



IR-4 PMC & CLC MEETINGS MINUTES

Spring Meeting, 2020

2019 Hyatt Place National Mall 400 E St SW,
Washington, DC 20024

ACTION ITEMS AND MOTIONS:

Motions:

1. For PMC to accept Bill Frantz, Kam Quarles, and Jennifer Clarke as new CLC members. **PASSED**
2. To reelect John Wise as chair of Project Management Committee for another 3 year term beginning at 2019 Fall PMC meeting. **PASSED**
3. For IR-4 Project and Univ. of Maryland Eastern Shore to proceed with MOU for the UMES to take over from Rutgers as the administrative host the IR-4 Northeast Region. **PASSED**

Action items:

1. Baron to plan a conference call with Cristi Palmer RFC & RDs to take conversation forward on the potential support person for the Environmental Horticulture Program. Work out the role and responsibilities of such a new position.
2. Schedule a second call with Cristi Palmer RFC & RD to discuss the Environmental Horticulture prioritization process. Consider an online prioritization step preceding the 2021 WOW to reduce time of EH session.
3. ACAC will revisit the laboratory guidance document with intent to address issues related to Data Quality issues (manual integration, statistics, etc).
4. Baron to contact Sherry Larkin to confirm she can continue through NRSP review.
5. Baron to set-up PMC call with Tammy Barkalow for discussion of QA transformation.

PARTICIPANTS

Mike Aerts; CLC
Jerry Baron; IR-4 Executive Director
Michael Bledsoe; CLC/Chair
Tom Bewick; USDA-NIFA
Doug Buhler; Administrative Advisor-NCR
Jill Calabro; CLC
Ann George; CLC
Liwei Gu; Regional Director-SOR
Matt Hengel; Regional Director-Western Region
Bob Jones; CLC
Dan Kunkel; Senior Associate Director
Bob Kaldunski; CLC
Sherry Larkin; Administrative Advisor-SOR/Chair
Armando Monterroso; CLC
Dan Rossi; Regional Director-NER
Steve Salisbury; CLC (by phone)
Todd Scholz; CLC/Vice Chair
Bob Simerly; CLC (by phone)
Alvin Simmons; USDA-ARS

Berry Tanner; CLC
Amy Upton; CLC
Herman Wagnespak; CLC
John Wise; Regional Director-NCR/Chair PMC

GUESTS

Scott Angle
Tammy Barkalow
Michael Braverman
Debbie Carpenter
Nancy Fitz
Scott Hutchins
Moses Kairo
Rick Keigwin
Ray McAllister
Chris Novak
Cristi Palmer
Van Starner
Simon Zebelo

Tuesday March 10th Joint IR-4 CLC & PMC Session

CLC Only Session

1. **New members/reappointments**

- Chair introduced new members

- Chair explained that new members and members up for renewal are officially approved at this meeting.
- Chair announced who is up for renewal this year:
 - Michael Aerts-Florida Fruit and Vegetable, Michael Bledsoe-Village Farms, Berry Tanner-National Watermelon Association, Bob Kaldunski-Ginseng Board of Wisconsin, Dave Trinkamba-MBG Marketing, Lori Berger-Ag Business Resources
- Chair recommended that the body consider Lori Berger separately, as Lori is now working for University of CA and university employees are generally not on the CLC members due to restrictions on lobbying. As the group understood her position, the consensus was to disqualify her as a member of the CLC, unless her status changed.

Motion made by Ann George and seconded by Jill Calabra to approve by unanimous consent the membership renewals for Michael Aerts, Michael Bledsoe, Berry Tanner, Bob Kaldunski, and Dave Trinkamba. PASSED

Motion made to disqualify Lori Berger as member of CLC due to her employment with the University. PASSED

2. Election/Reelection of CLC Chair/Vice Chair

- Chair began by explaining officers and terms of office for CLC.
- CLC has two officers, Chair and Vice Chair, with a term of two years. Chair is limited to two consecutive terms.
- Current officers are Chair-Mike Bledsoe and Vice Chair-Todd Scholz and both are eligible for election this year.
- Chair turned over the meeting to Ann George, Chair of Nominating Committee.
- Nomination received from Ann George for Mike Bledsoe to be Chair of CLC.
- No further nominations were received.

Motion made by Amy Upton and seconded by Mike Aerts to approve nomination of Mike Bledsoe. PASSED.

1. Ms. George reported that Todd Scholz is willing to continue as Vice Chair.
2. Nominations for Vice Chair were called for and nomination of Scholz as Vice Chair was received.
3. No further nominations were received.

