



ESCOP
Experiment Station Committee
on Organization and Policy



2020 ESS Business Meeting Agenda
October 1, 2020 (6:00 - 8:15 p.m. EDT)

Time	Agenda Item	Topic and Presenter(s)
6:00 p.m.	1.0	Call to Order – Moses T. Kairo, ESS Chair <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1.1 Approval of Agenda • 1.2 Approval of Minutes (September 25, 2019) • 1.3 Changing of the Guard – Gary Thompson • 1.4 Approval of Interim Actions • 1.5 ESS Awards for Excellence in Leadership – Resolution • 1.6 2021 ESS Chair Election – Western Region
6:10 p.m.	2.0	NRSP Review Committee – Doug Buhler and Jeff Jacobsen
6:30 p.m.	3.0	ESS Budget Discussion – Moses T. Kairo and Alton Thompson
7:00 p.m.	4.0	CMC – Steve Loring, Ryan McConaghy, Forbes Tate Partners and Rick Rhodes
7:20 p.m.	5.0	BLC and Finance Committee Report/BAC - Ernie Minton and Jeff Jacobsen
7:30 p.m.	6.0	Conversation with Acting NIFA Director - Parag Chitnis NIFA Update on System Responses
7:45 p.m.	7.0	APLU Update - Doug Steele
7:55 p.m.	8.0	Results of the NRSP Votes – Doug Buhler
8:00 p.m.	9.0	Consent Agenda Items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LEAD 21 • NIDB • USDA ARS • ECOP Liaison Report to ESCOP • Capacity Funds Working Group • PBD • DCC • STC • Members of NIFA's Research Working Group
8:05 p.m.	10.0	Resolutions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retirements/New Positions • Host Institution and Region
8:10 p.m.	11.0	2021 Meeting Announcement – Chris Pritsos and Bret Hess, Hosts
8:15 p.m.	12.0	Final Remarks and Adjourn – Moses T. Kairo

Agenda Item 2.0 NRSP Review Committee (RC)
Presenters: Doug Buhler and Jeff Jacobsen
Action: For Discussion and Vote (1862 AES membership)

NRSP-RC Committee Members:

Chair: Doug Buhler (NCRA)	Delegates:
Past Chair: Fred Servello (NERA)	Shirley Hymon-Parker (ARD)
	Mark McGuire (WAAESD)
	Keith Owens (SAAESD)
	Matt Wilson (NERA)
Executive Vice-Chair:	Don Latham (CARET, Stakeholder)
Jeff Jacobsen (NCRA ED)	Tom Bewick (NIFA)
Assistant Director, Ex-officio:	Mike Schmitt (ECOP)
Chris Hamilton (NCRA AD, Recorder)	Bret Hess (WAAESD ED)

Website: <http://escop.info/committee/nrsp-rc/>

NRSP Guidelines

The NRSP Guidelines (2015) were reviewed, updated, extensively modified and widely disseminated. These *new* NRSP Guidelines were provided to regional associations for comment, regional EDs re-reviewed after responses to regional associations were integrated, re-reviewed by the NRSP RC. The NRSP RC approved the final version and per our ESS Rules of Operation, the final document was provided to 1862 AES members 30 days in advance of the annual ESS meeting. Electronic voting was available prior to this meeting and will be closed after the NRSP RC report. This formal vote by 1862 directors, if affirmative, will immediately activate the NRSP Guidelines (2020) as the official version of NRSPs. Shortly thereafter, any approved changes to the Guidelines will be incorporated into NIMSS via our annual contract with Clemson for NIMSS maintenance and improvements.

NRSP Projects

On May 27 and June 3, 2020, the NRSP RC virtually reviewed, discussed three renewal NRSPs and passed official motions. NRSP RC findings were communicated to the regional AA representatives and regional EDs. The following NRSP RC recommendations, as seconded motions (shown below), have been provided to NRSP RC members and EDs for discussion at their regional meetings prior to the annual ESS meeting. Official electronic voting opportunities have been available prior to these meetings with an official close of the balloting scheduled for 15 minutes following the NRSP RC report by Doug Buhler. Near the end of the 2020 annual ESS meeting, results will be officially announced.

2020 Ballot

- I. **Approve the updated NRSP Guidelines as distributed and dated 8/24/2020.**
 - Eliminates redundancies found in previous versions and strengthens review criteria and business plans.
 - Housekeeping to clean up broken web links and simplify text, both in the instructions and the NIMSS forms. NIMSS updates will be made by Clemson developers after Guideline approval.
 - Presents a two-track approach to NRSPs. Most NRSPs would receive finite OTT funding and require a plan to transition off of funding by their second 5-year cycle. A small number of “Capacity” NRSPs would be allowed to support on-going research efforts of national scope and impact.

- II. **Support NRSP4: *Facilitating Registration of Pest Management Technology for Specialty Crops and Specialty Uses* renewal request as written at the proposed funding level of \$481,182 per year for FFY2021 through FFY2025.**
 - Provide a clear distinction of NRSP4 from IR-4 and provide a future model to diversify the funding model, with progress on this effort to be reported back to the NRSP-RC no later than midterm review time.

- III. **Reject NRSP6: *The US Potato Genebank: Acquisition, Classification, Preservation, Evaluation and Distribution of Potato (Solanum) Germplasm* renewal proposal as submitted.**
 - Results in one additional and final year of funding at \$135,000 for FFY2021 (ending 9/30/2021).
 - Non-responsive to prior requests to provide alternative business models over multiple project review cycles.
 - While the NRSP RC does not support continuation of the current project, there is value in continuing a relationship between ESS and the US Potato Gene Bank. We hope that discussion will continue at the appropriate levels of USDA-ARS, ESS, and the University of Wisconsin as the host institution.

- IV. **Support NRSP9: *National Animal Nutrition Program* renewal request as written at the proposed funding levels (\$199,000 for FFYs 2021, 2022, and 2025; \$219,000 for FFY2023, and \$249,000 for FFY2024).**
 - Request initiation of a collaborative discussion for a future funding model, with progress to be reported back to the NRSP-RC no later than midterm review time.
 - NRSP9 must also submit a more complete and comprehensive impact analysis than the previous version by midterm review time.

Agenda Item 4.0: Communications and Marketing Committee (CMC)

Date: October 1, 2020

Presenter: Mark Rieger (Chair), Steve Loring (Past chair)

1. **Committee Membership** (as of October 1, 2020): see [ESCOP Communications and Marketing \(CMC\)](#)
2. **Meetings:**
 - The CMC met by teleconference on September 8, 2020.
3. **Accomplishments/Upcoming Plans:**
 - The Executive Committee of the CMC met with Forbes/Tate Partners (FTP) on July 21, August 4, August 18, September 1, and September 15.
 - FTP has performed the proposed assessment and audit of the current communications and marketing project and plan. Strengths, challenges, and opportunities were identified and are included in the attachment to this brief. In building the roadmap, FTP has also initiated messaging and tactic development.
 - The CMC requested to the BAA Policy Board of Directors that the CMC be appointed as a standing committee of the BAA. The BAA approved the request. Language is being drafted to amend the rules of operation of the BAA and a BAA membership vote will be taken on the proposed changes.
 - The CMC has requested that an additional section, similar to AHS, CES, and ESS, be established to represent agricultural communicators.
 - On September 15, Doug Steele shared system-wide, a draft of the initial framework of the FTP Strategic Communications Roadmap Outline (attached). The goal of sharing the document was the socialization of the constructs of a communications roadmap and the opportunity for the BAA membership to provide input on the draft document.
 - On September 16, Mark Rieger forwarded to the section chairs of AHS, ECOP, ESCOP, APS, International Programs, and ACE a link to the Strategic Communications Roadmap Outline and a solicitation of input from the sections.
 - Members of the Executive Committee will be making presentations on the roadmap to the sections during upcoming section meetings.
 - The CMC will be requesting from the sections that are currently provide financial support to the committee (i.e., AHS, CES and ESS), a commitment of \$100,000 per section per year for a period of two years (CY 2021, 2022.) These funds are anticipated to support 1.5 FTE salary and fringe plus operating and reflect the “boots on the ground” that will implement the roadmap on behalf of the system. Before the termination of kglobal effort, each section supported the communications and marketing project annually at \$133,333
 - The CMC plans to gather and incorporate all input into a final roadmap to be presented to the BAA on November 12.
 - Feedback on the roadmap can be provided at any time to APLU_BAA@forbes-tate.com.

4. **Action Requested:** For information only.
5. **Attachments:**
 - a. 200901 BAA Roadmap Plan (September 15, 2020)

To: BAA Communications and Marketing Committee (CMC)

From: Forbes Tate Partners (FTP)

Subject: Strategic Communications Roadmap Plan Outline

Overview

The following memo provides an initial outline for APLU-BAA's new strategic communications roadmap plan. The outline, informed by what FTP learned during the Phase I assessment, is designed to provide an overview of:

- The plan's objective and strategic considerations;
- Target audiences and suggested message frames;
- Internal processes, roles, and responsibilities within BAA to support execution; and
- Suggested tactics and an illustrative messaging calendar.

The recommendations below are based in part on message, schedule, and logistical assumptions subject to revision and adjustment and is contingent upon participation by Extension Committee on Organization and Policy (ECOP), Experiment Station Committee on Organization and Policy (ESCOP), and the Administrative Heads Section (AHS) representing Cooperative Extension, research, and academic programs. However, the inclusive approach taken to soliciting feedback and shaping these recommendations is meant to help build a foundation for an effort that will ultimately serve and support the entirety of BAA and beyond to embrace existing partners like the Commission on Food, Environment, & Renewable Resources (CFERR). Please note the recommendations are meant to serve as general guidelines for the CMC and participating entities to develop the specific components of a strategic communications plan, and do not include all possible tactics and messaging examples.

We imagine this plan will encompass not only agriculture, but other topic areas including public health, nutrition, and youth community development.

Objective and Strategic Considerations

Objective

The CMC works in concert with other entities in the land-grant university system, including the lobbying team at Cornerstone Government Affairs, Council on Government Affairs, various committee chairs, and individual Extensions, research programs, and institutions to protect and increase levels of federally appropriated and awarded funding. Accordingly, the primary objective of the plan is to help BAA successfully secure additional federal resources to support its critical research, Extension, and education efforts. A secondary objective is to influence key stakeholders through advocacy communications.

Strategic Considerations



As it pursues this objective on behalf of BAA, the CMC encounters a set of strengths, challenges, and opportunities that can be summarized as follows:

- **Strengths:** APLU has a compelling and popular story to tell about the value of the organization's work and the work and strengths of individual institutions, students, and graduates who represent a broad network of potential messengers. Furthermore, land-grant universities enjoy broad-based support from the communities they serve and have a unique connection to every county throughout the country. They bring hope and opportunity, serving urban and rural populations, first generation students, veterans, and beyond – providing unique value to students through partnerships between community, research, and teaching in a way that only land-grant universities can.
- **Challenges:** BAA's messaging efforts have been hampered by internal communication and coordination issues that lead to a lack of awareness or confusion about how to tell its story, and what is defined as agriculture, ultimately inhibiting the effectiveness of potential messengers and the message itself. Differences in the ability of individual institutions to participate, or reconcile priorities, have also been identified as a challenge that an overarching communications plan should address.
- **Opportunities:** BAA has the opportunity to revitalize existing platforms and a ready-made bank of achievements that, in combination with improved internal processes, will allow it to reboot, rather than rebuild, an effective communications effort. BAA can lean in on the existing national network it has and the local support those institutions receive.

Based on this assessment, the strategy proposed will achieve the objective by positioning the land-grant system as a unique, high-value resource that not only fulfills an educational mission but also effectively collaborates with national and local stakeholders, and by communicating how investments of federal dollars have, and will continue to, allow institutions and partners to deliver advances in critical fields. The communications plan will play a critical role by maintaining ongoing awareness of BAA activities year-round (as opposed to just around specific asks), and demonstrating broad-based support for, and benefits of, BAA activities. In doing so, the plan is designed to be continuously informed by, and supportive of, members of the Council on Government Affairs and Cornerstone Government Affairs as they make direct asks of policymakers.

