

Response to Reviewer Comments

Appendix J1: CC Evaluation (Submitted)

Status: Complete

Project ID / Title:

NECC_TEMP2312: Northeast Coordinating Committee on Soil Testing

Questions

1. Goals and objectives clearly stated and appropriate to committee activity(s) **Excellent**
2. There is a good potential to attain the objectives and plan identified in the activity. **Excellent**
3. Activity addresses priority research and is not duplicative with existing activities. **Excellent**
4. Activity has moved beyond individual activity(s) and ideas to a collective, interdependent activity. **Needs Improvement**

For renewal projects only:

- 5a. Attendance of the preceding project has been adequate and reflects broad participation by designated project participants. **Excellent**
- 5b. The project has developed and demonstrated technology transfer to clientele. **Fair**

Recommendation

Approve/continue with normal revision.

Comments:

Regional soil testing groups are important for faculty in NE Region's land grant universities and their stakeholders. These regional groups mentor young faculty, address agricultural sample analyses in the laboratory, and collaborate on applied nutrient management research and educational issues. The regional methods manual, last updated in 2011, is an important output of this regional project. The project should continue, but would benefit from some revision and renewed effort. My comments and recommendations are listed below.

1. The issues and justification should be updated more extensively. The document for the renewal is very similar to the current project. I understand that the issues and justification may be similar as in the past, but it would be good to communicate what if any progress has been made on the issues. For example, high tunnel production systems, malting barley, and soil health continue to be mentioned as justification for the project. I would like some mention of what has been done to address these issues to reinforce that the regional group is making progress on finding answers and solutions for the stakeholders.

We have expanded the issues and justification section to include some of the progress we have made in the past renewal period toward finding answers and solutions for stakeholders.

2. The objectives cover research and extension missions with practical and achievable tasks. Are there activities that involve the traditional teaching mission - e.g., student training? If so, teaching-related objectives should be included.

At this time, the focus of the committee on stakeholder engagement. Some members may participate in traditional student training, but these efforts are tangential to the NECC group activity. Individual group members may provide opportunities through outreach activities and assistance with material preparation for graduate and / or undergraduate students to gain experience as they prepare for future careers in outreach and extension.

3. Procedure #3 should include the term "correlation" in addition to calibration.

This term was included.

4. The "Expected Outcomes and Impacts" Section provides a list of activities (discuss, review, collaborate, etc.) but is short on tangible, measurable outcomes and impacts (publish, present, etc). Some of these outcomes and Impacts should change as the project continues and matures. Many of these are identical to the current project suggesting progress in addressing the issues is slow. None of the activities have an impact listed.

Additional information has been provided to include tangible impacts.

5. I could not find a website for the activity but the document mentions the website several times including in Procedure #5. The methods manual was found on the Univ Delaware website. The website is also mentioned in the last bullet in the Outcomes and Impact Section. Developing the website (or making it findable in a Google search) is low-hanging fruit and would be a vehicle to show progress on objective #5.

This was updated to list that we would develop this website.

6. Outcomes and Impacts that show group collaboration are needed to improve the rating to question number 4 above.

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5b. The project has developed and demonstrated technology transfer to clientele. **Excellent**
Recommendation

Approve/continue with normal revision.

Comments:

This project will address an important issue for Northeast farmers. The team has good experience in the methodology and in working together. The likelihood of generating impactful results is high. A few comments are offered:

Under Related, Current, and Previous Work, last paragraph. Is genetic "pollution" the right term here? Loss of genetic integrity or other term may be more appropriate.

For Methods: -What kind of (previous land use?) land will the studies be conducted? Farmland? other? combination? -How will they know if weeds are there? -The test areas will not be inoculated (but 10 most common weeds are listed, so there must be some background), so the assumption is that there is weed pressure. I just did not see that stated. -How will the emerging seedlings be identified? Will they be grown out somehow, once they are removed and counted? Will rainfall be recorded also? air temp and soil temp? Would it be useful to collect weather data all year long or is the plan just to collect the data during the course of the season?

Based on the comments above, we are not sure that this review is related to our proposal as it seems more related to weed research.

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Excellent 3. Activity addresses priority research and is not duplicative with existing activities.

Excellent 4. Activity has moved beyond individual activity(s) and ideas to a collective,

interdependent activity. **Excellent** For renewal projects only:

5a. Attendance of the preceding project has been adequate and reflects broad participation

by designated project participants. **Excellent** 5b. The project has developed and demonstrated technology transfer to clientele. **Excellent** Recommendation

Approve/continue with normal revision.

Comments:

The proposal is well-written and addresses critical soil testing and nutrient management research, education, outreach, and extension needs in the northeast U.S. region.

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Approve/continue with normal revision.

Comments:

Very important committee for LGU to lead nutrient management effort. Objectives, methods and outcomes are well presented.