

## ESCOP Science and Technology Committee (STC)

### Notes from the September 24, 2019 informal breakfast meeting.

#### Committee Members Present:

Jody Jellison (NERA; Incoming Chair), Chris Davies (WAAESD), Susan Duncan (SAAESD), Bill Barker (NCRA) Bret Hess (Executive Vice-Chair)

#### ESCOP Websites:

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

<http://escop.info/committee/national-integrated-pest-managementcoordinating-committee-nipmcc/>

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

**S&T Committee (STC)** Incoming Chair, Jellison opened the meeting by asking if STC should respond to the OSTP questionnaire (<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2019/09/10/2019-19470/request-for-information-on-the-bioeconomy>) or if responses should be submitted by individual institutions. Concern was expressed about the short timeline for submission of responses. Jellison also asked the small contingent if it was appropriate for STC to respond and if there were specific questions STC would like to address. After lengthy discussion, the consensus of the group was to distribute the questionnaire to regional research EDs and leave it to each region to decide to either submit responses as a region and/or as individual institutions.

Incoming Chair Jellison explained to the group that last year's STC had suggested to review the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) report "Science Breakthroughs to Advance Food and Agricultural Research by 2030" for areas in which the system's multistate research committees are addressing the five main subjects of the report. Jellison then read the five most important initiatives that the report indicated need to be addressed by food and agriculture research:

1. The potential of microbiomes—in the animal gut, in soil, and everywhere in between—to increase efficiency and overcome obstacles in production.
2. Advancements in genetic evaluation and editing, including making the most of CRISPR and other technologies to accelerate the evolution of food production.
3. Expanding and analyzing the many pools of data involved in growing and producing food.
4. Developing and improving sensors and biosensors across all agricultural sectors to increase productivity and better target interventions.
5. Examining, through transdisciplinary collaborations, entire systems in food production and finding the keys to adapting and transforming them to overcome challenges and increase production.

The discussion centered around taking a scan of current work being done then identifying gaps. One thought was to identify multistate projects in the system's portfolio that could be highlighted by the National Impact Statement Writer.

STC monthly Zoom conferences are currently scheduled every fourth Monday from 4 to 5 pm Eastern. Incoming Chair Jellison would like fellow members to weigh in on whether to keep the meetings as currently scheduled or determine if every fourth Tuesday or Thursday from 4 to 5 pm Eastern might be better for the committee majority.

**The next STC Zoom conference is scheduled for 4-5 pm EDT on October 28, 2019.**