Minutes

NCAC6 – Animal Science Department Heads Meeting

January 23, 2016

San Diego, CA

Attendees: D. Beerman; L. Berger, Chair; J. Cassady; S. Loerch; A. Mathew; T. McFadden, Secretary; V. Mistry; K. Odde; D. Schaefer; D. Marshall, Administrative Advisor.

The meeting was called to order by L. Berger.

Project proposals/reports were discussed individually and voted on, as recorded below:

**NC\_temp1029** – Applied Animal Behavior and Welfare (NC1029). Renewal or New project.

Review done by Swanson and Dayton (both unable to attend) was read by Don Marshall and discussion recorded by L. Berger. The research topic is of great importance and this scientific group has been very productive in the past. However, several sections of the proposal are relatively under-developed and could be improved by adding more details or examples. Several specific suggestions were provided in the reviewers’ report.

D. Schaefer moved to Accept with major revision; A. Mathew seconded; the motion passed unanimously.

**NC\_temp1192** – An integrated approach to control of bovine respiratory diseases (NC-1027).

Reviewed by K. Odde and L. Berger. Odde summarized his comments on the project noting the proposal was well written, met the format requirements and addresses an important area of beef production. The annual report from 2015 is missing. It was noted that in spite of long efforts on bovine respiratory disease there has been little progress made in the US, whereas it is a minimal problem in Brazil. Overall, the proposal looks good. Berger agreed that this has been a productive group that has provided broad leadership in bovine health.

Odde recommended approval without revision; Loerch seconded.

Discussion: Loerch commented that management accepts a certain level of disease; Odde commented that this project’s goals should fit with that reality.

Vote called and motion passed unanimously.

**NCCC308** – Nutrition and Management of Feedlot Cattle to Optimize Performance, Carcass Value and Environmental Compatibility (NCT192)

Reviewed by S. Loerch and G. Lardy. Loerch summarized their review of the proposal, noting that this is a long term project that has made excellent progress that is well documented in the annual reports. He listed the three objectives and noted that seven stations contribute to objective 1, three stations contribute to objective 2, and 10 stations contribute to objective 3. The group’s linkages are excellent as documented by joint publications from research and by coordinated projects in extension. The group listed 55 presentations, 55 refereed publications and many popular press or extension articles targeting producers and/or influencers. The group usually has a midterm meeting at Midwest ASAS and again in early June – attendance has been excellent (10/11 attended).

Loerch moved to Approve without revision; Beerman seconded.

Discussion: Odde asked for clarification on group members and focus. Schaefer explained the focus is feedlot nutrition; several listed group members.

Vote called and motion passed unanimously.

**NCERA\_temp219** – Swine Production Management to Enhance Animal Welfare

Reviewed by T. McFadden and A. Mathew. McFadden summarized the review of the proposal, noting this is a well-written proposal with good justification addressing important issues/problems. This is a long-standing project/group that has worked well together and been very productive. The proposal lists 5 objectives; they are broad but clear. Objectives 1-3 are mainly research goals; objectives 4&5 target extension and education. The processes and procedures to deliver on these objectives are in place, based on the group’s prior accomplishments. Of note is their “research protocol template” that guides design, conduct and analysis of joint projects – this is impressive. On the other hand, the lack of specific research plans makes it hard to judge feasibility – more detail would be helpful, although it is noted the group seeks to have flexibility to respond to emerging issues. Their extension/education goals will be achieved through existing programs (PorkBridge, Sow-Bridge, National Swine Nutrition Guide, Pork Information Gateway) but any new approaches or impacts are not described. Potential outcomes are good, across research, extension and education. The project addresses appropriate priorities and is not considered duplicative. The group’s activity is clearly highly collaborative and involves an appropriate balance of participants. The well-integrated collaboration is exemplary and to be commended. Mathew agreed with these comments and added that this is a strong group and he is impressed with the extent to which they collaborate and share data.

McFadden asked for discussion on how much detail should be required in the proposal, in order to assess probability of success. D. Marshall said the objectives look appropriate. Several indicated breadth is ok and likely necessary; the track record speaks for itself. J. Cassady asked if some researchers focused on pig behavior and welfare are part of this project. McFadden and Mathew indicated this group is focused on nutrition and management. Odde suggested they recently added the welfare emphasis. Other discussion noted that there are 2 members from Iowa State and one from Michigan State but those are not included in the list of Participating States/Institutions.

McFadden moved to Accept/continue with normal revision; Loerch seconded. No further discussion.

Motion approved unanimously.

**NC2040** – Metabolic Relationships in supply of Nutrients for Lactating Cows (NC-1009)

Reviewed by D. Schaefer and G. Lardy. Schaefer circulated hard copies of their review and noted this is a midterm review. He summarized the review of the proposal, noting there was no report filed for 2015 although the group did meet. The project has three objectives, generally addressing: 1, Pre-absorption, 2, Post-absorption, and 3, Refinement of models. The Progress Report was excellent and substantive. Linkages are considered good; they are not well-documented but are self-evident. Funding is good, including a recent NIFA-CAP grant and industry funding; documentation could be improved. Information and Tech Transfer is good, including several prominent outputs (Dairy Cattle NRC, Discovery Conferences); again this should be better documented. It is noted the group solicited input to inform their tech transfer efforts and that is commendable. There are 32 members listed. In 2013, 14 members attended the annual meeting and 5 submitted reports; in 2014, these were: 13 attendees plus 5 reports. It appears attendance is below expectations. The group has a policy to remove members after two consecutive (?) absences but, so far, there is no evidence of action to enforce the policy.

Discussion: Odde asked who are members. Schaefer and several mentioned several names. Schaefer noted the group’s science is great so low attendance is surprising.

Schaefer moved to recommend Approve/continue project with normal revision; Odde seconded; No further discussion.

Motion approved unanimously.

**NC1170** – Advanced Technologies for the Genetic Improvement of Poultry (was NC-168)

Reviewed by J. Cassady and D. Beerman. Cassady summarized the review, noting this group includes 20 institutions and is an example of one that includes many collaborators outside the NC region – raising the question: should we include other regions in reviews of such projects?

The group meets in January; 2014 report covered completion of the previous project so the 2015 report was satisfactory but had only 1 year included. Only 11/20 members attended the meeting, which is held in conjunction with the PAG conference so they have multiple speakers, attendance around 100, including many non-members; some are grad students who attend and present. The project has 3 objectives, generally: 1, to create and share advances in genomics for poultry; 2, to create and share unique poultry resources; 3, identify genetic contributions to economically important traits and methods to apply that knowledge. This group works closely with the NRSP-8 group (focused on genomics across species; typically meet at PAG) – unsure if they are in the multistate system. Progress is excellent on obj 1; obj 2 includes Iowa St and Arizona maintaining multiple bird lines; objective 3 is incorporating genomics tests for selection and making good progress. Linkages are multiple, broad and documented; including international links. Funding is broad and excellent; at least $10M, perhaps 12M. Collaborations are broad, including the ARS poultry genetics group at MSU. Info and Tech Transfer are excellent, including 72 publications and good attendance at meetings. Perhaps include Penn St, Cornell and Tennessee. Don Beerman concurred with the review and added they listed 36 impact statements that were very effective; also that UCDavis incorporates data into models. J. Cassady added they’re making good progress on genomics-assisted selection.

Cassady moved to recommend to Approve/continue project with normal revision; A. Mathew seconded.

Discussion: At several points during the review there was discussion, summarized here. Odde asked about how academics in poultry genomics interface with industry. Beerman described one of his faculty who is funded by industry but has departmental duties in research and teaching. Odde asked about handling IP issues. Don B. said it is covered by contract handled by his provost; may be willing to share a copy. Lots of interest/discussion on this topic. Odde noted challenges in setting up and supervising agreements like these or consulting activities, ownership of ideas, etc. Cassady noted SDSU has a similar faculty appointment. General sense that this issue is of increasing importance given loss of federal funding.

Vote called and motion passed unanimously.

**NC2042** – Management Systems to Improve the Economic and Environmental Sustainability of Dairy Enterprises (Rev. NC-1119).

Reviewed by V. Mistry and H. Zerby. Mistry circulated hard copies of their review and noted this is a midterm review, the group has 28 members from 22 institutions; only 8/28 members are in NC, so perhaps should invite other regions to participate in review. He summarized the review of the proposal, noting they have 3 objectives, generally: 1, optimizing calf and heifer management, etc; 2, improving cow management decisions through nutrition, etc; and 3, (listed incorrectly in handout) Integrate analysis of farm systems components into decision-support tools to enhance efficiency, profitability and environmental sustainability. The Progress Report is good; this is a very active and productive group. They had 2 annual meetings, in 2014 and 2015 (Spain). In 2014, 16 attended from 15 stations; no report from 2015. Reports comprise many individual station reports. Multiple stations reported on each of the 3 objectives. Linkages were rated good; there is some evidence of links but this could be improved. The group has discussed improving collaboration and may hold quarterly phone conferences, which would be helpful. Funding is judged excellent; sources and extent vary by station/PI but they have a long list of public and private funding sources. Info and Tech Transfer is good; results are being transmitted through publications and presentations at various meetings/conferences. They are moving to publish more in trade and industry magazines to enhance transfer to industry and stakeholders.

V. Mistry moved to recommend to Approve/continue project with normal revision; D. Schaefer seconded. No discussion.

Motion approved unanimously.

That completed the project proposal reviews.

Chair Berger called for election of new officers as the three year terms of Chair (Berger) and Recording Secretary (McFadden) expire this year; McFadden nominated for Chair and Loerch for Secretary: both approved by unanimous vote.

This completed the formal duties of the meeting; adjourned at 9:37 am.

Informal discussion followed among most attendees:

The first topic was discussion of meeting jointly with the Southern region group to discuss projects at next year’s meeting in Nashville. There is general support of this. Perhaps meet for a period separately to discuss NC- or region-specific projects then convene jointly to discuss projects with broad membership. Probably should invite NE and W regions. Do they meet and do reviews? Unknown. Larry Berger, chair, suggested that Don Marshall (AA for NC) should meet with Bill Brown (AA for S region) to sort out plans for next year, identify overlapping projects, determine voting process, etc. McFadden noted the S group assigns department heads as monitors of projects and expects them to attend the annual meetings. NC group is not enthused to attend more meetings and think that is the role of the AA.

The second topic was the suggestion (Odde) that the Animal Science Heads are an appropriate group to discuss the many issues relating to public:private partnerships, i.e., strategic partnerships with industry, which we are all being encouraged to develop given ongoing loss of public funding support of universities. Cassady mentioned this should include faculty driven startup and spinoff companies, which are also tricky to deal with. Schaefer suggested this is being discussed and decided at higher levels; perhaps the Associate Deans for Research should discuss it at their meetings. Mathew noted that at Purdue, faculty go directly to their VP for Research for such matters. Cassady mentioned central administrations may take a share of revenues generated from entrepreneurial activities and even activities such as bull sales. Perhaps put this topic on the agenda for next year’s Animal Science Heads meeting.

Discussions concluded at that point.

Respectfully submitted by Tom McFadden, Secretary