Motion by Mike Aerts and seconded by Berry Tanner to approve Todd Scholz as Vice Chair. PASSED.

3. Other topics

- a. Meetings
 - There was a discussion of all the meetings scheduled this week.
 - Senator Merkley-OR w/Approp Staff, 3:00 pm
 - Representative Kaptur-OH, 9:30 AM Wed
 - Senator Stabenow-MI with Ag Staff-1:00 pm WED
 - Representative Moolenaar-MI-4:00 pm Wed
 - Hops is sponsoring meetings of growers this week. WA delegation, ID delegation, OR delegation (IR-4 is 4th on their list)
 - Tanner has meetings with GA delegation
- b. Mitigation strategies for pollinators
 - Ornamentals have been impacted by mitigation for pollinators
 - Vegetables with continuous bloom
 - Pollinators don't affect greenhouse—looking for that in writing
- c. Peptides
 - Does IR-4 do testing peptides
 - Novel route of pest management
 - Consensus is to look into it—
- d. New Application technologies
 - What about injection studies
 - Citrus industry uses
 - What is impact—studies are more expensive?

- e. New technologies—argument for new funding
 - IR 4 needs new funding to test new technologies for residues
 - Efficacious methods—method should be tested by crop
 - Is there an alternate agency for evaluating residues?
- f. Drone Application—Not really a different technology and not practical yet
- g. NeoNics
 - Exemption for greenhouse crops
 - Need these products and if eliminated, need alternatives
- h. Office of Urban Agriculture
 - 2018 Authorized and Funded
 - Not yet created
 - Bob Jones spoke of it as a possible link with IR-4
 - All urban ag crops would be specialty crops.
- i. Arguments for funding increase to IR-4
 - Increase in Presidents Budget from zero to \$17 Million
 - Increase in funding will double number of studies.
 - Increase will provide labels for new technologies that reduce exposures of applicators and public, increase efficacy of products, reduce amount of pesticide needed,
 - Facilitate trade by harmonization of Maximum Residue Limits among countries
 - Urban Agriculture—will be a partner with this effort.
 - Peptides, bio-control—not just conventional agriculture—also organic
 - Hemp production is an example of power of IR-4.
 - Specialty crops are in every state in every district
- j. Upcoming Meetings of interest
 - Minor Crop Farmer Alliance, Washington, DC Mar 12, 10:30 AM.
 - Global MRL Workshop, San Francisco CA, May 27-28, 2020
 - Food Use Workshop is scheduled for Minnesota in September 15-17, 2020.

Joint CLC & PMC Session

1. Comments from the Chairs:

Mike Bledsoe

- Thanked the CLC for his re-election.
- He has enjoyed his first term and is looking forward to the next.
- IR-4 faces many challenges—funding, move, and public perceptions.
- CLC is working hard to move us forward.
- Very proud of the membership—formation of the GASC
- Accomplished reestablishing presence with increase in Presidents budget.

John Wise

- Reminded the PMC about the training conference—excellent conference and was encouraged by the younger attendees who were engaged, qualified, capable.
- Funding is important to give the next generation a chance.

2. New Member Approvals

- Bledsoe explained that the CLC need to formally approve these new members so the PMC could approve them also.
 - Jennifer Clarke, CA Leafy Green Research Program
 - Bill Frantz—replace Terry Humfeld
 - Kam Quarles, National Potato Council

3. CLC Government Affairs Sub-Committee (GASC) Recap—Bob Simerly (via phone)

- Background of the subcommittee—formed to continue the effort throughout the year
- Restored funding last year—zeroed budget in Presidents proposal
- Laura Phelps, Jerry Baron, Keith Pitts—visited Ruth Saunders

- Increased request in Presidents Budget to \$17 Million
- Organized the Lunch and Learn—Committee helps, especially Amy Upton
- Support for the IR-4 Move and considerations
- Professional Assistance/Considered professional lobbying firm
- Not proper for USDA Agency to hire a lobbyist
 - CLC should organize a subcommittee formally.
 - GASC will serve as leadership for CLC efforts

4. IR-4 2019 Year End Summary (Baron)

- International Year of Plant Health is 2020!
- Discussed the 2019 IR-4 Annual Report
- IR-4 data supported 1545 new registrations in 2019, a record that included a 35-day shutdown of EPA
- Residue studies for Hemp—
- Export issues remains an issue
- Public Acceptance of pesticides
- President's budget includes a funding bump for IR-4 NIFA funds. First time an increase is proposed. Proposed cut for ARS's umbrella funds. It is believed that OMB visit by Laura Philips, Keith Pitts and Baron contributed to the proposed NIFA increase.
- Turnover—Lots of staff changing within the IR-4.
 - Tifton lab has a new director
 - More changes in personnel to be expected this year
 - Younger faces within IR-4
- Lobbyist question—Determined it is not good use of funds