Audiences

Audiences

The plan is designed to speak to three distinct, but related audiences. By reaching these audiences with messages that are tailored while still consistent with the overarching framework, the plan will create a self-contained echo chamber in which policymakers are being directly persuaded while also hearing from trusted, influential, and reinforcing validators. These audiences include:

Decisionmakers: The primary audience for the plan will be elected and appointed officials and staff who are responsible for making federal funding decisions including those listed below, with emphasis in any given phase determined in conjunction with key internal groups such as the Council on Government Affairs and Cornerstone. This initial list will be reviewed and revised as circumstances change and new opportunities present themselves.



- Congressional leadership
- House and Senate Agriculture Committee members
- House and Senate Appropriations Committee and Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee members
- Additional relevant committees and caucuses
- Secretary of Agriculture
- NIFA Director and Budget Staff
- USDA Undersecretary for Research, Education, and Economics

Amplifiers: A secondary audience for the plan should be comprised of “end-users” who benefit directly from BAA’s work and other natural allies, including:

- Farmers tied to local land-grant institutions
- Farmers market operators and restaurants
- Research beneficiaries
- State, Extension, and local government officials who will support federal requests
- Agriculture and commodity association advocates
- Local primary educators and civic organizations
- Affiliated agriculture organizations

Messengers: In order to successfully reach these first two audiences, CMC will also need to effectively educate and equip messengers within the APLU-BAA network. Specifically, CMC will need to not only provide CARET, policy committee, Extension, experiment station, and individual institution members with the messages they are intended to convey, but the rationale for those messages.

Messaging Frame

Given the Ag Is America account’s broad base of followers and established site, the plan does not envision a full rebranding. However, we do recommend that on these platforms, and across press and advocacy materials, BAA adopt a message frame that rests on these main proof points. We have also identified additional areas that could be built out more over time, including youth wellness, community health, food, and nutrition. While intended to drive toward a unified ask for federal funding, each one of these messages can and should be supported whenever possible by human faces – students, faculty, and community members. These real-world examples will help paint a picture of how the land-grant system is keeping its diverse graduates, and by extension the nation, competitive and prepared for the future.

Investments in agriculture and life science research and the Extension System result in safer, higher quality food systems.

- Example: “The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated the importance of a resilient food chain supply – from farm to table. Safeguarding America’s food security relies on robust, predictable federal investments in land-grant university research projects, and in the partnership between farmers and ranchers and local Extension Systems. We encourage policymakers to prioritize federal funding in agriculture and life science research, the Cooperative Extension System to continue bringing cutting-edge discoveries to those who can put them into practice.”



- Example: "Even before COVID-19 negatively affected global supply chains, rapid population growth was making issues like hunger, low crop yields, inadequate food storage, and nutrition more complicated – and more important than ever before – to tackle. American land-grant universities must be equipped with the federal funding required to be at the forefront of solving these pressing global problems."

Investments in agriculture and life science research and the Extension System make communities stronger and healthier.

- Example: "Land grant universities make significant contributions to the resiliency of communities. Federal investments in the system generate a strong return for taxpayers by reducing public health costs, offering education and opportunity to their neighbors, and improving the quality of life.
- Example: "America's land-grant universities have the knowledge, expertise, and local presence needed to help influence the social, economic, and environmental determinants of health. Land-grant research makes Americans healthier by improving the nutritional quality of food, finding solutions to make food more available, and helping individuals to make healthy food choices. These institutions also contribute to social health by helping people to avoid opioid abuse, tackle learning challenges, or promoting positive youth-development. Federal lawmakers should prioritize investments in Cooperative Extension and land-grant research that have proven to benefit youth, family, and community health outcomes."
- Example: "Cooperative Extension is engaging millions of American youths through 4-H, the nation's largest youth development organization. 4-H programming brings young people and adults together to create community change and promote civic engagement, healthy living, and scientific understanding. These positive outcomes are directly tied to continued investment in the Cooperative Extension Section found within land-grant universities."

Investments in agriculture and life science research and the Extension System address critical challenges facing agriculture and the environment.

- Example: "America's agricultural sector knows firsthand the devastating impacts brought about by climate change and natural disasters, including fire, drought, hurricanes, and more. That is why land-grant universities, along with the nation's leading ag researchers and cooperative Extension leaders, are teaming up with key federal research agencies, farmers, ranchers, and communities across the country to address this national security threat head on. Congress can play an integral role in this effort by approving funding increases for federal research programs designed to help farmers and ranchers – through agriculture and life science research and Extension – protect our environment and our precious natural resources."
- Example: "Investing in groundbreaking work to develop better biofuels seeds America's success by making sure we can power our economy and protect our climate. Only land-grant universities have the knowledge, research, and Extension reach to deliver these returns for the American taxpayer."
- Example: "When unanticipated crises strike, America needs expertise and ingenuity. Federal investments in land grant university research help to create a resilient resource that can nimbly focus knowledge, creativity, and problem-solving power to deal with new threats, safeguarding public health and our economy."

Investments in agriculture and life science research and the Extension System are vital to safeguarding America's status as a global leader in innovation.

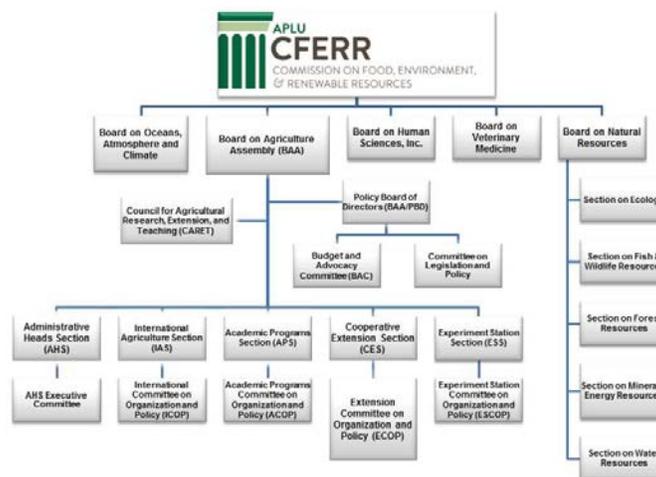


- Example: "Innovation has always been America's most important competitive edge. Federal investments that enable land grant universities to make the next generation of breakthroughs in areas like gene-editing technology, artificial intelligence, and precision agriculture are needed to ensure that the U.S. remains a global leader."
- Example: "From undertaking life-saving antimicrobial research and tackling chronic disease through the lens of nutrition, to mapping our natural resources and preparing the next generation of the workforce, the agriculture and life science Extension departments at land-grant universities are essential to seeding America's long-term success across a wide spectrum of issues and industries – not just agriculture. Federal investments in these programs must be robust and predictable to ensure American innovation continues at its highest potential."

In addition to weaving these themes into topline messaging and materials, they should be used to guide the message calendar through the use of theme weeks/months that focus tactical execution around a specific land-grant contribution (e.g. food security, food affordability, energy independence, antimicrobial resistance, health and wellness, youth, family and community development, and environmentalism). While the themes will provide a cohesive starting point for any pre-planned content, they can be coupled alongside relevant topics from the news cycle and emerging critical issues as needed in order to show the collective power of the system to rapidly address changing issues.

Internal Roles, Responsibilities, and Communications

In order to fully engage and mobilize the various entities whose participation will be required to make the communications plan a success, the plan recommends assigning each "communicator" entity within BAA's organizational chart a specific communications responsibility to establish a regular cadence of internal communications and asks. This cadence of communications should be designed to provide members of the overall communications infrastructure, including those involved with direct advocacy and wider communications efforts (Council on Government Affairs, Cornerstone Government Affairs, APLU Communications), with a combination of standing, formal opportunities to contribute and coordinate as well as open channels to provide situational input.





CMC: CMC responsibilities will include internal coordination, overall management of the strategic plan and message calendar, execution of recurring daily and monthly communications activities (e.g. online platforms, social media content and posting, clip compilations), and planning for “tentpole” communications activities. In order to create consistent internal engagement, CMC should send a bi-weekly update report note throughout the “communicator organization” that includes items such as:

- Notification of the theme of the month, accompanied by talking points and message guidance
- Notable recent postings and clips
- Calls for internal action (e.g. submission of institution-specific coverage, accomplishments, or third-party engagement)

Policy Guides: The roles and internal reporting responsibilities for this group would include guidance on priority setting at the beginning of the year, regular (bi-weekly or monthly) updates on decisionmaker contacts and feedback, and recommendations on specific projects, priorities, or decisionmaker targets to be highlighted during thematic periods on the message calendar including food, agriculture and environmental resources. Some participant group recommendations for consideration include:

- **Policy Board of Directors (supported by the Budget Advocacy Committee and Committee on Legislative Policy):** Set and communicate policy priorities to be highlighted within the “one ask” supported by the communications plan.
- **CGA:** Provide direct policy input and content contributions for communications materials.
- **Cornerstone Government Affairs:** Provide updates on advocacy needs and message targeting based on interactions with policymakers.
- **Land-Grant University Communicators:** Individual university communicators will play a critical role in shaping the communications strategy and leading its execution. Each institution has active, skilled communicators who will be able to provide real-time input into the plan direction as events unfold. Their expertise should be leveraged to, among other things, lead the development of locally targeted messages and responses to local concerns, while providing critical input on the national strategy and messaging and supporting the compilation and dissemination of communications materials as requested.

APLU Communications: The responsibilities of the APLU communications office will be to engage in regular message coordination, provide ongoing technical advice, where helpful, in reaction to CMC updates and message planning, and assistance with planning, executing, and promoting “tentpole” communications activities.

Local Actors: The responsibilities of this group, which would include CARET, the Cooperative Extension Section, experiment station section, AHS, and others, would be responsible for providing updated lists of accomplishments, profiles, and stories on a quarterly basis, as well as engaging with local media periodically at CMC’s request and in partnership with Land Grand University (LGU) communicators. For example:

- **CARET:** As volunteer advocates involved in making policy recommendations to the Policy Board of Directors, helping to coordinate advocacy efforts for ECOP, ESCOP, and others, and carrying messages across institutions, CARET delegates are primed to play a key role in



assisting with the communications plan at the local and institutional level. In their new, evolving roles as year-round advocates, they could serve as the primary “managers” of the communications plan at their institution, and assume primary responsibility for interacting with CMC, organizing communications outreach for other groups, reporting up accomplishments, and advocating for LGUs.

- **Extension and Experiment Stations:** Designees within the Land Grant University system (Extension and Research Stations across our 1862, 1890, and 1994 institutions) would have a responsibility to help generate primary content.
- **Additional Sections and Committees:** These groups would support general reporting on activities and provide other input as needed.
- **Expanded opportunities for the Commission on Food, Environment, & Renewable Resources (CFERR):** We recommend that participation in this plan expand beyond the confines of BAA and extend participation to other APLU committees with a role to play in your ultimate success.

For each entity, a communication liaison should be identified shortly after strategic plan adoption and trained during capacity development sessions in January within the guidelines of the institutions they represent. As the plan is further developed and implemented, additional participant groups may be added.

Tactics: Overview and Cadence

The tactics recommended in the strategic communications plan are envisioned to rely heavily on social media and online promotion to maintain a manageable, but consistent, daily drumbeat of communications activity, augmented by periodic earned media engagement, and punctuated by major communications pushes around “tentpole” events such as congressional visits or major report releases. Every tactical item also presents an opportunity to highlight student and faculty success stories that bring the land-grant mission to life.

Daily/Weekly

- Daily online posting of news stories featuring land-grant universities, with brief commentary on relevant topics, or promoting/engaging target audiences online
- “Land-Grant Success of the Week” post with picture or graphic highlighting the work of a specific institution, student, faculty member, initiative
- Twitter/online poll soliciting engagement from target audiences ranging from specific policy questions (e.g. What is the most important thing agriculture can do to combat climate change?) or general questions to spark conversation (e.g. What’s your favorite farm experience?)

