

# SAAESD Spring Meeting 2023

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April 17 – 20, 2023

The Mill Conference Center (<https://themillatmsu.com/>)

Mississippi State University

## Agenda

### Monday, April 17

3:00 – 5:00	<b>MRC Meeting</b> – MRC Members Only – <i>Sanders Boardroom</i>
5:00 – 6:30	<b>Registration</b> – <i>Main hallway of the Mill outside The Gallery</i>
6:30 – 8:30	<b>Welcome from Mississippi State University CALS and MAFES and reception</b> – <i>Shorty's</i>

### Tuesday, April 18

6:30 – 8:00	<b>Breakfast</b> – <i>The Gallery</i>	
8:00 – 5:00	<b>SAAESD Spring Business Meeting</b> – <i>The Gallery</i>	
8:00 - 8:15	1	<b>Welcome and Introductions</b> – Paula Agudelo <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review/Approve Agenda</li><li>• Review/Approve minutes from September 27, 2022</li><li>• Approve Interim Actions</li></ul>
8:15 – 9:00	2	<b>Multistate Research Committee Report</b> –Nathan McKinney <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• MRC updates</li><li>• 2023 ESS Award Nomination for Excellence in Multistate Research – Nathan McKinney</li><li>• NRSP8 &amp; NRSP11 discussion – Steve Lommel</li><li>• S9 budget presentation and vote – Bob Stougaard</li></ul>
9:00 – 10:30	3	<b>Liaison Updates</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• NIFA Report – Kevin Kephart</li><li>• ARD Report – Gregory Goins</li><li>• ASRED Report – Mike Phillips</li><li>• SRDC Report – John Green</li></ul> <b>ESCOP Committee Reports:</b> (written reports) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Budget &amp; Legislative Committee Report – Steve Lommel</li><li>• Communication &amp; Marketing Committee Report – JF Meullenet</li><li>• Science &amp; Technology Committee Report – Nathan McKinney</li><li>• Diversity Catalyst Committee Report – Jamie Larson</li></ul>

10:30 – 11:00	<b>Break</b>	
11:00 – 11:30	4	<b>Strategic Roadmap Implementation Update</b> – Implementation Working Group
11:30 – 12:00	5	<b>Cotton Winter Nursery and CottenGen Report and Discussion</b> – Don Jones
12:00 – 1:00	<b>Lunch</b> – <i>Buffet outside of The Gallery</i>	
1:00 – 2:00	<b>Keynote Address – The Gallery</b> <b><i>Harnessing Interdisciplinary Science to Tackle Grand Challenges in Agriculture</i></b> <b>Dr. Adrian Percy</b> , North Carolina Plant Sciences Initiative	
2:00 – 2:30	6	<b>Executive Directors Report</b> – Gary Thompson
2:30 - 3:00	7	<b>SAAESD Budget Presentation</b> – JF Meullenet <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cotton Assessment Discussion</li> </ul>
3:00 – 3:30	<b>Break</b>	
3:30 – 4:00	8	<b>Director Topics and Discussion</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research External Funding and Intellectual Property – Michael Salassi</li> <li>• New or Changing DEI Policies – Steve Lommel</li> <li>• Grant Support Specialists – Nathan McKinney</li> </ul>
4:00 – 4:15	9	<b>Nominating Committee</b> – Hongwei Xin <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experiment Station Section Chair-elect – call for nominations and approval.</li> </ul> <b>Resolutions</b> – Lesley Oliver <b>SAAESD Excellence in Leadership Award Presentation</b> – Paula Agudelo <b>Susan E. Duncan Meritorious Service Award</b> – Saied Mostaghimi
4:15 – 4:45	<b>Executive Session- ALL COOs</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FY 22 SAAESD Budget Discussion and Vote</li> <li>• Executive Director Performance Review</li> </ul>	
4:45 – 5:00	<b>Executive Session Debrief</b> – Paula Agudelo	
5:00	<b>Adjourn Business Meeting</b> – Paula Agudelo	
6:00	<b>MSU vs Southern University Baseball Game</b> <i>Meet in the Courtyard or Comfort Suites lobby, bus will pick up and return to both locations. Attendees may sit inside or outside</i>	

## Wednesday, April 19

6:30 – 8:00	<b>Breakfast</b> – <i>The Gallery</i>
8:00 – 10:00	<b>Communications Workshop</b> – <i>The Gallery</i> <b>Session 1: Seeking Success with Stakeholders</b> Lyndall Stout (Moderator), Oklahoma State University Dennis Reginelli, Mississippi Soybean Promotion Board Marty Fuller, Cornerstone Government Affairs Jon Kalahar, Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation  <b>Session 2: Communications and Media Training: Am I prepared to meet the press?</b> Sidney “Sid” Salter, Director of Public Affairs at Mississippi State University
10:00 – 10:30	<b>Break</b>
10:30 – 12:00	<b>Growing Controlled Environment Agriculture Enterprises in Your State</b> – <i>The Gallery</i> Kaylee South, Virginia Tech Michael Evans, Virginia Tech Amit Dhingra, Texas A&M University
12:00 – 1:15	<b>Lunch</b> – <i>The Gallery</i> <b>Luncheon Speaker</b> <b>Update from the USDA-NIFA Southern Regional Aquaculture Center</b> Jimmy Avery, Southern Regional Aquaculture Center
1:15 – 2:00	<b>SRDC Workshop</b> – <i>The Gallery</i> <b>Advancing Knowledge about Climate Resilience and Population Change: Roles for Social Scientists in Experiment Station Research</b> John Green, SRDC Gary Thompson, SAAESD
2:00 - 6:00	<b>Tours</b> – <i>Bus will depart from the front, east entrance of The Mill</i>
6:30 – 9:00	<b>Reception and Conference Dinner</b> – <i>Hunter Henry Center on the MSU Campus</i> <i>Bus will bring attendees and return to hotels</i>



**Courtyard Marriott Starkville at  
The Mill Conference Center**  
100 Mercantile St.  
Starkville, MS 39759



# SAAESD Fall 2022 Business Meeting notes

Baltimore Marriott Waterfront hotel September 28<sup>th</sup>, 2022

Attendees: Paula Agudelo, Rob Gilbert, Hongwei Xin, Scott Senseman, Mike Salassi, David Monks, Henry Fadamiro, Nathan McKinney, Saied Mostaghimi, Susan Duncan, Corey Gallow, Usman Adamu, Brent Elrod (NIFA), Kal Kalavachala (NIFA), Kevin Kephart (NIFA)

## Action Items:

1	<p>Agenda- <b>Approved by acclamation</b></p> <p>Meeting Minutes from Mini Land Grant – <b>Approved by acclamation</b></p> <p>Interim Actions – <b>Approved by acclamation</b></p>
2	<p>Michael Salassi is <b>appointed to the MRC and SERA Review Committee</b> replacing David White.</p>
3	<p><b>ARD-SAAESD Initiative</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SAAESD and ARD EDs will work together to <b>organize a joint “fly-in” meeting.</b></li> <li>• SAAESD and ARD <b>chair-elects will serve as liaisons</b> to the respective associations</li> </ul>
5	<p><b>Southern Research Communicators Consortium (SRCC) Discussion</b> – Representatives from the communicators and the directors will meet for a more in-depth discussion toward developing a coherent communications strategy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Scheduled for November 1, 2022.</b></li> <li>• <b>COOs will be invited to meet with the SRCC Steering Committee members.</b></li> </ul>
6	<p><b>Cotton Assessment Discussion</b> – Gary presented the Cotton Assessment Report as requested during the Executive Session at the Spring 2022 meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>We will be discussing further at the Spring 2023 meeting during the budget session.</b></li> <li>• <b>Homework- (everyone): ask “what is the value and what does the CWN and CottonGen bring to our individual stations.”</b></li> <li>• <b>Gary will have a conversation with Don Jones to assess impacts on the two respective cotton assessments.</b></li> <li>• <b>Gary will put together several budget models to discuss at the Spring 2023 meeting.</b></li> </ul>
12	<p><b>Nominating Committee Report</b> – Paula Agudelo</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2024 ESS Chair will be from the Southern Region             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin thinking about who would like to serve. <b>Need to identify nominees for Chair-elect no later than our Spring 2023 meeting.</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>• SAAESD Chair-elect - Call for nominations and election             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Nomination of Henry Fadamiro was confirmed with a unanimous vote.</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## Agenda and Discussion

1	<p><b>Welcome and Introductions</b> – Paula Agudelo (Rob Gilbert was unable to attend the business meeting due to Hurricane Ian making landfall in Florida)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reviewed and approved the agenda</li><li>• Reviewed and approved the minutes from 2022 Southern Mini Land-Grant Meeting</li><li>• Approved Interim Actions</li><li>• Discussed the schedule for future SAAESD meetings and host institutions.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Need to consider nominations for the ESS/ESCOPE Chair for 2024. Nominations for the chair-elect need to be completed by the 2023 Spring SAAESD meeting.</li><li>• The ESS/ESCOPE chair-elect will be announced at the 2023 ESS meeting in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and the Southern region will host the 2024 ESS meeting.</li><li>• 2023 Spring SAAESD meeting will be hosted by Mississippi State University and convened in Starkville, MS. Possible dates for Spring 2023 meeting in March or April were discussed. The week of April 17-20, 2022, was subsequently selected.</li></ul></li></ul>
2	<p><b>Multistate Research Committee Report</b> – Nathan McKinney and David Monks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Project Approvals, Renewals, and 3<sup>rd</sup> Year Reviews- See Agenda Briefs<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All projects are on schedule to be renewed this cycle except for SDC102.</li><li>• Four new proposals were submitted this cycle.</li><li>• AAs are encouraged to reach out to the project members to complete the Appendix E to formally join the project.</li><li>• We have 14 projects renewing this next cycle, so early submissions will be crucial.</li><li>• Several projects are scheduled for mid-term reviews in the upcoming year.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• MRC wants to see MEASURABLE progress towards at least one of the objectives during the mid-term reviews.</li></ul></li></ul></li><li>• SERA Review Committee Report- See Agenda Briefs</li><li>• ESCOP Crosswalk Analysis and SAAESD Multistate Portfolio Analysis- See Agenda Briefs<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The ESS Science &amp; Technology Committee developed the crosswalk document to evaluate the national multistate portfolio against NIFA and ESS priorities.</li><li>• SAAESD Multistate Portfolio Analysis – Reviewed the quantitative distribution of projects across our multistate portfolio in terms of new vs total projects in different multistate categories over the past 5 years. The distribution of different types of projects (S-, SERA, SCC, SDC) appears to align with other regions. Also reviewed the distribution of MS projects relative to Hatch multistate funding received by members across the regions. The Southern region receives the highest level of funding and was third in the overall number of projects among the regional associations.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• This information does not reflect the number of faculty who are participating in projects across the regions.</li><li>• General discussion around the benefit of having more multistate projects originating from the Southern region? While national level participation is encouraged, regional projects typically have primary focus on regional issues.</li><li>• Encourage faculty to initiate projects as appropriate and participate where their best interests are served.</li><li>• MRC can continue to review the portfolio to identify gaps where new projects can be initiated.</li></ul></li></ul></li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open Assignments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Michael Salassi (LSU) is appointed to the MRC and SERA Review Committee.</li> <li>• Southern IPM Center Representative- Gary will reach out to identify an SAAESD representative to the Southern IPM Center Steering Committee.</li> <li>• S1076- Gary will reach out to the directors to identify an AA</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Cindy will be conducting a zoom Q&amp;A session on October 4, 2022, for project AAs and NIMSS editors outlining NIMSS processes involved in multistate projects. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kevin Kephart would like to invite the NPLs.</li> <li>• Cindy will send a reminder to the entire listserv.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;">3</p>	<p><b>Strategic Roadmap Implementation Updates</b> – Gary Thompson- See slides regarding details of the Annual Action Plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• S1090 <i>AI in Agroecosystems: Big Data and Smart Technology-Driven Sustainable Production</i> is a model for Collaborative Discovery initiatives. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First annual meeting held on August 4-5, 2022, hosted by UF/IFAS in Gainesville</li> <li>• Next annual meeting at LSU on May 25-26, 2023 (<i>Thanos Gentimis (LSU), chair</i>)</li> <li>• 2<sup>nd</sup> SE AI Conference is being planned for March 2023 hosted by UF/IFAS</li> <li>• Developing a publishable white paper “<i>Southern Regional AI Needs and Applications</i>” as a justification for the NSF Regional Innovations Engines Program (NSF Engines)</li> <li>• ALLIANCE (Artificial intelligence for southern agriculture) is seeking resources to conduct coordinated data collection (preliminary data)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• ARD-SAAESD Initiative is an ongoing activity in Strategic Alliances with the goal of creating stronger partnerships. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It was proposed that the chairs-elect from each association serve as liaison to our respective organizations.</li> <li>• It was proposed that initial meetings between the two associations be organized as 2-day “fly-in” meetings at a hub airport hotel.</li> <li>• Action item for the respective EDs to begin developing the meeting.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• AG-NGINE proposal was an outcome of the Strategic Alliance meeting with the S-APS held during the Southern Mini Land-Grant Meeting. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A proposal to establish AG_NGINE as a national initiative was discussed and approved during the ESS Business Meeting. Funding was included in the ESS budget proposal to be voted upon 30 days after the meeting.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Honorifics Module 1 (agenda brief) is the first E-notebook module from the Enhancing Reputation focus area.</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;">4</p>	<p><b>New Research Initiatives Discussion</b> – Scott Senseman</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion centered around identifying topics that could be developed as collaborative regional research initiatives. We can develop topics as workshops during the SAAESD Spring meeting. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Climate smart agriculture/carbon sequestration</li> <li>• Science communication</li> <li>• Food production and nutrition</li> <li>• LSU has been asked to identify 3-5 focus areas where they could go after funding: soil and water management, crop breeding and plant health, invasive species, precision ag, biofuels and bio processing.</li> <li>• <b>Invasive species is a big topic in the Southern region. Related to climate issues.</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>