5. Update on THE MOVE (Baron)

Northeast Region

- Rutgers also declined to continue to support IR-4 Northeast Region- so considered our options.
- Dan Rossi reached out to different universities in NE region-1864 institutions generally not interested
- Began some dialogue with others including University of Maryland Eastern Shore (UMES)

IR-4 HQ

- Move has made progress but taking longer than expected
 - Recruiting is taking double the time expected.
 - Jerry moved on January 2, Small office suite.
- Looking to add Weed Scientist, two study directors and entomologist as first hires.
- National Operations Manager is in future.
- NC State team is hospitable and welcoming. They try to help you by working through solutions
- Recently some progress with Rutgers on transferring funds
- Baron introduced Dr. Steve Lommel, Director of NC Agriculture Research Service who is Baron's direct supervisor. Steve will join the PMC as Advisor.
- Bledsoe explained that CLC has had voice in employee selection process; he has been engaged. Rich Bonanno, former Chair of CLC, who is now NC Cooperative Extension Service Director is a formal member of the Search and Selection Committees

4. Indirect Cost Situation/Conversion to Special Cooperative Agreement

- Baron discussed process of conversion to an appropriation with overhead.
- CLC has two asks on the Hill; increase funding to \$20 Million in FY 2021 and change to Special Cooperative Agreement to allow 10% overhead.
- NPL for NIFA will be Tom Bewick. He replaces Rob Hedberg.

5. Strategies for the Lunch and Learn (Bledsoe)

- Plan to do program similar to last year, Mike Aerts is the moderator

- Other talking points
 - New technology
 - Office of Urban Agriculture

6. Partner Update

- USDA (S. Hutchins and S. Angle)
- Chris Novak (CropLife America)
 - Served at Syngenta, Corn Growers, Pork Producers
 - Strategic planning—Tools and technologies
 - Important topics
 - i. Use the word Pesticide—not Crop Protection. Crop Protection means crop insurance to public.
 - ii. Key Policy
 - iii. Trade Barriers
 - iv. State Issues
 - v. Product specific bans
 - vi. Preemption is strategy
 - vii. Endangered Species
 - viii. PRIA/EPA. Funding & PRIA V Reauthorization
 - ix. Need strong federal system to keep states from stepping in
 - x. Pendulums swing—Investigating Carbon footprint of pesticide use.
- EPA (R. Keigwin), OPP Management
 - Last week 4.5 Million hits for disinfectants for coronavirus
 - IR-4 had a phenomenal year—1545 registrations compared to 1100
 - Retirements and departures— Losing great people but many of the new hires are rock stars
 - EPA opening science center in RTP—marriage with toxics
 - Registration/ongoing well-known products, including Pyrethroid, Triazines, Rodenticides, Neonics. EPA seems to have saved the hard ones until the end.
 - Endangered Species Work under ESA-InterAgency Task force in statute
 - Draft Biological Opinions—Carbaryl and Methomyl, Glyphosate, triazines, and Atrazine
 - Change in pesticide use data—New with these reviews
 - Not the answer but better review
 - Recommends participation in public comment—back up facts with data.
 - EPA is moving from Potomac Yards this fall. Done in mid-November. OPP will spread between three buildings in Federal Triangle. Fiscally it will make sense. EPA currently pays \$1.25 Million per floor in just rent space at Potomac Yards. Historical building will be a bit different. Space is harder to make into functional offices
 - EPA OPP will probably not return to 900 people, net head count of hiring vs losses is not yet positive. Looking to gain 100 positions to about 700 people. PRIA commitments are based on 900 employees

Wednesday March 11th: 8:00 am to 5:15 pm

7. Approval of minutes, new agenda items. (Wise)

- Minor changes in Minutes were suggested by Alvin Simmons

8. Reports

- AAs
 - Sherry Larkin- stepping down as AA to pursue position with SeaGrant. Will be at Southern Region Directors Meeting next week to be supportive of IR-4
 - Doug Buhler-North Central Director meeting first week of April
 - Baron invited to present at Western Region Directors meeting. Rossi will cover
 - Brad Hillman is stepping down as NJAES Director- Hillman to check with Peg Brennen about assuming the IR-4 AA role from the NE.

- NIFA
 - Tom Bewick-NIFA does not have the bandwidth to do minor administrative changes, e.g. change in the IR-4 Principal Investigator from Baron to Kunkel. NIFA is focusing efforts on outstanding 2019 grant award that still need attention
 - Plan to process the NC, South and Western Regions as a Continuation Award. HQ and Northeast Region will have to go through a Non-competitive award process submitted by NC State and UMES.
 - NIFA needs progress reports 60 days prior to end of 2019 grant award to ensure progress on the 2020 awards

- ARS
 - Will be hiring a Ph.D level entomologist to assist Alvin with IR-4 work
 - Tifton still waiting on nitrogen generator
 - FY 2020 funding will be the same as FY 2019
 - Lost funds for IR-4 in 2021 Presidential budget-umbrella account
 - Will be establishing a new cooperative agreement with IR-4 @ NCSU
 - Tom Hendrick retired; Tamara Snipes took as Lab Research Director. ARS/Tifton will be hiring a new scientist to replace Hendrick. They have already hired some lower level positions at Tifton
 - John Harvey still classified at Field Research Director at Wapato. Still working, training his replacement, Dwane Larson who attended the National Education Conference

- CLC
 - Approved d new membership list yesterday
 - Lunch and Learn went extremely well, thanks to Amy Upton. Mike Aerts did a wonderful job in serving as MC
 - Many Hill visits by CLC
 - Bledsoe/Scholtz reelected as Chair/Vice Chair of CLC
 - CLC would like IR-4 to explore new technology i.e. new injection technology, peptides, new RNA technologies, vertical agriculture, etc.

- NER
 - Annual Report submitted
 - Reduction of field trials in 2020
 - Five new researchers
 - Great improvement of field coordinators coordination
 - Relocation of NE Region will be a topic for tomorrow

- SOR,
 - Detailed report submitted
 - All 2018 field data books have been received; 66% of 2019 field data books are in
 - Janine visited all sites in 2019
 - SLR meeting in June in Atlanta
 - Analytical Lab, submitted 14 ASR
 - 4 backlogged/all done by August
 - Analytical instruments are getting old, 15 years old being replaced
 - Goal for 20 ASR in 2020
 - QA is complete with 2019 work

- WR
 - Detailed report submitted
 - Field program in good shape, on target with timelines
 - New people in field sites, e.g. Oregon State
 - Working through problems at NM state
 - SLR meeting in April will be on-line
 - Laboratory is doing alright, number of project is going down

- Instruments will hopefully be moved this year with entire group finally in one place
 - Re-upped with LC/MS/MS lease, purchased new equipment
 - Has done significant amount of training for other facilities
 - Martin/Sherita continue to do a great job with QA
 - NCR
 - Detailed report submitted
 - Field Residue program is down in 2019
 - Consolidating field trials in the Dakota (Greg Rich)
 - 43 EH trials/wide range of FRDs
 - A few biopesticide projects/integrated solutions (organic basil & hemp)
 - Laboratory getting near eliminating backlog
 - QA having a busy year, Michael Chen is supporting other regions
 - Two new analysts in laboratory
 - HQ
 - NRSP-4 Renewal proceeding, thanks to Dan Rossi for significant efforts
 - Status of 2020 RFA/timelines
 - Uncertainty about how the 2020 funds will be handled. Tom Bewick will talk to Sue Bowman to find out what is the best mechanism, a non-competitive grant to NC State and UMES for HQ and NE Regions or a grant into Rutgers followed by a transfer to the new institutions.
2. Program update. IR-4 HQ et.al
- Food (Kunkel/Carpenter/Starner/Barkalow –All See slides/annual report for details)
 - Buhler– the numbers of new research work has really dropped over time due to funding; between 2010 vs 2020 we have lost 150 trials.
 - Kunkel it is actually worse as IR-4's efforts are supported by additional funding Stat of California and TASC funds
 - Starner – in the performance program we are receiving \$30 K for extra XDE performance trials, and \$42K for BASF for projects for BASF compounds.
 - IR-4 starting to explore alternative plans for Food Use Workshop
 - Barkalow detailed concerns about recent EPA audit at Weslaco. The RFCs need to have the support they need to find out problems early. Much more difficult to discover problems at the end of study
 - Kunkel brought up that a lot the information was provided during the training session in San Diego and we've updated the IR-4 handbook to share the information and implement within the program.
 - Barkalow people have to understand what the expectations are, there has always been what we perceive as capacity, but one of the issues is timing. FDB for 2019 are just now coming in – I anticipate within 4-6 weeks QA will be in the field, and the FDB will start stacking up, how do we move them in a more timely manner.
 - Wise – QC is also frustrated. Nicole's time starts to get pinched because she is shifted to field. People have other demands, and we want to respect that, we need to have time to schedule other work, a soft touch helps to persuade, if that is not sufficient, if it is a system level problem, we can put it on the agenda, do we need to make a formal request, I don't think we have done that to date, that is what I have going on in the background. If it is a new reality, we need to talk about it.
 - Kunkel when we started the 30-month timeline we had 6 weeks after samples were shipped for the FRD will send the notebook to the regional office,
 - Wise – suggesting may not be enough, how strong a stick is too strong, we don't want people to quit. Everyone is under pressure.
 - Carpenter- there has been a huge shift, and additional education may be needed, In the past we waited for ASRs for 2-3 years, it didn't matter when the field data books came in. Now it does.

- Environmental Horticulture (Palmer)- see slides
- Biopesticides research & regulatory support –see slides
- Communications
 - Baron - I met at the licensing people at NC State; they recognize that IR-4 is unique and questioned if we should have all of the partners logos on materials. Agreed to add to add Regional units logos to webpage, please forward to Palmer. Wise questioned if we should go beyond Regions
 - Kunkel I like what we have on the back cover of our annual report “major funding is provided by.... “
- International Activities
 - Kunkel - Codex Committee of Pesticide Residues was cancelled, so this year MRLs will be pushed back.
 - Baron– we continue to hear promising words from USDA-FAS for what we have been doing and that they want to expand the work because MRL harmonization is so important.
 - Kunkel–we don’t have someone at HQ to do a quick summary and passing it on to Codex, and that is one area I’d like to see, but there are a lot of positions before that.

3. Report on National Education Conference - Starner

- The two-day conference was successful, just shy of 120 participants
- Many members off the Training and Educational Committee. Need to replace ASAP as the planning of the NEC takes significant time.

4. Field and laboratory performance issues

Backlog –

- Hengel- IR-4 lab interactions have evolved into a much more cooperative network, Everyone is trying to pull in the same direction. Backlog is on a downward trend overall. To get rid of the backlog, we still have some work on defining backlog.
- Wise –When inexcusable backlog exists, if there is not some kind of hammer, it doesn’t mean anything. If backlog is reasonable and attitudes are right, we do not want to demoralize people.
- Baron- if there is a situation happening it is good for all of us to know. If there is a feedback system, maybe people can help.
- Hengel – but we still have our ACAC committee, and it was formed to help with analytical issues, you have a broader group to weigh in on it, we haven’t utilized the committee to that extent, but we may do that in the future with the transition.
- Wise – whether it is once a year or more, keeping the information in front of us does have value, but I’m not hearing anyone say that we need to take severe action. Knowing that the PMC is reviewing has some effect as well.
- Baron- maybe it should be discussed under quality, people make mistakes, but when it is beyond mistakes, we have to police ourselves or someone else does.

Quality –

- Carpenter - concerns about study quality was discussed extensively at NEC. In practice, way too many issues being found at the end of review. Should be discovered earlier, people need to do their job. You can train someone to ask questions, it isn’t obvious if they don’t have the raw data, they can’t look at it,
- Gu – Suggest we have lab directors serve in the role of QC of other lab’s data.
- Carpenter You can’t evaluate it unless you have the raw data.
- Gu – we can put it in the cloud drive.
- Hengel–Not everyone has the same acquisition software, and you have to train people for the packet they are doing, a chromatogram is a chromatogram, where in Gail’s data do I see if it was chromatically integrated. We just updated the operation handbook for the phase, we need to do the lab guidance document, what is going to be acceptable. Overall we have the same requirements, but little nuances – maybe we need to have a step back and we write

and an SOP on data quality. How would we do it without scanning everything, the chromatograms and send them off. Then you would get a more true check in the ASR.

- Gu – the major hurdle is different labs, if we have expert QC it would help.
- Wise – we might decide to talk about in the executive session is the motion to call on the ACAC to develop a QC process, we wouldn't micromanage the process.

5. Potential 2019 funding distribution

6. Upcoming Meetings

- Unless something changes, we will have the Summer PMC meeting via Zoom
- Food Use Workshop-may need alternative plans
- Fall PMC/NRPM Likely to be in New Jersey

7. Executive Session I