National Plant Germplasm Coordinating Committee Meeting (NPGCC)

Zoom Meeting Connection

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82556333521?pwd=ekdzeVhVTWJpaVJhby9WZEdDTmlBQT09>

Meeting ID: 825 5633 3521; Passcode: 226815

May 30, 2023 1:00-4:00 ET (if needed)

2023 NPGCC Agenda

Attendance: Bret Hess, Ksenija Gasic, Bob Stougaard, Carolyn Lawrence-Dill, Sarah Wilbanks, Ann Stapleton, Clarice Coyne, Larry Chandler, Melanie Harrison, Peter Bretting, Tim Cupka, David Baltenspergr, Jennifer Tippetts (recording secretary).

1. **Introductions and Additions/Approval of Agenda**- Members introduced themselves.
2. **Approval of 2022 NPGCC Meeting Notes**- David moved to accept the minutes as presented. Ksenija seconded the motion. Motion approved.
3. **Status of National Plant Germplasm System (NPGS)-** Peter shared a brief introduction.



Below is the final document on Safeguarding plant genetic resources in the United States during global climate change.



1. **Plant Introduction Station Impacts**- Melanie shared a presentation.

Carolyn asked if we should encourage more ARS participation in multi-state projects and can they participate in multiple projects. Peter shared that it depends on the project to determine the level of ARS engagement. There are no restrictions against participation and there are various ways to continue to promote participation.

1. **NIFA Update and Future Directions**- These slides are available to this group, but not for public distribution.
2. **AOSCA report-** Sarah Wilbanks
   1. A majority of staff retired about 18 months ago, finally fully staffed again.
   2. Trying to become more efficient and clean up old processes and stay relevant.
   3. We have had a 15% decline in acreage in the past six years. Working on addressing the why and finding a solution. We are great at what we do for seed certification, but don’t do a great job of promoting it.
   4. Continue to work with students and future breeders to create more awareness.
   5. Taking on major projects, one of these includes the standards books that are minimum standards that can be adopted by all agencies.
   6. Another project is the variety review board. This is a peer review system for a variety review. The system was an old inefficient system that we are building electronically with more security. This is also a new searchable database. Working on sharing this data.
   7. Launched a new website.
   8. Annual meeting coming up in Bloomington Minnesota.
   9. Launched a finalized 3 year strategic plan. NPGCC agreed to post the plan on the website. Peter and Melanie are going to work together to get NPGCC data on the new AOSCA website.
   10. Quality Assurance acres are down by 50% in the last 6 years. This is relevant data we have been able to recognize from updating our systems. There is not determining factor as to why the QA acres are down.
3. **Farm Bill-** Bret shared that as a national effort from the experiment stations is to put a figure in the national facilities act. The system is interested if it is possible to have mandatory funding so these dollars can be used at the LGU’s. There might be a direct impact on infrastructure. There was a $2 million dollar appropriation to NIFA to initiate infrastructure competitive grant program. The funds are targeted to the underrepresented universities.
4. **Other** **Topics**- David asked about if there are items in the reduction act that are going to affect the national germ plasm? Peter stated that from the ARS side there is no affect at this time.
5. **NAPB report**- David Baltensperger reported that the NAPB annual meeting will be at Clemson University, July 16-20. They have been active in providing information and sponsoring student visits to congress. They have also signed on to plant breeding and germ plasm letters to congress. 2024 meeting location will be at Bayer and Texas A&M in 2025.
6. **PBCC report**- Ksenija Gasic shared that they are working with NAPB on many objectives. Recently we have focused on the development of documents on how institutions handle germ plasm staff transitions. What happens with retirements or positions are not filled. We need to make sure there are no major effects. You can’t just stop taking care of the germ plasms. What can we do with our committee’s to be on the same page and have a progressive plan.
7. **ASTA report**- Tim Cupka reported that these types of transitions also happen in the private sector. When transitions happen, many varieties have potentially very valuable plasm ignored and or eliminated.
   1. Based out of the US and working with many global companies. The last two years have been tumultuous due to the war in Ukraine. Fertilizer, pesticide, inflation have all seen price increases. Farmers have seen high input costs and have chosen to go to rotation crops. In 2022 there was a step back from the high input crops that drove the grain prices up. As a result, 2023 has flipped, almost any seed company are having excellent years. Farms have seen the prices go up, even though there is a high input crop. We also need the rotation to conserve soil and pets, etc. In 2023, thus far, things are looking promising for our growing condition.
   2. Our research and breeding have changed in the last 10 years. Ten years ago, Tim was an average corn breeder. With 100,000 plots, this year there are only 33,000 trial plots. This is because we use GS predictions and only keep about a 1/3rd of the products. In the past Tim would have planted all of them but had GS calibration to be more effective. We no longer need as many field breeders as in the past. Now they are hybrid testing and planting new breeds. It only costs $8 to run a GS test, but it costs $140 to plant and run field trial. Research budgets are being cut and redistributed. GS is only effective when the calibration is set correctly.
8. **Future meeting formats and possible sites -** The group agreed to host the meeting next year in Ames if we can host in conjunction with the plant breeding program. The meeting will be a hybrid meeting. Peter will provide updates as more information is determined from the plant breeders; the meeting is often in June.
9. **Meeting Adjourned**