- Feral Hogs
- Coastal ports bring a lot of invasive species
- Virgin Islands- Soil and Water are topics. Invasive species and Precision Ag are all important.
- **Nutrition-based plant breeding-** breeding for nutritional quality
  - Related to human health (NIH funding opportunities)
  - LSU rice breeder developed a low glycemic rice. Received a lot of attention so now their rice board is interested.
  - VT- south has an opportunity to fill a gap
- Fisheries, seafood, and aquaculture is capturing a lot of attention. 93% of all seafood we consume is imported from China and SE Asia. This also touches on invasive species and nutrition and health.
- **Controlled Environment Agriculture (CEA)-** This area is booming. Many companies are moving into Virginia and Tennessee. Google and Amazon are engaging in this. Aligned with urban agriculture and vertical agriculture. Areas to explore within this topic:
  - Local food, food security, climate change, precision ag
  - Pandemic disrupting supply chain has led to more interest/development from industry
  - Could lead to a multistate project
  - There have been a lot of hires in the last three years in this area
  - Workforce development as well. We are creating jobs that don't have the people to fill them.
  - Aquaponics fits with this topic
  - Engineering, breeding, limited number of crops appropriate, water resources issues, AI/precision technology, energy
  - ARS is investing millions in CEA. Their next handful of hires will be in this area. They have partnered with Amplified AG to buy containers and grow all sorts of vegetables and fruits.
  - It is scalable
  - Our Spring meeting will be in MS, and catfish is huge there
  - Industry is already ahead of us. Our contribution will be workforce development. Critical role will be getting the students prepared to take these jobs.
    - Virgin Islands is developing some certificates and associate degrees for work in aquaponics
  - Soil and lighting can change various components in the plants such as flavor and nutritional content
  - Look at this at a system level: economics/lighting/energy/cyber security. Not just horticulture being grown in a different way.
  - Transportation and distribution get into "carbon". What crops work best? We are a specialty crop region, so we have a lot of adaptability
  - Federal funding programs in this area? What about DoE, DoD, etc.
  - Walmart had interest in the past in developing a vegetable hub in the SE. The concept is still alive, and they are willing to invest in supply chain efforts. This time next year it may be possible to get someone from Walmart to discuss this but is a little premature now.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is currently going on right now at our institutions and in the industry?</li> <li>• Look at publicizing that through our communications efforts in advance of the meeting.</li> </ul>
5	<p><b>Southern Research Communicators Consortium (SRCC) Discussion</b> – Gary Thompson &amp; Cindy Morley- See letter from the communicators (agenda brief)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Representatives from the communicators would like to meet with the directors for an in-depth discussion toward developing a coherent communications strategy.</li> <li>• Eight questions outlined in the letter are intended to help focus the discussion.</li> <li>• Our goal today is to familiarize ourselves with the questions and discuss some ideas.</li> </ul> <p><b>Representatives from the communicators and the directors will meet for a more in-depth discussion November 1, 2022.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who is our audience? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Educated Legislators</b> is our primary audience! <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This means we need to simplify and focus our message.</li> <li>• Consider retraining our people to think in “Extension” terms regarding communicating research.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Audience also depends on the “issue”. Sometimes it is the legislators, <b>federal agencies, funders or private industry and advocacy organizations</b>. Private industry will look to the region to see if there is workforce support in the area.</li> <li>• Extension communicates down to the farmer level, but that isn’t what we need to do be doing.</li> <li>• We also have Internal audiences. Does our President/Provost etc. know what we do?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Communicators need to be convinced why they should work for the “region” instead of just their institutions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What makes our southern region unique? What commonalities are there where we can collectively do powerful things?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• What is the role of the regional communications group? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help us come up with some best practices</li> <li>• Show how to communicate to university administration.</li> <li>• Create templates for a concise messaging.</li> <li>• Communicate consistent message across the region.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• We don’t have a place for stories to live. Is it time to develop external website?</li> <li>• What is the potential impact for the communicators coming together?</li> <li>• Role as a state liaison to the regional level.</li> <li>• Could use Multistate projects as topics to develop collaborative stories.</li> <li>• What resources are available to move the SRCC forward? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If we are asking our communicators to just promote the stories they are already doing (minor tweaks to show regional focus) that is one thing. If we are asking them to develop entirely new content JUST for the regional effort it is another.</li> <li>• Could fund travel so they could meet or fund the development of projects (software needs etc.) and allow them time to do these things.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

- Directors are supportive of giving the communicators resources, but **Communicators need to tell what the needs are...**
  - The Directors would like some idea of the financial needs and time commitments along with expected deliverables.
  - If we are going to invest additional resources, it needs to show value. We often put a lot of effort into things that we don't get much out of.
- Some communicators are more engaged in the regional effort than others. To engage others, ask each communicator to lead one story each year (collaborative story). This will help spread the focus around and give each institution a chance to shine.
- Recommends as many Directors as possible to attend the communication meeting.
  - Should there be a couple who act as the lead spokesman and the others attend?

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- Cotton Assessment Discussion** – Gary Thompson (see PowerPoint slides and agenda brief)
- Gary presented the Cotton Assessment Report as requested during the Executive Session at the Spring 2022 meeting.
    - The report contained the history of the assessments for the CWN and CottonGen, emails from CWN users, examples of other public winter nurseries, and update slides for CottonGen from Dorrie Main at WSU (a written report was requested but not delivered).
  - Henry Fadamiro (Texas A&M) had conversations with Soil and Crop Sciences faculty, and they value and use the resources.
  - Ryan Kurtz at Cotton Inc. stated in an email that funds from SAAESD are crucial to keeping the CWN running.
  - Cotton Inc is the individual checkoff. Why do we provide additional support?
  - The CWN is run very efficiently and is a bargain. It is a good structure.
  - Separate the two components (CWN & CottonGen) of the assessment when discussing continued funding (all agreed).
    - It's not an all-or-nothing... we can decide to decrease funding and not just do away with it.
  - The answer to why we are supporting cotton and no other commodities at this level needs to be more than "it is historical".
  - Extension uses these resources too.
  - **Further discussion will take place at the Spring 2023 meeting during the budget session.**
  - **Homework- (everyone): ask "what is the value and what does the CWN and CottonGen bring to our individual stations."**
  - **Gary will have a conversation with Don Jones to assess impacts on the two respective cotton assessments.**
  - **Gary will put together several budget models to discuss at the Spring 2023 meeting**
    - If funding is used for different purpose, need to remove the "levels" and equalize assessment across our institutions.

	<p><b>Weather Data Systems – Nathan McKinney</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Weather Data collection archival and accessibility-</b> Arkansas has 12 places that collect weather data, and each has slightly different hardware. Some stations post data online. All weather data is funded out of local M&amp;O. This model is not working for Arkansas. What are better practices? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OSU Mesonet (mesonet.org) is exceptional and the detail is phenomenal. Started as a marriage between OSU and OU with support from the governor. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Widely used by faculty.</li> <li>▪ There is a fire-hazard component that is updated hourly.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• NCSU the state climate office located on campus in the College of Science. They have a site on every research station. Data is collected automatically. Faculty use it all the time. Funding is supported by ag, extension and others.</li> <li>• Virginia Tech pays a fee to access other weather stations. Stakeholders want to know this data. There is an app for each experiment station and stakeholders can access each of those apps. Cost is ~\$100K per year.</li> <li>• UT is in the process looking at weather station upgrade. SDS Weather is company that they are going with. Hardware and software. Central administration will cover the software. Each station will cover the hardware.</li> <li>• Extension in Clemson requested funds from the state for at least one station in every county and to hire one person to manage the data. Addition stations at the RECs. Funded by the state, initiated by Extension.</li> <li>• LSU the state climate office is on campus but not in the college of Ag. Weather stations at most of the experiment stations. Looking at the mesonet system.</li> <li>• What is the gold standard? Recommended to look at compatibility that exists in your state. Use compatible databases within the state. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Campbell and Hobo. Campbell is more expensive but a little better quality and not as user friendly.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>
8	<p><b>S-AHS Data Sharing – Hongwei Xin</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data Sharing Committee will meet again on October 5<sup>th</sup>. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initial discussion from SAAESD members was supportive. Key will be data definitions to obtain meaningful information. Add the following in addition to expenditure data previously included in the document: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research faculty FTEs.</li> <li>• Number of peer-reviewed journal publications.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• Is this worth doing? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic group is not very supportive as they already have FAEIS.</li> <li>• Extension had mixed reviews.</li> <li>• AES: is this useful data TO YOU? Yes, it is useful.</li> <li>• Annual Salary Survey - use and expand upon.</li> <li>• Information on graduate students and postdocs might be useful. PhD students per faculty FTE for example.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define “faculty” as the ability to be a PI on a proposal?</li> <li>• 3-4 bullets for definitions in addition to text.</li> </ul> <p>Send any thoughts to Hongwei by October 5<sup>th</sup>.</p>
11	<p><b>Resolutions</b> – Paula Agudelo</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allen Moore</li> <li>• David White</li> <li>• Saied Mostaghimi</li> <li>• Rob Gilbert, as outgoing SAAESD Chair</li> </ul>
12	<p><b>Nominating Committee Report</b> – Paula Agudelo</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2024 ESS Chair from the Southern Region <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin thinking about who would like to serve. Need to identify someone by the Spring meeting.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• SAAESD Chair-elect - Call for nominations and election <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Nomination of Henry Fadamiro (Texas A&amp;M) with unanimous vote.</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
13	<p><b>Passing of the Gavel</b> – Paula Agudelo, SAAESD Chair 2022-2023</p>
	<p><b>Adjourned the meeting</b></p>

## Interim Actions

Spring 2023

- SAAESD created the **Susan Duncan Meritorious Service Award** to recognize contributions to our institutions in a role other than chief operating officer.
- Michael Toews was appointed as the SAAESD representative on the Southern IPM Steering Committee replacing Allen Moore.
- Damian Adams, Associate Dean for Research at University of Florida, appointed as AA for S1091.
- Paula Agudelo, Director of the Clemson AES, appointed as the AA for S1092
- Robert Gilbert, Director of Florida AES, appointed AA for S1094
- Cliff Lamb, Director of Texas Agrilife Research, appointed as AA for 1093
- Cliff Lamb, Director of Texas Agrilife Research appointed as AA for S1076
- Cliff Lamb, Director of Texas Agrilife Research appointed as AA for S1074
- Amy Grunden, Assistant Director of NCARS, appointed AA for S1073
- Mary Savin, Assistant Director of University of Arkansas AES, appointed AA of S1089
- Tim Rials, Associate Dean at University of Tennessee, appointed as AA for S1087
- Scott Senseman appointed to the ESCOP Budget and Legislative Committee
- Nathan Slaton appointed to the ESCOP Science and Tech Committee
- Michael Salassi, LSU, Appointed to the MRC and SERA Review Committee for a 4 year term
- Tim Rials reappointed to the MRC for 4 year terms
- SAAESD Signed onto the NCFAR letter asking Congress to come to an agreement on the FY23 Funding and to support USDA research programs in the final FY23 bill.
- SAAESD Signed onto the NCFAR and SoAR letter supporting \$8B in mandatory funding in the Farm Bill to spur scientific breakthroughs, keep pace with our global competitors, modernize facilities, and ensure nutrition security and a sustainable food system.

## 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

## Multistate Research Committee Report Spring 2023

Presenter: Nathan McKinney

The MRC is composed of Nathan McKinney (Chair, 2023), Tim Rials (2026), Cliff Lamb (2026) and two representatives of the SERA Review Committee, David Monks (2025), Michael Salassi (2026)

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 9/30/2023:

- 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

*S1078 has indicated they will not be renewing.*

*SCC84 will be changing to an S Project this next cycle and is currently named S\_temp 1096*

*Most other projects are on track to renew this cycle*

#### New Project Proposals in 2023:

- S\_Temp1095**- Science Communication in Agriculture: Human Science Research and Workforce Development
- SERA\_Temp49**- Heirs' Property: Impacts at Family, Community, and Regional Levels

#### 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

*Administrative Advisors for these projects and Administrative Advisors for the SAC(s) assigned to review them have been contacted and Appendix I/K forms initiated. MRC is meeting at Spring SAAESD meeting to review.*

#### Projects Terminating 9/30/2024:

**S1085-** Cover Crops for Sustainable Southern Agroecosystems- Rob Gilbert, FL

**S1086-** Enhancing sustainability of beef cattle production in Southern and Central US through genetic improvement- Jamie Matthews, KY

**SCC76-** Economics and Management of Risk in Agriculture and Natural Resources- Michael Salassi, LA

**SERA 41-** Improving Production Efficiency of the Beef Cow Herd in Southeastern- Cliff Lamb, TX

**SERA 43-** Southern Region Integrated Water Resources Coordinating Committee- Scott Senseman, OK

**SERA 45-** Crop diversification opportunities to enhance the viability of small farms- Lesley Oliver, KY

**SERA 46-** Framework for Nutrient Reduction Strategy Collaboration: The Role for Land Grant Universities- Nathan Slaton, AR

**SERA 48-** Turf- John Davis, FL

#### Projects up for Mid-term Review 2024 (those that end in 2026):

**S1069-** Research and Extension for Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) Applications in U.S. Agriculture and Natural Resources- Randy Raper, OK

**S1090-** AI in Agroecosystems: Big Data and Smart Technology-Driven Sustainable Production- Damien Adams, FL

**SERA 47-** Strengthening the Southern Region Extension and Research System to Support Local & Regional Foods Needs and Priorities- Scott Senseman, OK

#### For Discussion:

Rules of Operations change to allow Department Heads to be Administrative Advisors for “S” projects.  
National Multistate Project Guidelines updates.

#### Additional 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.



## Agenda Brief: NRSP RC Report – Steve Lommel

The National Research Support Project (NRSP) Review Committee (RC) is charged with establishing criteria for annual review of NRSPs and for review of proposals for revised or new NRSPs. The NRSP RC will be considering two proposals, NRSP8 and NRSP11, during an upcoming meeting on June 1, 2023, in Reno, NV. Regional input will assist in the Review Committee's deliberations of the merits of the proposals.

### Proposal to Renew NRSP8

NRSP\_temp8: National Animal Genome Research Program (homepage link: <https://www.nimss.org/projects/18969>). The original proposal was loaded in the online version of NIMSS. Supportive materials are located under attachments at <https://www.nimss.org/projects/attachment/18969>. The first three attachments were submitted when the original proposal was entered. These materials were left in NIMSS in case directors in your region would like to compare the original submission to the revised materials. The next four files were submitted after the proposal underwent peer review. The "Response to Review" document is very comprehensive and includes each reviewer's comment followed by the writing committee's response (reviews may also be viewed at [https://www.nimss.org/review/for\\_project/18969](https://www.nimss.org/review/for_project/18969)). ***The revised proposal and edited budget are the next two attachments (both should be considered in your regional evaluations).*** The writing team also received numerous letters of support that were attached as the last document. The joint summary review of the proposal that was conducted by the administrative advisors is available at [https://www.nimss.org/nrsp\\_review\\_new/28](https://www.nimss.org/nrsp_review_new/28).

### Proposal to Initiate NRSP11

NRSP\_TEMP\_11: Building Collaborative Research Networks to Advance the Science of Soil Fertility: Fertilizer Recommendation Support Tool (FRST) available at <https://www.nimss.org/projects/19002> was received last year and NRSP-RC considered the initial proposal as a request to draft an NRSP proposal. NRSP-RC provided input to the writing team, which was incorporated into the draft of the proposal that was considered by peers (first attachment at <https://www.nimss.org/projects/attachment/19002>). Peer reviews and the AAs' evaluation of the draft proposal are the first five entries at [https://www.nimss.org/review/for\\_project/19002](https://www.nimss.org/review/for_project/19002). The writing committee's responses to review comments are available at [https://www.nimss.org/technical\\_responses/20231](https://www.nimss.org/technical_responses/20231). The revised proposal was uploaded into NIMSS by the project editor and is also available as the second attachment at <https://www.nimss.org/projects/attachment/19002>. Again, ***the revised proposal should be considered in your regional evaluations.*** The draft that was reviewed by peers was left in the attachments in case anyone is interested in comparing the draft that peers reviewed and the version that the administrative advisors reviewed in the "Joint AA Review of Responses to Peer Reviewers" available at [https://www.nimss.org/nrsp\\_review\\_new/41](https://www.nimss.org/nrsp_review_new/41).

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**MULTI-STATE RESEARCH PROJECT S-009  
PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES CONSERVATION AND UTILIZATION  
BUDGET REQUEST BRIEF FOR FY2024**

**Updates on Accomplishments and Activities:**

- The Plant Genetic Resources Conservation Unit (PGRCU) collection conserves over 104,000 accessions of 1603 species and 281 genera with 88% available for distribution.
- In CY2022, 34,540 accessions (5,944 in the S-009 region) were distributed in 887 orders to requestors. Sorghum, cowpeas, peppers, and watermelon were the most requested crops. A total of 2,899 accessions were selected for regeneration, and 6,395 seed inventories were pulled for germination testing.
- The S-009 Regional Technical Advisory Committee was held on August 29, 2022, in Griffin, GA and was hosted by Soraya Bertioli, 2022 S-009 Chair and Representative from Georgia. There were 22 participants who attended in person and an additional 14 participants who joined virtually. The hybrid format was very successful and feedback during the meeting was favorable to continue this format for future meetings.
- A tornado hit Griffin, GA on January 12, 2023, causing damage to several facilities in the unit. Most of the damage sustained was in the USDA greenhouse and the pumphouse that supplies irrigation to field plots at the Westbrook Farm. Plans are underway to repair the damage as quickly as possible to prevent any reduction in field and greenhouse regenerations for the 2023 season.

**S-009 Support:** The S-009 Budget currently supports seven full-time technicians, partial salary for one permanent administrative associate position, and several 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 supports 16 full-time permanent positions which includes 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. In addition to unit base funds, the USDA, ARS, Southeast Area Office provided \$144,398 in FY2022 for a new refrigeration/dehumidification system in our large walk-in coldroom where germplasm is stored.

**S-009 Personnel:** In FY2023, compression salary increases were given to two S-009 employees totaling \$3,639. Based on the Governor of Georgia's budget proposal for FY2024, the University of Georgia salary increases will include a \$2,000 per employee raise which totals \$14,680 for the S-009 employees. Taking into consideration all salary increases, there will be a deficit of \$18,319 in the labor budget.

**S-009 Budget Request:** A proposed budget of \$591,218 is requested. This is an increase of \$18,319 to cover the labor budget deficit.

**Action Requested:** Approval of S-009 FY2024 Budget Request.

**PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES CONSERVATION AND UTILIZATION  
FUNDING REQUEST FOR FY2024  
TO THE SOUTHERN ASSOC. OF STATE AGRIC. EXPT STATION DIRECTORS**

<b>A. S-009 Budget</b>	<b>REQUESTED</b>		
	<b>FY2022</b>	<b>FY2023</b>	<b>FY2024</b>
Personnel	432,196	493,525	511,844
Travel	1,000	1,000	1,000
Operations	78,374	78,374	78,374
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$511,570</b>	<b>\$572,899</b>	<b>\$591,218</b>

**B. USDA/ARS Budget**

	<b>FY2022</b>	<b>FY2023*</b>	<b>FY2024**</b>
Personnel	\$1,681,352	\$1,782,500	\$1,864,495
Travel	5,605	25,000	25,000
Indirect Costs	584,614	469,637	505,977
Supplies	35,796	96,829	59,580
Equipment	76,599***	10,000	10,000
Facilities Support	95,000	95,000	95,000
<b>Total Base Funds</b>	<b>\$ 2,478,966</b>	<b>\$ 2,560,052</b>	<b>\$2,560,052</b>
Area Office/HQ Funds	<u>144,398****</u>	<u>TBD</u>	<u>TBD</u>
<b>TOTAL FUNDING</b>	<b>\$ 2,623,364</b>	<b>\$ 2,560,052</b>	<b>\$2,560,052</b>

\*Budget is based on additional base funding the unit anticipates receiving this fiscal year to cover 4.43% salary increase that became effective January 2023.

\*\*Personnel expense is based on proposed 4.6% salary increase for CY2024. The total base funds for FY2024 may be increased to cover the increase in salary.

\*\*\*Equipment purchased includes Diesel Forklift \$33,431; Greenhouse Benches \$11,021; RapidVap Vortex Dry Evaporator \$7,533; Quadiant AS-150 Envelope Printer \$5,638; IT Equipment \$18,589.

\*\*\*\* USDA, ARS, Southeast Area Office funding for new refrigeration/dehumidification system for walk-in coldroom.



Southern Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors (SAAESD)  
Liaison Update

*April 18, 2023*

**ARD Officers**

Dr. Louis D. Whitesides, Chair, Vice President & Executive Director 1890 Research and Extension, South Carolina State University

Dr. Mohamed Ahmedna, Chair-Elect, Dean and Director, College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences, North Carolina A&T State University

Dr. Jose Ulises Toledo, Associate Vice Chancellor for Research, Southern Agricultural Research and Extension Center, Treasurer, Southern University.

Dr. Chandra Reddy, Immediate Past Chair, Dean and Director of Research/Administrator of Extension, Tennessee State University

**1890s see budget increases**

In December 2022, the fiscal year (FY) 2023 “Omnibus Spending Bill” (\$1.7 trillion) was passed by the U. S. House and Senate and signed by President Joe Biden. This legislation will fund the federal government until September 30, 2023.

The omnibus appropriations bill provides \$1.701 billion for the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), an increase of \$64 million over FY2022. The bill includes \$1.094 billion for Research and Education Activities, \$565 million for Extension Activities, and \$41.5 million in Integrated Activities. The bill includes an increase for the Agricultural and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) of \$10 million (2.2 percent increase), funding the program at \$455 million. The explanatory statement encourages USDA to prioritize funding in AFRI for agro-acoustics, organic transitions, career and technical training opportunities for meat processing, and the Sustainable Agricultural Systems grants.

As depicted in the table below, the 1890 institutions were funded quite favorably as we strive for equity. From FY 2021, the Evans Allen Research Program received an increase of 21.9 % while 1890 Extension received an increase of 16.1%. The percent increases from FY 2022 to FY 2023 were, respectively, 11.3 and 10.8. From FY

2021, the Capacity Building program (Education Grants) received a 15.4% increase while the 1890 Facilities Program maintained stable funding. The percent increases from FY 2022 to FY 2023 were, respectively, 5.3 and 0. In addition, the 1890 Centers of Excellence and the 1890 Scholarship Program received stable funding (\$10 million). Overall, there was an overall \$17.5 million increase in funding for the 1890 land grant universities.

<b>1890 Research, Education and Extension Activities</b>	<b>FY 2021 Final</b>	<b>FY 2022 Final</b>	<b>FY 2023 Final</b>	<b>FY 2024 Requested</b>
(All \$ Millions)				
1890 Research	73.000	80.000	89.000	108.000
1890 Extension	62.000	65.000	72.000	88.000
1890 Education Grants	26.000	28.5000	30.000	30.000
1890 Facilities Improvement	21.500	21.500	21.500	100.000
1890 Centers of Excellence	10.000	10.000	10.000	10.000
1890 Scholarships	10.000	10.000	10.000	10.000

The 1890 community would like to thank our congressional champions, including but not limited to, Reps. David Scott (GA), Sanford Bishop (GA), Alma Adams (NC) and Senators Sherrod Brown (OH) and Raphael Warnock (GA) and others for supporting equitable funding for the 1890 land grant universities.

This bill also provides \$2 million to make competitive grants for agricultural research facilities in support of the Research Facilities Act. The explanatory statement further encourages NIFA to prioritize facilities that are located at or primarily benefit minority-serving institutions when making awards. In addition, the agreement urges NIFA to conduct outreach and grant writing technical assistance prior to issuing any funds for awards.

### **2023 Farm Bill Initial Priorities**

The 2023 Farm Bill initial priorities for the 1890 universities have been submitted to the Committee of Legislative and Policy (CLP) of the Board of Agriculture Assembly (BAA). The priorities submitted to date includes:

- Reauthorization of the Evans-Allen (Research and Education Programs) with the percentage share of Hatch funds be increased from 30% to 40%
- Tuition and fees will be an allowable expense for Evans-Allen
- Reauthorization of 1890 Extension Program with the percentage share of Smith Lever funds be increased from 20% to 40%
- Reauthorization of the 1890 Capacity Building Grants Program
- Reauthorization of the 1890 Facilities Improvement Program
- Reauthorization of the six existing Centers of Excellence and request support for four additional centers: (1) Climate Change/Climate Smart Agriculture; (2) Forestry Resiliency & Forestry Conservation; (3) Food Safety/Bioprocessing/Product Development and (4) Transdisciplinary Social Science Research (specific to the food and agriculture sector).
- Reauthorization of the Scholarships for Students at 1890 Institutions
- Request support for the 1890 Universities Foundation

## **NextGEN Program, “From Learning to Leading: Cultivating the Next Generation of Diverse Food and Agriculture Professionals”**

In August 2022, the NextGEN Program, “From Learning to Leading: Cultivating the Next Generation of Diverse Food and Agriculture Professionals” was announced by Secretary Vilsack.

Primarily, the funding opportunity is focused on supporting and preparing students for the expansive array of diverse careers in the food, agriculture, natural resources and human sciences across research, education and Extension, with an emphasis on federal government sector employment.

This is a tremendous funding opportunity (\$250,000,000) for the 1890s (research, Extension and teaching). Forty-six proposals were developed and submitted for funding. The review of these proposals by NIFA is almost complete and the award recipients should be notified sometime this month.

### **Leadership Development Programs**

ARD, AEA and the 1890 Council of Deans continue to participate in, and have representatives on the Board of Commissioners/Directors on the Food System Leadership Institute (FSLI) and Leadership for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (LEAD 21). Alton Thompson, ARD Executive Director, serves on both Boards.

FSLI offers executive leadership development to upper-level leaders in higher education, government, and industry to prepare them to meet the leadership challenges and opportunities of the future. The two-year FSLI experience includes three week-long residential sessions, personal leadership coaching, mentoring, a personal development plan, distance learning activities, and an individual leadership project. The FSLI is designed for experienced leaders. Fellows include leaders from various sectors, including education, industry, and government. Participant titles include program or division directors, provosts/vice presidents, experienced department heads/chairs, deans and associate deans, and others working in leadership of administrative capacities.

LEAD21 is intended to meet the future needs for leadership development of faculty, specialists, program and team leaders, research station and center directors, district and regional directors, department heads and chairs, and others in land grant universities’ colleges of agricultural, environmental, and human sciences and USDA/NIFA. The primary purpose of LEAD21 is to develop leaders in land grant institutions and their strategic partners who link research, academics, and extension in order to lead more effectively in an increasingly complex environment, either in their current position or as they aspire to other positions.

### **1890 Scholarship Program**

As championed by Representative David Scott of Georgia, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Scholarship for Students at 1890 Institutions (1890 Scholarships) Program was authorized by Section 7117 in the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018. Implementation of the 1890 Scholarships Program delegated to the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA). The program is to provide multiple scholarships for students at each of the 1890 Land-Grant Institutions and Tuskegee University. The program authorized \$40,000,000 in mandatory funds, with approximately \$10 million planned for FY 2020 and \$10 million available in subsequent years through 2023.

The overarching purpose of the 1890 Scholarships Program is to: (1) increase the number of students at 1890 Institutions who attain baccalaureate degrees in the food and agricultural sciences and related fields; and (2) support scholars' intent to pursue a career in the food and agricultural sciences and related fields in order to meet the technologically advanced needs of the 21st century food and agricultural systems workforce.

For FY 2020 – FY 2022, each 1890 received \$752,632.00 (\$500,000 in mandatory funds and \$252,632 in discretionary funds). Thus, the total amount of scholarship funds awarded to the 1890 system was 14,300,000 per year for the last three years.

Rep. House Agriculture Committee Ranking Member Congressman David Scott introduced H. R. 1436, a bill to make permanent and provide \$100 million additional dollars in funding for student scholarships at the 19 African American 1890 Land-Grant Colleges and Universities. AEA and ARD will be encouraging our members to seek co-sponsors for this bill.

### ***ARD Updates Newsletter***

The Association of 1890 Research Directors (ARD) continued publication of the monthly *ARD Updates* newsletter. The newsletter provides highlights, impacts and updates of research and academic programs, events, activities along with grant and employment opportunities across and/or, of importance to, the 19 universities in the 1890 land-grant system. The newsletter is distributed widely and has achieved significant national attention. Previous editions are posted on the ARD website at <https://wwwcp.umes.edu/ard/ard-updates/>

### **South Carolina State 1890 Research & Extension opens \$5.3M Coastal Region Research & Education Center in Charleston**

Located at 35 Lee St., the Coastal Region Research & Education Center boasts breathtaking views of the Cooper River and the iconic Arthur Ravenel Jr. Bridge. Federal funds, through the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), supported the construction of the \$5.3 million facility. The nearly 15,000-square-foot structure includes:

- A food demonstration lab.
- A computer lab.
- A classroom.
- A flexible multipurpose room.
- A leadership-training boardroom.
- Offices with a featured collaborative workspace.

Dr. Louis D. Whitesides, vice president and executive director for SC State 1890 Research & Extension, said the facility would not have come to fruition without cooperation between SC State and the City of Charleston to ensure that the region's people have a place to take advantage of lifelong learning opportunities.



## **New Appointments**

**Dr. KEITH M. HOWARD**, Dean & Research Director, College of Agriculture, Family Sciences, and Technology, Fort Valley State University, effective **January 9, 2023**.

**DR. DOUGLAS LAVERGNE**, Dean & Research Director, College of Agriculture, Environmental and Human Sciences, Lincoln University.

Submitted by Mohamed Ahmedna, ARD Chair-Elect and Greg Goins, Associate Dean for Research, North Carolina A&T State University

**Notes for ASRED Update  
March 2023**

1. The search committee for national Executive Director for ECOP and Cooperative Extension has identified two finalists. Interviews have been held and seminars are planned. We hope to have a person employed soon. In the meantime, Ms. Sandy Ruble and the EDA team are taking on the must-do items on behalf of ECOP.
2. In September, 2022, Dr. Steve Martin assumed the role of Interim Director of Extension in Mississippi as Dr. Gary Jackson moved to the role of Associate Vice President for Outreach and Engagement.
3. Earlier this month, Dr. Rich Bonanno, North Carolina State University, accepted an additional role at NCSU as Vice Provost for Outreach and Engagement.
4. On January 1, 2023 Dr. Tara Smith became the Interim Director of Extension in Louisiana, replacing Dr. Gina Eubanks following her move to a different role.
5. The following elections were held to fill Dr. Eubanks' assignments on behalf of ASRED:
  - a. ECOP Budget and Legislative Committee – three-year term ends Nov 2026 – Dr. Rich Bonanno, NCSU.
  - b. Administrative Advisor, Communications PLC – four-year term ends Nov 2027 – Dr. Mike Gutter, Virginia Tech.
6. Due to Dr. Angie Freel's move from her position in Arkansas and upon the advice of the SR 4-H Program Leaders, ASRED has selected Dr. Jeremy Johnson of Virginia to serve as our region's Program Leader representative to the ECOP National 4-H Leadership Committee.
7. Dr. Chris Geith (now Nygren) retired from her role as CEO of the Extension Foundation Friday, January 13, 2023. Dr. Beverly Coberly will serve in the position on an interim basis.
8. ECOP is beginning a revision of its Strategic Directions document with a new 3-year plan covering 2024-2026. Input from regions will be solicited during spring 2023 and a draft document will be reviewed by ECOP in July at the Joint COPs meeting. Directors and Administrators will act on it during the 2023 NEDA meeting, and it will guide the annual Plan of Work for Dr. Damona Doye, Oklahoma State University, the incoming Chair of ECOP for 2024.
9. The chairs of ECOP and ESCOP collaborated in visits to agencies in DC, scheduled around the annual CARET meeting in March.
10. The ECOP Program Committee is engaged in work around the Program Action Teams (PATs), including evaluation of PATs, how to form new PATs and how to sunset PATs.
11. As of March 23, 2023, NIFA has not named a permanent director. Dr. Drenda Williams is now the Acting Associate Director for Programs and the Associate Director for Operations.
12. NIFA will be holding applicant webinars related to recently released RFAs.
13. The Workforce Development PAT and Extension Foundation now have 109 workforce related programs entered in the National Registry of Cooperative Extension Programs and Assets (<https://extension.org/tools/registry/>). There are now registries for Urban; Climate; FCS; Tourism, Recreation and Hospitality; 4-H, Workforce Development, Ag and Natural Resources, Community Development, Immunization Education Programs, EXCITE A1 and EXCITE A2.
14. Reporting of expense data by Extension according to "program" has been raised as an issue since a clear definition of what constitutes a program for NIFA's use has not been determined. This is especially challenging in the case of county staff who may devote varying amounts of their time over the year to a number of programs, depending on how programs are defined. Following this year, the guidance from NIFA will be revised.
15. The National Extension Director and Administrator (NEDA) meeting for 2023 is scheduled for October 9-12 in Tucson, AZ.

16. As of March, registration is open for the National Health Outreach Conference, scheduled for May 22-24 and hosted by Cornell University.
17. Since form ES237 has been sunsetted, there will be an interim data collection process for 2022-2023 for collecting data about 4-H participation. It is hoped that NIFA will fund development of a new data collection instrument for use in 2024.
18. The National Impacts Database (NIDB) Writing Team has completed forty summary impact statements. They are accessible on the NIDB website ([landgrantimpacts.org](http://landgrantimpacts.org)) by selecting the Emphasis Areas tab.
19. The Ag is America site (<https://agisamerica.org/>) is being revised by the Committee on Marketing and Communications.
20. The National Extension Diversity and Excellence in Extension Awards application/nomination opportunities for 2023 have been announced with a May 1 deadline for nominations. The Southern Region has won the individual EiE award 8 of the last 11 years and hope to continue to showcase some of the high quality personnel and programs at our institutions and agencies.
21. On April 11-14, ASRED held its spring meeting in Georgia as a face-to-face meeting that was originally planned for 2020.

## SRDC Plan of Work 2023



### Broad reaching structural efforts:

- Initiate 1890 Fellow
- Explore cross-program reporting opportunities (i.e., health)
- Develop a publication plan for the differing program areas
- Design a method to connect research to Extension more completely (Identifying researchers; communication between Extension & research; etc.)

### Developing Pathways to Resilient Communities

- **Local & Regional Food Systems, SERA-47** – Facilitate work on the new 5-year plan
  - Support annual meeting
  - Monitor future opportunities for related issues
- **Heirs' Property**
  - Support regional Extension and research working groups toward SERA development
  - Coordinate AFRI project - *The Racial Wealth Gap, Persistent Poverty, and Heirs' Property: Analysis, Connections, Solutions*
  - Special issue of the *Journal of Rural Social Sciences*
  - Host up to three train-the-trainer workshops in cooperation with the Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers Policy Center (six workshops over a 2-year period)
- **Digital Access and Literacy (Broadband)**
  - Facilitate work of the National Digital Education Extension Team (NDEET) alongside the Extension Committee on Organization and Policy (ECOP) Program Action Team (curriculum development, metrics identification, research)
  - Collaborate with 1890 system to build capacity to aid underserved communities in digital access with recently funded AFRI grant
  - *Issue Briefs* series
- **Coming Together for Racial Understanding**
  - Support the 32 states that have trained Coming Together state teams
  - Build capacity for dialogues through additional training
  - Evaluate impacts and lessons learned – research briefs
  - Engage with NIFA on co-learning
  - Strengthen DEI efforts in the South LGU System – Synthesis of the Oct. 25-26, 2022 convening
  - Issue briefs (4)
- **Support the ECOP DEI Program Action Team**
- **Supporting Healthy Communities Across the Life Course (Interdisciplinary Network on Rural Population Health and Aging)**
  - Mentorship to pilot grantees and early career scholars
  - Pursue collaborative publication options
  - Proposal writing workshop for research collaboration
  - Work with the Rural Population Research Network (W4001/5001) multi-state group to organize a policy symposium

## Building Strategic Partners

- **CREATE BRIDGES** - Continue efforts with the six pilot states to explore ways to strengthen the retail economic sector in rural places. Issue briefs to be developed.
- **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 released in August
- Involvement with the **Delta Scholars/Delta Directions** leadership initiative for undergraduates (summer program held in June in the Delta, follow-up Boston in Nov.)
- **Lead and Drinking Water Initiative** with National Sea Grant Law Center and Univ. of MS School of Pharmacy in collaboration with Delta Scholars/Delta Directions partners (also connects with previous SRDC program of work item)

## Mobilizing Resources around Emerging Issues and Opportunities

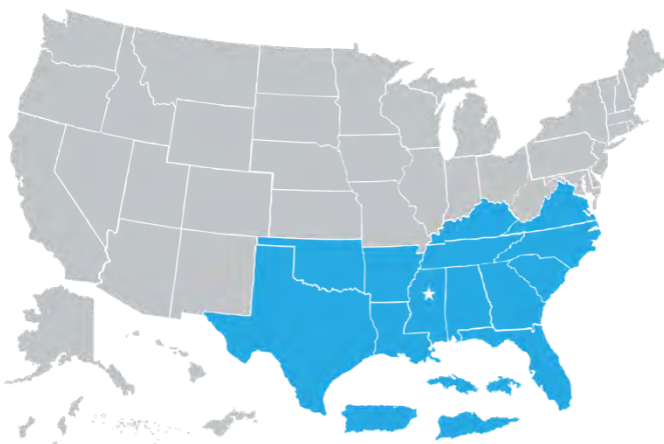
- **Grant Writing Skills:** Expansion of curricula to include writing teams and LGU-community partner-student teams with support from Extension Foundation/USDA-NIFA New Technology for Ag Extension (NTAE) program
- **Recreation Economy:**
  - National Extension Tourism – identify Southern members
  - Expand understanding of the national partnership efforts (Sarah Rocker – USDA NIFA, Rural Development, Forest Service)
  - View through a lens of cultural tourism in addition to natural resources
- **Economic Climate Resilience**
  - National Extension Climate Initiative – identify Southern members
  - Expand understanding of the national partnership efforts
  - Identify southern centric indicators of vulnerability – explore opportunities to update/revisit
  - Ensure the community development perspective is considered

SRDC Website: <http://srdc.msstate.edu/>

Dr. John Green, Director, [john.green@msstate.edu](mailto:john.green@msstate.edu)



*Investing in Rural Capacity:*  
Key Findings from the  
Southern Region



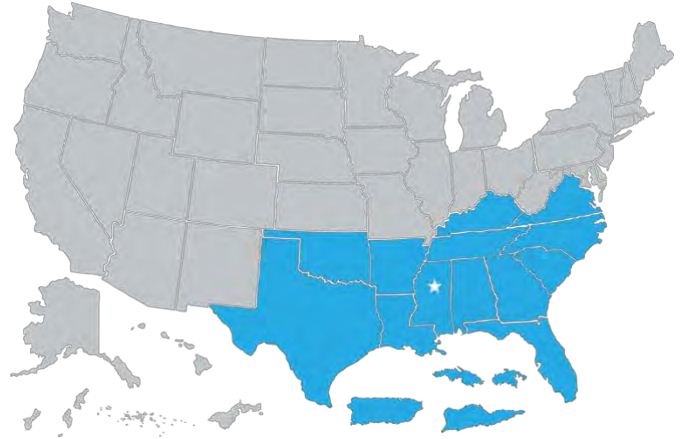
A Comprehensive  
Summary of Findings  
from the National  
Rural Development  
Stakeholder Listening  
Sessions

February 2023

# SOUTHERN REGION

## Introduction

The overarching purpose of this initiative was to identify the critical investments needed for building capacity and improving quality of life in rural America. This was done using a stakeholder survey combined with a series of virtual listening sessions. This report is focused on findings from the region served by the Southern Rural Development Center.



## Southern Regional Listening Session at a Glance

- Held virtually on April 20, 2022
- Hosted by Southern Rural Development Center
- Number of registrants 81
- Number of participants: 42

## Summary Findings

### Priority Rankings

Survey respondents were asked to rank in order what they view as the most critical rural development issues for further investment. There were eight options provided to all respondents, and the top four are shown in the figure, with comparisons between the regions that the respondents' organizations primarily served (explore the findings more closely via the interactive data dashboard: <https://bit.ly/RuralRecoveryDashboard>).

**Priority Ranks**

	North Central	Northeast	South	West	National Scope	Total
1	Economic development	Physical infrastructure and public services	Workforce development, training, and education	Physical infrastructure and public services	Health	Physical infrastructure and public services
2	Workforce development, training, and education	Economic development	Physical infrastructure and public services	Economic development	Physical infrastructure and public services	Economic development
3	Physical infrastructure and public services	Workforce development, training, and education	Health	Health	Economic development	Workforce development, training, and education
4	Community vibrancy	Climate change, climate variability, and extreme weather	Economic development	Workforce development, training, and education	Community vibrancy	Health

Each survey participant was asked to answer questions concerning assets, challenges, and opportunities connected to the top three topics they identified as priorities. Responses to these open-ended questions were coded, and the results are shown in the tables below. (Below each table, the statistic for perceptions of low/no capacity at the respondents’ respective institutions came from the survey as well.) These are followed by the recommendations for future investments discussed during the Southern Region virtual listening session.

**Workforce Development, Training & Education – Southern Region Survey Results**

<b>Assets</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to rural community colleges</li> <li>• Secondary/post-secondary vocational/technology schools</li> <li>• State/regional/local workforce investment initiatives</li> </ul>
<b>Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insufficiently trained local workforce</li> <li>• Limited access to transportation and poor quality of roads/transportation</li> <li>• Challenges in retaining workforce</li> <li>• Lack of higher education/training facilities and programs</li> <li>• Limited access to financial resources (especially for training)</li> <li>• Lack of broadband access</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More training and education programs</li> <li>• Research focused on work ethics, skillsets, community asset assessment, rural models of entrepreneurship, and issues around school district consolidation</li> </ul>

Perception of low/no capacity at respondents’ institution to address the challenges and opportunities:

- 44%

**Recommendations for Future Investments – Southern Region Listening Session Results**

- Realign incentives to meet the needs of rural communities
- Collaborate and partner across disciplines, communities, organizations, and other stakeholders
- Pursue equitable access to non-traditional and advanced education and training



## Physical Infrastructure & Public Services – Southern Region Survey Results

<b>Assets</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to land and space for further infrastructure development</li> <li>• Sense of community, connected residents, spirit of cooperation</li> <li>• Existing or soon to be expanding broadband</li> <li>• Networking and partnership among community organizations</li> </ul>
<b>Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited broadband and wireless phone service</li> <li>• Identifying funds and mechanism that are in line with the population demand for maintaining/improving infrastructure</li> <li>• Meeting housing and transportation needs</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broadband</li> <li>• Research and funding addressing the particular needs of rural areas and small towns</li> <li>• Education investments including distance education (broadband), entrepreneurship, and technical skills training</li> </ul>

Perception of low/no capacity at respondents’ institution to address the challenges and opportunities:

- 71%

## Recommendations for future investments – Southern Region Listening Session Results

- Inventory the physical infrastructure and public services that currently exist
- Engage community in meetings, involving the diverse communities to be impacted
- Meet the people who will be impacted where they are
- Include youth and those with lived experience
- Provide government officials with training for climate-friendly practices
- Incentivize green infrastructure regarding workforce opportunities, and help the people who may be displaced in a community
- Consider credentials necessary for education and open connections for remote expertise that can be shared across state lines

## Health – Southern Region Survey Results

<b>Assets</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land and natural resources that could be used to benefit healthy behaviors (e.g., fresh foods, outdoor exercise)</li> <li>• Existing organizations and services (local and state)</li> <li>• Local primary care/critical access services in some areas</li> </ul>
<b>Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited services relative level of need</li> <li>• Mental, behavioral, and substance abuse</li> <li>• Too few healthy food options</li> <li>• Lack of cultural support for healthy lifestyles and equitable access</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Address the characteristics and interests of rural places and small towns</li> <li>• Improve applied research/evaluation and planning to develop evidence on what works</li> <li>• Increase funds for healthcare access and education (such as nutrition education, broadband access, Community Health Workers, school nurses)</li> </ul>

Perception of low/no capacity at respondents’ institution to address the challenges and opportunities:

- 51%

**Recommendations for future investments – Southern Region Listening Session Results**

- Expand stable broadband access critical to providing telehealth
- Build partnerships with libraries, churches, and others to use computers and internet for health appointments and to access medical records
- Address basic needs such as food access and safe drinking water as priorities
- Provide strategic funding for rural communities to address suicide rates, drug abuse, and mental health issues
- Actions should be taken simultaneously to be most effective

**Economic Development – Southern Region Survey Results**

<b>Assets</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rural innovation and entrepreneurship</li> <li>• Natural and outdoor spaces</li> <li>• Tourism, recreation, and travel</li> </ul>
<b>Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of resources for small businesses and entrepreneurs</li> <li>• Limited amenities (affordable housing, healthcare, financial services, shopping/retail)</li> <li>• Lack of broadband or technologies</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Startup funds, incubation effort, and training for business owners and innovators</li> <li>• Broadband access, digital assistance and tools, and remote work capabilities</li> <li>• Workforce development</li> </ul>

Perception of low/no capacity at respondents’ institution to address the challenges and opportunities:

- 51%

**Recommendations for future investments – Southern Region Listening Session Results**

- Conduct research and development around workforce interests and needs
- Improve education for basic life skills and employer needs, helping parents understand and meet student needs, providing better training for teachers on classroom management, and offering apprenticeship programming and other opportunities
- Remove barriers and increase access to resources and infrastructures needed to get to work (housing, broadband, transportation) and for entrepreneurs
- Enhance networks and share resources to be “community driven”
- Connect tourism to natural resources
- Move beyond the community as a unit of analysis to pursue solutions that are multi-community to achieve the scale needed to manage challenges and emergencies
- Engage in succession planning for cooperatives, land ownership, and businesses
- Look ahead to technological developments and trends reshaping entrepreneurship

## Continuing the Dialogue in the Southern Region

Following the survey and listening session, presentations were made to several stakeholder audiences in the southern region, virtually and in-person. In addition to disseminating results and providing opportunities to inform planning, these events were used to solicit feedback and engage in “ground truthing” among diverse participants. Recognizing that some groups were under-represented in the research, intentional efforts were made to engage with partners working in the 1890 Land-Grant University System. One important briefing took place at an in-person joint meeting of 1890 leaders in Extension and research. Following presentation of Southern Region results, participants were invited to provide feedback on a form asking for their rankings on the issue priority areas being considered in this project, additional topics in need of attention, and the importance of different capacity building initiatives. Approximately 80 people were attendance at the conference, and 33 people submitted forms.

Comparison of the research results with this feedback from the 1890 Extension and research leaders is important to consider for continued dialogue around priorities and capacity building activities both in the South as well as for any state working to engage Black/African American communities. Although not in direct contrast with the original research results, differences in prioritizing investment areas did surface. For instance, the top four priority areas were as follows, with the first in the highest priority: (1) economic development; (2) workforce, development, training, and education; (3) health; and (4) agriculture and food systems. In response to the open-ended question asking for additional priorities they felt needed attention, participants identified more specific issues falling under the more general topics, including broadband access, educational assistance for Black students, addressing financial resources for families and businesses, and addressing mental health needs. Regarding programming, coordination of Extension and outreach teams across state and institutional lines was seen as the most important.

Providing opportunities for feedback such as these are important to the continued work of the RRDCs in general, and the SRDC has plans to continue to solicit input for its own planning and to inform the priorities that are conveyed to partners. In fact, a southern region follow-up virtual briefing and feedback session is planned for early 2023.

## Roles for the Regional Rural Development Centers (RRDCs)

The listening sessions were intended to inform a broad range of rural development partners, including leaders with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Land-Grant Universities, among others. Given their focus on building capacity across organizational and state lines, the RRDCs may play several roles in advancing the strategic investments addressed in this report. These include the following themes.



**Reaching across 1862, 1890, and 1994 Land-Grant University systems to collaborate on priority issues.**



**Conducting, translating, and disseminating research through journal articles, special issues, briefs, and presentations.**



**Scaling Extension outreach through curriculum development, training, gauging impacts, and showcasing promising practices.**



**Helping to acquire and leverage funding for research, Extension, and scholarship.**



**Actively encouraging the integration of research and Extension on key issue areas.**



**Facilitating workshops, listening sessions, and dialogues for innovative problem solving.**



**Convening researchers, Extension practitioners, and rural development stakeholders on high priority issues.**



**Building and coordinating multi-state teams.**

## Notes

Information in this report is excerpted from a report titled “*Investing in Rural Capacity: Comprehensive Summary of the National Rural Development Stakeholder Listening Sessions.*” The report shares findings from a national initiative conducted through the Regional Rural Development Centers (RRDCs).

For a comprehensive description of methods and participants, download the full report at:

<https://www.usu.edu/rrdc/listening-sessions#reports>

This work was supported in part by funding under the New Technologies for Agricultural Extension Program, led by the Extension Foundation, Federal Award Number is 2019-41595-30123. The RRDCs receive core support under funding via USDA NIFA. Graphics (excluding maps) were produced by the Extension Foundation. Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed here are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of USDA NIFA, the Extension Foundation, host institutions, or others providing material support.

## Suggested Citation

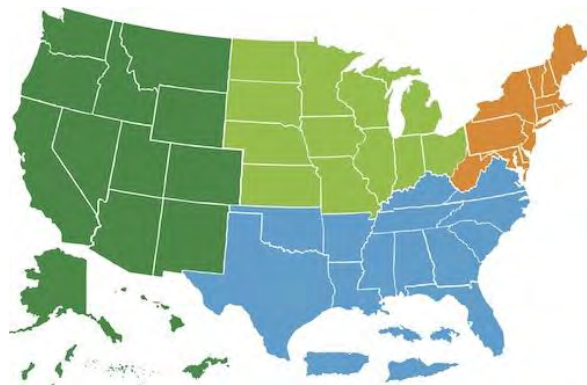
Entsminger, J., Green, J., Welborn, R., Wiatt, R., Bednarikova, Z., Gayle, R., Pan, Y., Goetz, S. (February 2023). *Comprehensive Summary of National Rural Development Stakeholder Listening Sessions*. Regional Rural Development Centers. <https://www.usu.edu/rrdc/listening-sessions>

## For More Information

More information, including the comprehensive listening session report, survey report, supplementary materials, and an interactive data dashboard, is available at:

<https://www.usu.edu/rrdc/listening-sessions>

Learn more about the Regional Rural Development Centers at: <https://www.usu.edu/rrdc/index>



### **Agenda Item 3 (consent): ESCOP Budget and Legislative Committee (BLC)**

**Presenter: Steve Lommel**

**Action: For Information**

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

Anton Bekkerman (NERA, University of New Hampshire) assumed the duties of the BLC chair for a two-year term replacing Glenda Humiston at the 2022 ESS Annual Meeting in Baltimore. The BLC chair is a multifaceted leadership position given the multiple committee assignments (BAA-BAC voting member, BAA-CLP voting member, ECOP BLC liaison). Immediately following the ESS Annual Meeting, the ESCOP BLC convened a face-to-face meeting with the new chair and committee to refresh responsibilities and linkages with other national budget and advocacy efforts. Regional and liaison memberships have been stable. Lewis-Burke Associates (LBA) has regularly participated in our meetings with Dr. Elizabeth Stulberg being designated as the point person to the ESCOP BLC from LBA. Monthly meetings occur on the fourth Tuesday of every month from 4:00 – 5:00 ET. In January 2023, Gary Thompson replaced Jeff Jacobsen as Executive Vice-Chair after Jeff Jacobsen retired from his role as the NCRA executive director.

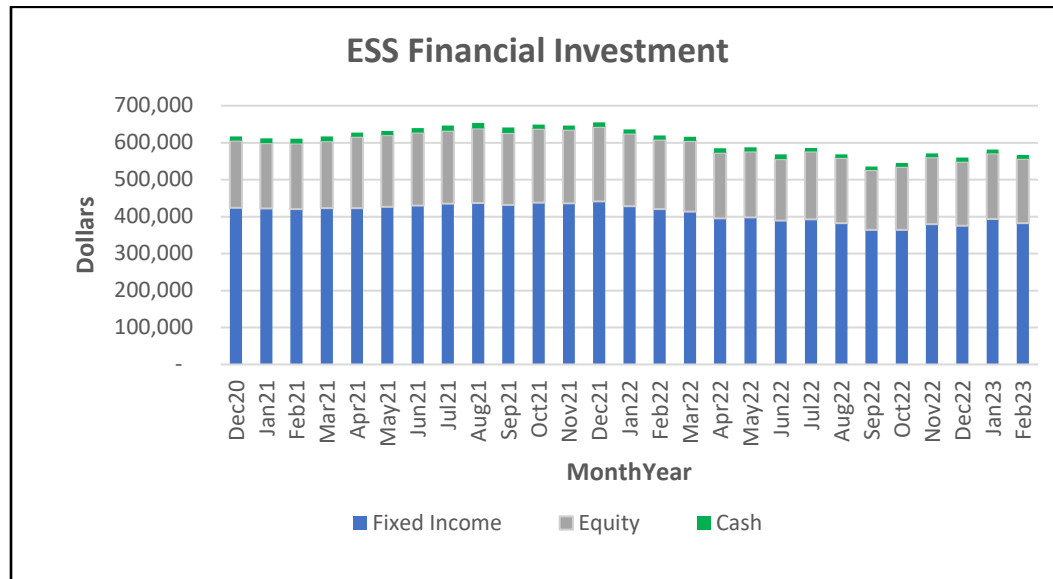
The predominant focus of the ESCOP BLC is to create, adapt, monitor, and change the ESS's input into the BAC, CLP, and infrastructure budget and legislative activities. Modification to existing processes, advancing new deadlines, and creation of new steps and requests make this an iterative process. The BAA Unified FY 2024 Appropriations Request was approved by the BAC and the BAA Policy Board of Directors and is summarized here ([FY24 approps](#)). The President's Budget Request was released on March 9 and those budget lines relevant to the BAA and ESCOP can be viewed here ([FY24 PBR](#)). The CLP finalized the BAA 2023 Farm Bill Request, which is summarized here ([BAA Farm Bill](#)). Requests for funding through the Research Facilities Act (RFA), which was reauthorized in the 2018 Farm Bill and funded at \$2 million in the FY2023 omnibus, were made by both the BAC and the CLP. The RFA is currently the primary legislative mechanism to address the \$11.5 billion infrastructure needs described in the 2021 [Gordian Report](#). An appropriation of \$500 million for the RFA was requested by the BAA in the FY 2024 Appropriations Request. A request for reauthorization and \$5 billion in mandatory funding for the RFA in the 2023 Farm Bill is summarized here ([RFA \\$5B](#)) and RFA FAQs can be found here ([RFA FAQ](#)). The BAA and Lewis-Burkes Associates are actively advocating through numerous mechanisms on behalf of the system for these budgetary requests.

The BLC is working to assess what changes to its operations structure may be needed to better represent and serve the needs of the Experiment Station Section. The BLC Rules of Operation were formally adopted at our March meeting. The committee also began alternating its meetings: one month the meeting is for voting members only to foster open discussion, and the alternating month includes the more traditional discussion and liaison report structure. One of the outcomes of this revised structure is more time for in-depth discussions by the voting members that is valuable in reflecting on broader questions that the BLC needs to address, while still receiving timely input from the liaisons.

**Finance Subcommittee** (<http://escop.info/blcfinance/>)

The Finance subcommittee of the ESCOP BLC assists in the management of ESS resources that were initially invested with TD Wealth in October 2020. The subcommittee (Chris Pritsos (chair), George Smith, Anton Bekkerman, Saied Mostaghimi, Gary Thompson, Cindy Morley, Doug Steele) has met every six months to manage the portfolio and its moderately conservative position (Fixed Income 60-70%, Equities 30-40%, Cash 0-10%) with a 5-10 year investment horizon. These funds are entirely liquid should ESS have the need to redirect these financial resources into strategic priorities. The summary of the investments as of the March 1, 2023 Finance subcommittee meeting is below.

The BLC Finance subcommittee was formally dissolved on March 8, 2023, and its activities incorporated into the newly formed ESCOP Finance Committee, which was approved by the membership as an ESCOP standing committee.



**Agenda Brief:** Communications and Marketing Committee (CMC)  
**Date:** March 27, 2023  
**Presenter:** JF Meullenet (Arkansas), CMC Past Chair

- 1.) **Committee Membership (as of March 27, 2023):** see Communications and Marketing Committee page, APLU website: [Communications & Marketing Committee](#).
- 2.) **Meetings (since September 2022):** the CMC held the following Zoom meetings.
  - October 20, 2022
  - November 17, 2022
  - December 15, 2022
  - January 19, 2023
  - February 16, 2022
  - March 16, 2023
- 3.) **Accomplishments / Upcoming Plans:**
  - The CMC is evolving. Here are key indicators.
    - The Operating Guidelines of the CMC (attached) have been updated and reflect a new composition of the CMC. Overall, administrators were removed from the CMC and replaced by regional communicators. The composition of the CMC is available on the [APLU website](#) and on the [AgIsAmerica](#) website.
    - The [National Impact Database](#) (NIDB), formerly a committee supported by ECOP and ESCOP, became a subcommittee of the CMC. One of the immediate challenges is to engage directors and administrators to ensure that impact statements are entered into the system. Currently, there is variation among what sections (Extension and Research), regions, and institutions enter impact statements. Overall, the NIDB was meant to be a tool for the system.
    - The separate assessments that AHS, CES, and ESS paid to support the CMC have been discontinued in the wake of the CMC becoming a BAA standing committee under FANR.
  - With the migration of the NIDB to the CMC, Sara Delheimer provided a [presentation on the database](#), reminding CMC members that the NIDB is a publicly accessible repository for impact statements from land-grant universities. Further, the database is easily searchable by state, type of institution, topic, Extension/research, and other parameters. In 2022, some 533 impact stories were entered into the NIDB. Importantly, there are opportunities for increasing functionality in the near future as the CMC explores moving the NIDB from Texas A&M University to a new host.



- Andrea Putman, Assistant Vice President Communications and Partnerships, Food, Agriculture, and Natural Resources (FANR), and the coordinator of CMC has posted the 2023 Monthly Toolkit Themes (attached).
- The [AgIsAmerica](#) website has been updated including the addition of evergreen content and a clear link of the website to the BAA and CMC.
- The NIDB writing group met on February 3-4, 2023. (All ag communicators on CMC are now a part of that group.) The team put together summary sheets on different impact topics that are current issues, developing some 60+ web stories and 50 summary sheets. These materials were all available for the CARET/AHS meeting on March 12-15, 2023.
- The Experiment Station Section, each of the AES regional associations, and the APLU's Board on Agriculture Assembly are sponsors of the annual meeting of the Association for Communication Excellence (ACE) June 11-13, 2023, in Asheville, NC.
- Communications and Marketing materials were created for CARET/AHS and included:
  - [APLU BAA Unified Fiscal Year 2024 Appropriations Request](#),
  - [APLU BAA 2023 Farm Bill Title VII Policy Recommendations](#),
  - [APLU BAA 2023 Farm Bill Request for the Research Facilities Act](#), and
  - [A National Study of Capital Infrastructure at Colleges and Schools of Agriculture](#).
- The CMC received a briefing on the brand-refresh of the Experiment Station Section, now [agInnovation](#).

4.) **Action Requested:** For information only.

5.) **Attachments:**

- Communications and Marketing Committee (CMC) Operating Guidelines
- 2023 Monthly Toolkit Themes

# Communications and Marketing Committee (CMC) Operating Guidelines

April 17, 2012

Amended & Approved: 11/20/2014; 12/19/2016; 11/29/2018; and 11/3/2022

The Communication and Marketing Committee (CMC) is responsible for guiding the communications efforts of APLU's Board on Agriculture Assembly (BAA) in order to increase awareness and build support for land-grant university agricultural and related programs including Agricultural Experiment Stations (AES), Cooperative Extension Services (CES), and Academic Programs. The CMC oversees the development, implementation, and effectiveness of this educational effort in coordination with APLU's Office of Food, Agriculture, & Natural Resources (FANR).

**Membership:** The CMC membership shall consist of: Chair, Incoming Chair, Past Chair, one representative from Agriculture Programs Section (APS), Council on Governmental Affairs (CGA), Association for Communication Excellence (ACE) and five communications professionals representing the regions (one each from the 1890s, South, West, North Central, Northeast).

**Ex-officio members** shall consist of: Extension Committee on Organization and Policy (ECOP) Executive Director (who may be the representative or appoint a regional Executive Director), Experiment Station Committee on Organization and Policy (ESCOP) Regional Executive Director, International Agricultural Section (IAS), Administrative Head Section (AHS) Executive Director (VP FANR), FANR Assistant Vice President for Communications and Partnerships (AVP), Executive Vice Chair and Assistant Executive Vice Chair and other non-voting members as deemed appropriate.

The positions of Chair, Incoming Chair, and Past Chair will be held by appointees from AHS, CES, and Experiment Station Section such that each section is represented in one of the three positions. The Incoming Chair will be appointed by the section of the Past Chair at the completion of the Past Chair's term.

The CMC Executive Committee shall be composed of the Incoming Chair, Chair, Past Chair, and FANR AVP. FANR AVP or his/her designee will serve as or designate the CMC's Secretary.

**Terms:** The term of Incoming Chair, Chair, and Past Chair is one year. After one year, the Incoming Chair becomes Chair, the Chair becomes Past Chair, and the Past Chair rotates off the CMC. The chair position will rotate among ECOP, ESCOP and AHS. Terms begin at the end of the AHS/CARET meeting (typically held in March).

The representative positions from APS, CGA, ACE, IAS, ESCOP Regional Executive Director are appointed by their respective organizations. The five communications professionals representing the regions are appointed by their respective region's ESCOP and ECOP Executive Directors.

These positions serve a two-year term with no limit on reappointment. The terms begin at the end of the APLU Annual Meeting (typically held in November).

**November 3, 2022**

**2023 MONTHLY TOOLKIT THEMES**  
December 9, 2022  
Topics in **Yellow** were not covered in 2022

**January**

**INNOVATING FOR THE FUTURE** (emphasis on Climate Smart Ag)

**February**

**ENHANCING WATER EFFICIENCY AND MANAGEMENT**

**March**

**CELEBRATING FARMERS and RANCHERS** (National Agriculture Week)

**April**

**CELEBRATING EARTH DAY**

**May**

**SUPPORTING WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT** (celebrating graduation)

**June**

**PROTECTING ANIMAL AND PLANT HEALTH**

**July**

**SAFEGUARDING FOOD SECURITY and NATIONAL SECURITY**

**August**

**RECAP** with links to past toolkits

**September**

**BUILDING THE FUTURE** (back to school)

**October**

**GROWING URBAN AGRICULTURE/ INDOOR and VERTICAL FARMING**

**November**

**GIVING THANKS** (stories from our communities)

**December**

**CONNECTING AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND HEALTH**

**Key Messages (source: Strategic Communications Roadmap)**

Investments in agricultural research, education, and Extension:

1. result in safer, higher quality food systems.
2. make communities stronger and healthier.
3. address critical challenges facing agriculture and the environment.
4. are vital to safeguarding America's status as a global leader in innovation.

## **Agenda Brief: ESCOP Science and Technology Committee**

**Date: April 18, 2023**

**Presenter: Nathan McKinney**

<http://escop.info/committee/scitech/>

<http://escop.info/committee/national-integrated-pest-management-coordinatingcommitteenipmcc/>

<http://escop.info/committee/social-sciences-subcommittee-sssc/>

### **S&T Committee (STC) Summary of Accomplishments**

The STC prepared a 2022 work plan (<http://escop.info/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/ESCOP-Prioritiesand-Chair-Initiatives-2022.pdf>) that was approved by the ESCOP Executive Committee. Implementation of the work plan started with asking ESS members to help update and localize ESCOP Grand Challenge Briefs utilizing a standardized set of templates. Templates are available for State/Regional use as the first hyperlink under the Links on the STC main page (<http://escop.info/committee/stc/>) at: <http://escop.info/grand-challenge-templates/>. Regional associations have assisted STC with making changes to an [interactive map of branch experiment stations](https://webdoc.agsci.colostate.edu/aes/wcrc/US_Map/) ([https://webdoc.agsci.colostate.edu/aes/wcrc/US\\_Map/](https://webdoc.agsci.colostate.edu/aes/wcrc/US_Map/)) by asking their members to send revisions. Each regional office has completed a crosswalk of their portfolio of multistate committees against emerging NIFA priorities and the ESCOP Grand Challenges. The STC continues to be engaged in the Climate Summit/ Climate Horizon Scan. AgInnovation has been launched but additional work is needed to roll-out the concept. An AgInnovation update will be presented at the 2023 Association of Communication Excellence (ACE) conference On June 12 in Asheville, NC. Nominations for the Excellence in Multistate Research Award are to be submitted from the regional office to the STC Vice Chair on May 15 and the winner will be selected at the June 5 meeting.

### **National Integrated Pest Management Coordinating Committee (NIPMCC)**

The 2023 annual meeting was held in Ames, IA on October 19-20. The committee continues to work on refining the Public IPM Enterprise Strategic Plan. A survey of IPM coordinators has been released that provides a sense of the current infrastructure across the system to take advantage of upcoming opportunities. NIPMCC is developing links with Climate Smart Agricultural Systems to use multiple decision support systems for collaboration within that program.

### **Social Sciences Subcommittee (SSSC)**

The subcommittee has struggled to gain traction over the last few years, which is largely a result of significant turnover amongst members. However, a subset of volunteers participated in a fruitful meeting with the NIFA liaison to STC regarding inclusion of social sciences in the climate sciences efforts. Alton Thompson agreed to co-advise the SSSC along with Jeanette Thurston. An initial scoping meeting was held recently in which restricting and retooling were discussed. SSSC also decided to hold an in-person meeting this coming fall.

**Agenda Brief:** Diversity Catalyst Committee (DCC)  
**Date:** March 27, 2023, 2023  
**Chair:** Brian Raison (Ohio State)  
**Presenter:** Jamie Larson (Mississippi State)

- 1.) **Committee Membership** (as of March 27, 2023): see ESCOP Diversity Catalyst Committee (DCC) webpage – <http://escop.info/committee/dcc/>
- 2.) **Meetings** (since September 2022): The DCC held the following meetings via Zoom. Minutes/notes from those meetings are available at on the [DCC's page on the ESCOP website](#) (see Past Events).
  - October 25, 2023
  - November 22, 2022
  - January 24, 2023
  - February 23, 2023
  - March 23, 2023
- 3.) **Accomplishments / Upcoming Plans:**
  - DCC chair Henry Fadamiro stepped down as DCC chair. Henry was appointed as the vice president for research, strategic initiatives. The DCC congratulates Henry on his new position and service to the committee. Brian Raison (Ohio State) graciously accepted the nomination as the DCC chair.
  - During the annual meeting of CES/ESS in Baltimore, two section-wide training activities informed by the DCC were held including *From Reckoning to Healing and Reconciliation* and *Generational Diversity and Interactions in the Workplace*.
  - Press releases were issued for each of the 2022 National Experiment Station Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion awards winners that included: [Anna Katharine Mansfield \(Cornell\)](#) and [the Mississippi Small Farm and Agribusiness Center \(Dr. Elizabeth Myles, Alcorn State\)](#).
  - The DCC revised the call for nominations for National Experiment Station Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion awards. An electronic portal is now available for [submission of DEI nominations](#). The DCC continues to seek nominations.
  - During DCC deliberations in the fall '22, the DCC undertook the development of a mission statement to serve as a guidepost for the DCC's plan of work. To that end, the DCC adopted a mission statement: **We unite Experiment Station leaders in promoting a more diverse and inclusive future.** Likewise, the DCC approved a Plan of Work for 2023-2026 and identified activities for 2023. (See Resources on the [DCC's page on the ESCOP website](#)). One of the highlights of the Plan of Work will be quarterly, interactive DEI webinars that will allow directors to engage deeply with speaker(s) or with each other. Stay tuned for an announcement of coming events.

4.) **Action Requested:** For information only.

5.) **Attachments:**

- DCC 2023 Plan of Work

# Diversity Catalyst Committee (DCC) Plan of Work 2023-2026

## 2023 Activities

**Mission of the DCC:** We unite Experiment Station leaders in promoting a more diverse and inclusive future.

### Plan of Work 2023-2026

- Intentionally engage ESS directors on a regular basis on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI).
- Recognize outstanding DEI efforts by ESS member.
- Seek best practices currently undertaken by ESS directors and widely share and promote.
- Provide ESS directors with opportunities to engage in DEI educational events.
- Serve the ESS as a DEI resource provider.
- Identify metrics of progress for the DCC and for member institutions.

### FY2023 Activities

During 2023 the DCC will:

- Meet on a monthly basis.
- Support the ESCOP Chair's diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives.
- Engage in strategic planning to identify the mission, vision, purpose of the DCC including re-writing the description of the DCC for the ESCOP website.
- 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.
- Follow-up on the Call to Action issued to all directors in August 2021.
  - Create an inventory of DEI actions and best practices taken by directors.
  - Collaborate with NIFA to profile exemplary actions of the directors.
- Collect ESS DEI best practices and submit to NIFA for profiling.
- Collaborate with NIFA on the presentation of DEI webinars (e.g., "DEI and the NIFA Compliance review process")
- Propose to the Experiment Station Section 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.
  - Offer 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.
- 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 DEI program Action Team.
- Implement a DCC DEI Webinar.
  - Quarterly
  - Initial theme "The Lived Experience".



## SAAESD Strategic Roadmap 2022-23 Mid-term Report

### Implementation Working Group Members

Tim Rials, Scott Senseman, Amy Grunden, Mary Savin, Kang Xia, John Davis, Michael Toews, Frankie Gould

### Collaborative Discovery

#### Actions:

Develop best practice sessions to build collaborative multidisciplinary teams

- *Artificial Intelligence*
  - ✓ *S1090 AI in Agroecosystems: Big Data and Smart Technology-Driven Sustainable Production*
  - ✓ *Innovation and Discovery to Equitably Meet Producer Needs and Perceptions. 2023 AI Conference, Orlando, FL, April 17-19, 2023*
- *Climate Change*
  - ✓ *Engaged in National Climate Change Roadmap and Implementation Plan (Core Horizon Scan Planning Group)*
  - ✓ *Climate Change, Adaptation, and Pursuit of Sustainable Possibilities: Interactive Dialogue on Roles for Social Sciences – 2023 Southern Rural Sociological Association meeting*
- *Controlled Environment Agriculture*
  - ✓ *CEA Session at this meeting*

### Enhancing Reputation

#### Actions:

Initiate a long-term strategy to increase honorifics at member institutions

- *Curated and distributed 2022 AAAS Fellows in SAAESD universities – sent February 10, 2023*
- *Developing honorifics toolkit to assist colleges and departments with faculty nominations*
  - ✓ *Module 1: Building Our Cultures of Nomination – Sent November 3, 2022*
  - ✓ *Module 2: AAAS Fellows Nomination Guide – Sent February 10, 2023*
  - ✓ *Module 3: Faculty Primer to Honorifics – under development for Fall 2023*
  - ✓ *Webinar and honorifics modules: <https://saaesd.org/aaas-fellows-and-other-honorifics/>*

### Strategic Alliances

#### Actions:

Southern Mini Land-grant Meeting joint sessions with ASRED, S-APS, and ARD

- *Preparing and responding to severe weather disasters at our RECs and local offices – SAAESD/ASRED*
  - ✓ *2024 Joint Spring meeting*
  - ✓ *Liaisons actively participating*
- *Building the Pathway from Undergraduate to Graduate Studies – SAAESD/S-APS*
  - ✓ *AG-NGINE developed as a national ESS initiative*
- *Proactive Steps to Build Strategic Partnerships – SAAESD/ARD*
  - ✓ *Reciprocal liaisons – Chair-elects from SAAESD and ARD*
  - ✓ *Joint ARD-SAAESD annual meeting (Building Strategic Partnerships - planning stage)*
  - ✓ *1890 communicators participation in SRCC*

Partner with the Southern Rural Development Center (SRDC)

- *SAAESD representatives on the BOD and TOAC*

- New Multistate Project: SERA\_Temp49 *Heir's Property: Impacts at Family, Community, and Regional Levels*
- *Climate Change, Adaptation, and Pursuit of Sustainable Possibilities: Interactive Dialogue on Roles for Social Sciences*. 2023 Southern Rural Sociological Association meeting

## **Effective Communications**

### **Actions:**

Create opportunities for communicators to meet, collaborate, and coordinate messaging

- SRCC and SRCC Steering Committee monthly meetings
- New Multistate Research project: S\_temp\_1095: *Science Communication in Agriculture: Human Science Research and Workforce Development*
  - ✓ *Grants Development workshop presentation and professional development round-table session at the National Agricultural Communications Symposium, 2023 SAAS Conference*
- *4 focus areas for the year*
  - ✓ Climate Change as it Relates to Water, Feral Hogs, Crop Genetics and Variety Development, Turf Grass as it Relates to Sports
- ACE Sponsorship and Participation
  - ✓ *Creating Regional Voices to Tell the Land-Grant Research Story: An Interactive Workshop for Communicators*. June 14, 2023

Capture success stories and amplify award announcements at SAAESD member institutions

- Collaborative press releases
- Collaborative regional stories

## **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?

## Cotton Winter Nursery (CWN)

The Cotton Winter Nursery (CWN) has been a critical part of the cotton research community for 60+ years. It serves to drive genetic gain and generation advancement with 2 growing seasons completed each year, though in recent years we achieved 2.5. For the first 55+ years the CWN was in Mexico, but due to the retirement of the National Cotton Council employee 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 operation. The site we decided upon is 9km NW of Liberia 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 2 hectare farm and provides suitable space to process, gin, and ship seed. A drip irrigation system was installed which allows for reliable and efficient use of water. An acid delinting system was designed and built so 'black' seed could be shipped to users in the US, reducing transportation time between the CWN and US scientists by 3 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 soil erosion.

The CWN is critical for proper characterization of the ~10,000 accessions in the USDA National Cotton Germplasm Collection, about one third of which is photoperiod sensitive. When necessary 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 their 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 severely restricted travel and commerce for 5 days per week allowing limited movement the 2 remaining 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 harvest, 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 to overcome the adversity created by Covid-19.*

The two tables on page 2 show the hill numbers (plots) and percentage of hills by the USDA and university scientists for the past 8 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 4 years, a private/public sector partnership addressing FOV4 that I managed.

Starting in 2023 Cotton Incorporated increased its support to Alfonso and the CWN to \$288,000/year. This is more than a doubling of our annual support since our time in Costa Rica. I fully expect this to continue for the foreseeable future given new leadership in Ag Research and my reengagement with the CWN starting in Spring 2022.



## Number of Hills by User in CWN

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
<b>USDA</b>	1907	2435	2250	3521	3036	2902	3435	2314
<b>University</b>	2603	3392	3727	967	2395	1635	1723	1073
<b>Other</b>				1950	1950	1950	1950	
<b>TOTAL</b>	4510	5827	5977	6438	7381	6487	7108	3387

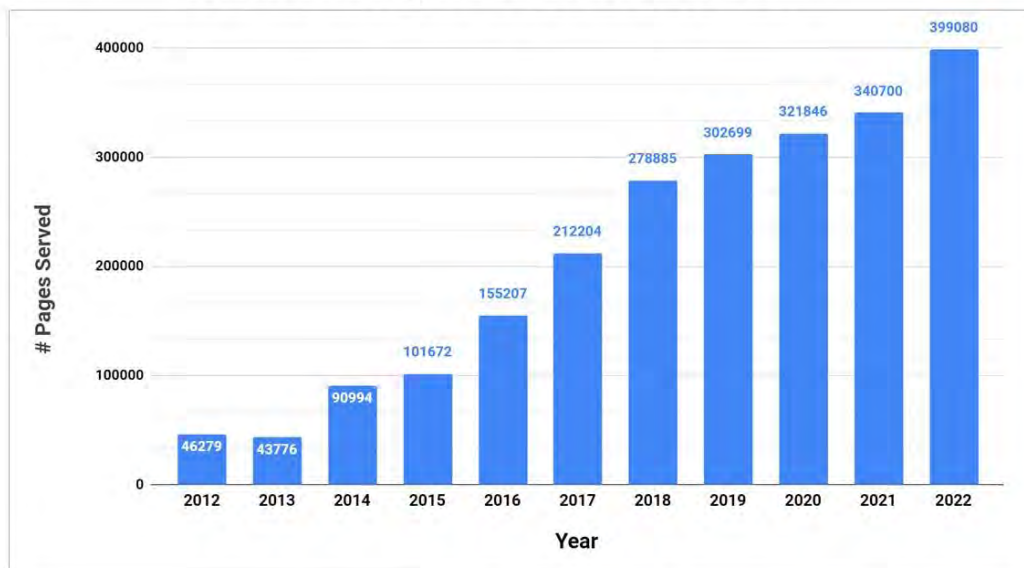
## Percentage of Hills by Public User in CWN

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
<b>USDA</b>	42%	42%	38%	55%	41%	45%	48%	68%
<b>University</b>	58%	58%	62%	15%	32%	25%	24%	32%
<b>Other</b>				30%	26%	30%	27%	

## 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 curated and 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.

### CottonGen: Pages Served 2012 to 2022



To provide more permanent support, a request is being developed by the cotton industry’s lobbying arm (National Cotton Council) for financial support of approximately \$500,000 in the upcoming 2024 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 viability.

## Thompson Annual Activity Report

May 17, 2022 – April 18, 2023

### Summary (Highlights)

This report summarizes the activities of the executive director's office during the period from May 17, 2022, through April 18, 2023. While this year marked the full return to in-person events, including national-level and regional meetings, we are continuing to use virtual meetings to conduct much of our business. Campus visits to Mississippi State University, University of the Virgin Islands, and University of Florida improved our knowledge of these experiment stations. We continue to accomplish activities outlined in the strategic roadmap, including promoting honorifics in our institutions, engaging allied organizations such as ARD, ASRED, S-APS, and SRDC, and developing the regional communications network. The Southern Research Communications Consortium (SRCC) is executing strategies to effectively tell our regional research stories and is meeting for the first time with the directors during the SAAESD spring meeting as well as during the ACE meeting in June. AgNGINE, a national online database of prospective graduate students in the agricultural and related sciences, was launched at our joint meeting with the S-APS during the 2022 Southern Mini Land-grant meeting and will be piloted this spring. Effective January 1, 2023, we have assumed administrative oversight of the ESCOP Budget and Legislative Committee as the executive vice chair (Gary) and assistant executive vice-chair (Cindy). Through this assignment, we will represent regional and sectional priorities with the APLU BAA legislative committees, Budget and Advocacy Committee (BAC) and Committee on Legislation and Policy (CLP). Our portfolio of multistate projects continues to grow with four new projects and seven renewals in 2022 and three projects under development with 16 renewals in 2023 (see appendix).

### Travel

- Joint COPs Meeting, Washington, DC. July 19-21, 2022. (*ESCOP, CLP, BAC, PBD meetings*)
- S1090: AI in Agroecosystems: Big Data and Smart Technology-Driven Sustainable Production multistate meeting, Gainesville, FL. August 3-5, 2022. (*Also met with the UF/IFAS Deans*)
- ASRED/AEA/PLN Meeting, Fort Worth, TX. August 23-25, 2022. (*SAAESD liaison report to ASRED*)
- Mississippi State University Campus Visit, Starkville, MS. September 11-14, 2022. (*SAAESD spring meeting planning, SRDC and SRAC visits*)
- ESS/CES-NEDA Annual Meeting, Baltimore, MD. September 25-29, 2022
- SRDC Board Meeting, Dallas, TX. October 19-20, 2022
- APLU Annual Meeting, Denver, CO. November 6-8, 2022 (*BAC meeting*)
- Multistate Research Coordinating Committee Meeting, Washington, DC. November 28-30, 2022
- Joint Cotton Breeding Committee Meeting, New Orleans, LA. January 11-12, 2023
- SAAS, Oklahoma City, OK. February 5-6, 2023 (*NACS, SAC7, SRDC/SRSA, S-AHS meetings*)
- University of the Virgin Islands Campus Visit, St. Croix, VI. February 15-22, 2023 (*Campus visit and to attend VI Agrifest 2023*)
- CARET-AHS, Washington, DC. March 14-15, 2023 (*BAC, CLP meetings*)
- ASRED Spring Meeting, Jekyll Island, GA. April 11-14, 2023 (*SAAESD liaison report to ASRED*)
- SAAESD Spring Meeting, Starkville, MS. April 17-20, 2023

### Conference/Workshop Planning and Organizing Committees

- ESS/CES-NEDA Annual Meeting Planning Committee, Baltimore, MD. September 25-29, 2022
- 2023 SAAESD Spring Meeting Planning Committee. Starkville, MS. April 17-20, 2023
  - Controlled Environment Agriculture Workshop
  - Southern Rural Development Workshop

- Southern Regional Communications Workshop
- ACE Communicators Workshop Planning Committee. Ashville, NC. June 11, 2023
- ARD-SAAESD Joint Meeting, Atlanta, GA. August 2023
- ESS Annual Meeting Planning Committee, Grand Rapids, MI. September 2023

#### **SAAESD Committee Meetings**

- SAAESD Executive Committee - quarterly
- Multistate Research Committee – quarterly
- SERA Review Committee - annually
- SAAESD Strategic Implementation Committee – monthly
- SRCC Steering Committee and SRCC virtual meeting - monthly

#### **Appointments and Liaisons**

- Association of Southern Regional Extension Directors (ASRED), liaison
- SERA Review Committee, member
- APLU Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources (FANR), ED liaison
- Joint Cotton Breeding Committee, chair
- 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
- ESS Budget and Legislative Committee, executive vice-chair
- ESS Finance Committee, executive vice-chair
- BAA Policy Board of Directors support for ESS representative, Mark McGuire
- BAC & CLP support for ESS representative, Anton Bekkerman
- 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
- Diversity Catalyst Committee, member
- AgNGINE Advisory Committee, member
- ESS-ESCOP Brand and Digital Marketing Committee, member (*ESS ad hoc*)
- Data Sharing Implementation Committee, member (*S-AHS ad hoc*)
- Ag Research Infrastructure (ARI) Initiative, member (*ESS ad hoc*)
- ESS/FANR/LBA Rapid Response Team, organizer (*ESS ad hoc*)
- ESCOP Non-profit Committee, member (*ESS ad hoc*)
- National Climate Change Roadmap (NCCR) Core Group, member

#### **Engaging New SAAESD Members**

- Harshavardhan Thippareddi, Interim Associate Dean for Research. University of Georgia
- Kang Xia, Interim Associate Director VAES, Virginia Tech
- Angus Catchot, Associate Director MAFES, Mississippi State University
- Jamie Larson, Interim Assistant Director, MAFES, Mississippi State University
- Mary Savin, Assistant Director AAES, University of Arkansas
- Aaron Kiess, NCARS Administrative Fellow, North Carolina State University

### **Engaging SACs**

- SAC7 Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology. SAAS Meeting. February 5, 2023
- Multistate Project Midterm Reviews

### **New or Revised Documents**

- ESS Budget and Legislative Committee (BLC) Rules of Operation
- Susan Duncan Meritorious Service Award

### **Webinars**

- National NIMSS Training Session. May 25, 2022
- Civil Rights Compliance Reviews: Research. September 21, 2022
- Multistate Q&A Session. October 4, 2023

### **Presentations and Participation**

- NIFA Training Session (NIFA organized): Regional Associations – Who, Where, When, Why and What (presenter). May 25, 2022
- Land Grant Anniversary Celebration University of the Virgin Islands. (Participated virtually) June 22, 2022
- North American Agricultural Advisory Network (NAAAN) – US NAAAN Climate Change Convening (Co-moderator with Doug Steele). September 15, 2022
- Maryland Agricultural Experiment Station strategic Vision (Meridian Institute interview). January 4, 2023

### **The year ahead**

Activities in the upcoming year will require travel to attend meetings as the liaison to allied organizations or providing support for directors who are in regional and national leadership positions by attending national and regional events. I anticipate conducting three to five campus visits during the year to better understand the specific strengths and challenges of our member Experiment Stations. I will continue to work with the SAAESD Strategic Roadmap Implementation Team to implement strategies that will strengthen our partnerships, increase the visibility of our region, and provide collaborative research opportunities for our members. The Team will be reviewing and revising the roadmap to ensure the strategies are effective and impactful. I will continue relationship building with the 1890 Land-grant institutions by co-organizing the first joint meeting with ARD that will be held in the late summer. I will also encourage the development of our social sciences portfolios through interactions with the Southern Rural Development Center (SRDC). Nationally, my activities will increase over the next two years. In January 2023, I became the new Executive Vice Chair for the ESCOP Budget and Legislative Committee (BLC), which is aligned through membership in the BAA Budget and Advocacy Committee (BAC) and the BAA Committee on Legislation and Policy (CLP). The BLC is one of the most active of the ESCOP standing committees through its engagement in advocacy for the annual NIFA budget request, the farm bill, and other legislation. I will also continue providing support for the ESS voting member of the BAA Policy Board of Directors and will continue to be involved in the development of the National Climate Change Roadmap as a member of the Core Horizon Scan Planning Group. At the 2023 ESS annual meeting, the Southern region will nominate the ESS chair-elect, who will host the 2024 ESS annual meeting during which time will become the ESS chair. Providing support for the chair-elect nominee will begin this summer and extend through the end of the ESS chair's term in September of 2025.

## **Appendix: New, Developing, and Renewing Multistate Research Projects**

### *New in 2022:*

- **S1091** Forest Resilience and Health
- **S1092** Biology, ecology, and management of emerging nematode threats in the Southern United States.
- **S1093** Management systems for beef cattle reared in subtropical and tropical environments
- **S1094** Genomic tools to improve equine health, wellbeing, and performance

### *Renewed in 2022:*

- **S0294** Postharvest Quality and Safety in Fresh cut Vegetables and Fruits
- **S1070** The Working Group on Improving Microbial Control of Arthropod Pests
- **S1071** A framework for secondary schools agriscience education programs that emphasizes the STEM content in agriculture
- **SCC81** Sustainable Small Ruminant Production in the Southeastern U.S.
- **SERA 27** Nursery Crop and Landscape Systems
- **SERA 3** Southern Region Information Exchange Group for IPM
- **SERA 6** Methodology, Interpretation, and Implementation of Soil, Plant, Byproduct, and Water Analyses

### *New in 2023:*

- **S\_Temp1096** Selection and mating strategies to improve dairy cattle performance, efficiency, and longevity
- **S\_Temp1095** Science Communication in Agriculture: Human Science Research and Workforce Development
- **SERA\_Temp49** Heirs' Property: Impacts at Family, Community, and Regional Levels

### *Renewing in 2023:*

- **S009** Plant Genetic Resource Conservation and Utilization
- **S1072** U.S. Agricultural Trade and Policy in a Dynamic Global Market Environment
- **S1073** Biological Control of Arthropod Pests and Weeds
- **S1074** Future Challenges in Animal Production Systems: Seeking Solutions through Focused Facilitation
- **S1075** The Science and Engineering for a Biobased Industry and Economy
- **S1076** Fly Management in Animal Agriculture Systems and Impacts on Animal Health and Food Safety
- **S1077** Enhancing Microbial Food Safety by Risk Analysis
- **S1078** Cognitive Influence on Teaching, Learning, and Decision Making Around Critical Agricultural and Natural Resource Issues
- **S1079** Peanut Variety and Quality Evaluation for Development of Virginia type Cultivars with High Oleic Trait, Flavor, and Rainfed Production
- **S1080** Improving Soybean Arthropod Pest Management in the U.S
- **S1081** Nutritional Systems for Swine to Increase Reproductive Efficiency
- **S1082** Aging in Place: Home and Community in Rural America
- **S1083** Ecological and genetic diversity of soilborne pathogens and indigenous microflora
- **S1084** Industrial Hemp Production, Processing, and Marketing in the U.S.
- **SERA17** Organization to Minimize Nutrient Loss from the Landscape
- **SERA18** Rice Technical Workers Group



*Mid-term Reviews 2022*

- **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

# SAAESD Budget FY2022-2023

<b>Annual Revenue (crosses fiscal years)</b>	<b>Approved 2022</b>	<b>Actuals</b>
Base Assessment	\$ 425,000	\$ 425,000
Cotton Winter Nursery	\$ 35,000	\$ 35,000
CottonGen	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000
<b>Total Annual Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 485,000</b>	<b>\$ 485,000</b>
Projected Carryover	\$ 137,921	\$ 139,652
<b>Total Revenue Available</b>	<b>\$ 622,921</b>	<b>\$ 624,652</b>
 <b>Expenses</b>		
<b>Salary and Fringe Benefits (includes 1x merit bonus)</b>		
Salary - Gary Thompson	\$ 246,471	\$ 246,471
Fringe (30.8%) - Gary Thompson	\$ 74,887	\$ 74,887
Salary - Cindy Morley	\$ 62,154	\$ 62,154
Fringe (30.8%) - Cindy Morley	\$ 18,885	\$ 18,885
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ 402,397</b>	<b>\$ 402,397</b>
 <b>Operating</b>		
<b>Travel</b>		
Executive Director Travel	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,092
Coordinator Travel	\$ 5,000	\$ 6,124
<b>Other</b>		
Office operations	\$ 2,000	\$ 1,523
Website & Computers	\$ 1,200	\$ 2,878
NC-FAR Dues	\$ 500	\$ 500
Awards	\$ 325	\$ 469
<b>Meetings and Sponsorships</b>		
AV For Fall 2022 Meeting in Baltimore	\$ -	\$ 265
National Ag Communications Symposium Sponsorship	\$ -	\$ 500
ACE Conference Sponsorship	\$ -	\$ 1,000
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ 34,025</b>	<b>\$ 38,351</b>
<b>Subtotal Salaries &amp; Operational Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 436,422</b>	<b>\$ 440,748</b>
 Cotton Winter Nursery	 \$ 35,000	 35000
CottonGen	\$ 25,000	25000
 <b>Total Expenses</b>	 <b>\$ 496,422</b>	 <b>\$ 500,748</b>
 <b>Projected Carryover</b>	 <b>\$ 126,499</b>	 <b>\$ 123,904</b>

# SAAESD Budget Proposal FY2023-2024

## Annual Revenue (crosses fiscal years)

Base Assessment	\$	435,283
Cotton Winter Nursery	\$	35,000
CottonGen	\$	25,000
<b>Total Annual Revenue</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>495,283</b>
Projected Carryover	\$	123,904
<b>Total Revenue Available</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>619,187</b>

## Expenses

### Salary and Fringe Benefits

Salary - Gary Thompson	\$	244,078
Fringe (31.6%) - Gary Thompson	\$	77,129
Merit Bonus (3% one time)- Gary Thompson	\$	7,322
Merit Bonus Fringe 16.5% (one time)- Gary Thompson	\$	1,208
Salary - Cindy Morley	\$	61,551
Fringe (31.6%) - Cindy Morley	\$	19,450
Merit Bonus (3 % one time)- Cindy Morley	\$	1,847
Merit Bonus Fringe 16.5% (one time)- Cindy Morley	\$	305
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>412,889</b>

### Operating

#### Travel

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

#### Other

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

#### Meetings and Sponsorships

Fall Meeting support	\$	500
Sponsorships	\$	1,000

**Subtotal** \$ **36,500**

**Subtotal Salaries & Operational Expenses** \$ **449,389**

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

**Total Expenses** \$ **509,389**

**Projected Carryover** \$ **109,798**

# SAAESD Assessments

## Base Assessments

<u>Institution</u>	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Average	Proportion	Base Assessment
Auburn University	5,060,507	5,294,994	5,279,531	5,267,582	5,276,588	5,235,840	0.064302	\$ 27,990
University of Arkansas	4,280,275	4,535,167	4,522,067	4,512,078	4,519,868	4,473,891	0.054945	\$ 23,916
University of Florida	3,871,629	4,132,286	4,118,647	4,107,830	4,115,179	4,069,114	0.049973	\$ 21,753
University of Georgia	6,119,100	6,470,436	6,473,325	6,458,717	6,469,863	6,398,288	0.078578	\$ 34,204
University of Kentucky	6,553,553	6,920,578	6,901,090	6,780,158	6,689,788	6,769,033	0.083132	\$ 36,186
Louisiana State University	3,906,444	4,122,171	4,111,288	4,103,342	4,110,454	4,070,740	0.049993	\$ 21,761
Mississippi State University	4,904,548	5,163,379	5,150,367	5,140,945	5,149,592	5,101,766	0.062656	\$ 27,273
North Carolina State University	7,981,805	8,486,139	8,463,378	8,911,888	8,924,846	8,553,611	0.105048	\$ 45,726
Oklahoma State University	4,071,242	4,359,273	4,343,821	4,330,921	4,338,072	4,288,666	0.052670	\$ 22,926
University of Puerto Rico	4,899,514	5,139,170	5,232,974	5,329,940	5,436,704	5,207,660	0.063956	\$ 27,839
Clemson University	4,366,083	4,608,290	4,599,927	4,594,612	4,606,046	4,554,992	0.055941	\$ 24,350
University of Tennessee	6,036,296	6,411,616	6,391,689	6,375,396	6,385,242	6,320,048	0.077618	\$ 33,786
Texas A&M University	8,630,764	9,285,065	9,249,539	9,219,184	9,234,351	9,123,781	0.112051	\$ 48,774
Virginia Tech	5,220,403	5,535,865	5,519,298	5,506,056	5,514,796	5,459,284	0.067046	\$ 29,184
University of the Virgin Islands	1,552,919	1,713,680	1,810,399	1,907,628	2,009,085	1,798,742	0.022091	\$ 9,616
	77,455,082	82,178,109	82,167,340	82,546,277	82,780,474	81,425,456	1.00000	\$ 435,283

## Cotton Assessments

State	Acres Harvested (1,000's) <sup>1</sup>				Acreage Category	2023-2025 Cotton Assessments		
	2020	2021	2022	Average		Database	Nursery	Total
Texas	3,181	5,566	2,080	3,609	6	\$4,167	\$5,833	\$10,000
Georgia	1,180	1,160	1,280	1,207	5	\$3,472	\$4,861	\$8,333
Arkansas	520	475	630	542	4	\$2,778	\$3,889	\$6,667
Mississippi	525	430	525	493	4	\$2,778	\$3,889	\$6,667
Alabama	446	401	430	426	3	\$2,083	\$2,917	\$5,000
Oklahoma	430	440	290	387	3	\$2,083	\$2,917	\$5,000
North Carolina	330	365	460	385	3	\$2,083	\$2,917	\$5,000
Tennessee	275	270	325	290	2	\$1,389	\$1,944	\$3,333
South Carolina	179	207	265	217	2	\$1,389	\$1,944	\$3,333
Louisiana	165	104	190	153	2	\$1,389	\$1,944	\$3,333
Florida	93	90	104	96	1	\$694	\$972	\$1,667
Virginia	79	74	90	81	1	\$694	\$972	\$1,667
						<b>\$25,000</b>	<b>\$35,000</b>	<b>\$60,000</b>
						\$694/unit	\$972/unit	

<sup>1</sup> Based on NASS statistics.

**RESOLUTION HONORING  
Henry Fadamiro**

**Whereas**, Dr. Henry Fadamiro, Former Associate Director and Chief Scientific Officer for Texas A&M AgriLife Research, will no longer participate directly in the activities of the Southern Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors; and

**Whereas**, Dr. Fadamiro has, during his years of service, contributed significantly to the activities of the association by serving on the ESCOP Diversity Catalyst Committee (Chair of DCC 2021-2022), serving on the ESCOP Chairs Advisory Committee and ESCOP Executive Committee, serving on the ESCOP Science and Tech Committee, serving on the SAAESD Strategic Implementation team, and providing leadership as an administrative advisor to advisory committees and multistate projects; and

**Whereas**, Dr. Fadamiro has 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 at Mississippi State University on April 18, 2023 expresses sincere appreciation to Dr. Henry Fadamiro 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. Fadamiro an appropriate copy of this resolution in honor of his leadership and contributions.

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**Dr. Paula Agudelo, Chair**



Southern Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors