

**2013 Annual NCERA 214 Meeting Minutes**  
Caine Dairy Teaching and Research Center  
Utah State University  
Logan, Utah

June 10-12, 2013

**Monday, June 10**

Dr. Jeff Held, President of NCERA 214, called the meeting to order at 9 AM at the Utah State University (USU) Caine Dairy Teaching and Research Center, Logan, Utah. Dr. Tom Bunch, Associate Department Head of USU Dairy, Animal & Veterinary Sciences welcomed the attendees to USU and then introduced Dr. Noelle Cockett, Dean of the USU College of Agriculture, Vice President for Extension and Director of the Agricultural Experiment Station.

Dr. Cockett welcomed the group to USU and discussed the Animal Science program at USU, the consolidation in recent years of all animal populations into one location and creation of the Research and Teaching Center in south Logan. She, in turn, introduced Dr. Ken White, Department Head, Animal, Dairy and Veterinary Sciences and Associate Dean of the USU School of Veterinary Medicine. Dr. Cockett discussed Dr. White's leadership, particularly in regards to his role in starting the School of Veterinary Medicine at USU. She also revealed that Dr. White had been recently named to replace her as Dean of the College of Agriculture and Director of the Agricultural Experiment Station when she assumes her new role as Provost at USU July 1<sup>st</sup>.

Dr. Ken White welcomed the group, spoke of challenges in moving up to the Dean's office and discussed the rationale behind the creation of the School of Veterinary Medicine and the ongoing construction of the new transgenic sheep and goat facility.

Dr. White's comments were followed by the presentation of the USU station report by Dr. Cockett.

Following a coffee break, Dr. Held introduced the Administrative Advisor for NCERA 214, Dr. Ernie Minton, Associate Director of the Agricultural Experiment Station at Kansas State University. Dr. Minton spoke of his pleasure at being assigned to NCERA 214 and then discussed his history at Kansas State, his familiarity with the work of some members in the group and commented on the positive engagement of NCERA 214 that simplifies his work as Administrative Advisor. He then discussed the requirements for the upcoming renewal process of NCERA 214 and the North Central Regions revision of the reporting requirements with more focus on impacts. Dr. Minton stated that he was looking forward to continued interactions with the committee and would be attending the business meeting the next day.

Following Dr. Minton, there was a round of introductions by NCERA 214 committee members and then Dr. Held discussed how the delivery of the station reports would proceed. Dr. Held asked Dr. Mike Thonney to suggest someone to serve with him on the Resolutions Committee and Dr. Thonney suggested Susan Schoenian, who agreed to serve.

Jeff Held chaired NCERA-214 station reports outlined below:

**Objective 1 – Develop and evaluate methods to improve reproductive efficiency:** Cornell University (Mike Thonney), North Dakota State University (Reid Redden), South Dakota State University (Anne Kolthoff), Texas A&M (Dan Waldron), Virginia State University (Stephan Wildeus), West Virginia University (Quinn Baptiste).

Following lunch, Jeff Held introduced Paul Rodgers, representative of ASI, and thanked ASI and Paul Rodgers his joining the NCERA 214 meeting and expressed appreciation for his long record of attendance record. Paul Rodgers spoke briefly and stated that he would be offering words on ASI at the business meeting on Tuesday and that Will Getz would also be providing comments on ASI.

Station reports continued:

**Objective 2 – Develop strategies to improve and predict efficiency of lean growth, and carcass quality, and meat palatability:** South Dakota State University (Jeff Held).

**Objective 3 – Evaluate genetic resources, nutrient requirements, and production systems for milk production:** Cornell University (Mike Thonney), University of Wisconsin (Dave Thomas).

**Objective 4 – Develop profitable and sustainable production systems (including parasite control and other health issues):** Dale Bumpers Small Farms Research Center USDA ARS Arkansas (Joan Burke), Fort Valley State University (Will Getz), Louisiana State University (Jim Miller), Michigan State University (Richard Ehrhardt), North Dakota State University (Reid Redden).