Monthly

- Publication of online infographic highlighting BAA past and future achievements (including any noteworthy achievements of students and faculty at member institutions) in monthly theme area
- Thematically tied essay authored by BAA member posted on Ag Is America or placed in local news outlet
- Monthly “reporter note” sent to press list of national and local reporters to keep media up to date on BAA developments and lay a foundation for future outreach



- Paid online promotion of social posts linking to Ag Is America web copy on issue of the month
- Paid online promotion of BAA “Champions” at the national, state, and local level who have been supportive of BAA priorities

Quarterly

Once per quarter, BAA should actively provide communications materials, promote online, and attempt to secure earned media coverage for a major “tentpole” event that involves multiple stakeholders and topics. For each of these events, CMC should engage APLU communications support in putting together promotional items that could include a press release, localized releases or content for local communicators to use in engaging media, press availabilities with BAA leadership members, and paid promotions and online advertisements. Examples of “tentpole” events could include:

- Congressional “fly-in” meetings
- Release of a “Seeding Our Success” report building on the accomplishments in the impact database
- National 4-H Conference
- “Call on Congress” mini-campaign during the final stages of the appropriations season

Tactics: Social Media and Paid Campaigns

In order to maintain a manageable, consistent, daily drumbeat of communications activity, it is important to understand the value of posting on social media and how it can increase BAA’s communication efforts. By leveraging existing social media accounts, including the Ag Is America Facebook and Twitter accounts, BAA can increase its online presence and reputation, and promote member universities’ research efforts. It is the ideal place to tie together the work your undergraduates, individual institutions, and Extension are doing, as well as the collective group, to show congressional targets the value land-grants have in their districts and nationwide.

Below are some best practices and how to implement them.

Post regularly

When content is posted consistently, it can increase BAA’s impressions, mentions, and overall online presence. Ag Is America’s social media outreach has been dormant for over a year. Content should be posted at least three times a week across all social media platforms to sustain and increase engagement rates.

Content can be scheduled ahead of time on the platforms themselves in order to maximize efficiency and a content calendar can be used to plan out content, whether it’s around a certain event like a 4H conference, or a national day of celebration like National Strawberry day.

Own the content

An audit of existing resources found most social content engagement came from being tagged in member universities’ posts. To increase overall content, posting organic tweets with a variety of content (graphics, videos, appropriate and relevant hashtags, quote retweets and more) will increase overall social engagement and allow for more website and social traffic. Posting a variety of content throughout the week will enable followers to see new and engaging posts. *Ex: A tweet*



posted with just text should be followed by either a tweet with a graphic or video, or even a retweet.

Additionally, staying in consistent contact with member universities communicators and asking them to send new research, announcements, or student successes to highlight will help with finding content to post. Communicators should also be given a heads up about any social media campaigns or hashtags you are trying to amplify so they can help extend the reach of that content to outside audiences.

Graphics or videos can be created by BAA, using free stock photos from royalty-free sites like [Unsplash](#) or [Pexels](#), or member universities can share videos with BAA if permission is granted.

Be intentional with clickable items

Tools like hashtags can be useful to drive brand identity, latch onto topics that are trending online, or get noticed by your target audience. However, when incorporating items that can be clicked into your social content (i.e. hashtags, links, and tags) consider their purpose and be intentional. Every clickable item is an opportunity to drive someone away from your post. If you're driving them to something (or someone) else you want them to see and engage with, that's great, but a deluge of unnecessary hashtags can muddy the waters. Though not a hard and fast rule, we generally recommend limiting the number of clickable items to three.

Run paid campaigns

Paid promotions on Twitter and Facebook generate higher than normal bumps in impressions and engagement. Paid, cost-effective ads on Twitter and Facebook linking back to the Ag Is America website will allow users who do not follow the channels to see BAA's content and increase its online presence.

Depending on the target audience, budgets for these paid ads can run anywhere between \$25-\$200/day.

Evaluating Success

In order to establish whether the content is engaging and reaching the right audience, it's important to look at the analytics of each paid and organic post. Analytics can give unique insights into what is working by evaluating engagement rate for each post, followers gained, or likes and retweets. Although each metric of success varies across different social media accounts and organizations, there are some general baselines that should be considered.

First, consider overall engagement rate, which means how many people saw the post then chose to interact with it by either liking, sharing, or commenting on it. Looking across industries, the standard engagement rate on Facebook is about 0.1% and on Twitter it is about 0.045%. But it is also important to understand what the average engagement rate for BAA's social properties will be used to set proper benchmarks. For example, Ag Is America's Twitter account has an average engagement rate of 0.1%, already higher than the industry benchmark. Setting a goal to increase the rate week over week will help create attainable goals.

Studying weekly or monthly analytics to evaluate the social content will help to determine long-term trends in engagement and website traffic. If the accounts are losing followers or dipping below the



industry benchmarks, it means the content isn't engaging users. To remedy this, switch up the various types of content that is being posted, change the tone of the social copy, and evaluate which previous posts got the most engagements.

How to Put A Week of Content Together

In thinking through content for the week, BAA could highlight:

- Notable calendar events
- Theme of the week or month
- News stories relevant to your priorities
- Pre-existing resources from APLU or member universities
- Individual institutions and their achievements
- Poll questions for followers (consider first what the poll results might look like)
- Evergreen content that is useful to regularly remind followers
- Trending hashtags or existing BAA hashtags
- Existing photos, graphics, or videos
- Young scientist features
- Undergraduate and graduate student features
- Faculty features
- Extension professional features
- Congressional targets

Using these categories as an outline, begin filling in draft posts. Use the same content across all of your social media accounts, but keep in mind Twitter has a 280-character limit (including links and spaces).

Sample Social Media Content Calendar and Posts

Below are examples of a full week of social media posts, including a mix of member university highlights and events.

Monday

- This week is the National @4H Conference! Delegations of 4-H youth from all over the country are heading to Washington, DC for a week of learning and mentorship. #Opportunity4All 🍀

Tuesday

- Invasive species like bamboo 🌱 not only throw off the look of your garden or backyard, they can disrupt entire ecosystems. Learn more from @ISUExtension on how they can be controlled 🙌 Quote RT: <https://twitter.com/ISUExtension/status/1288938693202501633>

Wednesday

- Wonder how winemakers adapt to short growing seasons? Watch @UNHAlumni's Annasamy Chandrakala @UNH_GradSchool #3MinuteThesis presentation on how nutrient-packed grapes 🍇 can do just that. Quote RT: <https://twitter.com/UNHAlumni/status/1281341615798460416>

Thursday

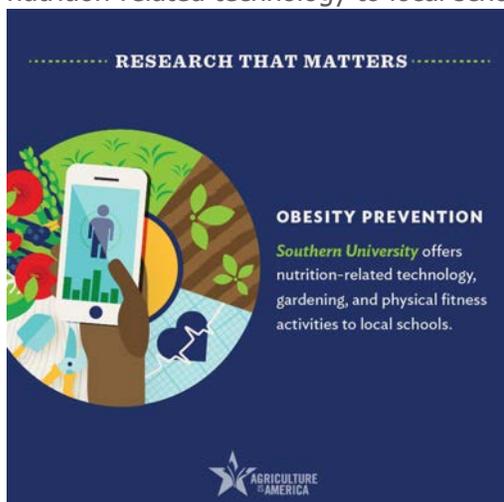
- Poll time! What do you think is the most important way to address climate change? 🌍



- Reducing emissions
- Supporting renewable energy sources
- Implementing a carbon tax
- Using responsible farming techniques

Friday

- Today is the last day of the National @4H Conference. From learning about civic engagement to personal development, we hope this served as an invaluable experience for all our 4-H delegates. What was your favorite part of the conference? #Opportunity4All 🍀
- Did you know September is National Childhood Obesity Month? Research made possible by universities like @SouthernU_BR help teach our nation's children how to garden and offers nutrition-related technology to local schools.



Tactics: Earned Media

Traditional earned media tactics help BAA tell its story in its own words, not just in a longer form but to a more targeted stakeholder audience, namely reporters who might write about your priorities and members of Congress who keep up with Beltway papers and their local media outlets. BAA should work with LGU communicators to ensure the timing and topic of any earned media tactics don't conflict with local issues or media priorities, as well as to identify local voices (students, faculty, community members) whose research and educational successes within the land-grant system help make the case for more federal funding.

Press Releases

BAA should send a formal release for every major "tentpole" event or development. Releases can also be used to make statements regarding bill signings, important votes in Congress, and funds allocated for agriculture and life sciences. In addition to a short summary of "the news" the release calls attention to, it typically includes a quote from the organization's leader. After a release is sent, the person quoted, or someone well-positioned to talk to media, should be prepared to handle any resulting interview requests. Or if needed, the request can be handed off to the APLU communications office.



Tuesday, September 15, 2020

Sending a release will require having a press list of reporters who cover the topic. For BAA, this should include certain national reporters covering federal funding and/or agriculture, local reporters in states of relevance, and trade reporters at the types of outlets who exclusively cover these issues. Any reporters who receive regular communications from BAA (like the reporter notes listed below) should also be included in news releases.

Reporter Notes

A monthly "reporter note" sent to this targeted list of national and local reporters would help keep this important audience up to date on BAA developments and lay a foundation for future outreach. This tactic is about developing advantageous relationships and thought leadership, so that 1) when news does break, reporters know to go to BAA for comment or background conversations, or 2) if there is a story BAA hopes to place, a degree of familiarity already exists between the group and the reporter.

The note should provide information about BAA's latest work and help reporters contextualize what is happening in the world of research and Extension that proves the value of federal investment.

Feature Articles and Letters to the Editor (LTEs)

Feature articles and LTEs go in-depth or make an argument and tell a story. They are some of the best traditional tools for putting a personal touch on an otherwise policy-heavy issue and getting the attention of members of Congress. Members' staffs monitor the news daily, so when local voices criticize, praise, or even mention a member of Congress in a local paper, it gets noticed.

These pieces could be used to highlight major achievements – and by extension the return on federal investments - or to call on Congress to get a bill across the finish line. Features go deeper than the news of the day to examine personal stories or highlight examples from member institutions to drive home a clear and consistent message (the need for more federal funding).

Another benefit of getting BAA content published is that it can be reused and amplified across existing social media channels, in alerts to BAA members and members of Congress, or passed on to the government affairs team for their use on the Hill.

LTEs are typically no longer than 200 words and respond to an article in a publication by substantiating it or refuting it. Before pitching any opinion piece, check with the intended publication to establish submission guidelines and word limits and work with land-grant university communicators to ensure timing and the topic do not conflict with local issue or media priorities.

Tactics: Member Engagement and Advocacy

Fly-Ins

Although it is difficult to know when life might return to "normal," a fly-in, be it virtual or in-person, is still a useful tool to build and reinforce the BAA brand on Capitol Hill and make members aware of its priorities. To ensure fly-ins are as effective as possible, it is essential that BAA members are briefed on the "one ask" and have talking points to support core messaging.



Fly-ins are another opportunity to highlight activities on social media, reach out to reporters – particularly Beltway reporters – and potentially place opinion content immediately before or after to reinforce the importance of federal investment in BAA activities for a public audience.

Conferences

If BAA members are already planning to attend certain conferences, like 4-H, encourage them to leverage their participation by engaging in communications outputs, such as using a consistent hashtag at the conference to make their content easier to find and share. Strengthening internal communications will give BAA a better idea of who is already planning to do what (and where and when), so that members can be encouraged to make use of BAA messaging at these types of events as appropriate, and enable BAA to strategically amplify their content.

Reports

The “Seeding Our Success” report would build on the accomplishments outlined in the impact database, tying them together in one place to tell one consistent story about the value of federal investment in agriculture and life science research and the Extension System. The report is an important piece of original, unique content that can be deployed using all the tactics mentioned above. For example, develop a relationship with a national reporter who has shown interest or writes about issues in the BAA policy space, then pitch the story to that reporter as an exclusive. Immediately after the article becomes public, disseminate the report broadly as a press release, amplify it on social media, and urge member institutions to do the same. Finally, write and place an op-ed in an outlet targeting multiple congressional targets, such as *The Hill*, or target an individual member using a local voice in a regional newspaper. That is the beauty of any single communications deliverable – they can often be used across multiple channels to provide more longevity and reach.

Illustrative Timeline of Activities

The following illustrative timeline is largely structured to mirror the congressional budget process, in order to sync major activities to key advocacy points. Ultimately, CMC should build a calendar that corresponds with planned conferences, events, announcements, and other key dates. CMC should also stay in constant contact with BAA to determine what individual institutions already have planned, so CMC can be ready to lift up those members and the broader group. Choosing these sorts of events strategically will ensure the main message and goal of these communications activities remain at the forefront.

