2022 SCC33 Annual Meeting minutes

Attendees:

Ryan Heiniger – North Carolina State University (*co-chair*)
Evan Tortel – Harvestmaster (*co-chair*)
Dr. Angela Post – North Carolina State University
Randy Laurenz – Michigan State University
Rob Stoutenburg – Michigan State University
Micalah Blohm – Michigan State University
Tom Siler – Michigan State University
Phillip Shine – University of Kentucky
Cam Kenimer – University of Kentucky
Dr. Robert Gilbert – University of Florida
Robyn Morgan – University of Arkansas
Richard Bond – University of Arkansas
Alex Coleman – Clemson University
Chad Deplazes – North Dakota State University
Matt Steward – ALMACO
Julia Piaskowski – University of Idaho (*virtual*)
Sally Jones-Diamond – Colorado State University
Bill Bruening – University of Kentucky (*virtual*)
Ryan Budnik – Iowa State University
Virginia Sykes – University of Tennessee
Ed Asfeld – Colorado State University
Amanda Easterly – University of Nebraska (*virtual*)
Jim Rouse – Iowa State University
Bradley Halladay – Medius.re
Ryan Blair – University of Tennessee
Adam Roth – University of Wisconsin
Henry Jordan – Auburn University
Daniel Mailhot – University of Georgia
Kyle Kepner – GDM (*virtual*)
Shad Mallady – Kincaid Equipment
Claire Venard – University of Kentucky
Kyle Stephens – Clemson University
Darin Eisinger – North Dakota State University
Steve Sick – FBN
Brian Ward – Zurn
Brad Moody – ALMACO
Jeff McCall – Clemson University
Cimberlee Foulger – HarvestMaster
Larry Gross – MIDCO (*virtual*)

Minutes:

The working group for the SCC-33 Variety Testing group met for their annual meeting on February 13 and 14th at the Bahia Mar – Fort Lauderdale hotel in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. The meeting was divided into 4 separate focus sessions; covering statistical analysis, equipment, data delivery, and the business meeting for the SCC-33 working group. After presentations within each focus session, the meeting was divided into break out groups to discuss items brought up during the presentations, as well as action items moving forward to address issues identified. All four sessions, as well as associated discussions, are detailed below.

The first focus session covered statistical analysis. Daniel Mailhot from University of Georgia presented on his work to standardize the way data is reported to allow for groups outside of the normal target audience to use variety testing data. Sally Jones-Diamond presented on how Colorado State University does analysis of their variety data at a location level, using an alpha of 0.3. Kyle Stephens from Clemson presented on the lack of standardization across variety testing groups from different states, including the fact that our SCC-33 standards have not been updated for over 10 years. Julia Piakowski from the University of Idaho demonstrated different methods for performing spatial analysis and provided guidance documents for using those methods in SAS and R. Finally, Ryan Heiniger led a discussion on how different variety testing program perform combined analysis across multiple years or locations.

Break out discussions from the first focus session covered the standard methods different variety testing programs use for executing trialing work in the field, as well as the different statistical methods and alpha values used by those same programs. As a group, we use alpha values from 0.05 to 0.3 to report data to growers based on different reasons of accuracy for our target audience or from historical methods developed within each program. Plot sizes vary across testing programs from 5-10' wide to 15-40' long depending on the crop and equipment being used. Data is generally reported within a month of the final location being harvested, with the except of Auburn University who reports data as it comes out of the field through their variety selection tool. Sponsor costs between programs varies from $65/variety/location to $200/variety/location. We discussed the opportunity to identify the cost per plot for executing trialing work in the field, and to adjust sponsor costs to account for the cost of executing field work, with the focus on reporting the value of that data in number of growers reached back to the sponsors. A sub-committee looking at updating the SCC33 standards was formed with Kyle Stephens (Clemson) acting as the chair.

