**NCAC14 Meeting Report**

**Basic Information**

Project number and title – NCAC14: Plant Pathology

Period covered: -- 01/01/2022-12/31/2023

Date of Report – 06/15/2023

Annual Meeting Dates – 02/08/2023 and 02/09/2023

Location – Reiman Gardens, Ames, IA (in-person and virtual)

**Attendees**

Martin Draper (Administrative Advisor), Rubella Goswami (USDA-NIFA), Jeanette Thurston (NCRA Executive Director), Megan Kennelly (Kansas State Univ., Chair), Loren Giesler (Univ. Nebraska), Steven Harris (Iowa State Univ., Vice Chair), Ken Korth (Univ. Arkansas), Won Bo Shim (Texas A&M Univ.), Jack Rasmussen (North Dakota State Univ.), Adam Davis (Univ. Illinois), Tesfaye Mengiste (Purdue Univ.), Carolyn Young (North Carolina State Univ.), Justin Talley (Oklahoma State Univ.), Heike Buecking (Univ. Missouri), Pierce Paul (The Ohio State Univ.), Ray Hammerschmidt (Michigan State Univ.)

**Brief Summary of Minutes of Annual Meeting**

In-person meeting with virtual (Zoom) option – Feb 8-9th, 2023

The agenda was distributed prior to the meeting

Megan Kennelly (Chair) opened the meeting with introductions by all participants in-person and online

The meeting included members from the North Central States (NCAC14) as well as the Southern States (SAC11), which demonstrates the broad relevance and impact of this group

The administrative advisor (Marty Draper; Associate Dean, Research and Graduate Studies, Kansas State Univ. College of Agriculture) provided the committee with an update. The AA serves as a resource who can provide general guidance and clarification that improves the effectiveness of the committee. Key points raised in this update included;

-- an update on the trajectory of the AFRI budget

-- comments on a new National Academies report that addresses the need for improved coordination and collaboration between Land Grant Universities

-- the relative advantages of umbrella Hatch projects for PIs and Departments

-- stressing the importance of participation in Hatch multistate projects by junior faculty as a means to find collaborators

-- highlighting the importance of Hatch reporting and conveying impacts

The USDA-NIFA representative (Rubella Goswami; Director, Division of Plant Systems-Protection) provided the committee with an update from NIFA. The Institute is almost fully re-staffed, with administration remaining in Washington, DC whereas operations are located in Kansas City. The importance of responses to climate change is important to NIFA, which is likely to be reflected in strategic plans that are developed. The Institute is working to reduce the length of RFAs by providing links that lead to the relevant details. Although the budget remains relatively flat, programs such as sustainable agriculture, organic agriculture research, and extension initiatives did see an increase.

**Project Reviews**

Required reviews

NCCC307; Biochemistry and Genetics of Plant-Fungal Interactions; renewal

<https://www.nimss.org/projects/18953>

Review and discussion of this project was led by Steven Harris. A motion was made and seconded to continue this project. The motion received a unanimous vote of approval. A recommendation was made that the committee place greater emphasis in their reporting on their success in creating a supportive environment for the training of early career researchers. In addition, it was noted that the links between the committee’s work and improved strategies for disease control was at times unclear.

NC1183: Mycotoxins: Biosecurity, Food Safety and Biofuels Byproducts; renewal

<https://www.nimss.org/projects/18698>

Review and discussion of this project was led by Won Bo Shim. This committee represents many of the leading mycotoxin researchers in the food and feed sector across the US and internationally. The members of the committee continue to publish and have impacts on key issues associated with the identification, analysis, and mitigation of various region-specific and ubiquitous mycotoxins. Interactions and collaborations amongst the group are not as robust and sustained as they would like. At the last annual meeting in May 2022, members discussed opportunities to increase interactions and work together on funding. However, there is limited funding available in this area, although the NE and KS stations work together on a USAID-funded project. Committee members continue to seek opportunities to develop data for use in risk assessment of mycotoxins. While it is difficult to secure funding for survey activities, members discussed the possibility of a collaborative proposal focused on prioritized surveys. Participants continue active publication and provide timely information to professionals in the grain, seed, animal feed, and brewing industries. A motion was made and seconded to continue this project.

**Progress of ongoing projects**

NC1208; Biology, Etiology, and Management of Dollar Spot in Turfgrasses.

<https://www.nimss.org/projects/18590>

Review and discussion of this project was led by Megan Kennelly. The consensus is that the group is functioning well on joint research including soliciting some external funds. There was a general discussion to encourage the group to make sure all reporting needs are met including impact reporting as they move into the final years of the project. There was some general discussion about how some multistate groups are narrow and some are broader in focus depending on regional needs.

NCERA137; Soybean diseases.

<https://www.nimss.org/projects/18582>

Review and discussion of this project was led by Loren Giesler. The consensus is that the group continues to work together well on extension and research goals. This group was highlighted as another example of a committee providing networking opportunities for young faculty.

NCERA184; Management of Small Grain Diseases.

<https://www.nimss.org/projects/18919>

Review and discussion of this project was led by Jack Rasmussen. The consensus is that the group continues to work together well on extension and research goals. This group was highlighted as another example of a committee providing networking opportunities for young faculty.

NCERA224; IPM Strategies for Arthropod Pests and Diseases in Nurseries and Landscapes.

<https://www.nimss.org/projects/18875>

Review and discussion of this project was led by Megan Kennelly. The group discussed that the committee could benefit from an expansion and updating of participants and more clarification/updating of reporting components.

NCERA222; Integrated Pest Management.

<https://www.nimss.org/projects/18823>

Review and discussion of this project was led by Adam Davis and Justin Tally. This group has broad participation, both across states (14 participants from 11 states) and across pest management disciplines. There’s a good statement of impacts in project overview (e.g., has provided input to EPA, USDA-OMP, NCIPM center). There is an explicit plan for collaborating among states, sharing and adopting innovations from other states in the region. The committee is closely affiliated with the NC-IPMC. Marty Draper is on their advisory committee and will work with their leadership to try to guide better documentation of their collaboration. The group lists 20 pages of publications, but there is no clear linkage between the publications and the objectives of the group. It would be helpful to have some information as to how the group’s activities lead to publications (if not, then just say that these are publications by members of the group, but don’t directly stem from NCERA 222 activity).

NC1197; Practical Management of Nematodes on Corn, Soybeans and Other Crops of Regional Importance.

<https://www.nimss.org/projects/18774>

Review and discussion of this project was led by Loren Giesler and Jack Rasmussen. The consensus is that this group remains productive and is making good progress towards their goals. They continue to meet on an annual basis. The group does more than Soybean cyst nematode research, but is connected with NCERA137 on that topic. In 2022 the two committees met together for part of the day and hosted a workshop together.

**State Reports and General Discussion**

State reports were presented by each participant. Topics that were discussed included;

-- ongoing and planned faculty recruitments/retirements and staffing updates

-- ongoing or planned searches for new Deans at multiple institutions

-- the maintenance of disciplinary identity within larger multi-discipline departments

-- enrollment trends and creation of new programs or certifications

-- funding of state diagnostic labs

**Election of Officers**

Steven Harris will be the Chair for the coming year

Ken Korth will the chair following Harris

**Future Meeting Plans**

Two options have been proposed for the 2024 meeting;

1. meeting jointly with the APS Southern Division in Feb. 2024 (South Carolina; Clemson Univ. as host)

2. meeting jointly with the APS Caribbean Division in April 2024 (Merida, MX)