Reviewer comments and technical team responses to W4010 temp:

We thank the reviewers and the Multistate Research Committee for the evaluation of our project renewal and feel that the suggestions have improved the proposal. Please see our specific changes below.

Reviewer 1.

Comment:

There is only one participant, Jennifer Horton. This was a great proposal, and it appears that Jennifer Horton may have written the entire piece. They need to get more participants listed in Appendix E, but again, it was a really thorough and well-written proposal. I would say approve with the minor provision that they get more members.

Response:

Jennifer Horton is the Assistant ED for agInnovation West and uploaded the proposal into NIMSS as there was an issue that the technical team could not. We have 6 individuals from 6 different states that have been involved in the drafting of the renewal. We expect all other participants in W3010 to join and plan to in our first year develop plans to actively recruit additional participants.

Reviewer 2.

Overall, the proposal is well-written and justifies the need to continue the multistate committee. The following recommendations should be included in the revised proposal before it is approved. A Non-technical summary should be added. The workshops and short courses described in the Methods section should be included as outputs. Likewise, the outcomes of these products should be included in the Outcomes and Projected Impacts. Was the intent with the last statement in the Outcomes and Projected Impacts “Increased knowledge of the role of specific molecular physiological mechanisms, genes and gene variants in regulating nutrient utilization efficiency in beef cattle” to link with the 5th objective? Please note that this statement was repeated, so perhaps a second/qualifying sentence was accidently copied over when pasting text into NIMSS? Milestones 2025-2027 are repeats of the same information, which are common activities and products of multistate committees not necessarily time-linked accomplishments. The Symposium on Molecular Mechanisms underlying Nutrient Use Efficiency mentioned in the Outputs should be included in the Milestones (i.e., what year will this be offered). Likewise, is it possible to indicate which year(s) symposia or workshops on basic understanding of nutrient use efficiency in beef cattle will be offered? The outcomes of such workshops and symposia should be included in the section on Outcomes and Projected Impacts. Recruitment of personnel from all the stations mentioned in the proposal will be necessary. Portions of the proposal should be rewritten to avoid the use of terms that do not align with the current administration’s priorities. Terms like climate and greenhouse gases should be avoided, even the term “diverse” in the context used in the proposal could cause the proposal to be flagged by NIFA. Is methane a suitable replacement for GHG or does GHG include other gases. If other gases are included then the list should be used instead of GHG. A suggestion for “diverse” in this instance is to substitute the term with “various” even though the two terms do not have the exact same meaning. Additionally, it would be prudent to remove the text in the Statement of Issues and Justification on how the project relates directly to the objectives of the USDA Strategic Plan FY 2022 – 2026 since those were from a previous administration. With the exception of climate change in the next paragraph, however, the paragraph is suitable for inclusion after removal of “These objectives are addressed in the following ways:”

Response:

A Non-technical summary has been added. The reference to wrokshops and short courses has been included in the outputs. The repeated statement in the Outcomes and Projected Impacts has been removed. Additional time-linked activities have been included in the milestones. Some of the milestones are dependent on acceptance of proposed symposia at meetings this group does not control and we want to be careful about committing to which year those topics may be accepted for a symposium.

We have modified language to reduce the likelihood of creating flags during review. We appreciate the reviewer’s suggestions (i.e., various and methane instead of diverse and GHG). We have also removed the specific reference to the FY 22-26 strategic plan.