Q1 2021

January

- Capacity building
- Briefing of BAA communicators network on roles and responsibilities
- Establishment of internal communications mechanisms
- Priority finalization

February – Introducing Message Frame in Support of “One Ask”



- Initiation of daily/weekly activities
- Public release of policy asks
- Themed monthly activities (e.g. infographic, essay/column)

March – Congressional Fly-In

- Continuation of daily/weekly activities
- Promotion of fly-in and reports from Washington to local media

Q2 2021

April – Food Security

- Continuation of daily/weekly/monthly activities

May – American Leadership

- Continuation of daily/weekly/monthly activities

June – "Seeding our Success" Report

- Continuation of daily/weekly/monthly activities
- Promotion of "Seeding our Success" Report

Q3 2021

July – Climate and Energy Independence

- Continuation of daily/weekly/monthly activities

August – Education and Innovation

- Continuation of daily/weekly/monthly activities

September – 4-H Convention

- Continuation of daily/weekly activities
- Promotion of and support for national 4-H convention

Q4 2021

October – Health and Safety

- Continuation of daily/weekly/monthly activities

November – "One Ask" Closing Push



- Continuation of daily/weekly activities
- National and local paid and earned media promotion of “one ask,” targeting key decisionmaker markets

December – Year in Review

- Continuation of daily/weekly/monthly activities
- 2022 Planning

■ SCO

Updated SCO Analysis

STRENGTHS

- BAA has a good story to tell about how its work is valuable and delivers results.
- BAA has reach with institutions all over the country, making for a broad-based audience of potential champions.
- Research enjoys strong public support and BAA has leaders to elevate it and give it a face.
- LGUs have a strong base of skilled, professional communicators versed in key issues and connected to key media channels.

CHALLENGES

- Irregular internal communications limit awareness of activities and the ability to leverage members and assets.
- Priorities and messages must be clear, streamlined, and durable.
- Several internal constituencies need to be addressed and balanced.
- Accomplishments and advocacy are communicated more through individual institutions than as part of a national identity.

OPPORTUNITIES

- BAA already has a rich catalog of achievements to raise up.
- Some existing platforms already have large followings that could be revitalized.
- Land-grant universities have a unique identity as accessible public institutions that deliver elite results.
- There are a variety of outside groups and organizations to partner with to raise BAA’s profile.



Agenda Item 5.0 ESCOP Budget and Legislative Committee (BLC)
Presentors: Ernie Minton and Jeff Jacobsen
Action: For Information

Committee Members:

<p>Chair: Ernie Minton (NCRA) Past Chair: Gary Thompson (Active Past Chair, NERA)</p> <p>Delegates: Alton Thompson (ARD) Dyremple Marsh (ARD) Gary Pierzynski (NCRA) Shawn Donkin (NCRA) Puneet Srivistava (NERA) Anton Bekkerman (NERA) Steve Lommel (SAAESD) Saied Mostaghimi (SAAESD) Glenda Humiston (WAAESD, Incoming Chair) Chris Pritsos (WAAESD)</p> <p>Executive Vice-Chair Jeff Jacobsen (NCRA ED) Chris Hamilton (NCRA AD; Recorder)</p>	<p>Liaisons: Jon Boren (ECOP) Katie Frazier (CARET) Doug Steele (APLU) Eddie Gouge (APLU) Caron Gala (APLU) Jim Richards (CGA) Hunt Shipman (CGA) Maggie Earle (CGA) Vernie Huber (CGA) Paula Geiger (NIFA) Bill Hoffman (NIFA) Glen Hoffsis (BVM) Laura Jolly (BHS)</p>
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<http://escop.info/committee/blc/>

BLC Committee

The BLC Committee meets monthly on Zoom with good attendance (mid- to upper teens) with topics of interest such as the annual budget, COVID-19 bills and processes, development of numerous advocacy communications, and will begin futuring discussions as we will have a new chair for the next two years and we have a number of new director delegates. In addition, the two standing committees of the BAA, the Budget and Advocacy Committee (BAC) and the Committee on Legislation and Policy (CLP) have reinvigorated their committees and associated activities. The ESCOP BLC feeds into each of these BAA Committees. Liaisons have been active and participatory. Bill Hoffman (NIFA) is the most recent addition as NIFA continues to increase staffing and restore functions. With the political focus on national and state elections, most of our activities and proposed asks/outcomes remain in limbo. They are repeated from the recent Joint COPs meeting.

Specific in-depth thrusts have occurred with the FFY2021 budget, deferred maintenance, and supplemental funding requests. All have involved communications pieces targeting advocacy for these efforts. Discussion highlights can be found in our ESCOP BLC minutes, along with summaries below. The ESCOP BLC, ESCOP and APLU leadership, the appropriate BAA PBD standing committees, and research EDs have engaged in these processes.

FFY2021: Since the 2020 CARET/AHS meeting, there have been numerous on-going efforts to acknowledge and make the case for the Unified Ask of an 8% increase across seven priorities in capacity (5), AFRI (1) and Tribal program (3) accounts. In addition, a

narrative footnote on the One Ask information sheet from APLU acknowledges numerous other NIFA programs below these seven priorities. The value and priority of this footnote has been a subject of numerous discussions. Numerous email Call to Action alerts have been activated and the LGU community has been somewhat responsive. Cornerstone recently employed a new platform with the goal of improving engagement with these Calls to Action alerts and increase contacts (as appropriate) with Congressional offices. Given the pandemic, this has been an ongoing effort, but with an on- and off-again activity level.

Infrastructure: The 2015 Sightlines Study on deferred maintenance at LGU and non-LGU universities and colleges has been reactivated, given the potential for a future infrastructure bill. Rather than wait until an opportunity appeared, the ESCOP BLC requested to ESCOP to make this a systemwide priority. In quick response, the BAC and the PBD approved this research-initiated request and this 'refresh' was funded by ESS at \$27,000. This request was set at \$8.4B for the Research Facilities Act (authorized in Section 7503 of the 2018 Farm Bill), with an additional request to have the Secretary granted broad waiver authority on implementation. Sightlines, now Gordian, was contacted and presented with numerous scenarios to 'refresh' the original study and potential economic impact metrics. After a national ESS vote, an option to do the 'refresh', add five institutions (completed) that did not participate in the original study and provide selected economic impact indicators was approved and implemented. Various advocacy pieces have been developed and more will likely be developed as the Sightlines 'refresh' is completed. Deadline for the Sightlines 'refresh' is mid-July to be ready for efforts on an infrastructure package shortly thereafter. A national webinar occurred on September 15, 2020 which will be recorded. Future advocacy efforts will attempt to increase the number and localization of the rollout.

Supplemental Funding Bills: The higher education community has created numerous requests to provide supplemental federal funding to research impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Ultimately, a specific NIFA-targeted research request was crafted for \$300M. Early on, the regional associations surveyed their directors to determine the pandemic impacts on ramping down, ramping up, COVID-19 research, employees (all categories) and facilities in order to document and coarsely allocate the \$300M across capacity and competitive research accounts. The original account distribution is provided at the end of this Agenda Brief for reference. As a notable action, the directors recognized the disproportionate impact on 1890 and Tribal LGUs and colleges and provided additional allocations above the standard proportionate share allocation. In addition, a background communication piece on these specific impacts to 1890 and 1994 institutions was prepared. Numerous advocacy communications were developed and continue to be developed.

As an allied note, Ernie Minton participated in a panel discussion on the \$300M requested allocation at the NC-FAR Board meeting. In addition, Ernie Minton and Doug Buhler participated in a briefing with Senate Ag staff on this \$300M research and \$80M Extension requests for supplemental funding. Other briefings have also occurred with other directors and with allied associations.

The BLC Chair and Executive Vice-Chair have attended the scheduled BAC meetings and conference calls. Minutes from these discussions can be found at: <https://www.land-grant.org/>.

Ernie Minton will complete his 'normal' 2-year term as ESCOP BLC Chair with the conclusion of the 2020 ESS Annual Meeting. In truth, he also began his term early with the departure of a prior BLC

Chair. We collectively thank him for the significant and multiple year commitment to ESS through all aspects of the 'budget' and his leadership on many allied efforts in support of research.

Finance Committee

The Finance Task Force completed its work as ESCOP approved the ESS Investment Policy and the selection of Private Client Services of TD Wealth as our investment manager. This is the same firm and individuals that manage APLU contracts. A national ESS director vote strongly approved the investment of up to \$600,000 from ESS cash reserves. After verification with the APLU CFO, the end of year balance for 2019 was \$719,277 (unaudited). CY2020 assessments of \$197,567 were 84% collected as of mid-September. Initially, ESS Chair Hopper requested Doug Steele (APLU VP FANR) to initiate the transfer \$600,000 of ESS cash reserves to TD Wealth in concert with our policies and with engagement of the Finance Committee. This was followed up with ESS Chair Kairo as the official signatory on the ESS Finance Policy. The mechanics of the financial transfer are for APLU to implement with TD Wealth. TD Wealth conducted an orientation session with the ESCOP Finance Committee by Zoom.

The membership of the ESS Finance Committee is: Past ESCOP Chair, BLC Chair, Incoming ESCOP Chair and one At-large BLC member with support from the ESCOP BLC Executive Vice-Chair. Hence, the Inaugural Finance Committee (below) is chaired by Shirley Hymon-Parker. In that this Finance Committee is a subcommittee of the ESCOP BLC, a link to the Finance Committee is under Resources and is: <http://escop.info/blcfinance/> where relevant resources will reside.

Past ESCOP Chair – Shirley Hymon-Parker (July 2020 - Oct 2021)

BLC Chair – Ernie Minton (July 2020 - Sept 2020); Glenda Humiston (start Oct 2020 - Sept 2022)

Incoming ESCOP Chair – Chris Pristos (ESS Chair candidate, start Oct 2020 - Sept 2021)

At-Large – Saied Mostaghimi (start July 2020 - tbd)

Executive Vice-Chair – Jeff Jacobsen

Assistant Vice-Chair – Chris Hamilton

APLU Liaison – Scott Powell (APLU CFO) or Doug Steele (VP FANR)

Background & Allocations for \$300M Supplemental NIFA Funding for Research (original version)

Agricultural research at Land-grant Universities (LGUs) and other institutions throughout the U.S. are uniquely positioned to address challenges amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Eighty one percent of agricultural research directors at LGUs provided information on impacts of pandemic restrictions. Directors also reported donation of personal protective gear and equipment, hand sanitizer, reagents and consumables for diagnostic testing, RNA kits, and loaning of PCR machines, other small equipment, and laboratory space for testing.

Public investment in agricultural research is reflected in Hatch, Evans-Allen, McIntire-Stennis, Tribal Research, and AFRI program lines at USDA NIFA. Supplemental support is critically essential to meet the direct needs caused by a stop in U.S. research operations. Additional federal assistance will help the U.S. agricultural research enterprise overcome unexpected disruptions in the following areas.

Ramp-down and ramp-up costs to close and restart research activities

- Nearly 60% of directors reported ramp-down or closure of at least 61% or greater; only 5% of directors reported ramp-down or closures of less than 21%.
- The cost of terminating on-going experiments coupled with future restarts will be devastating. On average, directors anticipate 6 months of additional support is needed to meet research objectives.

Ramp-up costs for new research related to COVID-19

- 68% of directors reported one or more projects initiated with capacity funds.
- Several projects have been launched to identify antiviral compounds, assess effectiveness of antiviral drugs, monitor disease prevalence in communities, evaluate various modes of SARS-CoV-2 transmission, and determine impacts of the pandemic on food safety and security.

Salaries, benefits and other costs with retaining research, technical and work-study employees

- 49% of directors reported spending greater than 60% of their NIFA-supported budget on salaries of personnel considered essential for conducting critical research.
- Hiring moratoriums decreased on-boarding and future recruitment of research personnel.
- Although paid, most undergraduates, work-study students, graduates, staff, post-docs, and faculty across lab and field programs have been unable to conduct any laboratory, greenhouse, and field research.
- Prohibitions on all travel negates research in which personnel must travel to research sites.

Core facilities supporting NIFA research

- Costly shutdown of greenhouses, 'omic' labs, fabrication units, wet laboratories, and specialized BSL2 and BSL3 containment facilities.
- The 24/7 nature of any laboratory animal and livestock facility, and the redundancies needed from scarce personnel, drives up costs locally and throughout the supply chain.

The five program lines recommended for supplemental allocations support most research negatively affected. COVID-19 disproportionately affected Tribal Research and Evans-Allen programs. Therefore, we recommend allocating \$5M for Tribal Research and \$36.2M for Evans-Allen, which also raises Evans-Allen to 30% of Hatch as directed by the 2008 Farm Bill¹. NIFA estimates additional funding needs for AFRI at \$150M and Federal Administration (4%) at \$12M. We recommend allocating the remaining funds to Hatch and McIntire-Stennis based upon FFY2020 proportional share. Lastly, given the severity of COVID-19 impact on State budgets, broad waiver authority for the Secretary match and other criteria would be significant contributions.

Proposed Allocations by Program		
Program	FFY2020 Actual (\$M)	Supplemental (\$M)
Hatch	259	85.0
Evans-Allen ¹	67	36.2
McIntire-Stennis	36	11.8
Tribal Research	3.8	5
AFRI	425	150
Federal Administration	---	12
Grand Total	---	300

Agenda Item 9.2: National Impact Database (NIDB) Committee

Date: October 1, 2020

Presenters: Steve Loring and Karla Trautman (Co-Chairs)

1. **Committee Membership** (as of October 1, 2020): Steve Loring, Karla Trautman, Debby Lewis, German Bollero, Sara Delheimer, Johnnie Westbrook, Faith Peppers, Ron Brown, Rick Rhodes; Ex-officio – Scott Cummings, Bret Hess, Jeff Jacobsen
2. **Meetings:**
 - The NIDBC met via teleconference on June 8, 2020.
 - The NIDBC met via teleconference on September 8, 2020.
 - The NIDBC will meet via teleconference on December 15, 2020.
3. **Accomplishments/Upcoming Plans:**
 - Overall quality of impact statements has improved since the committee implemented a review system. During 2020, 132 impact statements have been posted to the database. An additional 40 impact statements are currently under review
 - NIDBC has created a COVID-19 tag for impact statements. As of October 1, 2020, 80 COVID impact statements have been submitted to the database.
 - The NIDBC will send a prompt to the system in October soliciting submission of additional statements for posting in calendar year 2020.
 - The NIDBC recognizes the need for accessible impact statements that are camera ready and set for use during meetings like CARET/AHS and PILD.
 - The NIDB has been recognized as an asset by the Forbes/Tate Partners, the firm that has been contracted to develop a roadmap for a system-wide communications and marketing strategy.
 - The NIDBC is anticipating the implementation of the strategic marketing and communications roadmap and a decision on the disposition of the NIDBC. Should the NIDBC continue as is or evolve into subcommittee of the Communications and Marketing Committee?
4. **Action Requested:** For information only.
5. **Attachments:**
 - a. none

Agenda Item 9.5: Capacity Funds Working Group (CFWG)

Date: October 1, 2020

Presenters: Rick Klemme (chair), Rick Rhodes

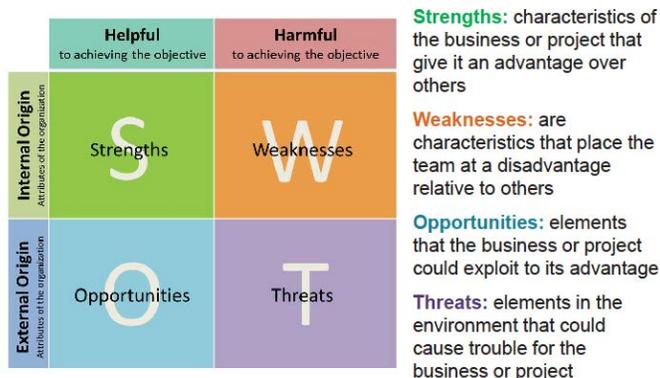
1. **Committee Membership** (as of July 29, 2020): Jon Boren, ECOPN MSU Cooperative Extension Service; Caroline Crocoll, ECOP; Maggie Earle, Cornerstone; Albert Essel, 1890s Extension; Andy Ferrin, National 4-H Council; Caron Gala, APLU FANR and CGA; Rick Klemme, ECOP Consultant; Anne Megaro, CGA Ag Teams – California; Ernie Minton, ESCOP; Elizabeth Gregory North, ACE/Communications; Rick Rhodes, ESCOP; Jim Richards, Cornerstone; Ray Trapp, CGA Ag Teams – 1890s, NCAT; Adam Ward, CGA Ag Teams – Ohio
2. **Meetings:**
 - The Capacity Funds Working Group (CFWG) met via teleconference on June 29, 2020, July 6, 2020, and July 14, 2020.
 - Rick Klemme on behalf of CFWG presented the findings of the group to the BAC on July 21, 2020 and to the Joint COPS on July 21-24, 2020. (The PowerPoint presentation is attached.)
3. **Accomplishments/Upcoming Plans:**
 - The CFWG was an ad hoc committee with broad representation that included members from ECOP, ESCOP, CGA, ACE/Ag communicators, 4-H and Cornerstone Government Affairs. The charge to the CFWG was to *“Develop a set of recommendations for the BAA to move forward through their processes that will increase the capability for us to achieve funding increases for NIFA capacity and competitive funding lines.”*
 - The CWFG developed a vision statement in working toward the charge. The vision statement affirmed *“Increase capacity and competitive funding at NIFA for agricultural research, education and extension by advancing the value of capacity funding to broad stakeholders/constituencies of agriculture.”*
 - The CFWG completed a SWOT analysis (attached.)
 - After considerable deliberation, the CWFG made three recommendations and for each recommendation provided tactical opportunities. The full set of recommendations and tactical opportunities are attached. Here are the recommendations of the CWFG:
 - **We recommend that the BAC identify a growth trajectory for NIFA priority lines.**
 - **We recommend that the BAC work within the BAA structure to develop a communication plan to reach high-value audiences informed by advice from communicators, advocates, and decisionmakers.**
 - **We recommend coordination with key groups in developing an annual capacity building, engagement, and advocacy calendar.**
 - The CFWG completed and submitted these recommendations to the BAA through Doug Steele on July 30, 2020.

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

5. **Attachments:**

- a. SWOT Analysis
- b. Advancing the Value of Capacity Programs in an Advocacy Environment
- c. Communicating the Value of Agriculture Research and Extension Capacity Funding (PowerPoint)

SWOT ANALYSIS



	Helpful to achieving the objective	Harmful to achieving the objective
Internal Origin <small>Attributes of the org.</small>	<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity funds allow Universities to deliver on the promise of extension by delivering immediate expertise to address the challenges facing communities without the reliance on the grant process often taking a year or more for delivering results. Capacity and competitive funding work together to match local, state, and regional needs while also addressing federal priorities. Research and extension address timely, critical needs in the state - We are trusted partners and experts with a well-established track record of innovation and impact to agriculture, natural resources, nutrition, and communities because of high-value information. Leverages at least a dollar for dollar match in state and local funding – Great value for this federal-state partnership with maximum use of these funds further matched by volunteer hours (extension). National identity but operate on a local level to empower communities and improve economic prosperity - we work and live in the communities we serve; not a top-down organization. We are culturally relevant volunteers that put in a high amount of volunteer hours. Impacts of work include improved health outcomes, ag productivity, and youth and community development. University lobbyists, coalitions, and state-level stakeholders are motivated to support the Agricultural R,E,&E system. 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Large and highly diverse across states; different org structures - Since capacity funds are used differently state-to-state, there are no uniform metrics to measure impact. This make messaging inconsistent and infrequent. OMB does not recognize the value of capacity, which hampers the ability of USDA to be an advocate in the Administration. Faculty and graduate students are not aware of the impact that capacity funding has on their base salary. There is no perception of the purpose of this funding inside and outside of the system. No coordinated communications campaign aligned with advocacy on core federal themes that can be adapted to have a state-level application. Distinction between capacity and competitive funding not clear to all; historical creation of Cooperative Extension and why it is a critical public service. There is a very effective (budget and appropriations) coalition of advocates for competitive funding. OMB, Science Societies, Foundations, Privates, and APLU etc. No coordinated advocacy calendar across subsidiary groups or coordinated/timely set of advocacy talking points and trainings.

Opportunities

- Engage and coordinate via a NIFA coalition an underutilized network of stakeholders and partners to support capacity funding.
- To coordinate stakeholder support to mobilize stakeholders in a timely way to engage in grassroots advocacy at the local and state levels that feed into a targeted and coordinated direct advocacy strategy at the national level.
- Identify a set of Champions in Congress who can be spokespeople for capacity (and competitive) funding.
- Build awareness through a comprehensive capacity to market the outcomes of the system by micro-targeting influencer audiences at a local and state level.
- Develop an engagement timeline which we can use for timely coordination between BAA, CGA, Coalitions, subsidiary groups, and vast stakeholders
- Develop a communications campaign. Develop key themes that reflect the innovations developed and services offered through capacity funding that are relevant at the local, state, regional, and global levels. Build out those themes with justifications and specific narratives.
 - Justification through economic: how Research and CE promotes economic prosperity and job creation
 - Deliver snapshots or short stories with visuals of our work in diverse communities, locations, and on diverse topics.
 - Develop clear and concise (and pretty) one-pagers on the value of CE and the distinction between capacity and competitive funding.
 - Reiterate the return-on-investment and partnership between federal, state, and local governments.
 - Alignment with local business, community, and agricultural of increased productivity, workforce training, and intellectual property development.
 - Many great talking points on our unique capacities and abilities: Capacity grants allow for unbiased, non-partisan, 3rd party technical assistance from creditable scientists. We're used by public agencies to provide scientific data and analysis, we develop tools and best practices, etc.

Threats

- No Champions in Congress for capacity funding for agricultural research and extension. (Competitive has: Panetta, Davis, etc.)
 - There are advocates for specific parts of the portfolio: SCRI, Organic, and Animal Labs
 - No Champion group: There is no group of public officials who have taken on the cause of capacity funding.
 - House Ag Research Caucus only supports competitive funding in NIFA at this point.
- All work needs to be coordinated with university lobbyists/Cornerstone/APLU so that we can have maximum impact from stakeholder engagement with congressional delegations. If we do not coordinate, we erode otherwise strong support for capacity. We all need to work from the same game plan and have coordinated roles.
- The Land-Grant University System will experience severe budget constraints Budget constraints due to COVID-19 economic pressures.
 - Reduced human and physical capacity becomes accepted as fate
 - Disconnects between applied research communication between campus and extension creating the impression of applied research not supporting extension.
 - Applied research initiatives not connected to the needs of the local support infrastructure.
 - Capacity funds not being aligned with "personnel strengths".
- There is a desire by some constituencies to make **all** agricultural research funding competitive (these constituencies typically do not understand or value extension). This would erode funding for the SAES.
- Outdated ideas of what Cooperative Extension is – need to rebrand as a critical **and flexible** public service that meets the public where they are with the information and service they need. (i.e. no longer just cows and cooking).

Advancing the Value of Capacity Programs in an Advocacy Environment

Working Group Members: Jon Boren, ECOPN MSU Cooperative Extension Service; Caroline Crocoll, ECOP; Maggie Earle, Cornerstone; Albert Essel, 1890s Extension; Andy Ferrin, National 4-H Council; Caron Gala, APLU FANR and CGA; Rick Klemme, ECOP Consultant; Anne Megaro, CGA Ag Teams – California; Ernie Minton, ESCOP; Elizabeth Gregory North, ACE/Communications; Rick Rhodes, ESCOP; Jim Richards, Cornerstone; Ray Trapp, CGA Ag Teams – 1890s, NCAT; Adam Ward, CGA Ag Teams – Ohio

Charge: Develop a set of recommendations for the BAA to move forward through their processes that will increase the capability for us to achieve funding increases for NIFA capacity and competitive funding lines.

What is Capacity? Smith-Lever, Hatch, 1890s Extension, Evans-Allen, and McIntire Stennis. Capacity funding leverages federal, state, and local dollars to address local, state, regional and federal research, education, and extension priorities.

Why Is Capacity Funding Important?

- Provides the foundation for Agricultural Research and Extension.
- Leverages state and local/county funds, volunteer time and partnerships.
- Positions faculty to develop stronger competitive funding grants.
- Enables the land-grant system to pivot in response to unexpected events.
- COVID-19, animal disease, floods, hurricanes, etc.

Vision: Increase capacity and competitive funding at NIFA for agricultural research, education and extension by advancing the value of capacity funding to broad stakeholders/constituencies of agriculture.

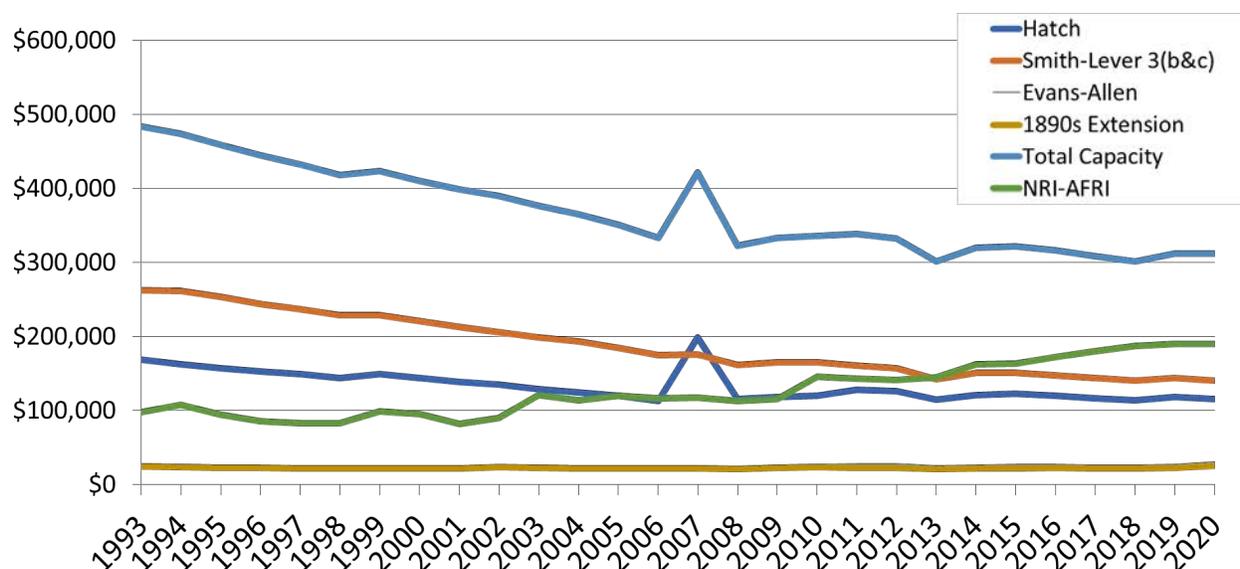


Figure 1. NIFA capacity and competitive appropriations in constant 1993 dollars (thousands) ranging from 1993 to 2020. This will be updated with McIntire Stennis and 1994 funding information later.

Recommendations and Tactical Opportunities

Recommendation 1: We recommend that the BAC identify a growth trajectory for NIFA priority lines. That way, the BAA BAC can determine a growth plan for capacity funding lines that is anchored in an advocacy team and clear justification of need.

Tactical opportunity A: To engage key advocates in the development of that growth trajectory.

- A working group be assembled to identify this growth trajectory to develop annual advocacy levels for NIFA priority lines.
- Membership should include: BAA member representative from 1862s, 1890s, 1994s, Extension, Research EDs, Insulars, CGA Ag Teams (at least three), Cornerstone, and (as appropriate) advocating stakeholders.

Tactical opportunity B: To identify an aspirational goal that drives a request as well as the needs that the request will meet.

- What is a reasonable goal, and does it represent the needs of the system? Can we drive advocacy around the goal? What advocates do we need in our corner?
- EXAMPLE ONLY: Increase capacity and competitive funding for agricultural research and extension by 25% over the next five years – increase by 25% by 2025. This is 5% per year.

Recommendation 2: We recommend that the BAC work within the BAA structure¹ to develop a communication plan to reach high-value audiences informed by advice from communicators, advocates, and decisionmakers.

Tactical opportunity A: Engage a think tank in a study that describes the scientific, economic, and food/agricultural impact areas and economic impact statements.

¹ e.g. Forbes-Tate, CMC, FANR, Cornerstone, APLU CGA Ag Teams, APLU staff, and the Land-Grant Consortium for Coordinated Communications.

- Identify data, information, as well as outcome statements that back up the value of capacity funding at a local and national level.

Tactical opportunity B: To develop a communications plan that considers the perspectives of key audiences. Plan components can include:

- Aspirational messages motivate and inspire internal/external advocates. Message should be national in scope (e.g. One-Story), but adaptable to local approaches as needed to communicate with local audiences. Links to data and outcomes are important at both levels of communication.
- Targeted engagement of policy makers and strategic engagement of our stakeholder communities. Engagement will reflect advocacy and engagement process for the annual budget and appropriations.
- Consistent, audience-tested, language about programs, services, and structure (SAES) and function (how we interact with producers, industry, communities, consumers, and families) of our system.
- Year-round public engagement (this is different from advocacy engagement, which is calendar and advocacy strategy based).

Tactical opportunity C: Publish an annual “Points of Pride” publication about the Cooperative Extension System, the State Agricultural Experiment Stations, the 1890s R&E, and the 1994s R&E that highlights outcomes and impacts associated with the investment in capacity and competitive funding.

- Highlight key “wins” (fact-based outcomes) from NIFA investment
- Highlight strategic states and narratives.

Recommendation 3: We recommend coordination with key groups* in developing an annual capacity building, engagement, and advocacy calendar.

Tactical opportunity A: Develop a timeline for appropriations request decisions, justification data, capacity building opportunities, and engagement (w/ APLU BAA, coalitions/key stakeholders, Congress, and the Administration).

Tactical opportunity B: Build a NIFA Coalition that supports key NIFA funding lines and engages key stakeholders.

- Consider value of developing a House Caucus to support capacity funding.
- Develop congressional champions in coordination with the APLU CGA Ag Teams.
- Work with the CGA Ag Teams develop an annual Dear Colleague strategy that supports funding requests for capacity and competitive funding from NIFA.

Tactical opportunity C: Support Administrative Heads, Deans, and Directors in their ability to encourage CARET, Congressional Member/staff interactions during summer months.

- Purposeful selection of CARET delegates—also consider how to engage them—they should not be making funding decisions or suggest funding levels.
- Work with Cornerstone, CGA Ag Teams, and CARET to develop Grass Top influencers.
- Develop and offer advocacy trainings that will allow APLU requests to be adopted effectively by subsidiary groups, faculty, and associations.

Advocacy players and audiences – develop clear roles and tasks.

- External
 - o Administration
 - OMB
 - Agencies

- Congress
 - Senate
 - House
 - Off-Ag. Committee advocates
- Stakeholders
 - National: APLU FANR – Cornerstone (in coordination)
 - AFBF, NFU
 - Commodity groups
 - Food groups
 - Others
 - State and local: CARET – AHS and CGA Ag Teams (in coordination)
 - Grass roots/stalks/tops
 - AHS & CARET representatives
- Internal (Particularly those that value competitive funding over capacity)

Resources:

Funding levels from 1993-2020

Cornerstone Land Grant.org Best practices: <https://www.land-grant.org/bestpractices>

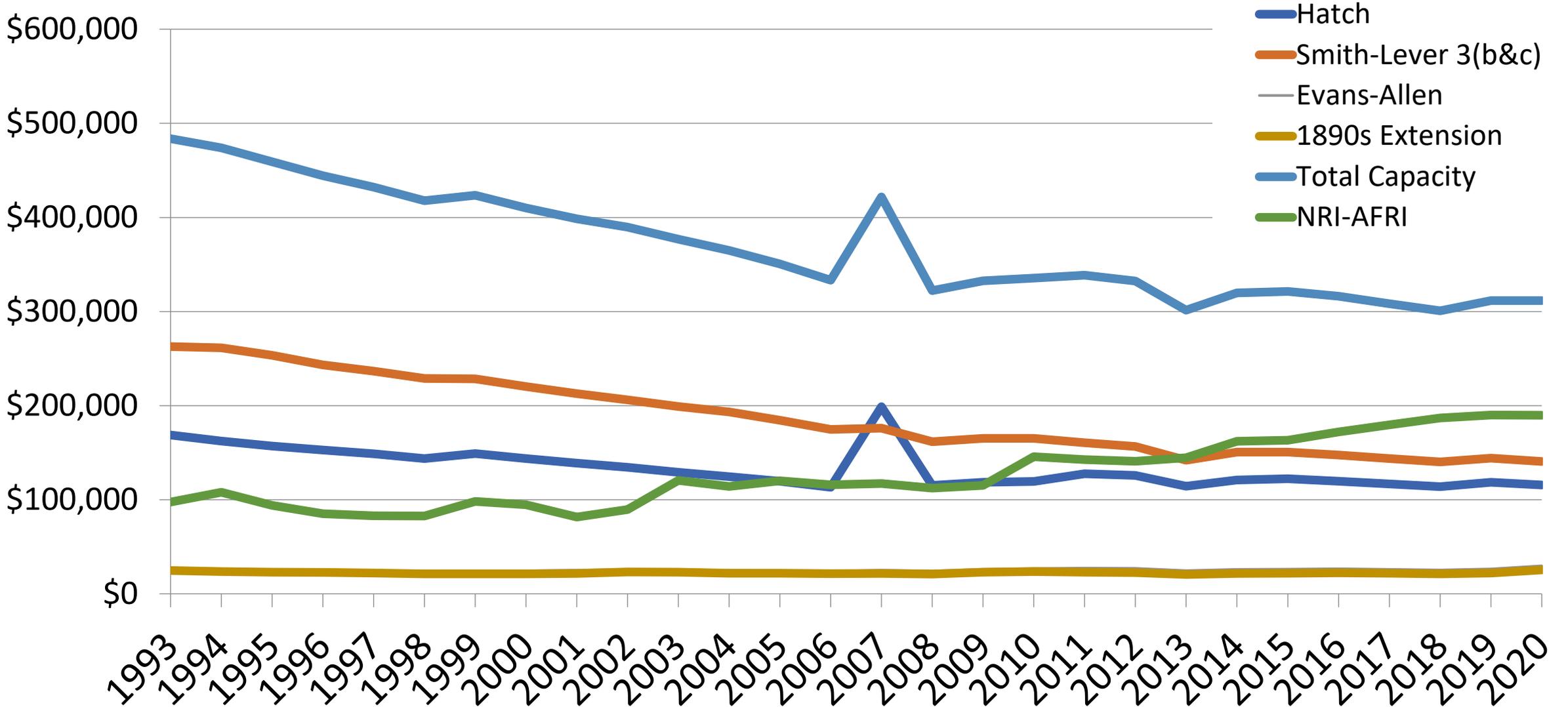
National Extension brand work is linked: <http://create.extension.org/node/321>

Communicating the Value of Agriculture Research and Extension Capacity Funding

Workgroup Report
Joint COPs
July 2, 2020



NIFA Capacity & Competitive Appropriations in Constant 1993 in Thousands Dollars (1993-2020)



Communicating the Value of Capacity Funding Working Group

- **Working Group Charge from Doug Steele:**
 - Bring focus to building justification and messaging around the value of capacity funding.
- **Working Group Goal:**
 - Increase capacity and competitive funding for agricultural research and extension by demonstrating the value of capacity funding to the broad stakeholders/constituencies of ag research and extension.
- **Working Group How:**
 - Cultivate widespread congressional support with an emphasis on Ag Committee and Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee Members.

Communicating the Value of Capacity Funding Working Group

Working Group Membership

- Jon Boren, ECOPNMSU Cooperative Extension Service
- Caroline Crocoll, ECOP
- Maggie Earle, Cornerstone
- Albert Essel, 1890s Extension
- Andy Ferrin, National 4-H Council
- Caron Gala, APLU FANR and CGA
- Rick Klemme, ECOP Consultant
- Anne Megaro, CGA Ag Teams - California
- Ernie Minton, ESCOP
- Elizabeth Gregory North, ACE/Communications
- Rick Rhodes, ESCOP
- Jim Richards, Cornerstone
- Ray Trapp, CGA Ag Teams – 1890s, NCAT
- Adam Ward, CGA Ag Teams - Ohio

Communicating the Value of Capacity Funding Working Group

- **Why Is Capacity Funding Important:**
 - Provides the **foundation** for Agricultural Research and Extension.
 - **Leverages** state and local/county funds, volunteer time and partnerships.
 - Positions faculty to develop **stronger competitive funding grants**.
 - Enables the land-grant system to **pivot** in response to unexpected events.
 - COVID-19, animal disease, floods, hurricanes, etc.

Recommendation 1



We recommend that the BAC identify a growth trajectory for NIFA priority lines.

The BAA BAC can determine a growth plan for capacity funding lines that is anchored in a clear justification of need.

Tactical opportunity: To identify an aspirational goal that drives a request as well as the needs that the request will meet.

***Tactical opportunity:** To engage key advocates in the development of that growth trajectory.

Recommendation 2



We recommend that the BAC work within the BAA structure* to develop a communication plan informed by advice from communicators, advocates, and decisionmakers.

Tactical opportunity: Publish an annual “Points of Pride” publication about the Cooperative Extension System, the State Agricultural Experiment Stations, the 1890s R&E, and the 1994s R&E.

Tactical opportunity: Engage a think tank in a study that describes the scientific, economic, and food/agricultural impact areas and economic impact statements.

*e.g. Forbes-Tate, CMC, FANR, Cornerstone, APLU CGA Ag Teams, APLU staff, and the Land-Grant Consortium for Coordinated Communications.

Recommendation 3



We recommend coordination with key groups* in developing an annual capacity building, engagement, and advocacy calendar.

Tactical opportunity: Develop a timeline for appropriations request decisions, justification data, capacity building opportunities, and engagement (w/ APLU BAA, coalitions/key stakeholders, Congress, and the Administration).

Tactical opportunity: Build a NIFA Coalition that supports key NIFA funding lines and engages key stakeholders.

Tactical opportunity: Support Administrative Heads, Deans, and Directors in their ability to encourage CARET, Congressional Member/staff interactions during summer months.

* e.g. BAA, COPS, Cornerstone, CARET, APLU CGA Ag Teams

Communicating the Value of Capacity Funding Working Group

- **Communicating Value References (examples):**
 - Cornerstone Land Grant.org Best practices: <https://www.land-grant.org/bestpractices>
 - National Extension brand work is linked: <http://create.extension.org/node/321>
 - The Economic Returns to U.S. Public Agricultural Research (Alston, Andersen, James, and Pardey), [American Journal of Agricultural Economics, Vol. 93, Issue 5, pp. 1257-1277, 2011](#)

Communicating the Value of Capacity Funding Working Group

Feedback

Agenda Item 9.6: Policy Board of Directors

October 1, 2020

Presenter: Gary Thompson

The BAA Policy Board of Directors met on July 23, 2020 during the 2020 Joint COPs Virtual Meeting. The next scheduled PBD meeting will be during the virtual APLU Annual Meeting.

1. General Announcements – Orlando McMeans and Doug Steele
 - Caroline Crocoll, Ph.D. - New Executive Director for ECOP
 - Advisory committee to NIFA being established by BAA
 - Strategic Realignment Implementation Task Force – Ernie Minton, ESCOP rep
 - Letter of invitation and charge to committee are coming
 - 1220 L Street – new APLU offices leased for 10 years beginning in January 2021
2. 2020 Assessment Overview
 - 2020 Assessment Calculation (New formula and calculations)

BAA Base	48%
CARET	9.8%
ESCOPE	9.2%
ECOP	27.6% (has national officer)
ACOP	5.3% (based on enrollment)
 - \$2.9M total assessments
 - ESCOP based on ESCOP Budget: \$200K total (60% capacity and 40% competitive NIFA funds received)
 - New Structure (Current Formula reviewed and approved in 2012)
 - Clearly defined which NIFA capacity and competitive lines are used for calculation
 - Is 60/40 split appropriate? (capacity stagnant with growth in capacity)
 - Based on previous year received (not current year which is uncertain)
 - 3-year rolling average necessary to minimize highs and lows
 - How to calculate annual or biannual increases
3. Capacity Value Working Group - Rick Klemme
 - Charge: Bring focus to building justification and messaging around the value of capacity funding
 - Cultivate congressional support (how to build/engage champions)
 - 1890s have remained stable in real value (Sanford Bishop, champion in House)
 - NRI/AFRI – has increased (multiple advocacy groups for competitive funding)
 - Broad representation on the working group (started mid-May and had 3 meetings)
 - Recommendations to BAC
 - Identify growth trajectory plan to engage key advocates for NIFA priority lines
 - Develop a communication plan with a focus on the end game...Congress
 - Develop a multi-year timeline for appropriations request, justification data, trainings and engagement (including annual advocacy calendar)
4. BAC Report - Doug Steele
 - \$380M COVID supplemental request is uncertain but lessons learned may be useful
 - 2021 Unified Ask – House appropriations stable most areas with increases in 1890s, 1994s, McIntire-Stennis

- Is it possible to increase both capacity and competitive in the same year?
 - Inequities in funding are being addressed so now what?
 - Capacity messaging? Fly in or special meeting
 - Alignment with Forbes Tate information is confluent with other parts of the discussion
 - Work on messaging
 - Grow connection with CARET...how can they help?
 - Land_Grant.org....make it more dynamic
5. CLP Report - Doug Steele
- Organized and active, but in quiet phase now
 - Will send out a communication in October to get input early
 - What topics will make the biggest difference for the system?
 - Need to establish a message early for FY2022
 - How to be more strategic about growing specific lines? – ACOP increases? – look at smaller lines along bigger themes with strategic realignment
6. Communications and Marketing - Mark Rieger and Rick Rhodes
- Forbes-Tate Partnership Consultants - Research and input for strategic plan not developing strategic plan
 - Phase 1 – look at resources and what members want
 - 7-page draft roadmap composed of a message framework, roadmap, and calendar of events is complete and being reviewed
 - Membership survey (643 invites with 122 responses) key findings
 - Lean heavily on advocacy
 - Develop and make consistent use of clear, unified messaging
 - Build capacity and strengthen the internal understanding of BAA while promoting its external objectives (knowledge gap)
 - Social sentiment analysis takeaways – AgIsAmerica and Land-Grant webpage
 - Consistency – posting consistently
 - Engagement – most AgIsAmerica engagement from university tagged posts
 - Recommendations
 - Post regularly and constantly – content posted 3x week
 - Own the content – make content real and original content (not retweets)
 - Must be coordinated – theme of the month
 - Run paid campaigns – cheap: \$100 for 2-3 days to expand audience
 - One-on-one outreach key findings
 - One message to support one ask
 - Clunky org of BAA – no clear agreement with message or targets – better define targets, tactics, and goals so everyone knows what they are
 - Strengthen link between federal dollars and BAA outcomes
7. NIFA Update - Parag Chitnis
- How to get money out of the door as quickly as possible? Goal is to become more regular and predictable
 - New NIFA dashboard – not ready for public release
 - New investigator grants
 - AFRI has given preference to new investigators for regular grants

- New seed grants specifically for new investigators \$300k program with 40% funding rate
 - Competing against other new investigators
 - Applied research (Extension community) will be included
8. CARET Update - Tom Kuhn and Eddie Gouge
- Executive committee met in March, May, and June
 - How to keep sessions informative with remote meetings?
 - Strategic plan (4 year) on tomorrow's meeting agenda
9. ESCOP Section Report
- Infrastructure initiative:
 - Infrastructure proposal was submitted to and approved by the BAC and PBD
 - The completion of the updated Sightlines Infrastructure Study (w/ 5 new universities)
 - CGA is developing a strategy to help advocate
 - Cornerstone has started talking to staffers to determine the timing and type of legislation where it might be introduced
 - ESCOP joined ECOP and AHS in contracting with Forbes-Tate Partners to develop a roadmap to assist the CMC in building a communications strategy to support BAA advocacy goals
 - Colorful and well-done one-pager, "Agricultural Experiment Stations: A System to Address Challenges in Food and Agriculture" was prepared by the ESCOP Science and Technology Committee
 - Single-sided: http://escop.info/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/STC_AESMESSAGE_SINGLE_20200721.pdf
 - Double-sided: http://escop.info/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/STC_AESMESSAGE_DOUBLE_20200721.pdf
 - Personnel changes:
 - Strategic Realignment Committee - Ernie Minton will continue to represent ESCOP
 - Research Working Group to work with NIFA's office of Planning, Accountability, and Reporting on a new version of REEport. The membership of this working group representing all of regions have been identified and this first meeting will be on August 4th
 - ESCOP Policy Board nominees - Marty Draper from Kansas State University and Mark McGuire, University of Idaho. The national electronic vote to be completed by Oct 15th
 - Eric Young retired on June 30th. Gary Thompson was selected to become the Executive Director for the Southern Region based at the University of Arkansas
 - George Hopper retired on June 30th. Moses Kairo, University of Maryland Eastern Shore, is the new ESCOP Chair
 - 2020 Fall ESS Annual Meeting:
 - Will be held virtually from September 28 – October 1st during the evening EST to accommodate the Western region and our territories
 - The meeting's theme is "Inclusive Excellence"

Agenda Item 9.7: Diversity Catalyst Committee (DCC)

Date: October 1, 2020

Presenter: Ali Fares (Chair)

1. **Committee Membership** (as of October 1, 2020): See [ESCOP Committee Diversity Catalyst Committee \(DCC\)](#)
2. **Meetings:**
 - The DCC met via teleconference on July 2, 2020.
 - The DCC will meet via teleconference on October 13, 2020.
3. **Accomplishments/Upcoming Plans:**
 - The DCC met on July 2, 2020 and discussed how current events revolving around racism and social injustice will inform the DCC agenda and what actionable steps will the DCC take.
 - On September 30, 2020, DCC Chair Ali Fares presented the National Experiment Station Diversity and Inclusion Award to Tracy Irani, Jenny Jones, Sharon Austin, Keith Diem, Kelly Moore, and Dale Pracht, members of the Diversity and Inclusion Committee, Department of Family, Youth and Community Sciences (FYCS) at the Institute of Food Agricultural Sciences of the University of Florida. This was the third year that the award was presented.
 - Henry Fadamiro will assume the leadership of the DCC at the conclusion of the ESS/SAES/ARD Fall Meeting.
 - The DCC has experienced turnover in the membership of the committee. Jeff Jacobsen has stepped off of the committee. Drenda Williams (Director of Equal Opportunity and Civil Rights) has joined the DCC as the NIFA representative and Nina Bennet (Assistant Dean for Academic at the University of Arkansas Pine Bluff) replaces Doze Butler as the APS/ARD representative.
4. **Action Requested:** For information only.
5. **Attachments:**
 - a. none

Agenda Item 9.8: Science and Technology Committee (STC)

Presenters: Jody Jellison and Bret Hess

Action Requested: For Information

Committee Members:

<p>Chair: Jody Jellison (NERA) Past Chair: Laura Lavine (WAAESD)</p> <p>Delegates: Alton Thompson (ARD) John Yang (ARD) Joe Colletti (NCRA) Bill Barker (NCRA) Indrajeet Chaubey (NERA) Mark Hutton (NERA) Susan Duncan (SAAESD) Nathan McKinney (SAAESD) Gene Kelly (WAAESD) Chris Davies (WAAESD)</p> <p>Executive Vice Chair: Bret Hess (WAAESD ED) Saige Zespy (WAAESD Recorder)</p>	<p>Liaisons: Wendy Powers (ECOP) Danesha Carley (NIPMCC; Pest Mgmt Subc) Tim Killian (SSSC; Social Sci Subc) Tim Conner (NIFA) Robert Matteri (USDA ARS)</p>
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ESCOP Web: <http://escop.info/committee/scitech/>

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

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

S&T Committee (STC)

Regular STC business encompasses reviews, reactions, and feedback to relevant national-level reports and findings. The STC effort to determine how well the State Agricultural Experiment Station's portfolio of multistate research aligns with the five main themes outlined in the report of the National Academy of Sciences Science titled "Breakthroughs 2030: A Strategy for Food and Agricultural Research" was placed on hold to gather much needed information to support ESCOP's \$300M request to supplement NIFA's budget as part of a COVID relief package. In addition to compiling results from a system-wide survey regarding responses to the COVID-19 pandemic, STC was tasked to "identify any messaging on current research projects that are addressing infectious diseases, viruses, AMR, zoological diseases or any related topics that address the nexus of people, food and the environment." An initial scan of NIMSS and REEport revealed several capacity-supported projects on infectious disease, viruses, AMR and zoological diseases that could be candidates

for developing messages. An additional scan is necessary to include projects involving plants/crops. A list of 217 projects addressing the nexus of people, food and the environment popped up in the initial search. It is hoped this might be useful for the working group assigned to develop a strategy for increasing capacity funds.

Guest speakers presented during each of the last two STC meetings. Paul Wester and Cyndy Parr with National Agricultural Libraries encouraged STC to help with coordination among experiment stations and libraries to standardize and integrate data (click [here](#) to view the full presentation). Dr. John Dyer, USDA Agriculture Innovation Agenda (Research Leader with the Agricultural Research Service and a member of the Senior Executive Service Candidate Development Program) explained the innovation agenda and the input gathering process (click [here](#) to view the presentation). The committee is looking forward to engaging in the process of developing the Agriculture Innovation Agenda after the input stage. Initial discussions in that regard have centered on how STC may add value to the input that USDA collected through the Federal Register.

An important role of the STC is to review regional submissions and recommend to ESCOP a winner of the annual Excellence in Multistate Award. The STC was pleased to review a number of excellent and inspiring submissions. The ESCOP Executive Committee approved the STC recommendation to announce W4001: Social, Economic and Environmental Causes and Consequences of Demographic Change in Rural America as the winner of the 2020 Experiment Station Section Excellence in Multistate Award.

An initial goal of the STC was to develop a communication piece to help support ESCOP's efforts. The two attached one-page "leave-behinds" were developed to help describe what the collective body of State Agricultural Experiment Stations do (also available on the ESCOP website as links to the [one-page](#) and [two-page](#) message documents). Many thanks to Rick Rhodes, Faith Peppers, and Sara Delheimer for helping develop the one-pagers.

National Integrated Pest Management Coordinating Committee (NIPMCC)

The NIPMCC Executive Committee has held two Zoom meetings since their in-person meeting in at APLU Washington, DC October 22-23, 2019. A third virtual meeting is being planned to evaluate progress subcommittees have made on drafting white papers for the committee's three banner topics. These would be documents that can be shared with ESCOP/ECOP and APLU, as well as legislators, policy makers, etc. The goal would be to provide information that would help with advocacy efforts. Planning for that annual fall meeting will also be a major topic for further discussion. The initial plan is to reduce report-outs and streamline regional reports to focus on contributions to the three banner topics.

Social Sciences Subcommittee (SSSC)

Although no progress has been made by the subcommittee amid the COVID pandemic, there is still interest in holding a work session with NIFA to advance the development of products describing the importance of social and behavioral sciences in agriculture. Review of membership and discipline team status will be sent to the STC Executive Vice-Chair for formal ESCOP appointment to SSSC. Updating the SCCC Rules of Operation remains on the SCCC radar.

AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATIONS

A System to Address Challenges in Food and Agriculture

Our food and agricultural systems face complex challenges as the physical environment and human societies change. Public investment in research and development is key to increasing agricultural productivity, food safety and security, community resilience, environmental stewardship, and economic growth. As part of the Land-grant University system, and with the support of USDA funding, Agricultural Experiment Stations (AES) and agricultural research programs at universities and historically black and tribal colleges are uniquely positioned to improve natural resources, food and agricultural systems.

WHAT MAKES AES UNIQUE?



Institutions in all 50 states and many U.S. territories with research sites representing diverse ecosystems, communities, and food production systems



A family of land-grant universities directs research that reflects a diverse U.S. population and varied needs



Laboratories, greenhouses, computational centers, equipment, and tools focused on improving the food supply and protecting the environment

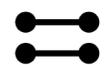


Skilled scientists, educators, students, and staff working in fundamental and applied research fields

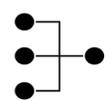


Impartial, verified science, technology, and recommendations

THE POWER OF PARTNERSHIPS



Federal and state funding allows AES to mobilize scientists to respond quickly to local issues



Multistate projects bring together scientists from AES across the country to tackle regional and national issues, creating state synergy, reducing duplication, and leveraging funds, facilities, and other resources



A close relationship with Extension and educators creates a feedback loop from research to application



Strong relationships with government agencies, farm and commodity groups, and the private sector transform innovations into economic development and business opportunities



WHAT DO AES NEED NOW?

With enhanced support, AES and agricultural research programs at universities and historically black and tribal colleges can continue to address challenges in food and agriculture more efficiently than any other system in the world. Filling current gaps and needs will require:



Enhanced funding to support diverse research, enable exploratory and early-career projects, and give AES the flexibility to respond to emerging issues



Resources to improve campus infrastructure and facilities for cutting-edge research



Interdisciplinary, systems-level research



Broader focus on sustainability and wellness



Models and decision-making tools that account for interlinked variables and uncertainty



Harnessing advances in big data, genetics, nanotechnology, and other emerging fields



Strategies for communicating information and sharing technology



Experiment Station Committee on Organization and Policy (ESCOP)

<http://escop.info>

AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATIONS

A System to Address Challenges in Food and Agriculture

Our food and agricultural systems face complex challenges as the physical environment and human societies change. Public investment in research and development is key to increasing agricultural productivity, food safety and security, community resilience, environmental stewardship, and economic growth. As part of the Land-grant University system, and with the support of USDA funding, Agricultural Experiment Stations (AES) and agricultural research programs at universities and historically black and tribal colleges are uniquely positioned to improve natural resources, food and agricultural systems.

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Skilled scientists, educators, students, and staff working in fundamental and applied research fields



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Strong relationships with government agencies, farm and commodity groups, and the private sector transform innovations into economic development and business opportunities



South Central Agricultural Laboratory. Photo by University of Nebraska-Lincoln.



Experiment Station
Committee on Organization
and Policy (ESCOP)

<http://escop.info>

HOW ARE AES ADDRESSING CHALLENGES IN FOOD AND AGRICULTURE?

ESS Business Meeting, October 1, 2020

Improving sustainability, competitiveness, and profitability

Onion growers applied **75%** less insecticide and saved **\$300 per acre** using pest management programs developed by researchers.

Researchers **quadrupled** the length of the strawberry growing season, increasing production **80%**.

Research-based recommendations saved **10,500** honey bee colonies, enough to provide crop pollination worth **\$6 million each year**.

Cutting-edge research has minimized the impacts of cattle diseases, which cause **billions of dollars** in losses.

In just one generation, soybean yields have **doubled** and corn yields have **quadrupled**.

Adapting to and mitigating climate change impacts

Researchers have developed crop varieties that grow well on marginal land and bred animals that can tolerate heat.

Researchers found that changes in temperature and precipitation caused soybean yields to be **30%** lower over the last 20 years, resulting in losses of **\$11 billion**.

Supporting energy security and the bioeconomy

Growers using recommended lighting and heating sensors and strategies have reduced energy use **up to 30%**.

Researchers increased the oil content of sugarcane tissues **80-fold** and genetically modified cell walls, improving ethanol production efficiency by **more than 60%**.

Scientists developed bio-based textiles that add value to agricultural byproducts, reduce waste, and provide alternatives to synthetic, petroleum-based textiles.

Ensuring a safe, secure, and abundant food supply

Researchers designed antimicrobial sprays, high pressure processing, and other technology that ensures food safety without damaging quality.

24 peanut varieties worth **\$200 million per year** were bred from a single peanut sample collected by researchers in 1952.

Improving human health, nutrition, and wellness

Pioneering research on bioactive compounds is guiding diet-based interventions, new food products, and accurate food labels, helping people make healthy choices, stave off illness, and reduce healthcare costs.

85 colleges are using a research-based program to create healthier campuses and encourage healthy diet, exercise, and stress management choices among their students.

Heightening environmental stewardship

Information about the economic value of ecosystem services has helped land managers and policymakers weigh the costs and benefits of management options, estimate losses under certain land use and climate scenarios, and predict how mitigation strategies might reduce losses.

Researchers helped install prairie strips on **35 farms** in **9 states**, reducing soil, nitrogen, and phosphorus runoff from these farms by **up to 95%**.

80% of commercial egg producers have adopted new feeding strategies that reduce ammonia emissions.

Building personal, family, and community resilience

Research on rural areas is guiding programs and policies, increasing the likelihood they successfully meet needs.

Nationwide, residents, businesses, and government agencies use research to guide disaster preparedness and recovery and to adapt to climate change impacts.

Research has shown that diversity and tolerance can lead to richer stores of social capital and economic prosperity.

WHAT DO AES NEED NOW?

With enhanced support, AES and agricultural research programs at universities and historically black and tribal colleges can continue to address challenges in food and agriculture more efficiently than any other system in the world. Filling current gaps and needs will require:



Enhanced funding to support diverse research, enable exploratory and early-career projects, and give AES the flexibility to respond to emerging local issues



Resources to improve campus infrastructure and facilities for cutting-edge research



Interdisciplinary, systems-level research



Broader focus on sustainability and wellness



Models and decision-making tools that account for interlinked variables and uncertainty



Harnessing advances in big data, genetics, nanotechnology, and other emerging fields



Strategies for communicating information and sharing technology

Agenda Item 9.9: NIFA Planning, Accountability, and Reporting Research Working Group

Presenter: Bret Hess

Action Requested: For Information

Association of 1890 Research Directors –

- Dr. Ami Smith, Associate Vice President & Director Of Gus R. Douglass Land-Grant Institute, West Virginia State University, 304-204-4305, smitham@wvstateu.edu
- Ms. Tracie J. Bishop, Program Manager and REEport Site Administrator, University of Maryland Eastern Shore, 410-651-6383, tjbishop@umes.edu

North Central Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors –

- Dr. Casey Hillmer, Assistant Director for the Wisconsin Agricultural Experiment Station, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 608-262-2397, casey.hillmer@wisc.edu
- Ms. Lynn Laws, Experiment Station Research Programs Coordinator, Iowa State University, 515-294-4544, lynnlaws@iastate.edu

Northeast Regional Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors –

- Ms. Rubie Mize, Research Coordinator, Maryland Agricultural Experiment Station, 301-405-4049, rgmize@umd.edu
- Dr. John Dieffenbacher-Krall, Assistant Director, Maine Agricultural and Forest Experiment Station, 207-581-3211, john.dieffenbacherkrall@maine.edu

Southern Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors –

- Dr. Susan Duncan, Associate Director of Virginia Agricultural Experiment Station, Virginia Tech, 540-231-3724, duncans@vt.edu
- Ms. Cynthia Nichols, Budget Director for AgResearch, University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture, 865-974-7122, cnichols@utk.edu,

Western Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors –

- Ms. Ellen Yeates, Program Coordinator for REEport and NIMSS, Washington State University, 509-335-9811, eyeates@wsu.edu
- Dr. John Talbott, Associate Director Oregon Agricultural Experiment Station and Director, Sun Grant Western Regional Center, 541-737-2194, John.Talbott@oregonstate.edu

Other Members -

- Ms. Chris Hamilton, NCRA Assistant Director and NIMSS System Administrator, 484-716-7645, christina.hamilton@wisc.edu
- Mr. David Leibovitz, Coordinator, NERA, University of Rhode Island, 401-874-4801, david_leibovitz@uri.edu
- Dr. Bret Hess, Executive Director, WAAESD, University of Nevada, 307-760-3319, bhess@unr.edu

NIFA Research Working Group Notes from 9/15/2020

The Extension module, which was demoed, will be released as soon as NIFA leadership signs off.

All Critical Issues that were updated as of November 2019 migrated over into the new reporting system. These Critical Issues will serve as the anchor across the different modules in the NIFA Reporting System.

The working group expressed their desire to allow Organizational Administrators the option of deleting projects or changing information that was entered incorrectly.

NIFA walked through research initiation as it currently works for Hatch projects.

Questions from NIFA:

1. What do you have in place in terms of internal processes for initiating a project?
2. If we created a space in the new system that has all required fields in proposal format that you can work off of, save progress, conduct internal review and then hit submit when ready, would you use that and would it reduce burden?

Additional discussion focused on Appendix F, a description of information that should be included in Hatch proposals from a previous NIFA manual.

NIFA discussed the need to identify inefficiencies and duplicative info requests.

The first action item for NIFA is to identify what is required by NIFA in proposals, as the lack of a standardized proposal template is an inefficiency that needs to be addressed.

NIFA is also exploring the possibility of integrating a data mining tool that will eliminate the need for supplying classification information.

The working group believes LGUs should be conducting the science review and that NIFA should be limiting their review to an administrative review.