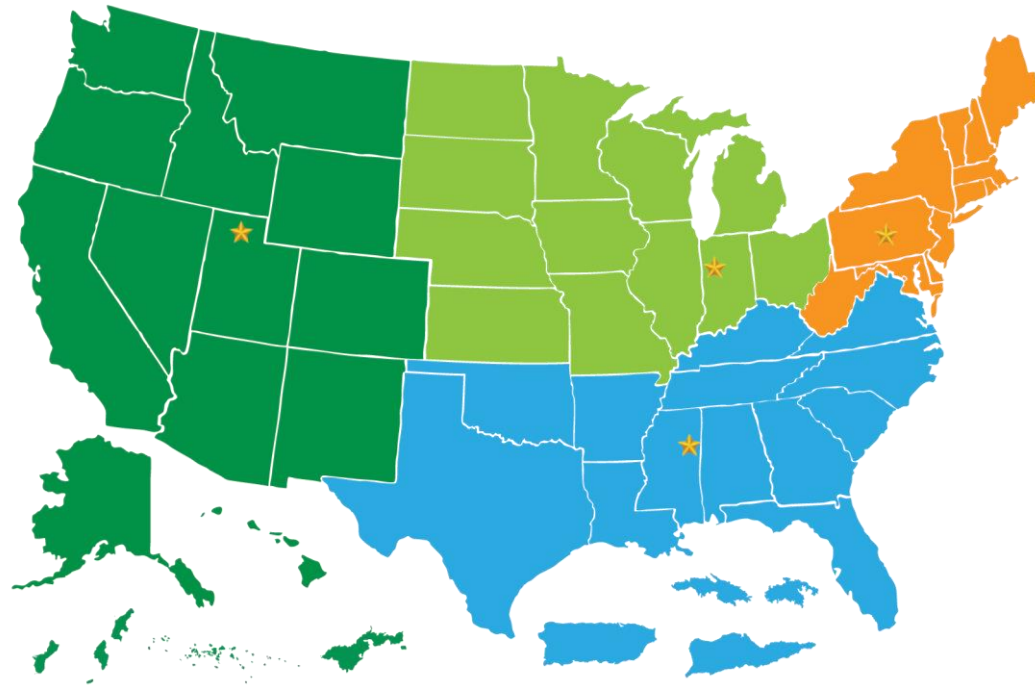
Regional Rural Development Centers

North Central Regional
Center for Rural
Development (NCRCRD)

Northeast Regional
Center for Rural
Development (NERCRD)

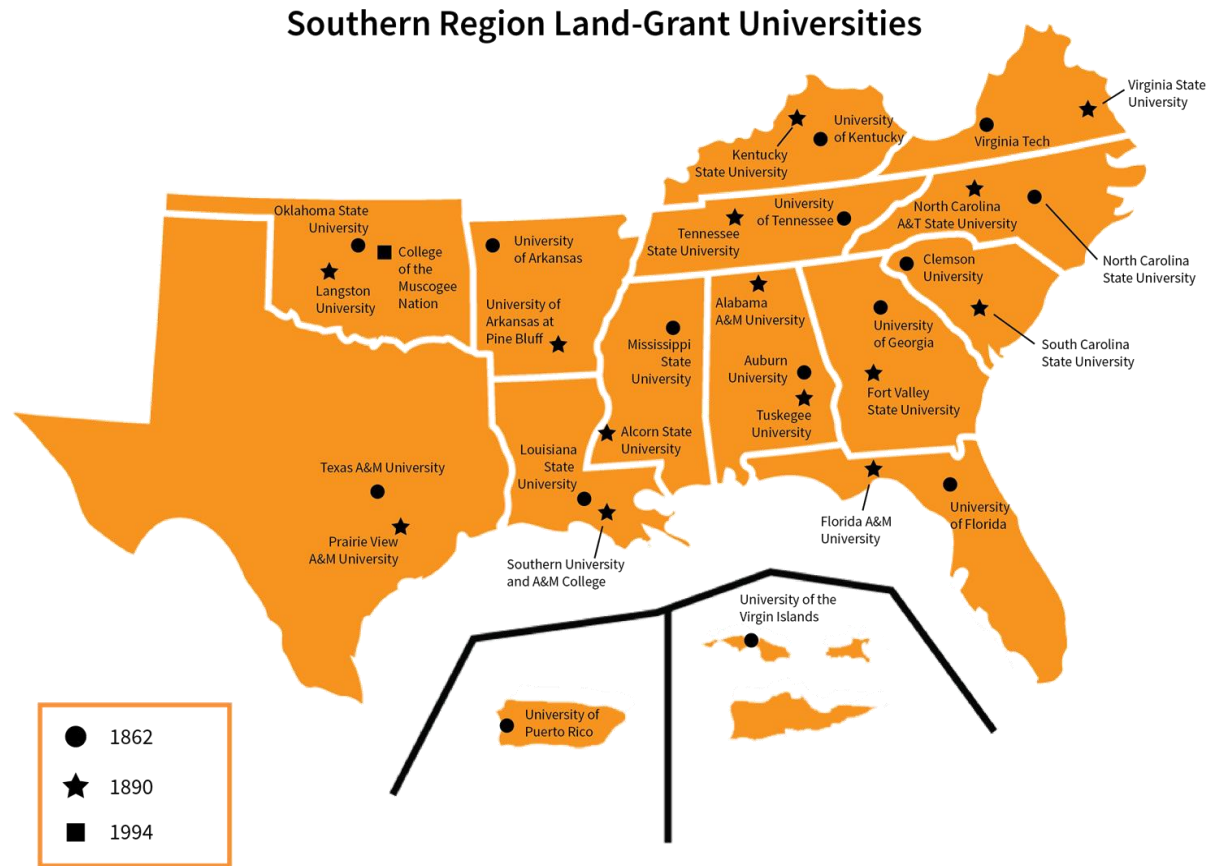
Southern Rural
Development Center
(SRDC)

Western Rural
Development Center
(WRDC)



Established through the Rural Development Act of 1972, the Regional Rural Development Centers build capacity in the Land-Grant University System to address crucial needs in our nation's rural communities

SRDC's Mission



The Southern Rural Development Center seeks to strengthen the capacity of the region's 30 land-grant institutions to address critical contemporary rural development issues impacting the well-being of people and communities in the rural South.

Funded through USDA NIFA



Current Priorities and Plan of Work

Developing Pathways to Resilient Communities

- **Community Priority Setting**

- Continue analysis from national priority survey
- Host regional listening session
- Host high priority topic listening session
- Disseminate findings to inform development programs

- **Local & Regional Food Systems, SERA-47**

- Continue to engage with the group's efforts in launching the new plan

- **Heirs' Property**

- Update the resource scan
- Collaboratively develop Extension and nonprofit train-the-trainer curriculum
- Support regional Extension and research working groups
- Coordinate AFRI project - *The Racial Wealth Gap, Persistent Poverty, and Heirs' Property: Analysis, Connections, Solutions*
- Special issue of the *Journal of Rural Social Sciences*



Current Priorities and Plan of Work (cont'd)

Developing Pathways to Resilient Communities

- **Broadband Access and Adoption**

- Facilitate the work of the National Digital Education Extension Team (NDEET) alongside the Extension Committee on Organization and Policy (ECOP) Program Action Team
- Collaborate with 1890 system to build capacity to aid underserved communities in digital access with recently funded AFRI grant



- **Coming Together for Racial Understanding**

- Support the 31 states that have trained Coming Together state teams
- Build capacity for dialogues through additional training
- Evaluate impacts and lessons learned
- Support the ECOP DEI Program Action Team
- Engage with NIFA on co-learning
- Strengthen DEI Efforts in the South LGU System



Current Priorities and Plan of Work (cont'd)

Building Strategic Partnerships

- **CREATE BRIDGES**
 - Continue efforts with the six pilot states to explore ways to strengthen the retail economic sector in rural places
- **USDA Office of Partnership and Public Engagement**
 - Survey concerning the needs of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers and the organizations serving them
 - Workshops to build capacity around proposal development and management
- **Extension Disaster Education Network (EDEN)**
 - Generate a set of materials to highlight this effort
- **Southern Region Program Leadership Network (PLN)**
 - Support the work of PLN along with helping support the Program Leadership Committee's efforts to plan for the annual joint meeting
- **Southern Region Community Resource Development (CRD) Indicators**
 - Facilitate gathering and reporting of southern region CRD indicators



Current Priorities and Plan of Work (cont'd)

Mobilizing Resources around Emerging Issues and Opportunities

- **Interdisciplinary Network on Rural Population Health and Aging**
 - Mentorship to pilot grantees and early career scholars
 - *Journal of Rural Social Sciences* special issue
 - Proposal writing workshop for research collaboration
 - Work with the W4001 multi-state group to organize a policy symposium
- **Examine Intersections of Existing Programs & Listening Sessions Data**
 - Address key topics relevant to the South, including specifically: housing, disaster, COVID-19 impacts, workforce development, and grant writing/management skills



Items for Further Consideration

Community Priority Setting

- What can we learn from the Community Priority Setting Listening Survey and Virtual Sessions?
 - Summary of findings
 - ✓ Priorities, capacities, and preferred forms of assistance
 - ✓ Assets, challenges, and opportunities
- How can this be used to inform our work through the Southern Land-Grant University System?



Graphic developed by the Extension Foundation

Items for Further Consideration

Next Steps with Heirs' Property Work

- Formalize network
- Advance working groups
 - Research
 - Outreach, Extension, and Technical Assistance
 - Policy and Law
- Develop a strategic plan
- Apply to form a Southern Extension/Research Activity (SERA)



Cotton Winter Nursery (CWN)

The Cotton Winter Nursery (CWN) has been a vital part of the cotton research community for over 60 years, the last 7 years near Liberia, Costa Rica. It serves to drive genetic gain and generation advancement with two growing seasons completed each year. For the first 50+ years the CWN was in Mexico, but due to the retirement of the National Cotton Council site manager and mounting safety concerns, it was relocated to Costa Rica in 2015. Alfonso Palafox, an employee in Mexico for a dozen years, was hired to manage the Costa Rica CWN operation. The CWN is located 9km northwest of Liberia, Costa Rica on the Pan American Highway.

Costa Rica was chosen primarily because of the suitable cotton growing environment, affordable labor force, available water, and reliable flights to and from the United States. Our farm office is located in a 60' x 50' building adjacent to the two hectare farm and provides suitable space to process, gin, and ship seed. A drip irrigation system was installed which allows for efficient use of water. An acid delinting system was built so 'black' seed could be shipped to users in the US, reducing transportation time between the CWN and US scientists by three weeks, thus allowing seed to be planted in the spring nurseries every year since the installation of the system. Other site improvements during the past few years include addition of native bushes for wind breaks and precise land leveling. The wind breaks conserve water and reduce wind damage.

The CWN is critical for proper characterization of the ~10,000 accessions in the National Cotton Germplasm Collection, about 35% which are photoperiod sensitive. These photoperiodic accessions are maintained in the 'carryover' nursery where plants are observed for multiple years to enable self-pollination to be completed. USDA staff travel to the CWN to collect phenotypic trait data using a standardized system.

Due to Covid-19 restrictions, 2020 was an especially trying time in the Costa Rica CWN. For a period extending several months, the government restricted travel and commerce for 5 days per week, then allowed restricted movement for the remaining 2 days. Alfonso tackled this challenge with dedication and planning. He, his wife, and one staffer lived full time at the farm for those 5 day periods to process, gin, delint, and ship seed, and in the end all 2019-20 CWN users received their seed in time for on-time planting in the U.S. Alfonso and his staff performed exceptionally well for the cotton research community to overcome adversity created by Covid-19.

The tables that follow show the hill numbers (plots) and percentage of hills by the USDA and university scientists for the past 7 growing seasons. The number of hills a scientist requests varies from year to year depending on their research needs and budget constraints. One explanation for the varying numbers/percentages is due to 'special' projects such as the Nested Association Mapping Population seed increase in 2017-18, a project managed by the NCSU breeder, and for the past 3 years, a NIFA funded FOV4 project I have managed.



Number of Hills by User in CWN

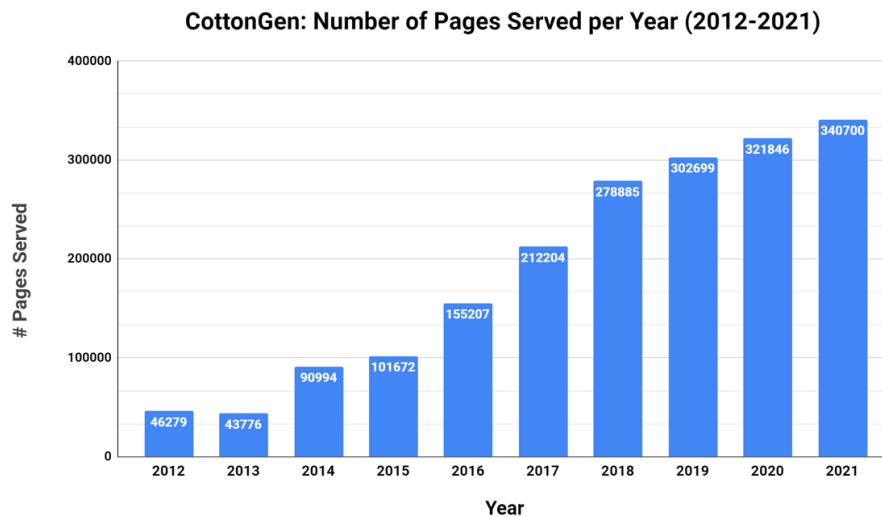
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
USDA	1907	2435	2250	3521	3036	2902	3435
University	2603	3392	3727	967	2395	1635	1723
TOTAL	4510	5827	5977	4488	5431	4537	5158

Percentage of Hills by User in CWN

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
USDA	42%	42%	38%	78%	56%	64%	67%
University	58%	58%	62%	22%	44%	36%	33%

CottonGen Database

As noted on the [website](#), CottonGen is the cotton community’s genomics, genetics and breeding database to enable basic, translational and applied research in cotton. It was built using the open-source TriPal database infrastructure. CottonGen consolidated the data from two previous databases, CottonDB and the Cotton Marker Database, and includes sequences, genetic and physical maps, genotypic and phenotypic markers, QTLs, trait evaluations, pedigrees, and relevant bibliographic citations. It is continually being updated to include annotated transcriptome, genome sequence, marker-trait-locus and breeding data, as well as enhanced tools for easy querying and visualizing research data. The graph below show usage since inception in 2012.