The second focus session covered equipment, with sponsors from HarvestMaster, Almaco, Wintersteiger, Kincaid, and Zurn giving presentations on their updated equipment offerings. Zurn highlighted their plot combines which are compact, easy to haul, and have John Deere parts for fast service. Kincaid discussed their purchase of SRES, which allows them to meet plot needs from planting to harvest. Wintersteiger highlighted their Quantum Core plot combine, which provides access to the Quantum technology for all budgets. ALMACO discussed their portfolio of plot research equipment, including their R series rotary combines and PowerPlant plot planters. Harvestmaster demonstrated their new NIR integration with the H2 GrainGage systems, including the ability to upgrade existing H2 systems with this technology. Ed Asfeld from Colorado State showed some improvements he's made to the plot equipment used in their program. Amanda Easterly from Nebraska gave a virtual presentation on a custom drill that they built for no-till planting. For this session, a single break out discussion was

held covering financing options for larger equipment. Some programs are able to carry over funds from year to year, while others are hindered by the structure of the accounts used within their institution. It was suggested to work with other programs within the university, as well as university administration, to identify loan opportunities to purchase equipment used by multiple programs.

The third focus session covered data delivery. Brad Halladay from Medius.re presented on the Medius platform being used by Auburn and NCSU as a tool to report their data publically, allowing for searching and filtering data that is not otherwise available in the static tables. Ryan Heiniger discussed the challenges and opportunities of rolling out a virtual tool to an audience that has historically been used to hard copy data sources. Virginia Sykes from Tennessee presented on the multiple state soybean database developed by Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee, Kentucky, and Arkansas in conjunction with the United Soybean Board. Kyle Kepner from GDM demonstrated the new ARM Mobile tool available for taking notes in the field using a smart phone. Ronnie Schnell gave an update on the Texas A&M variety testing program, and Dr. Angela Post discussed how crop specialists interact with variety testing programs at the university level, including her experience integrating with the NCSU variety testing program and how they apply their work to actionable extension activities in the field to aid variety selection.

Break out discussion from the third focus session centered on questions about how to use the Medius platform as a tool to report variety data to growers, and on how variety testing programs can work with other programs within their institutions to leverage the efforts of both programs. There was a lot of discussion on how trust is an important part of that effort to work with other programs, and that there is an excellent opportunity to work across variety testing programs by identifying a common data reporting method that could be integrated across multiple states if standardizations, particularly alpha values, across programs can be identified.

The final session was our business meeting for the SCC-33 group. Ryan Heiniger presented service awards to Cam Kenimer (2021) and Doug Warters (2022) for their work in organizing and running the meeting during our time at Key Largo. We had a discussion around the Good, Difficult, and Different aspects of the 2022 meeting. The group identified the focus sessions and break out groups after each session as a good, along with the hotel and location. Difficult items were the room where the presentations were held (too dark and interior to the hotel with no window) and the last minute adjustment of breakfast on the last day. Different was the location for 2023, with Puerto Rico and San Antonio mentioned as potential locations. It was also suggested by Ronnie Schnell that the group develops an "Excellence in Variety Testing" award to annually identify the testing groups with the most impact on the SCC-33 working group. Candidates would be identified by the co-chairs and then voted on by the SCC-33 group itself. This was accepted by the group as an option moving forward. After serving 2 years, Ryan Heiniger announced he was stepping down as co-chair. Evan Tortel will remain a co-chair for 2023, with Ronnie Schnell volunteering to act as co-chair for a term of 2 years. It was decided by the group that we will alternate replacing university/industry co-chairs each year to keep institutional knowledge at the co-chair level and avoid situations where both co-chairs are completely new to the hosting process. Thus, a new industry co-chair will be identified in 2023 to also serve a 2 year term. Both Kyle Stephens (Standardization) and Virginia Sykes (Digital Data Tool) were identified as sub-committee leads. Anyone wanting to serve on these sub-committees should contact either person, with reports due at the 2023 annual meeting. All attendees were encouraged to formally join the SCC-33 working group, as there are potentially travel funds available from their member institutions for participation. Finally,

the group was given an assignment of identifying a sponsor within their state that would be willing to attend the meeting in 2023, as our participation from seed industry has fallen off over the last few years.