



Research, Education, and Economics (REE)
National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education, and Economics (NAREEE) Advisory
Board

Specialty Crop Committee (SCC) Meeting Notes – Thursday, March 14, 2024

SCC Members Present: Dr. Gregory Goins (Chair), Ms. Donnell Brown, Dr. Carlos Iglesias, Mr. Jack Karlin, Dr. Charlie Messina, and Mr. Jim Tuinier - 6

SCC Members Absent: none

NAREEE Board Staff Present: Kate Lewis, NAREEE Board Executive Director/Designated Federal Officer (DFO)

NAREEE Board Staff Absent: Michele Simmons, Program Support Specialist

Guests: Dr. Tom Bewick, Dr. Jessica Shade, Ms. Megan O'Reilly, National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA)

I. Welcome, Roll Call,

DFO Lewis welcomed the group and attendance was taken. A quorum was established amongst the SCC Members. The prior minutes from the February 2024 meeting were approved after one minor edit DFO Lewis made to the minutes in real time. She informed the members that NIFA will not share information in today's meeting on FY25 SCRI but will provide information about how the FY24 process is going.

NAREEE Board and Committee and Subcommittee FY24 nominations has been received from the Secretary's office, and Michele Simmons will contact the new members.

II. Statement from Chair:

Dr. Goins welcomed the Members. He stated that Jim Tuinier's 2-year term has been completed, but he may be in the April 11, 2024, meeting, along with the new Committee Members.

III. Old Business/Review

DFO Lewis gave a brief update on the Committee's FY23 Feedback on Hemp Research Needs Roadmap. The Office of the Chief Scientist sent an acknowledgment letter to the SCC September 2023 thanking them for their feedback. The public launch of

the Roadmap occurred March 8, 2024, at an ARS lab in Philadelphia, PA. One of the projects in the Implementation Plan (currently in development) in support of the roadmap's goals is a \$10M investment in hemp research at Oregon State University. This is one of 14 projects that is in place or will be in place to support developing the hemp industry going forward.

IV. New Business

Remarks from NIFA about FY24 SCRI:

Dr. Bewick discussed funding a lot of workshops for grants. He mentioned that NIFA is asking for ratings instead of scores. SCRI needs at least 30-35 Scientific Merit Reviewers. SCRI research priorities can only be changed by Congress (legislatively mandated).

Dr. Shade stated that there are 164 relevancy reviewers and 17 review panels for the proposals. 155 pre-applications were received. 107 of those were invited for full application submission.

Donnell Brown indicated that the Relevancy Review process is going smoothly; and asked a question about the scientific merit reviewers for the SCRI Team?

Dr. Bewick stated that the number of applications has increased significantly in the last few years.

Dr. Iglesias asked is there a prospect for increased funding to attend the increased demand?

Dr. Bewick answer was that they expect applications to pick this year and then return to more normal levels.

There was discussion about work items for the Committee for FY24

NIFA FY25 SCRI program recommendations – NIFA will provide the SCC with its formal FY25 SCRI presentation/consultation in the July or August SCC meetings. They request the Committees' FY25 SCRI recommendations to be received in late August or September 2024. They must send out the request for pre applications by October 1, 2024.

In-person meeting – tentative for August 2024 (8/5-8/9) in CA with the California Specialty Crops Council. More info to be shared soon once DFO Lewis talks with Mr. van Sickle.

V. Wrap-up/Adjourn

DFO Lewis asked if there were any more comments or questions. There were none.

The meeting adjourned at 2:57 p.m. ET.

The next meeting is scheduled for April 11th @ 2pm ET.