The meeting adjourned for the evening. Committee met at American West Heritage Center for a lamb barbeque, catered by Elements Restaurant.

## **Tuesday, June 10<sup>th</sup>**

At 9 AM Jeff Held called the business meeting to order. There were no corrections to report for the 2012 minutes. Kreg Leymaster moved the minutes be approved and Reid Redden seconded the motion. Minutes were approved.

Jeff Held mentioned that the current NCERA 214 project is set to expire in 2014 therefore the process of renewal begins at this point. Ernie Minton commented on the responsibilities of the committee for project renewal. He said that the proposal for renewal would be submitted for review to North Central region that meets in March. The North Central region is responsible for the review of all new and renewing projects. Ernie would make the recommendation on the merit of NCERA 214 renewal around Christmas. He stressed that the current objectives were broad enough to encompass future work but that consideration should be given to changes arising from the retirement of current members, the addition of new members and the changing needs of the sheep industry. The writing committee, comprised of Deb Aaron (University of Kentucky), Dan Waldron (Texas A&M University) and Katherine Petersson (University of

Rhode Island), would revise the issues and justification statement but that it could be anticipated that it would resemble the statement of 5 years ago, it just needs to be updated. North Central directors encourage a more streamlined project write-up; brevity is appreciated. Ernie Minton then invited questions regarding the renewal. Dan Morriscal requested clarification on the need for direct collaboration between stations. Ernie Minton said that historically there was a strong feeling that the project existed because there was a need to be interdependent. Currently, however, there are projects where there is a collection of reports on what individual stations are working on, as well as direct collaborative effort. We should emphasize the direct collaborations when present but also highlight the value of coming together to discuss ongoing research and extension efforts at the different stations. Jeff Held pointed out that the renewal should capture the intellectual collaboration that goes on even in the absence of physical collaboration. Dan Morriscal stressed the need to increase interaction between stations in the areas of protocol development, and extension/outreach efforts. These interactions can occur even if there is no money for research. Katherine Petersson mentioned that during the renewal process the NCERA number would be changed unless there is written justification to maintain the same number. Ernie Minton said that some projects like to keep the same number due to industry recognition of that number but that sometimes there is value in changing the number. It is the committee's decision and to his knowledge a request to maintain the same number has never been refused.

Deb Aaron, Chair of the Rewriting Committee, stressed that she is willing to help move the renewal process forward but she wants significant input from the committee. She commented that there are five broad objectives and that most of our work fits into at least one or more of the objectives. As members, we need to think about whether we need to tweak, strengthen or simplify the objectives that we are currently working on and send our comments to Deb by July 1<sup>st</sup>. Are the stations currently listed under each objective still appropriate? Katherine Petersson asked whether the renewal should broaden to include goats. Will Getz felt the sheep-only focus should continue. Deb Aaron felt that a sheep only focus is the strength of the committee; it makes us unique. Jeff Held felt that if we included goat there would be too much overlap with other committees. Ernie Minton said that this was a decision for the group, that there were valid reasons on both sides of the discussion. He stated that although many members have goat responsibilities as well, that alone, was not justification for not focusing solely on sheep. Kreg Leymaster was happy with the size of the current committee. Ernie mentioned that there was no reason that goat-related results could not be presented to the group even if the title stays solely sheep. The discussion then turned to committee membership. Jeff Held said that invitations to grow the committee are underway. We have contacted Brian Faris at Kansas State encouraging his participation in the group. Dave Thomas stressed that the committee would like to bring Purdue University into the membership. When possible, we, as a committee, need to encourage new station participation and motivate inactive members to participate. Kreg Leymaster asked if a membership invitation would be sent out to all station directors during the renewal process. Ernie Minton stated that this was the case however he encouraged active recruitment as a good supplement. He felt this was especially important since a strong case had been articulated that many members were the only ones at their institution focusing on sheep and that this increases the value of this group to each other. Ernie Minton asked where the meeting was going to be held next year. Jeff Held said that this discussion was moving forward and that Rhode Island had been suggested as a potential site. The first two weeks in June were suggested as a possible meeting time. Jeff Held wrapped up the discussion of the renewal by stating that Deb Aaron

would be in contact with the station representatives for the tweaking of the objectives, the rewrite of the justification as well as confirmation of participation in specific objectives by each station. Mike Thonney stressed that this is one of the few meetings that we can go to where we can interact with other people on sheep specifically. He feels that this needs to be reflected in the justification. Jeff Held felt that the discussion of the rewrite was moving along smoothly.

Dave Thomas then started a discussion of the sheep curriculum inventory survey that he had sent out, at the request of Bob Ludwig of the Hale Group who has been conducting the Sheep Sustainability study for the American Lamb Board. The sheep industry recognizes the loss of resources but Bob Ludwig felt that hard data was needed to document the changes. Dave Thomas reported that 40 institutions had responded and that it did not paint a rosy picture. In general there has been consolidation around one person at each university, with some universities totally eliminating their sheep programs. Dave stated that he will continue to compile that data and will then send the information to Bob Ludwig to disseminate as he sees fit. Dave Thomas also expressed concern with what is happening at ARS stations, with the potential retirement of Kreg Leymaster (MARC) and the potential closure of Dale Bumpers Small Farms Research Center USDA ARS Arkansas (Joan Burke). Jeff Held expressed the view that this issue should be addressed in the committee resolutions. Will Getz felt that it was important for the administrators from Washington D.C. to be more engaged with our committee. He felt that a formal note, to that effect, should be sent. There was discussion on the best approach to addressing this issue. Some possible approaches would be to: 1) have the committee send a letter to the national program leaders, 2) have the sheep industry (stakeholders) address the issue, 3) have university stakeholders send a letter to DC, 4) have those stakeholders that are involved with the dissemination of the research reach out to national program leaders. Kreg Leymaster felt that the approach should be broad. The committee asked the opinion of Ernie Minton on the best approach to conveying the importance of these programs. Ernie expressed the view that the industry was key to articulating the industry's need in conjunction with a note from station directors to decision makers in D.C. He felt that the voice of industry was critical. Reid Redden, as incoming President of NCERA 214 will oversee this effort. Mike Thonney expressed the view that traditional animal agriculture was not valued and that more money was being spent on non-traditional animal agriculture such as organic and small farms. Will Getz felt that the coordination and collaboration of research needs to be emphasized and that, at this point, was not coordinated well enough. Ernie Minton suggested that a coordinated effort between NCERA 214, and Brian Faris (Kansas State) to contact local industries and provide them with a letter that contains a few key points regarding the dwindling resources at universities might be effective. Kreg Leymaster asked Ernie how Kansas State was able to build a new sheep facility. Ernie described how legislators with linkages to industry, strong support by the Animal Science department for the sheep program and vocal support by 4-H were all vital components to the process. Dave Thomas volunteered to work with Reid Redden and Joan Burke to draft a letter addressing these issues, and then coordinate with ASI to submit a similar letter.

Jeff Held then turned the discussion to the results of the survey conducted by the NCERA-214 Sheep Curriculum Committee (Jeff Held, Dan Morrill, Henry Zerby and Richard Ehrhardt). Eighteen institutions were surveyed. It was found that all institutions surveyed either offered a full semester sheep production course (80%) or sheep production was integrated into a livestock management course (20%). There were a few institutions (3) that offered advanced

courses in sheep production. Instructors typically had a 50% teaching/research, 50% extension appointment. The Sheep Industry Handbook was the core resource but generally used as a reference or optional text, not required. There was discussion on ways to tighten the bond between the handbook and courses taught. The option of an electronic format was discussed.

Jeff Held then introduced Paul Rodgers, from ASI.

Paul Rodgers thanked the committee for his invitation to the meeting. He noted that he has been attending the meeting for 27 years. Paul introduced Amy Trinidad, from ASI, who is involved with eXtension and is reporting on this year's meeting. Paul thanked the committee for their work in the areas of research, teaching, and extension. He also appreciated those members that serve on ASI committees, as well as those that authored chapters in the revised Sheep Industry Handbook that is now several months away from publication. He relayed a request from Keith Inskip for manuscript submission to the open access Sheep and Goat Research Journal. Paul also thanked Dan Morrical for his leadership on the Management Tips, which are appreciated and well read by the ASI membership. He mentioned that the Management Tips are available on the ASI website and also as hard copies. Paul then highlighted the current areas of focus of ASI: immigration, farm bill, federal budget, wildlife services, ongoing litigation, crop insurance and risk management. He feels that many animal programs will be going away in the new farm bill. He discussed the future of crop insurance and risk management and also expressed the view that the cause of the decline in Big Horned sheep would be solved by science. Jeff Held expressed appreciation for Paul Rodgers support and attendance.

Jeff Held asked the Resolutions Committee (Mike Thonney and Susan Schoenian) for the suggested resolutions. Mike Thonney, Chair of the Resolutions Committee, presented the following resolutions.

1. Be it resolved, the members of the NCERA-214 committee on Increased Efficiency of Sheep Production express thanks to Juan Villalba, Noelle Cockett, Kenneth White, Tom Bunch, Rae Ann Hart and other Utah State University staff members for their hospitality in organizing and presenting a successful and memorable annual meeting of the NCERA-214 sheep research and extension committee. (To be sent to Head of Animal Science Department and President of the University of Utah.)

2. Be it resolved the members of the NCERA-214 committee on Increased Efficiency of Sheep Production express their appreciation to the American Sheep Industry Association for the presence of Paul Rodgers, Amy Trinidad, and Will Getz at the NCERA-214 meetings. (To be sent to Peter Orwick, Executive Director of ASI and Clint Krebs, President of ASI.)

3. Be it resolved the members of the NCERA-214 committee on Increased Efficiency of Sheep Production express their appreciation to Keith Inskip for his service as editor of the SGRJ to provide dissemination of sheep and goat research (to be sent to Dean Daniel J. Robison, Dean and Director of the Davis College of Agriculture Natural Resources, and Design, [djrobison@mail.wvu.edu](mailto:djrobison@mail.wvu.edu)).

4. Be it resolved the members of the NCERA-214 committee on Increased Efficiency of Sheep Production express their appreciation to Clark Willis and other

colleagues for hosting for a tour and lamb barbecue at his ranch at Bear Lake. (To be sent to Clark Willis.)

5. Be it resolved the members of the NCERA-214 committee on Increased Efficiency of Sheep Production strongly support the continuation of the USDA ARS sheep research at the stations at Booneville, AR, Dubois, ID, and Clay Center, NE. Researchers at these stations have been an integral part of our committee and a critical resource for the sheep industry. (To be sent to:

Edward B. Knipling  
Administrator  
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14TH & INDEPENDENCE AVE., SW  
Washington DC 20250)

Kreg Leymaster moved that the resolutions be approved and Dan Morrival seconded the motion. The resolutions were approved.

Nomination committee, Kreg Leymaster and Dave Thomas presented Reid Redden (Chair), Katherine Petersson (Vice Chair), and Susan Schoenian (Secretary). It was moved to unanimously elect these individuals to office by Henry Zerby and seconded by Richard Erhardt. Motion carried.

Jeff Held brought up the NCERA 214 meeting location for 2014 and indicated that there was some interest in holding it in Rhode Island. Katherine Petersson extended an invitation from John Kirby, Dean of the College of Environmental and Life Sciences, at the University of Rhode Island, to hold the 2014 meeting of NCERA 214 at the University of Rhode Island. Discussion followed as to the dates of the meeting. Dan Morrival moved to have the 2014 meeting be held the second week in June starting on Tuesday in Kingston, Rhode Island with the University of Rhode Island serving as the host institution. Kreg Leymaster seconded the motion. The motion carried. Jeff Held stated that the committee was looking forward to seeing John Kirby.

Will Getz moved and Henry Zerby seconded to adjourn the business meeting. The business meeting was adjourned.

After a break – the station reports resumed

**Objective 4 – Develop profitable and sustainable production systems (including parasite control and other health issues):** University of Wisconsin (Dave Thomas), Virginia State University (Stephan Wildeus), West Virginia University (Quinn Baptiste)

**Objective 5 – Wide dissemination of research results and information to universities, regulatory agencies, and producers:** Fort Valley State University (Will Getz), University of Maryland (Susan Schoenian), Ohio State University (Henry Zerby), North Dakota State University (Reid Redden).

After lunch the committee toured the USDA Poisonous Plants Research Facility and then traveled to Bear Lake, Utah for a tour and barbeque at the Clark Willis ranch.

### **Wednesday, June 12<sup>th</sup>**

At 9 AM the committee gathered to tour the USU Animal Science Sheep and Goat facility, the Matthew Hillyard Animal Teaching & Research Center and the Utah Science Technology and Research (USTAR) building. The tour/meeting concluded at 12 PM.

### **List of 2013 Attendees**

- Aaron, Debra ([daaron@email.uky.edu](mailto:daaron@email.uky.edu)) - University of Kentucky
- Burke, Joan ([joan.burke@ars.usda.gov](mailto:joan.burke@ars.usda.gov)) - USDA, ARS, Arkansas
- Baldin, Michel ([baldin@wisconsin.edu](mailto:baldin@wisconsin.edu)) - University of Wisconsin
- Baptiste, Quinn ([quinn.baptiste@mail.wvu.edu](mailto:quinn.baptiste@mail.wvu.edu)) – West Virginia University
- Cockett, Noelle ([noelle.cockett@usu.edu](mailto:noelle.cockett@usu.edu)) – Utah State University
- Ehrhardt, Richard ([ehrhards5@msu.edu](mailto:ehrhards5@msu.edu)) - Michigan State University
- Ely, Don ([dely@uky.edu](mailto:dely@uky.edu)) – University of Kentucky
- Getz, Will ([getzw@fvsu.edu](mailto:getzw@fvsu.edu)) - Fort Valley State University, ASI
- Held, Jeff ([Jeffrey.Held@sdsu.edu](mailto:Jeffrey.Held@sdsu.edu)) - South Dakota State University
- Kolthoff, Ann - South Dakota State University
- Leymaster, Kreg ([kreg.leymaster@ars.usda.gov](mailto:kreg.leymaster@ars.usda.gov)) - USDA, ARS, MARC
- Miller, Jim ([jmille1@lsu.edu](mailto:jmille1@lsu.edu)) - Louisiana State University
- Minton, Ernie ([eminton@k-state.edu](mailto:eminton@k-state.edu))
- Morrical, Dan ([morrical@iastate.edu](mailto:morrical@iastate.edu)) - Iowa State University
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- Redden, Reid ([reid.redden@ndsu.edu](mailto:reid.redden@ndsu.edu)) North Dakota State University
- Rodgers, Paul ([prodgers2@earthlink.net](mailto:prodgers2@earthlink.net)) - ASI
- Petersson, Katherine ([kpetersson@uri.edu](mailto:kpetersson@uri.edu)) – University of Rhode Island
- Schoenian, Susan ([sschoen@umd.edu](mailto:sschoen@umd.edu)) – University of Maryland
- Thomas, Dave ([dlthomas@wisc.edu](mailto:dlthomas@wisc.edu)) - University of Wisconsin, Madison
- Thonney, Michael L. ([mlt2@cornell.edu](mailto:mlt2@cornell.edu)) Cornell University
- Trinidad, Amy ([amy@sheepusa.org](mailto:amy@sheepusa.org)) - ASI
- Villalba, Juan ([juan.villalba@usu.edu](mailto:juan.villalba@usu.edu)) – Utah State University
- Waldron, Dan ([d-waldron@tamu.edu](mailto:d-waldron@tamu.edu)) – Texas A&M
- Wildeus, Stephan ([swildeus@vsu.edu](mailto:swildeus@vsu.edu)) – Virginia State University
- Zerby, Henry ([zerby.8@osu.edu](mailto:zerby.8@osu.edu)) - Ohio State University