To provide more permanent funding support, a request has been submitted by the cotton industry’s lobbying arm (National Cotton Council) for substantially more financial support of CottonGen in the latest farm bill. We are hopeful this effort yields a favorable response, but until we hear the result, we are asking for SAAESD’s continued financial support which is critical to its sustainability.

Agenda Item 4.0 ESCOP BLC Committee 2022 Report
 Submitted by: Steven Lommel

Budget and Legislative Committee (BLC, <http://escop.info/committee/blc/>)

Glenda Humiston (UC System) will be in the final year of her two-year term as BLC Chair. Anton Bekkerman is the Incoming BLC Chair. Regional membership is relatively stable for ARD, NERA and SAAESD, with some rotations occurring for NCRA and WAAESD. Liaison membership has been stable and active. Monthly meetings on the fourth Tuesday of every month from 4:00 – 5:00 ET will continue.

The BLC Chair serves as the Experiment Station Section (ESS) representative to the BAA BAC (Budget and Advocacy) and CLP (Committee on Legislation and Policy) Committees. These BAA standing committees have moved their regular discussions and decision-making forward on the calendar to be more proactive and synchronized with the federal budget and policy cycles, which influences ESCOP BLC discussions. This past year the BAC requested respective Section BLC Chairs to review the current Unified Ask priorities (across nine program lines) and requested budgets. For ESS and the ESCOP BLC, this specifically pertains to the Hatch Act (\$329.38M FY22 Unified Ask baseline), and with the ARD to the Evans-Allen Act (\$92.837M baseline). All Sections/Groups provided feedback on AFRI (\$700M baseline) and identified 'one other program line' for advocacy consideration. We were directed to use the Unified Ask FY2022 as the baseline number, and then make Section recommendations to BAC for FY2023 and FY2024 in a relatively short timeframe. All Sections/Groups would then review, comment, and revise accordingly over the next several months to be prepared for the annual CARET/AHS interactions and systemwide advocacy efforts in CY2022.

ESCOP BLC had robust discussions identifying programmatic enhancements and new directions for additional investments in Hatch and AFRI. BLC members articulated numerous examples that could serve as future advocacy talking points and messages, beyond the current focus on 'Climate Smart Agriculture.' In addition, several different approaches were discussed to serve as recommendations for proposed funding levels for Hatch and AFRI, such as numeric increases based upon highs from the last several budget cycles, a 25-50% increase, and mirroring the increase from China with public R&D support of 14% for each of the last eight years. The table and narratives below provide the initial ESS recommendations for Hatch and AFRI with a 100-word justification for each. Note that the AFRI justification is a minor modification to existing language.

Program	Enacted 2021 \$ Millions	Enacted 2022 \$ Millions	BAA Rec 2022 \$ Millions	Proposed 2023 \$ Millions	Proposed 2024 \$ Millions
AFRI	435.000	445.000	700.000	798.000	910.000
Smith-Lever	315.000	320.000	400.050		
Hatch Act	259.000	260.000	329.380	399.380	469.380
Evans-Allen	73.000	80.000	92.837		
1890 Extension	62.000	65.000	78.740		
McIntire-Stennis	36.000	36.000	45.783		
Extension 1994	8.500	9.5000	10.000		
Education Grants 1994	4.500	5.5000	6.000		
Research Grants 1994	4.000	4.5000	6.000		

HATCH Justification

“Climate-smart agriculture, in all its diverse systems has vast potential to be a critical contributor to solving the existential global threat of climate change. Strategic federal investment through Hatch funds in climate-smart agriculture research catalyzes bold innovation and site-specific practices that can lead to more than only marginal long-term impacts to reduce climate uncertainties. Improved practices, innovative and adaptive technologies, diverse human and improved physical infrastructure, and proactive policy incentives at the local, regional, and national levels will in aggregate produce diverse and equitable national impacts to mitigate climate change. Federal funds are matched and highly leveraged through local and private investments and implementations, increasing buy-in and adoption by a diverse set of stakeholder communities across the U.S.”

Revised AFRI Justification

“The National Institute of Food and Agriculture’s (NIFA) Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) is the nation’s leading competitive grants program in the agricultural and natural resource sciences. Scientists, and educators use AFRI grants to address urgent problems facing our nation’s food supply, food supply, and the environment. Recent experiences demand increased attention on food supply chains, climate change, and threats imposed by drastic disruptions. Increased support is sought to build back the United States’ global leadership role in the agricultural and natural resource sciences as well as ensure domestic food security and accessibility issues. Research shows that each dollar invested in agricultural research yields \$17 in economic benefit for our Nation.”

The initial BAA BAC discussion addressing all FY2023 and FY2024 recommendations occurred in December 2021. Requests were integrated into advocacy efforts for the next several years and will likely shift as strategic opportunities present themselves. Lastly, the ‘one other program line’ advocacy ask will continue to be Infrastructure, subject to advancements made during the current reconciliation bill and future opportunities.

CLP activities will occur over many months to feed into the 2023 Farm Bill. Section priorities have been submitted as previously reported. As other priorities and concepts of other Sections and Groups arise, CLP discussions will discuss and prioritize. Wherever possible, the ESCOP BLC (if applicable) and/or ESCOP Committee will be given opportunities to evaluate and make recommendations to our representatives on CLP and the PBD.

Agenda Brief: Communications and Marketing Committee (CMC) for SAAESD

Date: May 5, 2022

Presenter: JF Meullenet (Chair)

1. **Committee Membership** (as of May 5, 2022): see [ESCOP Communications and Marketing \(CMC\)](#)
2. **Meetings:**
 - The CMC met by teleconference on October 21, 2021.
 - The CMC met by teleconference on November 18, 2022.
 - The CMC met by teleconference on February 17, 2022.
 - The CMC met by teleconference on April 21, 2022.
 - The CMC will be meeting by teleconference on May 19, 2022.
3. **Accomplishments/Upcoming Plans:**
 - In early November 2021, CMC Chair Karla Trautman sent a formal request to Tom Coon (Chair, BAA Policy Board of Directors) to reposition the CMC as a standing committee of the BAA. In doing so, the CMC noted that a motion to designate the CMC as a BAA standing committee required a change to the BAA Rules of Operation. Changing the Rules of Operation entails sharing with all members of the BAA a motion at least 30 days prior to a vote. The ideal time for announcing the motion publicly and launching the vote was after January 1, 2022.
 - AVP Andrea Putman is actively engaged in moving strategies of the “Roadmap” forward and has developed a 2-year plan to support system’s communications and marketing initiatives. Andrea currently develops and releases a monthly toolkit for university communicators; actively engages small focus groups of communicators from all regions to discuss how the CMC/AVP and communicators can work better together; produces a podcast series to highlight stories from across the LGU system; generates long-form story ideas and pitches them for use in mass media feature articles; and is strengthening partnerships with allied organizations and NIFA. AVP Putman is also coordinating closely with APLU Council on Government Affairs and Public Affairs to ensure there is alignment between all groups involved with communications and advocacy.
 - During the Annual Meeting of the APLU (November 2021) CMC Chair Karla Trautman met with the Administrative Heads, ESCOP, and ECOP to socialize the standing committee request of the CMC. During these presentations Karla shared draft language for a change in the BAA Rules of Operation.
 - The Executive Committee of the CMC met with Doug Steele to discuss strategies to identify all voting members of the BAA and to discuss how best to “turn out the vote”.
 - Lewis-Burke Associates were hired as the advocacy firm to represent the “system”. The communications and marketing project will be an important component in the moving an advocacy effort forward.

- Kim Scotto was hired as an associate to work half-time with AVP Putman on communications and partnerships, and half-time with the Executive Director for the Board on Human Sciences.
 - AVP Putman is actively working on the disposition of the AgIsAmerica website. Currently, AgIsAmerica looks too broad and unfocused in its current state. Key questions revolving around the website include: Who is the primary audience for AgIsAmerica? What is the most useful content to be displayed on AgIsAmerica? Interestingly, the AgIsAmerica social accounts have a strong following. How could we refocus AgIsAmerica while retaining the established following?
 - In March 2022, the leadership team of the CMC rolled over. Steve Loring (representing AHS and ESS), CMC Past Chair, rotated off the CMC. As a point of pride, Steve was the longest serving CMC Executive Committee member and oversaw the dramatic transformation of the committee and project. Chair Karla Trautman (CES) stepped into the Past Chair slot and JF Meullenet (ESS) accepted the CMC gavel as Chair. Nancy Cox (AHS) is the Incoming Chair.
 - In April, the ballot establishing the CMC as a standing committee was issued to the voting members of the BAA. The voting closed on April 22 and the ballot passed by a resounding margin. Importantly a supermajority of the BAA voting members cast ballots. Afterward, Doug Steele informed Tom Coon on the outcome of the ballot and the outcome will be an item on the next Policy Board of Directors agenda.
 - The membership of the CMC will soon evolve with an expectation that additional regional communicators will join the committee. Chair Meullenet will be meeting with the sections during the Joint COPS meeting in July to provide a CMC status update and dialogue with COPS.
4. **Action Requested:** For information only.
 5. **Attachments:**
 - a. none

2021-2022 ESCOP Science and Technology Committee [Susan Duncan]

The ESCOP Science and Technology Committee met monthly through the 2021-2022 [11 meetings]. The committee consists of the chair (Jody Jellison, NERA; Bernie Engel, NCRA), past chair, two delegates from each region (NCRA, NERA, SAAESD, WAAESD) and ARD, and the Executive Vice Chair. Liaisons from ARS, ECOP, NIFA, NIPMCC, SSCC, and guests as appropriate also attend the meetings; liaisons provide reports and updates to help inform the committee of current issues and opportunities. Discussions of the influence of COVID-19 pandemic on research activities were central to several of the early meetings. Throughout the year, the committee provided information, including developing informational documents for the Agricultural Research Infrastructure Advocacy initiative. A 2-page infrastructure leave behind talking points document and a branch station document (https://webdoc.agsci.colostate.edu/aes/wcrc/US_Map/) and examples of ongoing research were prepared. Both documents were well received. The ESS Climate Change Strategies report was reviewed and discussed. We also assisted with development of communications information in support of the research Executive Directors and others, to increase visibility of the AES system. An example of contributions was the creation of state-level templates based on the national Grand Challenges documents that STC had previously designed. Each LGU should have access to these templates that they can design to promote to their legislative bodies, commodity boards, stakeholders with research impacts of relevance to each of the grand challenges. A key activity each spring is the selection of the 2021 Excellence in Multistate Research Awards. The STC reviewed the evaluation form and made recommendations for changes to improve the evaluation process and is preparing to review the regional nominations. The STC is also advocating for an ESCOP Faculty Research Award at the regional level.

Agenda Brief: ESCOP Diversity Catalyst Committee (DCC)

Date: April 25, 2022

Presenter: Henry Fadamiro, DCC chair

1. **Committee Membership** (as of April 25, 2022): See [ESCOP Committee Diversity Catalyst Committee \(DCC\)](#)

2. **Meetings:**

- The DCC met via teleconference on November 17, 2021.
- The DCC met via teleconference on December 21, 2021.
- The DCC met via teleconference on February 15, 2022.
- The DCC met via teleconference on April 10, 2022.

3. **Accomplishments/Upcoming Plans:**

- Three members of the DCC were nominated to serve on Federal commissions and subcommittees including Dr. Shannon Archibeque-Engle, Colorado State University, USDA Equity Commission; Dr. Nina Bennett, University of Arkansas Pine Bluff, USDA Equity Commission Subcommittee on Agriculture; and Dr. Tracy Dougher, Montana State University, USDA Equity Commission Subcommittee on Agriculture. The DCC nominees were not selected to serve. We understand that competition was keen for seats on the commission and subcommittee and appreciate the willingness of the DCC candidates.
- The 2022 [Call for Nominations for National Experiment Station Section Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Award](#) was approved by ESCOP. Nominations for teams and individuals have been solicited from the Experiment Station Section and were originally due on April 1, 2022. That deadline was extended to April 30, 2022.
- During the 2021 Joint COPS meeting, ESCOP approved distribution of the DCC's Call to Action. In November 2021, DCC chair, Henry Fadamiro, sought actions taken by directors during the quarter that followed the issuance of the Call to Action. Among the six institutions that responded, there was a clear commitment to ESS/DCC priority areas, a reflection of diversity, equity and inclusion being a high priority of Land-grant institutions. Of the responses received, Cornell AgriTech (Geneva, NY) addressed in detail, each of the ESS DCC priority areas and outlined actions taken and resources deployed in each area. The response provided by Cornell AgriTech is attached.
- The DCC submitted to ESCOP a Plan of Work for 2022. In January 2022, ESCOP approved the plan which is included with this brief as an attachment. (The Call to Action referenced above is included in the Plan of Work.)
- Membership on the Diversity Catalyst Committee is evolving. Wes Burger (Mississippi State, SAAESD representative) rotated off the DCC and was replaced by Jamie Larson (Mississippi State). John Dieffenbacher-Krall (University of Maine, NERA representative) stepped down from the DCC and was replaced by Anna Katherine Mansfield (Cornell AgriTech). NIFA representative Drenda Williams stepped down to accept new responsibilities at NIFA and will be replaced on the

DCC by Jessica Creighton. Jodie Anderson (University of Alaska) has joined the DCC as a representative from WAAESD.

- The DCC is currently collaborating with the ECOP DEI Program Action Team and developing an inventory of college of agriculture, Cooperative Extension, and AES DEI points of contact, similar to the Communications and Marketing Committee seeking the primary communications point of contact. Together, ESCOP and ECOP intend to undertake a survey of the DEI contact to gauge DEI institutional climate as a steppingstone for development of strategies for transformational leadership dedicated to DEI.

4. **Action Requested:** Information only.
5. **Attachments:** DCC Plan of Work; Call to Action Report-Cornell Agritech.

