

S1087 Group Meeting - Fall 2023

Location: University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Attendance:

In Person:

- Melinda Knuth, NCSU (chair)
- Daniel Tregeagle, NCSU (secretary)
- Charlie Hall, Texas A&M
- Alicia Rihn, UT

Attending Online:

- Hayk Khachatryan, UF
- Ariana Torres, Purdue
- Alejandro Gutierrez-Li, NCSU

Spring 2023 Minutes

Charlie Hall moved to approve the minutes of the previous meeting. Alicia Rihn seconded. Minutes unanimously approved.

Review of publications from 2019 data

Since the Spring 2023 meeting,

- "Bound To Grow Natives? Comparing Four Methods for Analyzing Proportional Data and Their Policy Implications for Water Conserving Practices in U.S. Native Plant Production" by Knuth, Melinda; Tregeagle, Daniel; Rihn, Alicia; Behe, Bridget; Peterson, Bryan; Palma, Marco was submitted to the Journal of the Agricultural and Applied Economics Association (JAAEA)
- Ariana Torres presented results from the 'returns to investment in social media' paper at IFAMA in New Zealand. They invited her to submit the paper to the International Food and Agribusiness Management Review (IFMAR). Co-authors are Bridget Behe, Marco Palma, Hayk Khachatryan, Alicia Rihn, and Sue Barton.
- Melinda met with the HRI board who has been impressed by the volume and quality of publications from the 2019 survey. She passes on their congratulations.

Discussion of the s1087 Website

Historically, the S1087 (and earlier iterations) maintained a Google site. Charlie Hall noted that there is no longer a need to maintain the site as it duplicates the information in the NIMSS site.

All agreed that it would be beneficial for HRI to host a page on their website that documents the outputs from the project. Charlie suggests linking to the full report from the 2019 survey as well as a splash page with all the publications from the 2019 survey.

Melinda will contact Jennifer Gray from HRI and include Charlie in the conversation.

Jennifer Gray is interested in the idea and we are working out details on how to accomplish this.

Discussion of the 2024 survey

General Company Information

Plan is to keep this section unchanged to maintain compatibility with previous iterations.

Employment

Alejandro Gutierrez-Li suggested adding a question about which tasks that firms have most difficulty hiring. Probably a multiple choice question. Alejandro can send a list of potential tasks.

Hayk: managerial vs. non-managerial?

All agree to include a question about the difficulty of finding labor. Specific wording to be shared with the group by the survey design subcommittee.

Product Types

All agree to keep the general content of this section unchanged. Perhaps consider alternative formatting to compress the question.

There was discussion of harmonizing our definitions to harmonize with USDA surveys. Changing to 'potted flowering plants'. Suggestion to add 'cut flowers' and 'cut cultivated greens'.

In the 2019 survey, the other category was largest ~12%.

The survey design subcommittee will align the online survey with the print version.

Production and Management Practices

No changes to this section

Marketing Practices

Changed the wording of the reselling question, Q27.

Survey design subcommittee to be created, including Melinda (chair) and Daniel (secretary), at least. Daniel to send around an email to find anyone else interested in joining. Subcommittee will review differences between online and print, merge 'obvious differences', flag differences that are less easily resolved with a recommendation for each.

- Part of this process will be to look at retailing questions, which only appear online. Should they be extended to include questions about retail sales outlets?
- Subcommittee needs to review against Hayk's print version and the online version

Regional Trade in Nursery Products

No changes

Factors Affecting Management and Planning

Need to harmonize questions about management with the questions about tasks proposed by Alejandro. Survey design subcommittee to address.

Annual Sales

Hayk notes that on the Qualtrics survey, blocks prevent respondents going all the way back. He suggests removing blocks if going back and forth is necessary for the survey takers. Survey design subcommittee to address.

Roundtable Discussion of State Activities and Projects

Hayk

The stormwater ponds management project, which has two components. First estimates homeowner preferences for types of stormwater management practices within neighborhoods. NSF sponsored.

Florida grown blueberry projects. Find ways to differentiate FL berries from others. Measure FL consumers first. Perhaps look nation-wide to see if FL has any national impact.

Ariana

Presented the S1087 social media paper at IFAMA and preparing for their journal (IFMAR).

She is working with Alicia on native plant related projects.

Her work is mostly on markets for specialty crops and organic grains, including high tunnels and the economic viability of biological control as applied to spinach.

Alejandro

He is working on labor issues in general, including leading a labor extension program at NCSU which is not crop specific. This program focuses on immigration-related labor issues and mechanization for helping alleviate labor scarcity.

Recently he has been looking at the impact of extreme weather effects on labor supply, including hurricanes, and an increased prevalence of hot weather, which makes field work even harder.

He also has projects on topics including the impact of the pandemic on labor markets, the US dairy sector, the NC livestock sector, and Christmas tree growers in NC and TN.

Charlie

Charlie continues to run his market metrics benchmarking initiative and the Eagle program for agribusiness leaders.

He has a project on Boxwood blight, in which he is developing enterprise budgets and looking at alternative mitigation methods for blight. A component of this project is in collaboration with Julie Campbell focusing on consumer acceptance of blight resistance boxwoods.

He also has a project with the floriculture research alliance with Melinda and Alicia through FMRI. This project is winding up. It produced five articles regarding the messaging impacts on consumer plant purchases.

Melinda

Melinda is supervising two graduate students who are evaluating sustainability in Horticulture. One is looking at annual bedding plants. The other is looking at the cut flower industry. Both are looking at practices, measures and barriers to sustainability.

Another student is working on labeling and ecommerce of plants. This work is in conjunction with Alicia.

She is working on cataloging environmental benefits with Charlie and an undergrad worker. They are halfway through the first draft. Hoping to be published in JEH in December.

She is wrapping up the FMRI project with Charlie and Alicia.

Alicia

Alicia is continuing work on her flatheaded borer management specialty crop block grant. The survey for this project has been distributed to consumers.

Alicia is working with Julie to study alternative control measures for Ambrosia beetles.

She is working with Ariana on two studies. One looking at consumer perceptions of native plants and another is looking at marketing of natives.

She has a project with the Native Plant Network, trying to centralize information about native plant production.

Wrapping up the FMRI project with Charlie and Melinda.

She is working on local cut flowers in TN, studying consumers' eye tracking responses to local vs imported flowers.

She is participating in the e-commerce project with Melinda.

Daniel

Daniel is continuing survey development for projects grower willingness to pay for improved disease resistance in cucurbit crops and sweetpotatoes.

He is continuing his strawberry nursery propagation research. Documenting production systems, costs, risks, barriers to adoption and supply issues as the basis of a supply chain analysis of controlled environment strawberry propagation technology. The focus group and interview protocols have been approved by IRB for deployment this Winter.

Daniel has an ongoing project on citrus greening and perennial crop supply response. They have a review paper on this topic under R&R at Agricultural Economics. Development of the supply response model and welfare estimation equilibrium displacement model is ongoing.

He is also working on a project examining the costs of pesticide resistance, focusing on the information needs for improving measurement of these costs.

Update on HRI grant proposal

Melida communicated with HRI leadership at Cultivate.

Hayk and Charlie obtained letters of support.

Asking HRI for \$40,000, which is more than the \$35,000 they usually provide.

Alejandro excused himself for another meeting at 11:58am.

Discussion of group rules and protocols

Melinda, Alicia and Daniel drafted a set of bylaws. The group does not currently have a set of written bylaws.

Charlie excused himself to catch a plane at 12:13pm.

Hayk asked when the bylaws should be revised.

Bylaws need to be consistent with NIFA regulations. Melinda to consult with NIFA reps to harmonize with NIFA requirements.

Daniel moved that the draft bylaws be accepted. Alicia seconded. Resolution passed unanimously.

Document will be added to the agenda for the next meeting, with opportunities for discussion and amendments to the document.

Graduate student involvement initiative

Governance document created the 'auxiliary member' status, explicitly encouraging / allowing members to bring their mentees.

Next meeting location

Julie Campbell did not respond prior to the meeting regarding Puerto Rico.

Charlie agrees to host in Texas for Spring 2024. Planning for Dallas.

Registration options

The group is happy to have a Zoom option if it does not place an additional cost burden on in-person members.

Wrap-Up

Thanks are given to Alicia for hosting the group.

Alicia moved to adjourn the meeting. Daniel seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned.