**NCERA 180 Multistate Hatch Project Annual Meeting**

**June 10, 2025 9:00 am CDT**

**Brookings, SD and Online (Zoom)**

1. Introductions: Peter Kovacs called the meeting to order. He welcomed and thanked all the participants for joining today’s meeting. Dr. John Blanton, Associate Dean for Research and Director of SDSU’s Ag Experiment Stations welcomed the attendees and provided a brief overview of the College structure and organization. In-person participants had a chance to tour the Raven Precision Ag Center and hear about some of the Precision related work done at SDSU on the day before of the NCERA-180 Annual Meeting.
2. Participants

* Peter Kovacs, South Dakota State University, NCERA-180 Chair
* Kasiviswanathan Muthu Muthukumarappan, South Dakota State University, NCERA 180 Admin Advisor
* John Fulton, Ohio State University
* Rob Proulx, North Dakota State University Extension, NCERA-180 Vice-Chair
* Natasha Rayne, University of Wisconsin
* Simerjeet Virk, Auburn University
* Alex Thomasson, Mississippi State University
* Won Suk Lee, University of Florida
* Glen Reins, University of Georgia
* Guillermo Balboa, University of Nebraska, Lincoln
* Nick Uilk, South Dakota State University
* Van Kelley, South Dakota State University
* Dharmendra Saraswat, Purdue University
* Abhilash Chandel, Virginia Tech University
* Sunoj Shajahan, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign
* Manoj Karkee, Cornell University
* Rupak Karn, North Dakota State University, Carrington Research Extension Center
* Jennifer Lachowiec, Montana State University (online)
* Amire Verdi, University of California, Riverside
* Mahendra Bhandari, Texas A&M

1. General Discussion and Collaboration Reports

Kasiviswanathan Muthukumarappan, who serves as the administrative advisor, gave an update on the administrative side of the group (also on behalf of Christina Hamilton). Dr. Muthu reminded participants that the multi-state projects are intended to make a difference. The NCERA name has been updated to Ag Innovation NC. NCERA 180’s midterm review was favorable. A reviewer suggested a potential merger between the S-1069 and Ag Innovation NC 180 groups. Discussion that followed brought forth concerns about losing some members and diluting the research focus from each group. Dr. Muthu recommended keeping the groups’ stand-alone structure but looking for opportunities to co-host meetings and facilitate collaborations between the two groups. The Ag Innovation NC 180 group’s current cycle will expire on 9/30/2027. The first draft of the renewal proposal is due by 9/15/2026 and a full proposal is due to NIMSS by no later than 12/1/2026. The annual report for 2025 will be due 8/10 and should be concise and multistate/collaborative in focus, with no lists of station reports.

Dr. John Fulton gave an update from the International Society of Precision Agriculture. The Society has a new leadership with strong financial state. The mission is to advance the science of precision agriculture globally. There is an effort to integrate conferences (e.g. ESPA, or the Latin-American PA) for informatics, preserve presentations, and to bring the society under one umbrella. The Society is working on corporate membership as well. They are working on to develop a precision ag course database featuring courses from around the world. The next International Conference is in Porto Alegre in Brazil between July 13-16 in 2026.

Dr. David Clay from South Dakota State University is leading an international effort to update the Precision Ag Basics book offered to undergraduate students. The work is updating current chapters and introducing new chapters as well.

Other efforts discussed included:

* A digital ag survey was conducted across the Midwest states to establish a baseline of what technology farmers currently using or aware of.
* Multiple states are working on planter related research to improve seeding quality.
* States are working the utilization of machine learning and deep learning for yield prediction in different crops.
* Machine learning and artificial intelligence (AI) aided weed detection, identification, and targeted spraying research involves many states.

1. Business Meeting and Elections

* General discussions were about the need of site-specific management course creation, drone spraying efforts
* Alex Thomasson and Guillermo Balboa offered to host the 2026 meeting at Mississippi State University and University of Nebraska, respectively.
  + The group has decided to alternate the region where the meeting will be, to go to Mississippi State University in 2026

New executive team members have been elected:

Chair – Joby Czarnecki Mississippi State University?

Vice-Chair – Simer Virk, Auburn University

Secretary – Natasha Rayne, University of Wisconsin

1. Meeting Adjourned at 11:59 AM CDT.