Diversity Catalyst Committee (DCC) Plan of Work FY 2022

During FY 2022 the DCC will:

- Meet on a monthly basis.
- Support the ESCOP Chair's diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives.
- Identify metrics for assessing progress towards improving diversity, equity and inclusion.
- Assist directors in integrating diversity, equity, and inclusion as an essential component of all programs.
- Issue a call for nominations for the National Experiment Station Section Diversity and Inclusion Awards (individual and group.)
 - Seek nominations.
 - Evaluate nominations and identify a winner.
 - Provide winners with an opportunity to share what they've done during the annual ESS Meeting in September.
- Periodically follow-up on the Call to Action (attached) issued to all directors in August 2021.
 - Create an inventory of DEI actions and best practices taken by directors.
 - Engage regional Executive Directors to identify a champion institution(s) who could serve as an exemplar and as a change leader in areas of diversity, equity, and inclusion.
 - Collaborate with NIFA to profile exemplary actions of the directors.
- Collaborate with NIFA on the presentation of DEI webinars (e.g., "DEI and the NIFA Compliance review process")
- Propose to the Experiment Station Section a series of DEI-related activities, exercises, trainings and opportunities are included in the Experiment Station Section agendas.
 - Examples:
 - Longer format, cultural competence training (occurring over several days); creation of ESS DEI Fellows?
 - Offering reading resources (e.g., *The Color of Food: Stories of Race, Resilience and Farming* by Natasha Bowens). Follow up with presentations by the author?
 - Re-offer the Intercultural Development Inventory. (Nehrwahid Abdul-Wahid, the speaker at the 2021 ESS meeting [Leadership, Diversity and You] is a licensed IDI trainer.)
- Collect ESS DEI best practices and submit to NIFA for profiling.
- Collaborate with ESCOP's Science and Technology Committee to develop a working definition of and a framework for "Equity in Science."
- Collaborate with the Cooperative Extension Section to co-create a DEI training session during the Joint CES/NEDA/ESS meeting in Baltimore, MD in September 2022.

Diversity Catalyst Committee (DCC)

Call to Action 2021

Land-grant institutions and the Experiment Station Section have a duty to understand how they have benefitted from racial injustice and to ensure their programs and services do not perpetuate systems of oppression and injustice. We challenge ourselves to not simply strive to become non-racist but commit to an active anti-racist agenda in all aspects of our work.

Background:

During the annual 2020 Experiment Station Section meeting, the opening session was dedicated to “inclusive excellence.” From that session, the attached summary report was written¹. During the opening work session, the Experiment Station Section directors identified four diversity challenge areas and discussed potential actions to address those challenges. These are listed in the report. Prior to and coincident with the ESS meeting, the United States was in the midst of civil unrest boiling over from years of racial injustice and the need for all Americans to acknowledge and address racial inequities. During his leadership term, ESCOP Chair, Moses Kairo declared that the first of the Chair’s Initiatives was: Fully integrate Diversity, Equity and Inclusion as an essential component of all our programs. Last, the Diversity in Research Leadership Task Force, the predecessor to the DCC, recommended strategies to broaden the diversity of leaders holding research administrative positions. Many of the suggestions made by that task force are reiterated here. It is to these ends that the DCC shares the following reflections and recommendations.

Diversity and Inclusion Challenge Areas:

The Experiment Station Section Directors identified four diversity and inclusion challenge areas. These included:

- Recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce: developing a pipeline to support inclusive excellence.
- Strengthening partnerships among the 1862/1890/1994 institutions.
- Addressing funding challenges/disparities across the three LGU systems.
- Reaching/working with underserved populations.

Call to Action:

The DCC issues a Call to Action to engage all directors. Of the challenge areas listed above, the DCC asks you to identify a challenge that you intend to address in the upcoming year and use the following questions to guide your action steps.

- What actions do you intend to take?
- What is the timeline on your actions and what resources will you deploy?
- What gaps will you address and what obstacles do you anticipate?

¹ The summary report was written by Woody Hughes, Jr., Brian Raison and Rachel Welborn.

- What goals do you expect to reach?
- What will diversity and inclusion look like on your campus or station?
- How does your response to this Call to Action fit into the long-term diversity and inclusion strategies of the station, the college and university?

DCC Actions:

The DCC will periodically ask each director what they've undertaken. The DCC will work with NIFA to profile exemplary actions of the directors. The DCC will seek directors to share what they've done in a series of best practice sessions. The DCC will encourage submission of nominations for Diversity and Inclusion Award winners and celebrate your accomplishments.

Inclusive Excellence: Systematic Approaches to System Change

September 28, 2020 Opening Session to the 2020 ESS/AES/ARD Annual Meeting
Summary Report

Session Objectives – Participants will:

- Explore how inclusive excellence can strengthen existing Experiment Station efforts.
- Engage in a series of conversations that will identify obstacles to affect inclusive excellence and strategies to overcome the obstacles.
- Be challenged to implement at least three actionable steps that lead to inclusive excellence at their home institutions.

If we do wonders with one set of eyes, imagine seeing the world from various other set of eyes.

~Session Participant

Survey Highlights

In a survey to ESS members prior to this session, several assets as well as challenges to inclusive excellence were identified. During this session, participants explored potential strategies to leverage assets to address the four top challenges identified. The section that follows documents potential strategies to address these issues:

1. Recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce; developing a pipeline to support inclusive excellence
2. Strengthening partnerships among 1862/1890/1994 institutions
3. Addressing funding challenges/disparities across the three LGU systems
4. Reaching/working with underserved populations

Call to Action

This report serves as a summary of thoughtful input on what ESS could do in order to vastly impact Inclusive Excellence. The charge to the reader is this:

How will this input be translated into CONCRETE ACTION that will have the greatest positive impact in Inclusive Excellence in 5-10 years?

In a changing world, a diversity of ideas will better help us find solutions to new problems that are not predictable with past understanding.

~Session Participant

Strategies for Addressing Top Challenges

Recruiting and Retaining a Diverse Workforce; Developing a Pipeline to Support Inclusive Excellence

- **Internships**
 - Targeted internships
 - Internships leading to permanent positions at slightly better the entry-level salaries (e.g., incentive)
 - Reserve internships for minority serving inst.
- **Mentorships - strong peer-to-peer mentorship for underrepresented groups**
- **Pipeline development**
 - Industry pipeline program (industry scholarships/internship opportunities)
 - Grow the diverse workforce that you want to see by grooming students from freshman through graduate school for those w/ graduate programs
 - Use capacity funds to recruit diverse graduate students (will end up as faculty hopefully)
 - Postdoctoral programs to bridge to faculty
 - Work with your institutions MANRRS groups as a pipeline for employees <https://www.manrrs.org/>
 - Develop a program from diversity scholarships in undergrad and grad.
- **Training**
 - Training own diversity PhD students
 - Identifying unconscious or systematic biases currently causing attrition within the pipeline
- **Start with youth development**
 - Start early with 4H in creating the foundation for a diverse workforce
 - Change the perspective of high school students about what Agriculture is, most of the best talent is going to a pre-med pathway
 - Campus experiences for 3rd graders from URMs
 - Target students in 7-12 for scholarships in Ag programs to build the pipeline
- **Exchange programs/shared programs/cross training/collaboration**
 - Graduate student swap between 1862s, 1890s, 1994, like a clinical rotation, for a semester research project.
 - Develop summer experiential exchanges for students between the LGU system
 - Student opportunities to exchange across campus
 - Create regional research exchange programs to provide greater experience for grad students and post docs
 - Station scientists from other organizations at our experiment stations

- Cross training of students from diverse institutions - summer internships at diverse locations - all institutions involved
- Dual degrees from more than one institution/program
- Providing learning opportunities to each other's students within a region.
- Multiyear faculty exchanges across institutions
- Develop bridge research programs with 3 LG types
- **Incentivize - Incentives for minority faculty and students**
- **Identify successful examples**
- **Examine/reshape recruitment and hiring practices**
 - Aggressive search locally and internationally
 - Reduce the number of non-essential required qualifications in job ads
 - Improve recruitment strategies.
 - Strengthen hiring practices
 - Strong start up packages
 - Reactive and proactive work environment- vetting in hiring for sensitivity
 - Train all personnel involved in any aspect of hiring training in recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce
 - Dedicated funding to assist in hiring diverse faculty.
- **Collaboration**
 - Shadow AES/ARD Directors and get them to regional/national meetings
 - Encourage and build through regular monthly/weekly meetings with Admin
 - Build Regional strategic relationships with 1890s and 1994's to do target hires at faculty or staff
 - Joint travel to relevant sites
 - Change the climate so that different people with different life experiences can feel at home

Strengthening Partnerships among 1862/1890/1994 Institutions

- **Building relationships**
 - Physically visit other institutions
 - Faculty exchanges across the three LGU family members.
 - More face to face get-togethers with faculty working in related areas and administrators across these institutions
 - Effective partnerships begin with building strong relationships!
 - Regular collaborative sessions
 - Faculty "internships" or mini sabbaticals at institutions of different land grant groups
 - Virtual exchanges
 - University alliance formation among 2-3 other university partners
 - Reach out to one of each institution type different from your own and invite to 1) a meeting, 2) a research proposal.
 - specialty listing
 - Names of 1862/1890/1994s into a hat and matchmake to outcomes and/or speed dating.
 - Partnership building grantsmanship workshops
 - Create shared appointments within and across states that have scientists from both institutions at each of the universities
 - Hold meetings at more affordable locations for larger participation or meet at an 1890 or 1994 institution's campus for major meetings.
- **Target collaboration on issues**
 - Targeted meetings focused on joint challenges or common stakeholders
 - Link common interests at grass roots level, not admin.
 - Organize mixed research teams around a given area and provide funds
 - Targeted special collaborative initiatives
 - Think tanks that will connect researchers/expertise with targeted outcomes
 - Identify common goals.
 - Develop statewide or regional joint research programs to include all types of institutions
 - Collaborative projects
- **Funding/grants**
 - Dedicated competitive funding
 - Seed grants to form or strengthen teams between 1862/1890/1994 institutions and facilitation of these partnerships
 - Fund cooperative projects with faculty at other LGU types
 - Create grants in AFRI, NSF, NIH, etc. that requires partnerships with 90 and 94
 - RFAs that require or at least favor collaborations among LGUs

- Funding that not only rewards diverse granting participants, but also highlights different cultural perspectives in presenting research results
- Expand Hatch Multistate type funding to 1890 and 1994 institutions
- National funding programs requiring programs that include all partners
- Dedicated funding for collaborative projects for mixed research teams
- Require collaborations across institutions for more grant sources.
- Shared grants requiring multiple diverse land grant institutions.
- USDA-funded graduate student and post-doc exchange programs
- Financial Benefit should go primarily to the 1890 and 1994 partners, 1862 faculty should be rewarded internally from the effort and time.
- Dedicated competitive 1890 funding for the 1890 LGUs, and dedicated competitive 1994 funding for the 1994 LGUs that is separate from new and existing dedicated competitive funding for all LGUs
- **Expand leadership opportunities**
 - Invite 1890's and 1994's to lead on projects and not just follow
 - Provide funding to 1890s & 1994s to lead the strengthening partnership efforts
 - Allow 1890's to lead programs with 1862s as participants
 - 1890/1994 lead interdisciplinary proposals
 - Due to external funding having a long history of moving extraordinarily slow at some 1890 LGUs, in some instances, take that into consideration when determining which institution will be responsible for managing external financial resources as it relates to 1890/1994/1862 collaborative partnerships
- **Strengthen multi-state opportunities**
 - Create a program that allows for more participation from the 1890s and 1994s in Multistate projects
 - Take better advantage of multistate opportunities
 - Collaborations are personal - invest in more involvement of 1890/1994 in multistate research projects
 - Multistate research projects / research teams
 - Joint multi-disciplinary research initiatives
 - Joint research and extension programming
 - Encourage faculty to include project partners from these universities
- **Cross institution pipeline development**
 - Joint degree programs and grant program collaborations
 - Automatic adjunct faculty appointments with institutions within each state
 - Building partnerships around recruitment of faculty and staff for 1862, 1890 and 1994
 - Share facilities, human and other resources
 - Co-advise students

Addressing Funding Challenges/Disparities across the Three LGU Systems

- **Join together/ collaborate (3) for significant request for all ag research**
 - Joint programs/research projects
 - Collective pipeline directed to UG and MS programs at 1890/1994 institutions leading to PhD program at 1862 so all institutions benefit at their strengths.
 - Collaborate to be unified and make a concerted effort on behalf of all.
 - merge the different institution types to reduce segregation in higher education
 - true long-term partnerships. not one-time funding that encourages last minutes request.
- **Collaborative grant development**
 - public private partnerships
 - grant and project cooperation across 1890/1862/1994
 - Shared grants across diverse institutions with equal sharing of resources.
 - Designated pools of funding (collaborations)
 - develop funding opportunities targeted specifically to joint submissions from the 3 LGU systems focused on developing solutions to meet global challenges
 - Commit to submitting a proposal with at least one other institution AND commit to allowing the minority-serving institution to be the host of the project.
 - set asides in OREI, SCRI and other competitive funding opportunities
 - Partnerships between institutions strengthen research grant applications!
 - funding opportunities that require meaningful roles/budgets for all 3 LGU
 - national initiative stimulating ag research to the level of NIH; all LGU benefit
 - Collaboratively developed research proposals
 - partner across LGU systems to find grants together and foundation support
 - Joint projects/grant programs that require participants from more than one land-grant category: 1862 + 1890 + 1994
 - develop joint grantsmanship workshops and proposal development activities, preferably with accompanying seed funding committed from the institutions
 - build extra power in grants including commodities for partnerships
 - grant subcontracting
 - meaningful participation of 1890s and 1994s with the 1862s, not as add-ons
 - collaborative grants with dedicated funding and long-term partnerships
- **United approach to funding/advocacy**
 - Joint advocacy for more funding
 - All land-grant Universities advocate for equitable funding at the federal level
 - 1890's and 1994's need to have the fully funded match just as the 1862's do.
 - Do the state-based work to ensure equitable match availability
 - Focus on increasing 1890 and 1994 \$ BEFORE 1862 after IDing the goal that works.
 - Joint lobbying to minimize competition amongst institutions

- work with state legislatures and Congress to highlight the benefits of leveraging resources across systems
- Better aligned requests to Congress
- Joint efforts in seeking state matching funding.
- Join forces for advocacy as ONE
- Advocacy for funding increases of underfunded programs
- Willingness of 1862 institutions to equitably share increases in funding (based on need) with 1890 and 1994 institutions
- Expand advocacy efforts
- Expand Capacity Funds - and have student and faculty demographics as part of the formula for allocating dollars
- Local and state representation, federal reps in the corner as well- part of this also means a diverse representation to represent a diverse constituency
- **Share resources**
 - Share AES research stations which some lack.
 - willingness to share resources
 - Share resources
 - Pooling internal funding across different institutions
 - Create opportunities for leveraging

Reaching/Working with Underserved Populations

- **Listen and identify needs first; develop true long-term partnerships**
 - Include multiple members of those populations in advisory groups to set priorities.
 - Collaborate on research projects addressing underserved populations to include a needs assessment.
 - intentional outreach and inclusion in advisory groups
 - match making process to identify underserved populations and their needs, then facilitation process to make connections with LGU that have resources and want to assist
 - Use/revise/enhance/change frameworks to engage underserved populations
 - Firstly, define and identify the populations
 - Working with advocacy groups for underserved populations to identify needs
 - Engage the stakeholders directly in setting the research and outreach agenda
 - Get out more and find stakeholders and address their concerns
 - ID some problems and then sign up to do
 - listen first and be there for long haul.
 - Show genuine interest
 - listen to needs, and create intentional collaborations with clear measures of accountability
 - Underserved populations aren't always overlooked, but not considered in the plan. Be interesting and try hard. Nobody wants to partner with you if you are boring and not in tune with culture!
 - Listen carefully to what your target population says is important to them.
 - identify shared issues (e.g., use of public lands)
 - shared stakeholder communication activities- both to gather input into our programs and delivery of results
 - Include underserved perspectives in interpretation of research results and sharing those perspectives as a way to enhance conversations and include diverse audiences.
 - targeted programs in the poorest counties in each state/ long-term and intentional
- **Understand, respect and build on the strengths of each other**
 - Working with underserved populations with limited resources is what 1890's and 1994's do well. This is a case where 1890s/1994's could lead the conversation
 - Partner with the experts, Extension, especially 1890 Extension
 - Partner with 1862s, 1890s, and 1994s to deliver instructional and research programs in underserved areas/populations
 - Increased collaborations
 - Use Extension partners to reach out across state/region/nation
 - Build on linkages that have already been established

- collaboration with institutions that focus on underserved populations
- identify the best communicators - then build the team who has the scientific expertise to solve issues
- **Strengthen understanding/training around working with underserved audiences**
 - Special training for reaching the underserved
 - Build a greater understanding to learn how to become more effective.
 - reach out to NGOs and other non-university entities (e.g. advocacy groups) to learn best practices in how they engage underserved populations
- **Grow the pipeline of students and faculty from underserved groups**
 - Dual and joint graduate degrees across all LGUs
 - Provide internships for underserved populations.
 - scholarships
 - Summer camps/interns/faculty sabbaticals for underserved groups
 - recruiting employees/students from the targeted underserved population
 - Create shared internships to focus on this area
 - Create programs and funding for teachers in target schools to develop familiarity. Match the faculty to the population
 - Student exchanges/mentoring across diverse institutions.
 - scholarships/ internships - multi-year commitments
 - Hire faculty with this as a major job expectation and hold them to this through T&P process. or create an endowed chair with this expectation
 - Student internships that target underrepresented groups within the state and region - do this as a regional/joint activity rotating across universities or joint effort
 - employing a diverse faculty and staff
- **Purposeful inclusion/ prioritization**
 - Make it a priority, rather than an afterthought.
 - Field days that facilitate bringing in underserved populations
 - Increase the focus on urban populations, food islands, linkage of food with health outcomes.
 - Community service/open classes and community events, schools
 - Better funding for these types of programs

Addendum: Participants provided other rich content to the session through a series of related discussion prompts. These are included below for reference.

Discussion Prompt: How would we (ESS) be better if we truly worked under a banner of Inclusive Excellence?

- Then we will value the opinion of others who train of thought is not of the same cannon (our view), from a traditional way
- ESS would produce more innovative programs and products and of more practical value to a larger number of people in our communities
- We will be able to more freely share our resources and truly bring 1862, 1890, and 1894 institutions together.
- Working under a banner of Inclusive Excellence would yield broader perspectives on existing issues.
- We would be better equipped to approach problems (both internal to the university and external) in more meaningful ways, and ultimately provide solutions that are more robust.
- We need to ask our advisory groups, stakeholder groups, and commodity support groups to better embrace DEI as a relevant system of increasing market share and consumer support.
- build more trust and confidence among ourselves
- Bring a broader set of experiences that would challenge our assumptions of “the way” to solve or approach issues
- also a better set of outcomes for our students and adult learners
- Fresh, more efficient processes across the board that don't follow, "We do it this way because it's how we've always done it."
- It would help to enhance inter-institutional cooperativity
- If we embrace inclusive excellence, we would expand both the diversity of ideas in addressing research questions while also expanding our potential impact.
- reach more people more effectively
- Inclusion of different viewpoints and experiences can spark innovation.
- All voices would be heard and valued, leading to a better working climate, increased productivity, and innovation.
- Examples of best practices or new programs that work at other institutions that could be modeled at our institutions
- Through IE, we would be able to more effectively engage stakeholders whose
- Research questions and answers that address the needs - limitations of all those who live in our borders to ensure safe, food, feed, and fiber
- If we do wonders with one set of eyes, imagine seeing the world from various other set of eyes.
- Reach a broader audience
- It would change the perspectives we all harbor, to open minds to see problems more broadly.

- Chance to hear perspectives you might not consider, or might have misconstrued, and learn issues that are outside your normal thinking.
- Richer experience for all involved.
- Diverse world experiences bring very different ideas on how to approach a problem — both research challenges and institutional challenges.
- We will be able to more freely share our resources and truly bring 1862, 1890, and 1994 institutions together.
- Broadened perspectives and horizons.
- In a changing world, a diversity of ideas will better help us find solutions to new problems that are not predictable with past understanding.
- Provide more role models and motivation to strive for leadership positions for marginalized people.
- Problems which ESS aims to address and respond to impact a diverse group, answering these challenges will require a diverse team
- Inclusive Excellence would provide for stronger, more meaningful and impactful multi-disciplinary and multi-institutional collaborations: leveraging of resources.
- Empowering and welcoming a diverse community of scholars will improve the quality of everything we do, from teaching to the quality of our research questions and solutions.
- Being inclusive doesn't just make us better, it makes us relevant to more people.

Discussion Prompt: What is ONE THING I could change or do this year that would have the greatest positive impact in Inclusive Excellence in 5-10 years?

- Reach out to other institutions that we have not connected with as yet.
- Work on regional strategies with Alton Thompson and ARD Directors
- I will reach out to 1890s and 1994s to recruit my graduate students.
- Network with people who are not just like me. Build my circle with people outside my box.
- Intentional communication and engagement.
- support shared internships
- Focus on audience when developing materials to report data
- be proactive in reaching out to other groups
- Hire faculty members of color and support them with quality start-up packages.
- Incentivize my faculty to collaborate with 1890 universities on research projects
- Be strategic and intentional about inclusivity
- Recruit faculty from 1890 and 1994
- collaborate with 1890s on internships in agriculture fields
- Try to carve out seed funding for new collaborative efforts between our faculty (1862) with 1890 or 1994 partners
- Try to institutionalize the concept of inclusive excellence with faculty and administration and establish a pilot program to foster interactions between ESS 1862 and 1890s.

- I think my "one new idea" is also the answer for this one: Building an advisory committee that will better connect communicators from 1862, 1890 and 1994 institutions so we can benefit from their input and they can benefit from learning about each other, their audiences and their cultures.
- Establish meaningful relationships with other institutional members of the LGU family.
- Reach out to build trust with 1994 institutions
- Helping others (students, high school teachers, Madea, etc.) to understand all that "Agriculture" is. That is the best way to recruit and will lead to positive change in the years to come. [Madea--the person who is raising those students who should major in agriculture, but because of the view of agriculture, these students are majoring in other areas.]
- Facilitate meaningful conversations among minority and majority students for deeper understanding of challenges and opportunities of DEI
- This has been an amazing thinking and reflecting time. THANK YOU!
- Our 1862 HSI has some of the same challenges that our 1890 and 1994 institutions are facing, so I will seek ways to collaborate at a higher level.

Discussion Prompt: What are 2-3 action steps I could take in the next 30 days to advance toward this ONE THING?

- Identify funding opportunities to enable these interactions and collaborations to become a reality.
- I sure would love to think through how the SRDC could help with these ideas.
- Agriculture can be so much more than its historical image, data sciences, gene editing, innovation and entrepreneurship, we need to embrace those traits
- Plan for seed funding for collaboration with 1890 universities
- Talking to everyone I meet about agriculture:
- Flip the narrative that education is the pathway away from Agriculture.
- Pick up the phone and start networking!
- Establish a regular monthly meeting with my counterparts in 1890 and 1994 universities.
- Target faculty from 1890 and 1994 to participate in AFRI grants
- I love the emphasis on conversation...that's where it starts!
- As was mentioned earlier, I will work with Gary Thompson to plan and implement joint programs, proposals with ARD and the Southern region

Respectfully submitted by:

- *Woody Hughes, Jr., Fort Valley State University*
- *Brian Raison, The Ohio State University*
- *Rachel Welborn, Southern Rural Development Center*

“Inclusive Excellence” Call to Action 2021 Report

Submitted by Anna Katharine Mansfield, Associate Director

What challenge area you are addressing?

Since August 2020, the Cornell AgriTech DEI Council (formerly Committee) has begun to address two of the four D&I Challenge Areas:

- Recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce: developing a pipeline to support inclusive excellence.
- Reaching/working with underserved populations.

What actions have you taken?

- Created, completed, and analyzed data from internal climate survey
- Initiated integrated Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Council
- Drafted and initiated three-year DEI plan:
 - Yr 1. Internal climate
 - Yr 2. External climate
 - Yr 3. Metrics and accountability
- Initiated informal monthly meetings of principal DEI leaders at Cornell AgriTech, Cornell Cooperative Extension, and the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences
- Hosted, or have secured speakers for, station-wide talks or workshops on:
 - The history of indigenous peoples at Cornell AgriTech
 - Anti-racism initiatives in Cornell Cooperative Extension
 - Microaggressions in the workplace
 - Gender and sexuality
- Drafted agenda and programming for an AgriTech employee onboarding program to include community expectations and cultural norms for international employees (to be completed in May 2022)
- Encouraged and supported formation of Employee Affiliate Groups (EAGs) for Minority Genders in STEM and LGBTQ employees
- Initiated planning for student assistantships and internships for underrepresented minority candidates
- Two faculty searches were conducted with emphasis on diversifying candidate pools; both were filled with diversity hires
- With the help of Cornell’s American Indian and Indigenous Studies program, land acknowledgement language was drafted and is under review for consideration by the historically dispossessed Seneca Nations

What resources have you deployed?

- Associate Director effort reapportioned to include DEI initiatives
- Discretionary funds used for professional training in DEI programming for DEI Council co-chairs
- DEI training and programming available from Cornell

- Commitment to invest discretionary funds in student assistantships and internships for underrepresented minority candidates

What gaps will you address?

- Cornell AgriTech community is largely white, male, and cishet; training on the realities of normative culture and privilege and its implications for recruiting and retaining diverse candidates
- Critically assessing current demographics and cultural norms to improve inclusivity for underrepresented groups within the AgriTech community
- Critically assessing stakeholder reach to determine what groups are being overlooked and how extension and outreach programming can be more accessible and welcoming
- Support and encouragement of individual growth for all community members
- Acknowledgment and 'credit' for DEI work in annual reviews

What goals are you seeking?

- To provide baseline education about normative culture to all community members
- To support critical, open discussion about the strengths and weaknesses of current culture, and create a common vision for change
- To identify and empower leaders within the community to advocate for equity for minority segments
- To create a self-aware, accessible culture where individuals can bring their full, authentic self to work

What does diversity and inclusion look like on your campus or station?

- Majority white
- Age-stratified such that white, cishet men still hold most leadership positions, but younger leaders and more diverse
- Diversity largely consists of women and international academics
- Student and staff population is more diverse in almost all parameters than faculty

How does this CTA fit into your station, college, or university DEI strategic plan?

- Cornell AgriTech made a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion in late 2019; the social upheaval in 2020 prompted rapid action in the development of a DEI Committee. In 2021, this committee was transformed into an integrated DEI Council, and charged with the development of a DEI strategic plan.
- In the spring of 2021, DEI strategic plans were requested from the College for all units, including AgriTech; so the still-developing strategic planning document was reformatted to fit the college template.

SAAESD Strategic Roadmap 2021-22 Mid-term Report

Implementation Working Group Memberst

Tim Rials, Scott Senseman, Amy Grunden, Henry Fadamiro, Susan Duncan, John Davis, Michael Toews, Frankie Gould

Collaborative Discovery

Actions:

1. Identify current and emerging research priorities across the region
 - *MRC reviewing multistate portfolio for strengths and gaps*
 - *Engaging SACs to identify areas emerging research*
2. Establish the “Southern Land-grant Faculty Seminar Series”
 - *Developing quarterly seminars to identify opportunities for collaboration and increase awareness of faculty experts across the region*
 - ✓ *Focus topics on research priorities that closely align with federal funding priorities*
3. Develop best practice sessions to build collaborative multidisciplinary teams
 - *AI Initiative:*
 - ✓ *S1090 AI in Agroecosystems: Big Data and Smart Technology-Driven Sustainable Production*
 - ✓ *Envisioning 2050 in the Southeast: AI-Driven Innovations in Agriculture*
 - *Climate Change Initiative:*
 - ✓ *Addressing the impacts of climate change on agriculture and forestry in the Southern region*
 - ✓ *Preparing and responding to severe weather disasters at our RECs and local offices*
 - ✓ *Engaged in NIFA and Partners Climate Change Summit*

Enhancing Reputation

Actions:

1. Promote a culture of professional societies award nominations with SACs
 - *Engaging SACs in the honorifics process*
2. Share e-Learning modules on “Building Success in Extramural Funding”
 - *Identified points of contacts (POCs) for grant proposal development units at member institutions*
3. Initiate a long-term strategy to increase AAAS fellows at member institutions
 - *Curated and distributed current AAAS Fellows in SAAESD universities*
 - *“Honorifics: Building Your Culture of Nomination” webinar presented March 23, 2022. Slides and recorded webinar link were distributed to directors and SACs*
 - *Developing honorifics toolkit to assist colleges and departments with faculty nominations*

Strategic Alliances

Actions:

1. Use the Southern Mini Land-grant Meeting joint sessions to increase interactions with ASRED, CARET, ARD, S-APS

- *Ongoing at this meeting*
- 2. Build a strategic partnership with 1890 Agricultural Research Directors (ARD)
 - *2022 ARD Symposium April 2-5 in Atlanta. SAAESD exhibitors: Auburn, NCSU, UF, UGA, UTK, VT*
 - *Chairs Chandra Reddy (ARD) and Rob Gilbert (SAAESD) discussed strategies to move forward*
 - *Joint ARD-SAAESD Session at the Southern Mini Land-grant Meeting focusing on this partnership*
- 3. Partner with the Southern Rural Development Center (SRDC)
 - *Ongoing conversations with SRDC Director John Green and Associate Director Rachel Welborn*
 - *Gary Thompson appointed to serve on the SRDC Board of Directors*
- 4. Engage with Southern Association of State Departments of Agriculture (SASDA)
 - *Presented at the SASDA business meeting at the Little Rock Marriott Hotel June 6, 2021*

Effective Communications

Actions:

1. Capture success stories and amplify award announcements at SAAESD member institutions
Collaborative Press Releases
 - *“Multiple SAAESD institutions receive AAAS Fellows honors” OSU – Published online in **Southeast Farm Daily**, April 12, 2022
<https://www.farmprogress.com/extension/southern-researchers-receive-honor>*
 - *“Pigskin and Peaches” Clemson & UGA*
 - *“Regenerative agriculture evaluation gets underway in Texas and Oklahoma” OSU & TAMU*
 - *“Kentucky, Florida Put Aside Rivalry to Rally Around Love of Growing Plants” UK & UF*
 - *“UF, UGA team up for turf success” UF & UGA*
 - *“At inaugural conference, scientists, farmers see ways to make AI useful to agriculture” UF*
2. Create opportunities for communicators to meet, collaborate, and coordinate messaging
 - *Formed the Southern Region Communications Consortium (SRCC) to exchange and connect experiences*
 - *“Southern Research Communicators Consortium” presented at the National Agricultural Communications Symposium, 2022 SAAS Conference*
 - *Initiating an ag communicators research multistate project*
 - *4 focus areas for the year: Artificial Intelligence, Invasive Species, Climate Change, Honorifics*
 - *Social media #SouthernAgResearch – Follow on Twitter @SouthernAES*

Discussion Points with Directors

Are we focusing on the priorities that are important for the association?

What new directions or opportunities might be considered for the upcoming year’s action plan?

What are your thoughts on developing and capturing “measures of success?”

Insights about the SAAESD Communications Task Force

DRAFT April 22, 2022

Summary:

The Southern Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors (SAAESD) has identified the need to enhance the reputation and awareness of research impacts at land-grant universities in its consortium. Communications professionals at the participating institutions are important and valuable partners in achieving this goal. Initial activities have established good communication and collegiality among communicators. Moving forward, some suggestions for achieving the desired outcomes could be considered.

Recommendations for consideration:

- **Identify and clarify specific objectives for the program.** For example, who is the audience that the organization is interested in reaching and influencing? If this is higher education leaders and granting agencies, a program that focuses on establishing SAAESD leaders as thought leaders among their peers and **targets higher education media and conferences** may prove more successful than a general media campaign. Understanding specifically what outcomes are expected after 12 months, 24 months, etc. is needed to ensure that expectations are realized.
 - **Examples could include editorial coverage in The Chronicle of Higher Ed;** Co-authoring Op Ed pieces in relevant media; Establishment of a Linked In page for the group, sharing consortium news and amplifying individual university pieces.
- **Allocate resources to contract dedicated public relations/communications personnel** to implement a focused communications program for the regional research priorities. It is a challenge for existing communications personnel to advocate for the regional initiative while representing their individual institutions. By contracting with an existing communicator, the association could **leverage existing media infrastructures** at one of the institutions but also have dedicated expertise to direct the program.
 - This person could be tasked with managing the organization's social media pages, drafting pitches/campaigns that could be used by member institutions and representing the communicator network in meetings to learn of potential story ideas and report out about communicator team progress.
- **Explore the possibility of dedicated digital communication efforts** using emails, social media, LinkedIn, etc. to position the SAAESD with its key audiences. For example, UF/IFAS CREC used a media campaign with a dedicated website and focused emails and placements in national media outlets like Forbes and the New York Times that directed targeted audiences back to a website with impact stories. **This campaign would require financial support and work** to identify a specific target audience but can be very effective. The key to a program like this is to determine who we are talking to -- leaders at other national institutions, decision makers, the general public, or are our efforts serving only ourselves?
- **Use the monthly Southern Research Communicator Consortium (SRCC) meetings for collaborative, roundtable discussion about particular topic areas** for communications. If each communicator knows that topic (climate change, invasive species, etc.) prior to each meeting, they can determine which researchers at their institutions have active projects related to the

topic, and through open discussion, *communicators can begin finding connections and story ideas* that bolster the objective of the group.

- **Discussion among Experiment Station Directors about impressing these priorities with their communicators** and how and why it is a mutually beneficial exercise. This also includes the Directors having a clear idea of what services their communications professionals are able to provide. Perhaps *a communications spokesperson could attend the next Directors meeting to convey capacity and a director could attend the next communicators meeting to convey expectations*. This will help ensure everyone is on the same page about the capacity of the communicators group and proper expectations will be set.

This collaborative effort has a higher likelihood of success if participating communicators are more effectively briefed on the purpose, target audience, and desired outcomes of these collaborative communications efforts, and that monthly meetings have specific action items and objectives to achieve those outcomes.

Thank you for your consideration, and we look forward to further discussion.

Thompson Annual Activity Report

April 2021 – May 2022

This report summarizes activities during the period from April 22, 2021 through May 17, 2022 and represents the first full year as the Executive Director (ED) for the Southern Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors (SAAESD).

Travel:

- *2021 SASDA (Southern Association of State Departments of Agriculture) Annual Meeting*. Little Rock, AR. June 6, 2021. (Presentation on SAAESD and Potential Interactions with SASDA)
- *Southern Administrative Heads & CARET Joint Summer Meeting*. Clemson, SC. July 29-August 1, 2021 (SAAESD update and presentation on Climate Change and the Role of Land Grant Universities)
- 2021 Experiment Station Section Meeting. Olympic Valley, CA. Sept 27-30, 2021. (Panels in Session III: Agricultural Research is the Solution to Climate Change).
- *University of Florida/IFAS REC and Site Visits External Review Team*. October 10-15, 2021
- *2022 SAAS (Southern Association of Agricultural Scientists) Conference*. New Orleans, LA. February 10-15, 2022. (Presentation on Southern Research Communicators Consortium)
- *Envisioning 2050 in the Southeast: AI-Driven Innovations in Agriculture*. Auburn, AL. March 9-11, 2022. (Organized and moderated panels on AI activities in Southern universities)
- *The 1890s Research and Innovation Agenda: Pathways to Build Back Better*. ARD Research Symposium 2022. Atlanta GA. April 2-5, 2022
- *Cotton Winter Nursery Review*. Liberia, CR. April 11-12, 2022
- *Southern Region Mini Land Grant Meeting*. College Station, TX. May 16-19, 2022. (Organized joint sessions and climate panels)

Planning and Organizing Committees:

- *Southern Region Mini Land Grant Meeting*. College Station, TX. May 16-19, 2022
- *2021 ESS Annual Meeting*. Olympic Valley, CA. September 27-30, 2021
- *2022 Joint ESS/CES-NEDA Meeting*. Baltimore, MD. September 25-28, 2022
- *APLU New Administrator Orientation (virtual)*. February 8-10, 2022
- *USDA NIFA Climate Summit*. ongoing

Engaging new SAAESD COOs:

- Arthur Appel, Auburn University, August 4, 2021
- Scott Senseman, Oklahoma State University, August 5, 2021
- Tom Zimmerman, University of the Virgin Islands, Aug 11, 2021
- Jamie Matthews, University of Kentucky, August 9, 2021
- Scott Willard, Mississippi State University, January 26, 2022
- Cliff Lamb, Texas A&M University, March 14, 2022

Engaging SACs:

- SAC Administrative Advisors meeting. November 3, 2021
- SAC13/NAUFRP Forestry. December 13, 2021
- SAC2 Animal Sciences. January 28, 2022
- SAC11/NCAC14 Plant Pathology. January 25, 2022
- SAC7 Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology. February 13, 2022

SAAESD Policy Document Rewrites:

- SAAESD Rules of Operation (update SAAESD By-laws)
- Southern Advisory Committee (SAC) Guidelines
- Multistate Research Committee (MRC) Procedures

- Administrative Advisor (AA) Guidelines
- Multistate Research Project Guidelines for initiating new projects and slide deck

SAAESD Committee Meetings:

- SAAESD Executive Committee - quarterly
- Multistate Research Committee - quarterly
- SERA Review Committee - September 7, 2021
- SAAESD Strategic Implementation Committee - monthly

Best Practices for New and Emerging Directors Webinars

- *The Ins and Outs of NIMSS*. featuring Cindy Morley, SAAESD Program Coordinator. June 9, 2021. 15 participants from UGA, UARK, OSU, NCSU, VT, LSU, Clemson, UF.
- *Roles and Responsibilities of Administrative Advisors for Multistate Projects*, featuring Sara Delheimer, Program Coordinator, Multistate Research Fund Impacts. September 8, 2021. 21 participants from NIFA, UTK, OSU, NCSU, UARK, VT, UK, UGA.
- *Strategies for Effective Advocacy and Engagement*, featuring Caron Gala, APLU. January 26, 2022. 12 participants from NCSU, UK, UARK, UGA, UF, OSU, UVI.

SAAESD Strategic Roadmap Webinars

- *Honorifics: Building Your Culture of Nominations*, featuring John Davis, Senior Associate Dean for Research and Associate Director Florida AES. March 23, 2002. 20 participants from UF, UARK, VT, MSU, OSU, NCSU, UK.

Panel Organization

- 2021 Experiment Station Section Meeting. Sept 27-30, 2021. Olympic Valley, CA. Session III: *Agricultural Research is the Solution to Climate Change*.
 - *Panel: Addressing the Challenges to Agriculture and Forestry Presented by a Changing Climate*. Director tabletop discussions resulted in the report: *ESS Leadership Strategies: Adapt to and Mitigate the Impacts of Climate Change*.
- *Envisioning 2050 in the Southeast: AI-Driven Innovations in Agriculture*. March 9-11, 2022. Auburn, AL. Breakout session panels: *University Efforts to Advance AI Application to Southeast Agriculture* breakout session.
 - *Panel 1: AI-Related Research Status and Programmatic Updates*.
 - *Panel 2: Administrative Outlook and Strategic Directions to Advance AI Applications to Southeast Agriculture*.
- 2022 Southern Region Mini Land Grant Meeting. May 16-19, 2022. College Station, TX.
 - *Panel: Addressing the Impacts of Climate Change on Agriculture and Forestry in the Southern Region*.
 - *Panel: Preparing and Responding to Severe Weather Disasters at Our Research and Extension Centers and Local Offices*.

Appointments, Liaisons, Reviews, Surveys, and Reports

- Association of Southern Regional Extension Directors (ASRED) liaison
- Executive Director Liaison to APLU Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources (FANR)
- Southern Rural Development Center (SRDC) Board of Directors (12/2021-11/2025)
- Council for Agricultural Science and Technology (CAST) Board of Trustees (chair)
- Southern Research Communicators Consortium member
- University of Florida IFAS REC External Review, South Team member
- USDA NIFA Centers of Excellence at 1890 Institutions – *ad hoc* reviewer

- University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture Strategic Planning Research Initiatives (SPRINT) Program – *ad hoc* reviewer
- Conducted surveys on behalf of the University of Tennessee (1) and North Carolina State University (3)
- NIFA's Climate Change Adaptation Planning – Report on Southern regional priorities and issues
- ESCOP Executive Committee *ex officio* member
- ESCOP Chairs Advisory Committee *ex officio* member
- National Impact Database (NIDB) committee *ex officio* member
- NRSP Review Committee member
- NRSP1 Management Committee member
- Policy Board of Directors support for ESS representative, Mark McGuire
- Strategic Realignment Implementation Committee support for ESS representative, Marty Draper
- Diversity Catalyst Committee member
- Food and Agriculture Climate Alliance (FACA) Ag Research Working Group member
- ED participant in BAC, CLP, BLC, STC

New and Developing Multistate Research Projects

- S1090 AI in Agroecosystems: Big Data and Smart Technology-Driven Sustainable Production
- S Temp 1091 Forest Heath and Resilience
- S Temp 1093 Management systems for beef cattle reared in subtropical and tropical environments
- S Temp 1094 Genomic tools to improve equine health, well-being, and performance

The year ahead

Activities this year were strongly influenced by the limitations imposed by the pandemic. Travel resumed in the last quarter of 2021 and first quarter of 2022, and I anticipate traveling more during the rest of the calendar year, attending national meetings as well as regional events. Implementation of the SAAESD Strategic Roadmap will continue in the upcoming year with efforts on the three focus areas of Collaborative Discovery, Enhancing Reputation, and Strategic Alliances. Special attention will be given to continuing the Artificial Intelligence research initiative along with developing research initiatives on the impacts of climate change on agriculture. The Southern Research Communicators Consortium (SRDC) will continue to engage university communicators across the region, creating opportunities to highlight collaborative research among our members thereby increasing the visibility of SAESs in the Southern region. Work will continue with our members to encourage the use of honorifics as an approach to recognize faculty excellence throughout the region. Relationship building with the 1890 Land-grant institutions through activities with the Agricultural Research Directors (ARD) and collaborating with the Southern Rural Development Center (SRDC) will be priorities in the upcoming year. I will continue to engage the Southern Advisory Committees (SACs), the SAAESD Executive Committee, and the Multistate Research Committee as resources for our activities. Attention will be given to reviewing and enhancing our multistate research portfolio. Nationally, I will continue to represent the interest of our members at APLU and USDA NIFA with the goal of creating opportunities for our members.

SAAESD FY2021-2022 Budget

	Presented at Spring Meeting (April 2021)	Actual (May 2022)
Base Assessment	\$ 394,811	\$ 395,109
Cotton Winter Nursery	\$ 35,000	\$ 35,000
CottonGen	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000
Total Annual Revenue	\$ 454,811	\$ 455,109
Projected Carryover	\$ 150,869	\$ 145,913
Total Revenue Available	\$ 605,680	\$ 601,022
Expenses		
Salary and Fringe Benefits		
Salary and Fringe (30.63%) - Thompson	\$ 300,449	
Salary - Thompson (7/1/21- 3/15/22)		\$ 166,175
Salary - Thompson (3/30/22-6/30/22)		\$ 69,794
Fringe (28.17%) - Thompson (7/1/21- 3/15/22)		\$ 46,812
Fringe (28.17%) - Thompson (3/30/22-6/30/22)		\$ 19,661
Salary and Fringe (30.63%) - Morley	\$ 75,765	
Salary - Morley (7/1/21- 3/15/22)		\$ 41,905
Salary - Morley (3/30/22-6/30/22)		\$ 17,600
Fringe (28.17%) - Morley (7/1/21- 3/15/22)		\$ 11,805
Fringe (28.17%) - Morley (3/30/22-6/30/22)		\$ 4,958
Subtotal	\$ 376,214	\$ 378,709
Travel		
Executive Director Travel	\$ 25,000	\$ 12,074
Coordinator Travel	\$ 5,000	\$ 8,805
Other		
Office operations	\$ 2,000	\$ 1,546
Website & Computers	\$ 1,200	\$ 190
2022 NC-FAR Dues	\$ 500	\$ 500
Awards	\$ 325	\$ 1,277
Subtotal	\$ 34,025	\$ 24,392
Subtotal Salaries & Operational Expenses	\$ 410,239	\$ 403,101
Cotton Winter Nursery	\$ 35,000	\$ 35,000
CottonGen	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000
Total Expenses	\$ 470,239	\$ 463,101
Projected Carryover	\$ 135,441	\$ 137,921

NOTE: Donna Pearce last month salary & sick leave buy out (\$4955.91) deducted from NCSU funds to UARK

NOTE: Thompson and Morley "Salary and Fringe" increased due to 2% COLA applied 3/16/2022

NOTE: \$1000 for AI Conference Student Poster Awards - approved by Executive Committee 2/16/2022

SAAESD FY2022-2023 Budget Request

Annual Revenue (crosses fiscal years)

Base Assessment	\$	410,521
Cotton Winter Nursery	\$	35,000
CottonGen	\$	25,000
Total Annual Revenue	\$	470,521
Projected Carryover	\$	137,921
Total Revenue Available	\$	608,442

Expenses

Salary and Fringe Benefits

Salary - Gary Thompson	\$	239,292
Fringe (30.8%) - Gary Thompson	\$	73,702
Salary - Cindy Morley	\$	60,344
Fringe (30.8%) - Cindy Morley	\$	18,586
Subtotal	\$	391,924

Operating

Travel

Executive Director Travel	\$	25,000
Coordinator Travel	\$	5,000

Other

Office operations	\$	2,000
Website & Computers	\$	1,200
NC-FAR Dues	\$	500
Awards	\$	325

Subtotal \$ **34,025**

Subtotal Salaries & Operational Expenses \$ **425,949**

Cotton Winter Nursery	\$	35,000
CottonGen	\$	25,000

Total Expenses \$ **485,949**

Projected Carryover \$ **122,493**

SAAESD Assessment Calculations

An annual budget is approved during the spring meeting. Annual assessments are based on the proportion each institution receives of total Hatch (regular & multistate) received by the region. SAAESD Chief Operating Officers approve changes in salary and benefits for the SAAESD personnel, which are prorated equally across SAAESD member assessments in the same proportion as the previous year's assessments and take effect concurrently with the change in salary and benefits. Twelve of the 15 members (3 members have zero cotton acres) contribute to the Cotton Winter Nursery and CottonGen database through assessments. Both of these assessments are based on a three-year average of harvested acres from the state data reported by USDA NASS statistics. Each state's acreage is put into one of seven multiplier categories and assessments are calculated based on that multiplier.

<u>Institution</u>	<u>State</u>	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Average	Proportion	Base Assessment	
Auburn University	AL	5,054,889	5,060,507	5,294,994	5,279,531	5,267,582	5,191,501	0.064648	26,539	27,475
University of Arkansas	AR	4,275,443	4,280,275	4,535,167	4,522,067	4,512,078	4,425,006	0.055103	22,621	23,419
University of Florida	FL	3,866,890	3,871,629	4,132,286	4,118,647	4,107,830	4,019,456	0.050053	20,548	21,272
University of Georgia	GA	6,112,778	6,119,100	6,470,436	6,473,325	6,458,717	6,326,871	0.078786	32,343	33,484
University of Kentucky	KY	6,547,119	6,553,553	6,920,578	6,901,090	6,780,158	6,740,500	0.083937	34,458	35,673
Louisiana State University	LA	3,902,180	3,906,444	4,122,171	4,111,288	4,103,342	4,029,085	0.050173	20,597	21,323
Mississippi State University	MS	4,899,394	4,904,548	5,163,379	5,150,367	5,140,945	5,051,727	0.062907	25,825	26,736
NC State University	NC	7,973,628	7,981,805	8,486,139	8,463,378	8,911,888	8,363,368	0.104146	42,754	44,262
Oklahoma State University	OK	4,066,328	4,071,242	4,359,273	4,343,821	4,330,921	4,234,317	0.052728	21,646	22,410
University of Puerto Rico	PR	4,796,036	4,899,514	5,139,170	5,232,974	5,329,940	5,079,527	0.063254	25,967	26,883
Clemson University	SC	4,363,068	4,366,083	4,608,290	4,599,927	4,594,612	4,506,396	0.056117	23,037	23,850
University of Tennessee	TN	6,029,717	6,036,296	6,411,616	6,391,689	6,375,396	6,248,943	0.077816	31,945	33,072
Texas A&M University	TX	8,619,958	8,630,764	9,285,065	9,249,539	9,219,184	9,000,902	0.112085	46,013	47,636
Virginia Tech	VA	5,214,719	5,220,403	5,535,865	5,519,298	5,506,056	5,399,268	0.067235	27,601	28,575
University of the Virgin Islands	VI	1,451,900	1,552,919	1,713,680	1,810,399	1,907,628	1,687,305	0.021011	8,626	8,930
		77,174,047	77,455,082	82,178,109	82,167,340	82,546,277	80,304,171	1.00000	410,521	425,000

*Individual assessments are the proportion of the institution's 5-year average to the total Hatch dollars multiplied by the total assessment highlighted in yellow.

**MULTI-STATE RESEARCH PROJECT S-009
PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES CONSERVATION AND UTILIZATION
BUDGET REQUEST BRIEF FOR FY2023**

Accomplishments and Activities for 2021:

- The Plant Genetic Resources Conservation Unit (PGRCU) collection conserves over 102,000 accessions of 1601 species and 286 genera with 87% available for distribution.
- A total of 51,773 accessions (7,156 in the S-009 region) were distributed in 1071 orders to users in 2021. Sorghum and cowpeas were the most requested crops.
- Regenerations and characterization of germplasm resumed according to normal operations in 2021.
- All S-009 and USDA-ARS positions in the unit are filled except for the S-009 Administrative Associate position due to the retirement of Donna Kent in January 2022. The position provides administrative support to the unit and manages time and attendance, travel arrangements, budget oversight and reports, purchasing, front desk reception duties, and meeting arrangements. We would like to have this position filled part-time to maintain administrative operations for the project.
- The S-009 Regional Technical Advisory Committee met virtually on August 10, 2021, and was hosted by Virginia Sykes, 2021 S-009 Chair and Representative from Tennessee. The 2022 meeting is expected to be held in person in Griffin, GA and hosted by PGRCU and Soraya Bertioli, the 2022 Chair and Representative from Georgia.

S-009 Support: The S-009 Budget currently supports eight full-time and one part-time permanent technical support positions and seasonal positions to support the conservation and distribution of plant germplasm maintained at the Griffin, GA location. An additional \$78,374 is set aside for purchase of supplies and \$1,000 for travel.

ARS Support: USDA, ARS annual appropriations provided to the Griffin, GA location support 16 full-time permanent positions including five scientist positions and additionally supports seasonal positions. The annual budget includes funding for supplies, utilities, equipment, and facilities maintenance and repair. It also includes \$95,000 paid through a Research Support Agreement to UGA-Griffin to cover grounds maintenance and HVAC repair and maintenance.

S-009 Personnel: The University of Georgia provided salary increases in FY2022 including \$5,000 per employee raises and compression raises totaling \$9,746. Taking into consideration all salary increases and the associated increase in estimated benefits, there will be a significant deficit in the labor budget. Three options for the labor budget include:

Option 1: Rehire the vacant Admin Support position FT (8 FTE). Resulting deficit is \$88,908;
Option 2: Rehire the vacant Admin Support position PT (7.5 FTE). Resulting deficit is \$61,329;
Option 3: Abolish the vacant Admin Support position (7 FTE). Resulting deficit is \$33,749.

S-009 Budget Request: A proposed budget of \$572,899 is requested. This is an increase of \$61,329 to cover the deficit as outlined in Option 2.

Action Requested: Approval of S-009 FY2023 Budget Request.

**PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES CONSERVATION AND UTILIZATION
FUNDING REQUEST FOR FY2023
TO THE SOUTHERN ASSOC. OF STATE AGRIC. EXPT STATION DIRECTORS**

Option 2

A. S-009 Budget

	FY2021	FY2022	REQUESTED FY2023
Personnel	431,047	432,196	493,525
Travel	1,000	1,000	1,000
Operations	<u>78,374</u>	<u>78,374</u>	<u>78,374</u>
TOTAL	\$510,241	\$511,570	\$572,899

B. USDA/ARS Budget

	FY2021	FY2022*	FY2023**
Personnel	\$1,534,447	\$1,691,000	\$1,742,100
Travel	0	27,500	27,500
Indirect Costs	430,203	451,854	471,140
Supplies	369,226	223,451	153,165
Equipment	5,771	10,100	10,000
Facilities Support	95,000	95,000	95,000
Total Base Funds	\$ 2,434,647	\$ 2,498,905	\$2,498,905
Area Office/HQ Funds	<u>70,500</u>	<u>TBD</u>	<u>TBD</u>
TOTAL FUNDING	\$ 2,664,054	\$ 2,498,905	\$2,498,905

*Budget is based on additional base funding the unit anticipates receiving this fiscal year to cover 3.8% salary increase that became effective January 2022.

**Personnel expense is based on proposed 4.6% salary increase for CY2023. The total base funds for FY2023 may be increased to cover the increase in salary.

Option 3

A. S-009 Budget

	FY2021	FY2022	REQUESTED FY2023
Personnel	431,047	432,196	465,945
Travel	1,000	1,000	1,000
Operations	<u>78,374</u>	<u>78,374</u>	<u>78,374</u>
TOTAL	\$510,241	\$511,570	\$545,319

B. USDA/ARS Budget

	FY2021	FY2022*	FY2023**
Personnel	\$1,534,447	\$1,691,000	\$1,742,100
Travel	0	27,500	27,500
Indirect Costs	430,203	451,854	471,140
Supplies	369,226	223,451	153,165
Equipment	5,771	10,100	10,000
Facilities Support	95,000	95,000	95,000
Total Base Funds	\$ 2,434,647	\$ 2,498,905	\$2,498,905
Area Office/HQ Funds	<u>70,500</u>	<u>TBD</u>	<u>TBD</u>
TOTAL FUNDING	\$ 2,664,054	\$ 2,498,905	\$2,498,905

*Budget is based on additional base funding the unit anticipates receiving this fiscal year to cover 3.8% salary increase that became effective January 2022.

**Personnel expense is based on proposed 4.6% salary increase for CY2023. The total base funds for FY2023 may be increased to cover the increase in salary.

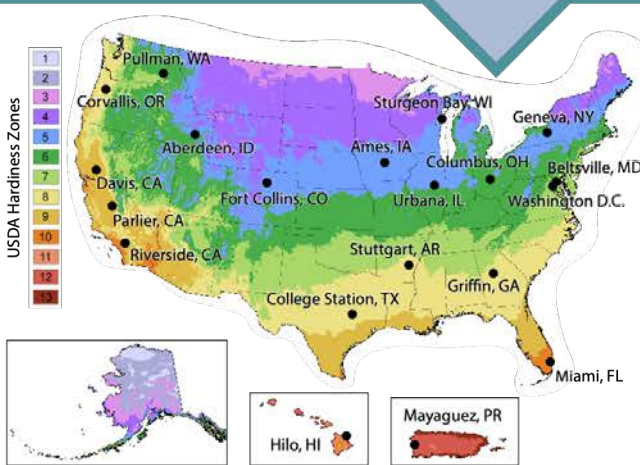
National Plant Germplasm System

CONSERVING CROP GENETIC RESOURCES IN THE U.S.

The National Plant Germplasm System (NPGS) is the network of USDA genebanks that safeguards our nation's precious plant germplasm (also termed genetic resources)—living material from which plants are grown.

NPGS conserves world-class collections of plant genetic resources

Collections include approximately 200 crops and their wild relatives. These are maintained across the country at 20+ locations suited to the biological and environmental needs of each crop.



Diverse collections are key to agricultural security

Genetic diversity can be used to improve crop quality, yield, pest and disease resistance, tolerance to environmental extremes, and more.

NPGS distributes living plant material to researchers and plant breeders working to develop and improve crops for a growing population and changing climate.

Plant germplasm is conserved in many forms

Curators must balance ease of maintenance, protection against loss, longevity, and accessibility.

They maintain living collections as:

- Plants growing in the field, greenhouse, screenhouse, or tissue culture
- Seeds or frozen tissue in cold storage



Watch a video overview of the NPGS



NPGS conserves the crops that sustain our everyday lives. These plants are essential to the future of global agriculture.

NPGS conserves germplasm from **16,000+** plant species

NPGS distributes **200,000+** items for research each year

NPGS safeguards **601,000+** unique kinds of germplasm



Food and Beverage

Most of NPGS's collections are food crops. This includes fruits and nuts, vegetables, grains, oilseeds, herbs, beverage crops, and more.



Fiber

Certain crops are cultivated for fiber, such as cotton, hemp, and flax.



Industrial and Medicinal

Some crops have industrial applications and are used in biofuels, lubricants, cosmetics, and medicines.



Feed

A variety of crops are used for feeding livestock such as cattle, pigs, and poultry.



Ornamental

Some plants are grown for their aesthetic interest and role in environmental quality.

Contacts: Peter.Bretting@usda.gov

Design credit: Kathryn Chen (March 2022)

Funding by USDA-ARS and the USDA-NIFA-Higher Education Challenge Grant Program (2020-70003-303930), with support from Colorado State University. USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.



To learn more about plant genetic resources, visit GRIN-U.org



SAAESD Report on Artificial Intelligence in Agriculture

An Artificial Intelligence Workshop held during the 2021 SAAESD Spring Meeting and the survey that followed indicated artificial intelligence was a major focus area that is receiving significant attention across the region. Results of the SAAESD member survey were shared with members. A notable gap is that awareness of artificial intelligence in agriculture research among southern LGU is low, uncoordinated, and greater awareness is needed and strategies for building the southern region leadership is important. As a result of these activities, a core group of faculty, from Auburn University, University of Florida, and Mississippi State University, applied for and received workshop funding from NIFA to conduct a regional AI in Agriculture conference. The conference, entitled AI in AG, Envisioning 2050 in the Southeast: AI-Driven Innovations in Agriculture, was held March 9-11, 2022 in Auburn, AL. The Organizing Committee and program development team [collaborators on the proposal] represented most of the SAAESD member institutions as well as ARD regional member and other institutions. The conference brought industry, state and federal agencies, and university faculty together to discuss the future of artificial intelligence in agriculture. Key points from the conference included:

- Data is a critical part of artificial intelligence in agriculture conversation. Data ownership, data sharing, data quality, data security. How can agriculture research do this better?
- New federal funding allows for great innovation, partnerships, and risk-ventures around agricultural research and Extension related to artificial intelligence.
- Universities and private sector partners can work together on intellectual property in AI, and accelerate the pace and make greater impacts.
- Workforce development, through education of students, Extension specialists and agents, and stakeholders is needed as the gap widens between technology introduction and the availability and demand for prepared employees.

The conference had over 250 people registered, with both in-person and virtual options. Plenary sessions, poster session, presentations, panel discussions, and working sessions were included in the program. Gary Thompson, SAAESD executive director, moderated a breakout session on university efforts to advanced AI application to southeast agriculture, which included several SAAESD members on the panel. For more information about the program, go to <https://aaes.auburn.edu/ai-driven-innovations-in-agriculture/>. Registered participants can access the program session recordings from that website.

ACADEMICS

Likely collected by your Office of Institutional Research

- Fall undergraduate enrollment
- Fall graduate enrollment
- Undergraduate 1-year retention rate
- Undergraduate graduation rate (6-year)
- Doctoral mean time-to-degree (years)
- Graduate degrees awarded
- Total recurring teaching budget expenditures

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

- Number of Cooperative Extension FTEs, by type
- Number of contacts, by type
- Total recurring Cooperative Extension budget expenditures

RESEARCH IN COLLEGE AND EXPERIMENT STATION

Likely collected by your Division of Research

- Number of research FTEs
- Total sponsored research expenditures
- Total recurring research budget expenditures

DATA DEFINITIONS

A-Z

Doctoral mean time-to-degree: A measure of the average time needed for full-time doctoral students to complete a program, expressed in years. This is calculated as the difference in years between the entry term and graduation/degree term, averaged across all full-time doctoral students within the college of agriculture (or equivalent) and organized by graduating academic year.

Fall graduate enrollment: A measure of the number of graduate students enrolled in the fall term. Total number of students enrolled in a master's or doctoral program within the college of agriculture (or equivalent) during the fall term of a given year. Does not include students enrolled in professional or certificate programs. Include college-level totals only; do not breakdown by major.

Fall undergraduate enrollment: A measure of the number of undergraduate students enrolled in the fall. Total number of students enrolled in a 4- or 5-year bachelor's program within the college of agriculture (or equivalent) during the fall term of a given year. Include college-level totals only; do not breakdown by major.

Graduate degrees awarded: The total number of master's or doctoral degrees conferred in an academic year by the college of agriculture (or equivalent). Does not include professional degrees or certificates. An academic year includes Fall, Spring, and Summer semesters. For instance, AY 2021-2022 includes degrees conferred Fall 2021, Spring 2022, and Summer 2022.

Number of contacts: A measure of the total number of direct and indirect Cooperative Extension contacts with constituents. *Direct contacts* include teaching, guidance, or assistance based on an educational exchange of information related to a technical issue or topic. *Indirect contacts* include information that is provided, or effort that is exerted, through outlets that do not require direct instruction. Organized by fiscal year.

Number of Cooperative Extension FTEs: A measure of the total number of professional Extension full-time equivalents in the college of agriculture (or equivalent). Extension FTEs include the professional program staff, administration, communications personnel, etc. who have, at a minimum, a bachelor's degree. Does not include general support or secretarial staff, paraprofessionals, or clerical staff. FTE is calculated as a ratio of working hours spent on Extension activities during a fiscal year, divided by the total number of hours conventionally worked in the same period. (See [NIFA guidance](#) on "professional Extension FTE" for additional information.) Distinguishes between *agent* type or *faculty* type, by fiscal year.

Number of research FTEs: A measure of the total number of permanent, recurring faculty engaging in research in the college of agriculture (or equivalent). A research FTE is calculated as a ratio of working hours spent on research during a fiscal year, divided by the total number of hours conventionally worked in the same period. For instance, a faculty member who normally spends 25% of his/her time on research and the rest on other activities (such as teaching, advising, or service to the university) should be considered as 0.25 FTE. Does not include part-time faculty or post-docs. Organized by fiscal year.

Total recurring Cooperative Extension budget expenditures: A measure of the recurring Cooperative Extension funds (internal) spent to conduct Extension activities within the college of agriculture (or

equivalent), expressed as a dollar amount per fiscal year. Includes federal capacity funds. Excludes all extramural funding sources.

Total recurring research budget expenditures: A measure of the recurring research funds (internal) spent to conduct research and development within the college of agriculture (or equivalent), expressed as a dollar amount per fiscal year. Includes federal capacity funds. Excludes all extramural funding sources.

Total recurring teaching budget expenditures: A measure of the recurring teaching funds (internal) spent to conduct teaching-related activities within the college of agriculture (or equivalent), expressed as a dollar amount per fiscal year. Excludes all extramural funding sources.

Total sponsored research expenditures: A measure of the funds spent to conduct sponsored research and development within the college of agriculture (or equivalent), expressed as a dollar amount per fiscal year. In line with NSF's Higher Education Research and Development ([HERD](#)) Survey, expenditures for college of agriculture (or equivalent) R&D activities come from internal or external funding and include recovered and unrecovered indirect costs. Funds passing through to subrecipient organizations are also included. R&D is excluded if it was conducted by university faculty or staff at outside institutions and was not accounted for in the reporting institution's financial records. Organized by source of funds: federal, state/local government, institution, business, nonprofit organizations, all other.

Undergraduate 1-year retention rate: A measure of the rate at which first-time full-time students persist in their entering education program at the institution, expressed as a percentage. This is the percentage of first-time bachelors (or equivalent) degree-seeking undergraduate who were enrolled in a college of agriculture (or equivalent) during their first fall (cohort) who are enrolled in their second fall in the college of agriculture (or equivalent) regardless of program within the college of agriculture (or equivalent).

Undergraduate graduation rate (6-year): A measure of the rate at which first-time full-time students graduate from the institution in a timely manner, expressed as a percentage. The total number of undergraduate completers from the college of agriculture (or equivalent) within 150% of normal time (i.e., 6 years), divided by the revised adjusted cohort. See [IPEDS](#) for additional information.

Southern Region Vegetable Consortium

Mission

- Mission of the consortium is to promote the vegetable industry through education, research and Extension through regional collaboration utilizing the expertise of the member institutions

Rationale

- Each participating state has some level of vegetable specialty crop production
- Production ranges from major economic enterprises to minor crops in the various regions
- No one state has comprehensive expertise in all vegetable specialty crops
- The vegetable industry can be better served by pooling expertise across the region

Organization

- Host institution and membership
 - Coordinator resides at the host institution
- Memorandum of Understanding
 - formal mechanism for institutional membership
 - establishes the \$35,000 annual dues from each institution
 - cash or in-kind for salaries of web master and coordinator
- Coordinator responsibilities (~20% FTE):
 - managing budget (bookkeeping functions?)
 - overseeing website
 - managing grant program
 - facilitating agent training
 - organizing annual meeting of steering committee
 - soliciting sponsors and promoting the consortium
- Steering Committee (governing body) composition:
 - one administrator from each institution (executive committee)
 - two faculty from each institution
 - one grower representative from each member state
 - Coordinator (non-voting member)
 - National Program Leader, NIFA
- Steering Committee responsibilities:
 - approve annual budget
 - review and rank grant proposals
 - assist with agent training
 - contribute to the website
 - attend annual meeting

Activities

- Each state receives funds to support research and extension grants and funding of agent travel to attend at least two trainings per cycle
- Sponsored Agent Training
 - Goal—to enhance county agent expertise in vegetable production to be more effective in providing advice to growers
 - provide partial and full scholarships to agents from the member states to attend trainings
 - full scholarships (all expenses paid) offered to four or five agents from each member state
 - opportunity for agents from multiple states to interact and network
 - in-person sessions have been supplemented with webinars
 - topics for trainings based on input from agent participants and approved by the steering committee
- Grants Program
 - Goal—to provide funding in support of applied research in the member states
 - maximum award is \$5000
 - outreach category – Extension grants
 - leverage from IR-4
 - grants for research projects seed applications for larger grants
- Webpage to disseminate information on vegetable production
 - Who would host the website?
 - List experts from each state with contact information
 - All research and extension grants are listed with final reports
 - Newsletter on web site
- Southern Vegetable Extension Work Group
 - Southeastern U.S. Vegetable Crop Handbook
 - <https://www.aces.edu/blog/topics/lawn-garden/2021-southeastern-vegetable-crop-handbook-now-available/>
 - www.vegcrophandbook.com
 - Partnership with Vegetable Growers News

A best practices session by Professor Emeritus Tom Monaco (NCSU) entitled, “*Southern Region Small Fruit Consortium, A Model for Regionally Integrated Activities*” was presented at the 2021 SAAESD Spring Meeting. During the presentation, Dr. Monaco proposed a roadmap for developing similar consortia within the Southern Region based on the Southern Region Small Fruit Consortium (<https://smallfruits.org/>). This outline is based on that roadmap, and the topics within the outline are examples intended to stimulate discussion.

The National Academies of SCIENCES • ENGINEERING • MEDICINE

ENHANCING COORDINATION BETWEEN LAND-GRANT UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES

Preliminary Observations

Introduction

Acting on a Congressional directive, USDA/NIFA asked the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine to establish a Blue Ribbon Panel to consider how to maximize coordination among universities and colleges of the land-grant system to improve and sustain food security in the U.S. and beyond and suggest ways to increase and communicate their collective impacts.

To that end, the panel established by the National Academies is focusing on the potential to enhance inter-institutional collaboration of participants from a diversity of land-grant institutions—including the 1890s and the 1994s—to increase knowledge generation, solve problems, and create positive opportunities across the food and agricultural knowledge system. In addition, increasing collaboration would also improve both the perception and the reality of the land-grant system as an integrated whole with goals and purposes.

This document contains the Panel’s preliminary observations about the nature of collaborative activity across the land grant system and the potential to enhance its impacts. Its purpose is to solicit reactions, ideas, and relevant information from stakeholders who participate in and/or are invested in the outcomes of those activities. You are encouraged to provide comments on any of the preliminary observations using the public comment form <http://nap.nationalacademies.org/land-grant-collaboration/form>. **Please provide comments by Friday, May 6, 2022.** The comments will inform a workshop planned for the spring of 2022, after which the panel will prepare a brief report to Congress and to USDA with findings and recommendations for follow on actions.

Section 1: Collaboration in the Land-Grant System

Preliminary Observation #1: There is a significant amount of active and successful inter-institutional collaboration and cooperation taking place in the land-grant system today. Examples of large-scale collaboration among land-grant institutions include the USDA/NIFA-funded Coordinated Agriculture Projects (CAP)¹ and activities funded by the Foundation for Food and Agricultural Research.² Other examples of collaborative work come from the Multistate Research Program supported by the federal Multistate Research Fund. Since the mid-1940s, the 1862 Agricultural Experiment Stations have worked together on pressing problems that concern two or more states. Many of these projects have participation from across the system, and include stakeholders from industry, government, and beyond, and in some institutions, faculty are required to be involved in multistate research. The Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 requires integration of research and extension activities in these collaborations. In addition, there are outstanding collaborations within states as well. For example, in Montana and Michigan, 1862 and 1994 institutions (Tribal Colleges) are working to

¹ <https://nifa.usda.gov/afri-regional-bioenergy-system-coordinated-agricultural-projects>

² <https://foundationfar.org/grants-funding/grants/>

enhance student and research success as well as outreach. In many states that house both 1862 and 1890 institutions, joint Plans of Work and reports are required. For example, through the Alabama Agricultural Land Grant Alliance (AALGA), statewide extension activities are carried out jointly by Auburn (1862), Alabama A&M, and Tuskegee (1890). These examples of interactions among 1862, 1890 and 1994 institutions are exemplars of collaborative intent, serving as emerging models for enhanced collaboration across land-grant institutions.

Preliminary Observation #2. Currently, inter-institutional collaborations do not routinely engage faculty from the full range of institutions across the land-grant system. For a number of reasons, collaboration among the 1862, 1890, and 1994 institutions collectively occurs much less frequently than collaborations among schools within the 1862 group. The 1890 institutions seldom serve as lead institutions for collaborations, while the 1994 schools have very limited resources for this purpose.

Section 2: The Rationale for Collaboration

Preliminary Observation #3: The nature of key questions for food and agricultural science are evolving, and the scientific approaches to address them are increasingly at the convergence of multiple disciplines, use information collected dynamically across multiple scales or geographies, and require advanced data science capability. Research, teaching, and extension that use a systems perspective, supported with data science expertise and capability, are necessary to address the multifaceted problems now facing the agriculture and food system. For example, while traditional research and extension may have focused primarily on improving crop yields, current questions are more broadly framed, for example, on how to improve crop yields in a changing climate, and/or without environmental degradation.

Preliminary Observation #4: All of us are smarter than one of us: Diversity promotes novel ideas. Given the scope of the problems and challenges that face the food and agriculture system, bringing together individuals with different methodologies, expertise, perspectives, philosophies, backgrounds, and networks offers an opportunity to generate new insights to achieving solutions to problems, and to produce broader impacts from the work of the collaboration. A first step is to recognize the diversity of potential partners from within the land-grant system (such as faculty across 1862, 1890, and 1994 institutions) and from outside of the system (such as producers and state departments of agriculture, industry and venture capitalists).

Preliminary Observation #5: Inter-institutional collaboration can allow human, fiscal, and physical resources to go further and have a broader impact. Collaboration has the potential to reduce the duplication of effort and deploy scarce resources more efficiently when the roles of collaborators and the assets brought to the project are complementary. Partner institutions need not play identical roles, and collaborations can result in different kinds of outcomes, outputs, and impacts for the project and for the partners that are mutually beneficial.

Section 3: Barriers to Collaboration and Ideas for Overcoming Them

The charge to the Blue Ribbon Panel asks it to recommend actions to enhance the success of collaborative activities among institutions in the land-grant system. Identifying and overcoming barriers is an obvious need. A number of examples of potential barriers and means to overcome them can be found in the following list.

Preliminary observation #6: Institutions use different approaches for approving funds to support faculty involvement in collaborations that may create varying expectations on the nature of collaborations and the role of participants. For example, some institutions use multi-state funds to support salaries while others may only use them to support travel to participate in meetings. The rationale and implications for these differences needs to be explored further.

Preliminary observation #7: Historical inequities have handicapped the ability of many 1890 and 1994 institutions to be full partners in collaborations with the 1862s. Different authorities guide the allocation of federal funds to 1862, 1890, and 1994 institutions respectively, with different requirements for state matching support of federal dollars, and different stipulations for the use of funds for collaboration. There is an urgent need to explore how to level the playing field for collaborative opportunities across differently resourced universities and ensure full and equitable participation among all collaborators.

Preliminary observation #8: Faculty members may already be fully committed to other grants and teaching assignments, leaving insufficient or inadequate time and resources to support new collaborative projects. Younger faculty, in particular, may face strong disincentives for pursuing collaboration. Modifying evaluation criteria for promotion and tenure to ensure that participation in collaborations is appropriately recognized and rewarded has been a longstanding need. In 1890 and 1994 institutions, fewer faculty members are generally available to share teaching, research, and extension responsibilities. The potential to provide direct funding for those who have heavy teaching responsibilities to “buy themselves out” while involved in collaboration and providing “teaching postdocs” should be explored. Ensuring adequate start-up resources for newly hired faculty and investing in “continuation” resources for newly promoted faculty may also offer possible solutions.

Preliminary observation #9: Land-grant system institutions have traditions emphasizing and rewarding competitive, rather than collaborative, research projects. Requirements to fund administrative and overhead costs to all institutions participating in a collaboration may also reduce incentives to share funds among multiple institutions. This situation is counter to the impression of the land-grant system as a unified enterprise. In exploring solutions, it is notable that the National Science Foundation (NSF) supports collaborative projects in which each PI gets their own budget for their work on the project, thus minimizing bureaucracy.

Preliminary observation #10: A lack of information about the distribution of expertise at institutions across the land-grant system or of other available assets may hinder the ability to identify suitable partners for collaboration. Collaboration organizers may not be aware of the potential for external public or private partners with assets (data platforms, technologies, funds, networks, etc.) to participate and support land-grant collaborations. Collaboration could be encouraged by using NIFA to convene a workshop or series of workshops highlighting individual investigator projects across the agency that are doing work in the same or similar areas.

Preliminary Observation #11: The time available for planning collaborations properly is sometimes inadequate. Planning is the methodical process for envisaging collaborative activities and taking steps to provide what is required for their successful implementation. Opportunities to obtain planning grants could be expanded with criteria to achieve multiple goals. For example, NIFA could fund preliminary studies or preproposals that require three institutional types (e.g., large 1862, small 1862, 1890, minority serving institutions, 1994s, etc.). An evaluation criterion for competitively awarded funding that gives inter-institutional collaboration sufficient weight by funders could make the effort more

worthwhile to would-be grantees. The challenge to applicants would be to include a diversity of disciplines, people, perspectives, and backgrounds. An open question is whether such planning awards should be focused on topics or projects of a specific scope.

Preliminary observation #12: Leading collaborations requires team building, emotional intelligence, and project-management capabilities, for which many faculty are unprepared and untrained while administrative supports may not be available to assist. Institutions might proactively identify faculty leaders and prepare them to lead collaborations. Returning indirect costs to cover additional administrative support might assist new leaders and improve the success of multi-institutional collaborations.

Preliminary observation #13: Institutions have different administrative procedures and policies for proposals, agreements, intellectual property, reporting, and mechanisms for handling funds that may create time lags, paperwork burdens, and opportunity costs that discourage collaboration. Institutional leaders can reduce the activation energy needed for inter-institutional collaboration by addressing these issues. One way to achieve this might be through the development of broad agreements between institutions that describe a common vision of needs, aspirations, perceived benefits of collaboration, and mechanisms to support participation. Establishing such agreements would require negotiation and a commitment of time, but the results could produce trust, awareness, and insight into the partner institutions' culture, norms, breadth of expertise, and administrative practices. Such agreements send a signal to faculty that there is buy-in from leadership to support collaboration.

Section 4: Amplifying and Communicating the Impacts and Outcomes of Collaboration

Impact is the powerful effect that an activity or project, especially something new, can have on a situation, person, or policy. Amplifying impact means to intensify or expand that effect. The panel observed the potential for amplifying outcomes on several levels.

Preliminary observation #14: The size and complexity of a collaboration should be expected to change over time and take on new goals and partners. The goals of a project would dictate whether a national scale, multi-faceted, multi-sector effort must be built from the start of a collaboration, or whether a pilot phase or regional effort could be useful in providing proof of concept. Alternatively, a project may be organized with multiple phases and with different kinds of activities planned for early versus more mature stages of a partnership. It may be possible to broaden impact by building on top of an existing collaboration by, for example, using competitive extension funds to bring knowledge or practices identified in the first phase of a collaboration to a broader audience of users, or simply to support the dissemination of information in new formats and tools.

Preliminary observation #15: Some key issues and questions in agriculture may require large, multi-disciplinary collaborations and sustained research over time in multiple locations. NSF provides sustained long-term funding through its LTER and LTAR sites that supplements individual projects, and the National Institutes of Health supports Cancer Centers and numerous other multicomponent projects. The potential for this type of mechanism to create longer and more sustained success in agricultural research needs exploration. Funding from agencies like NSF, NIH, NASA, DOE, and EPA might be leveraged to broaden collaboration across the country.

Preliminary observation #16: Collaborations lead to a diversity of outcomes, including some for which impacts are not easily recognizable or require more time to achieve. Greater thought on how to measure and communicate the value of those outcomes would increase their visibility. Anticipating expected outcomes and how to communicate them, defining what success looks like, and creating metrics for impacts could increase the effectiveness of communication efforts. To strengthen the ability to capture and communicate impacts, NIFA might provide additional support for post-collaboration assessments.

Preliminary observation # 17: Stakeholders, including producers, policymakers, and the public, are more likely to recognize the impacts and benefits of collaborative activities among land-grant institutions if communication strategies are tailored to them. Documenting the economic, environmental, and societal impacts and benefits of collaboration could raise the profile of the land-grant system to stakeholders. Infographics and other visualization methods, such as graphs and graphics, and using different media types, formats, and information portals for disseminating information would make communication more effective.

NIFA has a communication unit that collects, writes and transmits to the public the impacts of work that it supports (<https://nifa.usda.gov/impacts>). The NIFA staff also provide workshops on recognizing and effectively communicating impacts. NIFA's "Share Your Science" campaign (<https://nifa.usda.gov/share-your-science>) is designed to highlight research outcomes and accomplishments on a national level. It is aimed at spotlighting the achievements being made by NIFA's partners in addressing societal challenges, such as increasing food security and decreasing hunger, and addressing climate change, food safety, childhood obesity, and sustainable energy. This effort is critically dependent on submissions from the LGU system and USDA communications staff, and could benefit greatly from ready access to institutional impact stories. Another successful model is the Multistate Research Fund Impact Project (<https://www.mrfimpacts.org/>) created in 2010 by the Experiment Station Section on Organization and Policy (ESCOP). It works with multistate committees to develop impact statements as their projects terminate. Project staff provide workshops on recognizing and communicating impacts for project participants, faculty, and staff. ESCOP maintains a social media presence and is also linked to the USDA Communications Office. A complete listing of impact statements is available on the project website.

For more information about this document, contact:

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**RESOLUTION HONORING
Wes Burger**

Whereas, Dr. Wes Burger, Dean of the College of Forest Resources and Director Forest and Wildlife Research Center, at Mississippi State University, will no longer participate directly in the activities of the Southern Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors; and

Whereas, Dr. Burger has, during his years of service, contributed significantly to the activities of the association by serving on the Southern Regional Aquaculture Center Board of Directors, serving on the ESCOP Diversity Catalyst Committee, and providing leadership as an administrative advisor to interregional projects; and

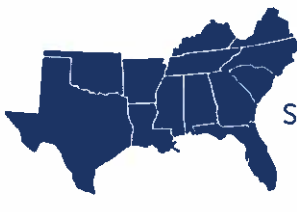
Whereas, Dr. Burger has served the Land-Grant mission of the State of Mississippi, the Southern Region, and the U.S. with dedication and vision toward maintaining competitive, safe, profitable, efficient and sustainable agriculture;

Now, Therefore Be It Resolved That the Southern Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors, assembled in College Station, Texas on May 16, 2022 expresses sincere appreciation to Dr. Wes Burger for his dedication and outstanding service to the Southern Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors and wishes him every success in his professional endeavors.

Be It Further Resolved that the Chairperson of the Southern Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors be authorized and directed to transmit to Dr. Burger an appropriate copy of this resolution in honor of his leadership and contributions.



Dr. Robert Gilbert, Chair



Southern Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors

**RESOLUTION of SORROW HONORING
Neville Clarke**

Whereas, Dr. Neville Clarke, former Director of the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station and most recently Special Assistant to the Vice Chancellor for Agriculture and Life Sciences, at Texas A&M, has died; and

Whereas, Dr. Clarke had, during his years of service, contributed significantly to the activities of the association by serving as its chair in 1981; and

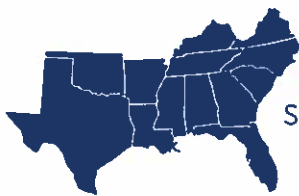
Whereas, Dr. Clarke had served the Land-Grant mission of the State of Texas, the Southern Region, and the U.S. with dedication and vision toward maintaining competitive, safe, profitable, efficient and sustainable agriculture;

Now, Therefore Be It Resolved That the Southern Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors, assembled in College Station, Texas on May 16, 2022 expresses sincere appreciation to Dr. Neville Clarke for his dedication and outstanding service to the Southern Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors and express condolences to his family

Be It Further Resolved that the Chairperson of the Southern Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors be authorized and directed to transmit to the family of Dr. Clarke an appropriate copy of this resolution in honor of his leadership and contributions.



Robert Gilbert, Chair



Southern Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors

A RESOLUTION

Celebrating the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Passage of the Rural Development Act of 1972 and Its Establishment of Research and Education Programs to Revitalize and Develop Rural America

WHEREAS the thirtieth of August, in the year two thousand twenty-two, marks the fiftieth anniversary of the passage of the *Rural Development Act of 1972* ("the Act") by the Congress of the United States (Public Law 92-419, published at 86 Stat. 657); and

WHEREAS title V of the Act, named *Rural Development and Small Farm Research and Education*, has as its purpose "to foster a balanced national development that provides opportunities for increased numbers of the people of the United States to work and enjoy a high quality of life dispersed throughout our Nation by providing the essential knowledge necessary for successful programs of rural development" (§501, now as amended at 7 U.S.C. 2661); and

WHEREAS the four Regional Rural Development Centers act as one-stop entities to connect the nationwide network of Land-Grant college and university researchers, educators, and practitioners, that they may provide science-based information and hands-on, community-level programming designed to help rural communities make science-based investments for economic development, and position the United States as a global economic leader; and

WHEREAS in this fiftieth year since the Act's passage the country's four Regional Rural Development Centers are: the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development, based at Purdue University and serving 12 states through 34 Land-Grant colleges and universities; the Southern Rural Development Center, based at Mississippi State University and serving 13 states, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands through 30 Land-Grant colleges and universities; the Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development, based at the Pennsylvania State University and serving 12 states and the District of Columbia through 16 Land-Grant colleges and universities; and, the Western Rural Development Center, based at Utah State University and serving 13 states, American Samoa, Guam, Micronesia, and the Northern Marianas through 30 Land-Grant college and universities; and

WHEREAS the four Regional Centers bring together the most innovative minds from inside and outside the Land-Grant University system to address cutting-edge issues, without regard to state boundaries, and contribute significantly to scientific knowledge related to rural development; and

WHEREAS collectively, the four centers have collaborated regionally and nationally to: conduct innovative research and develop programs which strengthen economic vitality; create resilient, healthy, and equitable communities; enhance quality of life; support the development of rural workforces and leaders; harness technological innovation; promote balanced use of natural resources; and advance e-connectivity for rural America; and

WHEREAS many localities, states, and regional bodies are celebrating this fiftieth anniversary of the *Rural Development Act of 1972* with resolutions and proclamations, and all the Regional Centers are commemorating the signing of this historic legislation, as it addresses the needs of rural communities;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that we, the Southern Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors, do recognize the significant contributions of the Regional Rural Development Centers over the past 50 years and look to them for leadership as they play a significant role in the continued vibrancy of rural America; and

RESOLVED, that the Southern Association of Agricultural Experiment Stations Directors encourages the people of the United States to observe and celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the passage of the *Rural Development Act of 1972*; and

RESOLVED, that the Southern Association of Agricultural Experiment Stations Directors calls for continued collaboration and cooperation among Federal, state, and local governments, institutions of higher education, and community organizations to ensure special effort is made to address the needs of rural communities; and

RESOLVED that the Southern Association of Agricultural Experiment Stations Directors celebrates the millions of youths, adults, families, farmers and ranchers, community leaders, and others who have benefited from the Extension, teaching and research programs provided by the Regional Rural Development Centers as national treasures and indispensable investments of which we as a Nation are proud.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I, Dr. Robert Gilbert, Chair of the Southern Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors, has hereunto set my hand and signed on this Second day of May in the year two thousand twenty-two.



Dr. Robert Gilbert, Chair



Southern Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors