

ESCOP Science & Technology: <http://escop.info/committee/scitech/>

6/01/2020

4 pm ET, via Zoom (<https://zoom.us/j/7318779678> or 1 669 900 9128 Meeting ID: 731 877 9678 Password: 222828)

Committee Members:

<p>Chair: <i>Jody Jellison (NERA)</i> Past Chair: Laura Lavine (WAAESD)</p> <p>Delegates: <i>Alton Thompson (ARD) 336</i> <i>John Yang (ARD) 573</i> <i>Joe Colletti (NCRA)</i> <i>Bill Barker (NCRA)</i> Indrajeet Chaubey (NERA) Mark Hutton (NERA) <i>Susan Duncan (SAAESD)</i> <i>Nathan McKinney (SAAESD)</i> Gene Kelly (WAAESD) <i>Chris Davies (WAAESD)</i></p> <p>Executive Vice Chair: <i>Bret Hess (WAAESD ED)</i> <i>Saige Zespy (WAAESD Recorder)</i></p>	<p>Liaisons: Robert Matteri (ARS) <i>Wendy Powers-Schilling (ECOP)</i> <i>Tim Conner (NIFA)</i> Danesha Carley (NIPMCC) <i>Tim Killian (SSCC)</i></p> <p>Guest Speaker: <i>Dr. John Dyer</i></p>
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Agenda:

1. Welcome – Jellison
 - a. Thanks for spending the time together
 - b. Appreciate being able to join folks inside their homes
 - c. Thanks for your approval of the one-pager
 1. Approved last week
2. Roll-call – Hess
 - a. Quorum is present
3. Approval of meeting notes from 04/27/2020 – Jellison
 - a. No clarifications or changes necessary
 - b. Nathan McKinney moved to approve the meeting notes
 1. John Yang seconded the motion
 2. The motion was approved.
4. Guest Presentation:
 - a. [Dr. John Dyer, USDA Agriculture Innovation Agenda \(Research Leader with the Agricultural Research Service and a member of the Senior Executive Service Candidate Development Program\)](#)
 - The goal of the Agriculture Innovation Agenda is to conduct a forward-looking exercise that identifies the greatest opportunities and challenges, as well as key technologies that need to be developed, over the next 10 to

20 years to increase ag productivity by 40 percent and decrease the environmental footprint of the industry by half by 2050.

- Stakeholder input is important. Many groups, including Extension, have been engaged to hold workshops in their local community.
- The Ag Innovation Agenda was launched in February 20, 2020 by Secretary Perdue at the Agriculture Outlook Forum.
 - It starts with highlighting successes of American agriculture, including increased production, steady inputs, and addition of innovative technologies.
 - Since 1930, U.S. agriculture has seen a 400% increase in production of food and fiber, and over the same time period, inputs have remained relatively flat.
 - Innovative technologies have enabled the forward movement. Technologies include automated irrigation systems, robotic milking processes, the introduction of biotechnology for weed and pest control and more.
 - Many challenges lie ahead for agriculture, including world population growth, a push for sustainability and more.
 - In the Ag Innovation Agenda, Secretary Perdue challenged the industry to increase productivity by 40% and decrease the environmental footprint of agriculture by 50% by 2050.
 - Developing innovative technologies will be key in moving forward. The Ag Innovation Agenda supports identification and development of the next generation of technologies to move farmers, ranchers and foresters forward into the future.
- The Ag Innovation Agenda has three main goals, and a scorecard.
 - The first priority is research, with the idea of developing a research and innovation strategy that aligns public and private research to achieve the biggest benefits.
 - Secondly, the program seeks to identify and focus on existing USDA programs, integrating innovative technologies to help fast-track technology into the hands of producers.
 - The third goal focuses on metrics, which allows assessment of productivity and conservation efforts. Further, it identifies where gaps may exist.
 - The scorecard highlights areas of importance to consider. Some of those target areas include ag productivity, forest management, food loss, and food waste.
 - Each area is led by a different team of people.
- To accomplish the goals of the Ag Innovation Agenda, several steps have been identified.
 - The first step is to consider existing publications and already-identified challenges and opportunities. Documents such as the Breakthroughs 2030 report from the National Academy of

Sciences can help inform a wide swatch of opportunities, challenges and recommendations.

- The NAS report identified four areas that align with the Ag Innovation Agenda, including genome design; digital and automation; prescriptive intervention/data analytics; and systems-based management.
- Each area is on where advances in science are predicted to have a substantive impact on ag productivity and the conservation footprint.
- It is important to also include private sector research documents, as well.
- The next step is to hear from stakeholders. USDA is currently engaged in this part of the process.
 - Farmers, ranchers and foresters are most able to provide on-the-ground perspectives of big opportunities and challenges. Their input is collected in two ways.
 - First is publication of a Request for Information, which was published April 1 in the *Federal Register*. Stakeholders are encouraged to respond to the RFI by August 1.
 - Second is a series of workshops planned, organized and funded through sponsoring organizations. The workshops being with a presentation from USDA about the Ag Innovation Agenda. Then, subject-matter experts will be invited to talk about each innovation cluster area and provide some thought-provoking ideas on possible innovations. Then, groups are split up to discuss what big opportunities are available for their individual segment. The final product is an opportunity statement that is very broad, with critical solutions listed below. Groups are also asked to think about gaps, policies, barriers and supporting technologies.
 - To date, workshops have been held with 31 different major stakeholders, including commodity groups, the dairy and forestry sectors, and several umbrella organizations.
 - Feedback has been largely positive and productive.
 - The RFI and workshops are structured similarly.
 - Despite the inability to meet together currently, plans are being developed to enable short Zoom facilitated sessions to engage in constructive conversations.

- Finally, the "big ideas" collected from stakeholder groups and reports will be aligned into research opportunities and product goals. Private sector cooperation will also be vital at this stage to deliver solutions.
- The Ag Innovation Agenda aims to be completed by December 31, 2020. After the RFI closes on August 1, the data will be organized, and a first draft of resource opportunities and product goals will be developed. Then, the draft will be circulated to the scientific community for peer review and feedback in September and October.
 - Following peer review, the document will be revised and sent to the Secretary of Agriculture's office for final approval by the end of the calendar year.
 - After approval, work forward can begin.
- Questions:
 - Format of online?
 - A virtual format would include short video segments from subject matter experts, likely hosted on eExtension, then a 2-2.5 hour Zoom call to discuss. Shorter Zoom calls are strongly preferred.

5. Liaison Updates, as needed

- a. ARS
 1. No liaison was present at the meeting.
- b. ECOP - Wendy Powers-Schilling
 1. ECOP update still stands from the last meeting.
 2. Wendy was uncertain as to where the \$80 million request was at this point.
 1. States are still working with their budgets
 3. ECOP is currently working on strategic directions document (2020-2024), which is out for review to the regions until mid-July.
 1. The document includes four key areas: increasing visibility and recognitions of the Cooperative Extension System; supporting professional success of Extension leadership through tailored professional development; expand federal and non-federal resources available to Extension to identify national priority Extension issues and provide mechanisms for collective action.
 2. The key areas may change as a result of regional reviews.
- c. NIFA - Tim Conner
 1. COVID-19 updates continue regularly.
 1. Jody mentioned this is a good way to communicate
 2. When asked if the date for extensions has been moved, Tim noted it will depend on a new OMB memo. The safest would be to anticipate no extensions past six months.
 1. If something happens, we can address at that point.
 3. NIFA is working on Plans of Work, Hatch products, competitive grants.

1. 100 percent telework status has been maintained.
2. Additionally, NIFA is going through another leadership change with Scott Angle leaving. Parag Chitnis will be Acting Director as of July 13. Bryan Kaphammer will move into the Acting Associate Director position.
 1. Hopefully, NIFA can continue to rebuild during the changes.
4. Project Café has been implemented, and NIFA continues to evaluate the short- and long-term viability of the project.
- d. NIPMCC
 1. No liaison was present
- e. SSSC - Tim Killian
 1. No updates at this point.
 2. Chair indicated SSSC is still in a holding pattern, trying to sort out when to meet next time.
6. Selection of ESS Excellence in Multistate Research Award winner
 - a. Rankings shared from initial individual rankings were very close, but two top projects were identified. After discussions, the project from the Western Region, *Social, Economic and Environmental Causes and Consequences of Demographic Change in Rural America*, was the best project for many reasons.
 1. This project had a scope of impact that was far reaching, beyond just one industry, sector, or stakeholder group.
 2. The project was very interdisciplinary, exemplifying coordination and cooperation between states and regions, expanding its reach from multi-state to national.
 3. The project leverage funds from a wide variety of state, federal, public and private funds to accomplish its goals.
 4. The project participants were very diverse, including non-land-grant universities and land-grant universities.
 5. The impacts of the project are extensive. Impacts extend both to science and social science.
 6. The submission format was strictly followed, and each section was very strong.
 - b. Nathan McKinney motioned to select *Social, Economic and Environmental Causes and Consequences of Demographic Change in Rural America* as the winner of the 2020 ESS Excellence in Multistate Research Award. John Yang seconded the motion.
 1. Bret called the vote, since Jody is a voting member of the group.
 2. The motion passed unanimously.
 - c. After a vote, the motion moves forward as a recommendation to ESCOP, and the decision is moved forward to the ESCOP Board for ratification.

Action Items:

- Begin thinking about opportunities to engage with ARS in the Ag Innovation Agenda.

- Work with Executive Extension Directors and Research Directors to establish and participate in Ag Innovation Agenda workshop. (Bret H.)
 - Stay tuned for involvement in the evaluative process of the Ag Innovation Agenda.
- Begin thinking about how STC can work with National Ag Libraries and building their data curation platform.

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