

Brief summary of minutes of annual meeting:

Project Organization

At the beginning of the meeting, Project Advisor Dr. Jackson reiterated the main objectives of the project, as well as other goals that included setting up of a new Project Website, and submission of collaborative grants to national funding agencies. He emphasized that multi-state projects involve collaboration between teams in different states, in which they leverage their expertise, provide a platform for joint publications and joint grant proposals, and establish interdependence among participants. He reiterated the need to communicate with stakeholders including other researchers, extension specialists, industry representatives, students, producers, and the wider public. He suggested that project participants more actively engage in conversations with these stakeholders, either directly or via their respective university administrators. He referred the project members to the priorities listed in the US Farm Bill, the Foundation for Food and Agriculture Research (FFAR), and a recent National Academy of Sciences report on science breakthroughs 2030.

The project members greatly appreciated Dr. Jackson's perspective and suggestions, which led to a lively discussion during and following the meeting. One outcome was the development of a new project website, which can be found at: <https://www.mycotoxins-nc1183.com/> . We expect this resource will be useful for communication within the group and for outreach and collaboration with other stakeholders.

The discussion also resulted in the implementation of a new committee structure to better focus committee activities. Specifically, the members of the project agreed to create three sub-committees, each charged with coordinating activities around one of the three specific project objectives. Each sub-committee will be co-chaired by two project participants, as follows:

Objective 1: Develop data for use in risk assessment of mycotoxins in human and animal health. Rong Di and Michael Lawton.

Objective 2: Establish integrated strategies to manage and reduce mycotoxin contamination in cereals and in forages. David Schmale and Gretchen Kuldau.

Objective 3: Better Understand the Biology and Ecology of Mycotoxigenic Fungi. Heather Hallan-Adams and Lisa Vaillancourt.

The immediate goal of each sub-committee is to solicit suggestions from project members on topics that can form the basis of inter-state, collaborative research projects that will be proposed to a national funding agency. The group agreed that each sub-committee would make a presentation of their project suggestions at the next project meeting, and that the best suggestions would then be adopted by the group for preparation and submission to federal and private funding agencies. It is expected that these sub-committees will also play a role in the day-to-day activities of the project through the sharing of data, methods, personnel, and other resources.

Station Presentations:

Research presentations were given by participants from KS, IA, KY, OK, NE, NJ, PA VT, WI, and MI.

Other Committee Business:

Committee Chair Michael Lawton will step down as chair after the next committee meeting, and will be succeeded by Vice-chair David Schmale, who, in turn will be succeeded as Vice-chair by Lisa Vaillancourt as secretary. It was agreed that the next committee meeting will take place May 17-19 at Rutgers.

The Chair reminded all participants of the need to submit an Annual Report (termination report) within 2 months of this meeting. The meeting was adjourned.