

National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education, and Economics Advisory Board

REE Advisory Board Office
Room 321-A Whitten Building
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250-2255

Mailing Address:
STOP 0321
1400 Independence Ave. SW
Washington, DC 20250-0321
Telephone: 202-720-3684
Fax: 202-720-6199

DRAFT MINUTES Executive Committee Conference Call

Thursday, June 18, 2009, 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. EST.

Executive Committee Members Present: Dr. Martin Massengale, Dr. Walt Armbruster, Mrs. Carol Keiser-Long, Dr. Ed Runge, Mrs. Jean-Mari Peltier, Dr. Mary Wagner, Mr. Terry Wolf

Executive Committee Members Absent: Dr. Tom Rosol, Dr. Fred Cholick

Guests Present: Rachael Goldfarb, Counselor to the Under Secretary for REE

NAREEE Board Staff: Mrs. Karen Hunter, Executive Director, Mrs. Shirley Morgan-Jordan Program Support Coordinator



I. Roll Call of Members and Invitees

Karen Hunter, Executive Director called roll of the Executive Committee members.

II. Comments and Welcome

Dr. Massengale welcomed the group and noted that committee members have been busy working on reports. Draft reports for Invasive Species and Commodity Crops are out for Executive Committee review. Drs. Armbruster and Massengale are scheduled to meet with the newly appointed Under Secretary for Research, Education and Economics, Dr. Shah, on July 1; they will brief the rest of the Executive Committee during the July conference call meeting. Dr. Massengale reminded the Committee that a discussion of topics for the October meeting would take place later during the call. He also mentioned that the Executive Committee may wish to wait until after July 1 meeting with Dr. Shah to take his priorities into consideration before finalizing topics for the October meeting.

III. Comments from Dr. Rajiv Shah

Dr. Shah was unable to attend the call, but Rachael Goldfarb was available to make a few brief comments. She introduced herself as Dr. Shah's chief of staff and thanked the Board for the opportunity to participate in the

call. Dr. Massengale welcomed Rachael and reminded her that the Board's meetings are open and that she is welcome to participate at any time.

IV. Update on Committee Activities and/or Reports

Specialty Crop Committee Activities

Dr. Walt Armbruster reported that the Specialty Crops Committee held listening sessions last fall: two in Washington and one in New York, followed by a session in Florida this spring. The results from those sessions will be drafted into a report for the Secretary soon. Jean-Mari Peltier will be assisting with the writing of the report. It is anticipated that by the time for the next conference call a draft will be put forward for the Executive Committee to review prior to full board discussion and approval.

Renewable Energy Committee Activities

Carol Keiser-Long reported on the Renewable Energy Committee (REC) activities and quickly outlined the premise of the REC and the most recent report (180 days from establishment of committee). She also pointed out that the committee's report fell very much in line with the REE Strategic Energy Science plan and goals with a focus on sustainable natural resources and efficient use of energy and conservation. The REC attempted to identify areas in which REE could take a leadership role. Carol also reported that she attended the June 3 Biomass Research and Development Initiative Technical Advisory Committee (BRDI TAC) meeting and updated that group on the REC. She is working with BRDI TAC leadership to lay the foundation for a joint BRDI TAC/REC meeting. The meeting would serve to help both committees clarify and understand specific roles and outline specific goals for the future. The meeting was originally proposed for September, but it seems that December or sometime early 2010 are more likely. The joint meeting would be beneficial to both groups if held sooner rather than later. Carol offered to provide a more in-depth report for Dr. Shah and Rachael at their convenience.

V. Updates on Work Groups

Commodity Crops

Jean-Mari Peltier reported that the draft was currently in the hands of the Executive Committee for review. She suggested including a copy of the Excel spreadsheet that detailed the commodity-by-commodity ranking of the priorities. Jean-Mari suggested that the spreadsheet could be included as an addendum to the report. Jean-Mari provided a brief background on the commodity crop work group for Rachael. The broad topic made drafting the report a challenging task. Information was gathered via website searches, outreach to commodity organizations, other committee members, and a brief informal survey. Some of the commodity crop stakeholders don't view research as a priority; rather they believe priority needs are funded through private sector research. For example, if a pest problem emerges in a commodity crop, chemical companies are ready to promptly research and address the issue. The specialty crop industry has different needs than commodity crops. The Commodity Crop Report details desires of research from the producers, not from the commodity crop processors. As a result of the April NAREEE meeting, there is a renewed interest in a joint NAREEE-Farm Foundation-Commodity Crops Stakeholders meeting to pursue the topic. Dr. Massengale commented that the Board focuses on two or three topics for each meeting and that commodity crops as a single topic was too broad to be effective. Dr. Armbruster also commented that the commodity groups are now interested in talking about research.

Invasive Species

Karen Hunter reported that the Invasive Species Report is out for Executive Committee review. Changes are due back to the NAREEE office by Monday, June 22. Like the Commodity Crops Report, the Invasive Species Report is broad and general, providing an overview/state of the science perspective on invasive species.

Climate Change

Dr. Armbruster reported for Dr. Heldman. The Climate Change Work Group held a conference call earlier in the week. The group looked at the general areas they wish to focus on: mitigation, adaptation, carbon trading. The group is reviewing presentations and notes to formulate relevant points and begin drafting the report. Leadership has been assigned to different work group members to write the report. Another conference call is scheduled for late next week.

VI. Commodity Roundtable and Follow Up from Farm Foundation Meeting

Dr. Armbruster updated the group on the progress of the reporting from the April NAREEE-Farm Foundation meeting and the proposed follow-up commodity crop meeting. The report on the April meeting will be prepared in the next month. The most significant outcome from the meeting may very well be the proposed future meeting between NAREEE and the commodity crop stakeholders to discuss research. There is some concern that the rate of increase in US agricultural productivity is starting to slow, and it could be a result of less funding in productivity research. No formal group has been established to organize a call for a meeting yet (joint NAREEE-commodity stakeholder meeting).

VII. FY 2010 Nominations

Karen Hunter reported that the Federal Register Notice for nominations is out. Complete application packages are due to the NAREEE office by July 17. Interested applicants must send signed, original AD-755 and any letters to the NAREEE Office. Members who wish to be reappointed must follow the same application protocol as new members.

VIII. Fall Board Meeting

The next Board meeting will be from October 28-30, 2009 at the Madison Hotel in Washington, DC. An orientation session will be held for new members. It is time to select topics and assign work groups for meeting planning. Dr. Massengale reminded the Executive Committee that "Extension" has been selected as one topic. Fred Cholick has agreed to chair the work group. Any other interested members should notify Dr. Massengale. It would seem most appropriate to include some other members with experience in different facets of extension. Alton Thompson was suggested as a potential work group member for his experience with the extension system in the 1890 land grant university system. Robin Douthitt was also suggested as a good representative from the consumer science perspective. Other suggestions for topics are listed in the agenda. Suggestions came from within the department. Karen Hunter encouraged the extension work group to narrow the topic of "extension" to something more specific to facilitate generation of usable recommendations. Dr. Massengale asked for any other recommendations for topics. Mary Wagner pointed out that with the prevalence of healthy eating, obesity and nutrition issues, it seems to be an opportune time to make the board more visible by addressing one of those topics. Jean-Mari Peltier volunteered to help Mary Wagner with the topic. Carol Keiser-Long also emphasized the meat-animal industry and its effect on healthy eating and behaviors. Dr. Ed Runge noted that extension funding in many states is being reduced or eliminated. Jean-Mari Peltier brought up the topic of e-Xtension and recommended an update of how well it works in practice. Funds

are being put toward e-Xtension projects. Dr. Massengale suggested any other extension comments should be shared with Fred. Carol commented that the Renewable Energy Committee report also has a piece on extension. Dr. Massengale also suggested that Lester Myers might be a good person to ask as an aquaculture representative. Joe Layton was also suggested as a good resource; Dr. Massengale will check with him—Joe’s schedule may be too busy. Mary Wagner also suggested a focus session on industry involvement and dollars. There is still a problem with young people not remaining in science fields. The retention of science and math experts for industry is dismal. Work force education and preparation remains a critical issue. Terry Wolf suggested other topic ideas: he will email to the group for consideration in the future. Dr. Massengale asked if it could be considered that nutrition/health, work force development, and extension are the highest priorities. Discussion followed, the consensus was to narrow down the topics.

The meeting adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

MARTIN MASSENGALE
Chair

Karen Hunter
Executive Director

APPROVAL BY ADVISORY BOARD: _____
Date

Initials
Chair

Initials
Executive Director