

Petition for Western Coordinating Committee 67

NUMBER: WCC-67

TITLE: Western Coordinating Committee for Sustainable Agriculture.

DURATION: October 1, 2000 to September 30, 2005

DESCRIPTION AND JUSTIFICATION:

The Agricultural Productivity Act passed by Congress in 1985 as part of the Food Security Act, provided the authority to conduct research and education programs in alternative farming systems, at that time known as Low-Input Sustainable Agriculture (LISA). The 1990 Farm Bill strengthened the intent of the 1985 Food Security Act, and it further defined and expanded the objectives of the program to include education of agricultural professionals. The USDA program's name was changed at this time to the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program. Congressional approval of the SARE program was continued in the 1996 Farm Bill (Federal Agricultural Improvement and Reform Act of 1996), with \$1.1 million appropriated for research, education, and professional development activities in 1996. The SARE program operates a competitive grants program and is administered through four geographic regions. In the Western Region (comprising 13 states and American Samoa, Micronesia, Northern Marianas, and Guam) an Administrative Council is responsible for overall policy and funding decisions for a variety of competitive grants programs.

WCC-67 (formerly WRCC-67) was first established in 1987 because of a growing need to enhance coordination and communication on sustainable agriculture research and outreach activities occurring throughout the western region. Of the four geographic regions, the western region covers the largest geographical area with the greatest number of bio-regions and farming systems, from the Pacific islands to Alaska to the desert southwest. Coordination and identification of research and education priorities of a multi-discipline, bioregion specific program such as sustainable agriculture requires regular evaluation and feedback. Because of the diverse agricultural systems found in the western region, and the multi-disciplinary nature of research and outreach activities within these sustainable agricultural systems, regional communication among researchers and outreach professionals is critically important. A coordinating committee to provide communication and feedback on new issues, priorities, successes, and failures is vital to the overall success of the program.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Coordination of Region-wide Efforts:
 - Stimulate multi-state projects (WCC-67 will work to identify common areas of collaboration, with a focus on sustainable production systems, direct marketing and value-added. Other possible focus issues are medicinal and culinary herbs, agro-forestry, and sustainable programs for under-served clients).
 - Require an annual written report from each participant and cooperator (a standard reporting format will be developed and distributed with the minutes each year).
 - Annually, provide regional sustainable agriculture priorities to be included in the minutes and given to Western SARE.
2. Outreach and Education Function:
 - Each meeting will have one 'action' theme as the focus of the meeting .
 - Identify priority areas under these themes to be considered by Western SARE for future RFPs, and provide a pool of proposal reviewers for the Western SARE's competitive grants programs.
 - Increase awareness, among the regions sustainable agriculture stakeholders, of the activities and needs of the regions efforts through presentations at the WCC-67 meetings on these target themes.
 - Encourage on-farm research.

3. By invitation, WCC-67 will build partnerships and expand collaboration between agencies and organizations that have a sustainable agriculture mission:
- Between the Agricultural Experiment Stations and Cooperative Extension
 - Between Land-Grants and NRCS, EPA, ARS, FSA, etc.
 - Between this committee and other sustainable agriculture groups such as Leopold Center, WSU-CSANR, UC-SAREP, etc.
 - Between landowners, NGOs, farmers, ranchers, commodity groups, agribusiness, etc.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES:

- Coordination of western region research and education programs on sustainable agriculture in priority areas.
- Successful funded multi-state grant proposals, including on-farm research projects.
- Annual minutes, state reports, and list of priority areas from WCC-67 meetings.
- In collaboration with Western SARE maintain a Web site with active research projects, reviewed publications and Extension outreach media
- Annually, provide a list of key sustainable agriculture research issues and/or needs.

EDUCATIONAL PLAN:

Extension specialists and other grass roots agricultural educators will be participants in the committee and will conduct educational programs to clientele based on research results. They will be assisted in this effort by the annual minutes, state reports, and a list of priority areas from WCC-67, as well as material submitted to the Western SARE Web site.

PARTICIPANTS:

For each participant in the WCC, provide the name, institution/agency, area of expertise, and indicate the appointment percentage for research/extension/teaching. It is desirable to include participants from other agricultural agencies (e.g., ARS, ERS, FS, CES, etc.) wherever possible. Briefly describe the efforts to include involvement of individuals from appropriate agencies in the coordinating committee.

To obtain a list of initial participants for this section, this draft petition will be sent to all who have been previously been involved with the WCC-67 and the PDP coordinators with the attachment of Appendix H, the participants form, for those who are interested to fill out. The individuals who fill out Appendix H and send it in will be the initial participants in the proposal. Once the initial list is prepared the petition will be submitted to the Directors. If approved the petition with a letter inviting participation will be sent to those individuals and organizations listed above in Objective III

OPERATIONAL STRUCTURE:

WCC-67 will have three officers; they will be a Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary. Each year a secretary will be elected and the positions will be filled by rotation from Secretary to Vice-Chair to Chair.

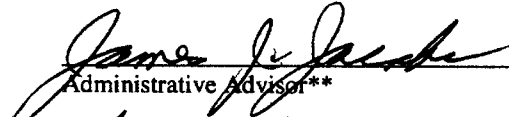
The Secretary will be responsible for the minutes.

The Vice-Chair will be responsible for the logistics of the annual meeting. The annual meeting will generally be held in the state of the Vice-Chair. Meeting locations will be set two years in advance. If for some reason the meeting is not held in the state of the Vice-chair a member from that state must volunteer to assist the Vice-Chair in this role.

The Chair will prepare the meeting announcements, agenda and any reports required beyond the minutes. At the end of the petition period all chairs under this petition will assist the final chair in preparing the accomplishment report.

The committee will attempt to hold a joint meeting with the WSARE PDP coordinators and administrative council every second or third year.

SIGNATURES:



Administrative Advisor**

5/17/00
Date



Chair, Western Director's Association

8-11-00
Date

ATTACHMENTS:

ACCOMPLISHMENTS (only required for WCCs requesting renewal):

ACCOMPLISHMENTS 1997-2000

Specific Objectives:

1. *To serve as a technical Advisory Committee to the Western Region SARE Administrative Council on policy matters relating to the operation of the Western Region SARE program and the overall program priorities.*

Three WCC-67 Committee meetings were held jointly with the Professional Development Program representatives meeting: Reno (1997), Spokane (1998), and Tucson (1999). This objective was met at two of three coordinating committee meetings where discussions were held as to the advisory role of the committee to the SARE program. Formal advisory statements were recorded and made to the Council in Reno. In addition to these interactions, nearly all individual members of WRCC-67 have been asked to participate in the review process of grant proposals submitted to Western SARE/ACE competitive grants programs. A general discussion of policy matters and committee functions as reviewers of proposals took place at the Reno meeting. It was recognized that numerous WCC-67 committee members had served as a source of reviewers for competitive grants under the present committee proposal. Members of the committee feel it should move toward an evaluative role rather than a reviewer pool, as many committee members were SARE applicants and the pool of non-committee reviewers was growing. It was recognized that a new advisory function would be necessary in future years, emphasizing documentation of delivery of information to clients.

2. *To coordinate research and educational projects involving sustainable agriculture in the Western Region.*

Each of the first two annual committee meetings consisted of planned, thematic agenda sessions (Spokane: local and regional sustainable agriculture projects; Reno: grazing land resource use, management, and conflict resolution) in which on-going regional project updates and results were presented and field tours to local agricultural and food systems projects were also held at all meetings.

Considerable interdisciplinary exchange took place at these meetings. A valuable interaction by Western Agricultural Experiment Station researchers and Cooperative Extension personnel was continued by these activities. This has been an economical association, making it possible for both groups to participate in joint exchanges of information on state activities and also to participate in joint tours which have always been a tradition with WCC-67. By holding WCC-67 meetings on a rotational location basis, participating producers and committee members benefited from the exchange of ideas and information related to sustainable agriculture.

3. *To promote exchange of information on sustainable agriculture research and education among Western Region scientists and Extension educators, and to enhance the distribution of information to the broader general public, including growers, consumers, and policy makers.*

At the Spokane meeting in August 1997, it was decided that the WCC-67 would dedicate time and resources to the planning of the first regional sustainable agriculture conference sponsored by Western SARE. In Reno, the initial program committee was formed to present a proposal to the Administrative Council at the same meeting concerning dates, structure, objectives, and information topics for the conference. It was recognized by the Committee that the conference would be the first regional educational event for a SARE region-wide planning effort. The event's primary goal was to provide a unique regional educational and informational exchange opportunity and to provide a showcase of the region's sustainable activity to the largest possible audience. A Program Planning Committee meeting was held in February 1999 with three WCC members serving as program co-chairs (Luna, Granatstein, Swezey). At this meeting, the Portland venue was selected by the co-chairs, and John Luna was designated conference committee chair.

4. *To develop a regional database of sustainable agriculture research and education activities within the region, accessible on the WSARE Program Web site.*

It was reported that as of the Tucson meeting, more than 270 postings of results had been made on the Program Web site. The WCC had stated the necessity for submission of project results as a continuing goal to members.

5. *Conduct a regional symposium on Sustainable Agriculture for the Western Region*

This objective was met with outstanding results. Committee members worked for over 18 months on symposium concepts, proposals for support, program, and proceedings. A Program Committee was formed at the Reno meeting and presented a meeting theme and topics prospectus to the Administrative Council. The Council approved the symposium concept and support for the activity. The Program Committee, led by conference co-chairs Luna, Granatstein, and Swezey held a February 1999 program planning meeting with WCC-67 members, invited farmers and ranchers, and non-governmental organization representatives. The program co-chairs formed a conference template, which was finalized in September 1999, in the form of the conference announcement and brochure. At the Tucson meeting, conference co-chair Swezey and WSARE staff member Kelleher introduced the interview/abstract proceedings format and agreed to produce the conference proceedings "Sustainable Agriculture... Continuing to Grow", given in advance to each conference attendee. The conference was held March 7-9, 2000 in Portland Oregon, with over 80 presenters and 650 attendees. Highlights included opening keynotes from Oregon Governor John Kitzhaber and Deputy Secretary of Agriculture Richard Rominger. One hundred seventy-five attendees toured local sustainable agriculture and food systems projects. Standing-room-only poster sessions and an information "share fair" highlighted the information exchange process at the conference. The proceedings, which combine profiles of farmers and ranchers who spoke at the event with scientific abstracts from researchers, is now on-line on WSARE's Web site. A valuable outreach tool, which will disseminate conference information and allow readers to review outstanding sustainable agriculture practice and research, has been created through WCC-67 activity on this objective.

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR CONTRIBUTION TO WCC: *Attach the original of each participant's form (Appendix H, page 33) to the back of the petition.*

***if the committee has a Lead and Co-Administrative Advisor, both signatures should be included on the petition.*

NOTE: THE PETITION SHOULD NOT EXCEED THREE SINGLE-SPACED PAGES EXCLUDING ATTACHMENTS.

Participant	E-mail, phone, fax	Expertise	% Research	% Extension	% Teaching
WCC-67 Participants Petition for Renewal 10/01/2000					
L. Robert Barber CALS/ANR UOG Station Mangilao GU 96923-1871	bbarber@uog.edu 671-735-2001 671-734-6848		20	60	20
David Bezdicek Washington State University Crop & Soil Sciences PO Box 646420 Pullman WA 99164-6420	bezdicek@wsu.edu 509-535-3644	soil biology cropping systems	49		51
Jessica G. Davis Dept of Soil & Crop Sciences Colorado State University Fort Collins CO 8052-1170	jgdavis@colostate.edu 970-491-1913 970-491-2758		20	80	
Richard P. Dick Crop & Soil Sciences Oregon State University 138 Strand Agricultural Hall Corvallis OR 97331-3201	richard.dick@orst.edu 541-737-5718 541-737-3178	soil biology	65		35
Chris Feise Interim Director Center for Sustaining Ag and Natural Resources 6024 Upland Terrace S Seattle WA 98118-2928	feise@wsu.edu 206-725-4076 509-335-2885			100	

Participant	E-mail, phone, fax	Expertise	% Research	% Extension	% Teaching
David Granatstein Washington State University 1100 Western Ave N Wenatchee WA 98801-1299	granats@wsu.edu 509-663-8181 x.222 509-662-8714	sustainable ag		100	
Alan M. Gray Powell Research & Extension Center 747 Road 9 Powell WY 82435-9135	alangray@uwyo.edu 307-754-2223 307-754-5605	forage	25	75	
Steven Guldan Alcalde Sustainable Ag Science Center PO Box 159 Alcalde NM 87511-0159	sguldan@nmsu.edu 505-852-4241		60		
John Luna Crop & Soil Sciences Oregon State University 138 Strand Agricultural Hall Corvallis OR 97331-2201	lunaj@bcc.orst.edu 541-737-5430 541-737-3178	cropping systems conservation tillage	50	50	
Mari Marutani CALS/ANR UOG Station Mangilao GU 969-1871	marutani@uog.edu 671-735-2001 671-734-6848		60	20	20
Don Vargo ASCC-LGP PO Box 2609 Pago Pago, American Samoa	donvargo@elele.peacesat.hawaii.edu 011-684-699-1394 011-684-699-1575		70	20	10