



## PROJECT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Fall Meeting, 2017

October 31/November 1, 2017

IR-4 Project Headquarters

Princeton, NJ

### Executive Summary

**MOTION:** To approve minutes of Summer PMC Meeting. Approved

**MOTION:** To proceed with funding Food Use Program upgrade priorities (7 upgrades were identified - 6 residue studies and 1 Pest Problem Without Solution request [~\$45k]). Approved

**MOTION:** That it is acceptable for the Food Use Program to work on a requested need for use of a biopesticide (i.e., biopesticides are available for funding within the Food Use Program), in addition to being addressed through biopesticide funding; communication between the two programs is critical. Approved

**MOTION:** To allow the Biopesticide and Organic Support Program to provide regulatory assistance 1) to the Forest Service (using *Verticillium nonalfalfae* VnAa140 to manage the invasive "Tree of Heaven," *Ailanthus altissima*) and 2) to Washington State Univ. (Tianna DuPont – using mustard meal to manage replant disease in apples) the regulatory. Both approved.

**MOTION:** To add Tim Albert (Kemin) as new CLC member replacing Amy Gandhi. Approved

**ACTION ITEM:** Put together a generic formal expectation packet that companies must agree to before IR-4 works with them.

### Brief updates from AAs, NIFA, PMC members (NE, NC, S, W, ARS, HQ, CLC)

**NE:** Cornell has been officially closed. Things in the NE region are generally going well

**NCR:** will postpone hiring a replacement for S. Miyazaki until July 1 to help balance finances in the region. J. Wise will serve as the interim RFC.

**SOR:** R. Batts has agreed to serve as interim RFC working from NC State. G. Mahnken will serve as acting Lab Directors with W. Borejsza-Wysock's retirement

**WSR:** Hired M. Horak as new RFC beginning Nov. 1.

**ARS:** Funding is still uncertain will carry on until notified otherwise. Issues with freezers has been rectified

**HQ:** Fewer tolerance approvals this year most likely due to new administration and personnel changes. The EPA Minor Use Officer position is currently vacant. There are some company issues that need to be addressed. Held major meetings in the fall: FUW, GMUS-3/Workshop 2, Orn. Hort. Workshop. SOAR Award presented to B. Madden and L. Phelps

**CLC:** Gave presentation at FUW that was well received. They are having regular meetings with the CLC Congressional subcommittee.

**AA:** B. Hillman discusses RU's new Responsible Cost Management financial system. Under the new system, calculated cost of NJAES hosting IR-4 HQ is significant. Rutgers has a new Chancellor who is very familiar with the Land Grant University System. R. Tjeerdema mentioned work is going slower than expected to move the Western Region analytical lab into their new space. UC Davis also has a new Chancellor who is not familiar with the Land Grant System. R. Hedberg reported the Federal government is still operating on a Continuing Resolution. Hope the FY 2018 grant award process is smoother, as is a continuation of the FY 2017 award. He noted the potential problem of timing, NIFA cannot

release the FY 2018 awards until the FY 2017 progress reports are submitted. Awardees are not allowed to submit progress reports until 90 days before the one year anniversary of the 2017 award.

### **Communications Update**

Website redesign is moving forward. There is an updated Economic Analysis report. Submitted a Communication Strategic Plan

### **Food Program Update**

There were fewer registrations this year, due to the regulatory freeze established by the new administration in January and the open Minor Use Team leader position at EPA. IR-4 submitted the Cereal Grain Group modifications for review. This is the final submission in this multi-year project. IR-4's Analytical Summary Report backlog is going down. The labs are headed in the right direction but there are still concerns with ARS and FL labs. Two motions were approved related to funding upgrades and considering biopesticide priorities within the Food Use priority setting process. Three research centers that were decommissioned – UC Cooperative Extension Center – Holtville, CA; WSU lab – Tri City, WA; and Cornell field site, Geneva, NY. There have been a number of issues surrounding certain companies and not promptly sending regulatory paperwork to HQ.

### **Biopesticide & Organic Support Program**

A motion was approved to provide regulatory assistance to the Forest Service (using *Verticillium nonalfalfae* VnAa140 to manage the invasive "Tree of Heaven," *Ailanthus altissima*) and to Washington State Univ. (Tianna DuPont – using mustard meal to manage replant disease in apples).

### **Ornamental Horticulture Program Update**

Posted 12 summaries. EPA approved 1 new label based partially on the efficacy and crop safety work from IR-4. The Orn. Hort. Workshop was a success with many new people participating.

### **International Activities**

GMUS-3/Workshop-2 was well attended. Thirty-five countries were represented. People like the collaborations/communications during the breakout sessions.

### **Strategies for 2019 Funding**

Educating Congress through OMB and Lunch N Learn meetings. Staying involved with the Tactical Sciences Team and partnering as no new monies are expected.

### **CLC**

Nominated Tim Albert from Kemin Industries to fill the seat of Amy Gandhi.



## PROJECT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

*Fall Meeting, 2017  
October 31/November 1, 2017  
IR-4 Project Headquarters  
Princeton, NJ*

### Minutes

#### Tuesday, October 31<sup>st</sup>

In attendance: T. Barkalow, J. Baron, M. Braverman, D. Carpenter, M. Hengel, B. Hillman, L. Gu, D. Kunkel, C. Palmer, D. Rossi, V. Starner, A. Simmons, J. Wise; phone: M. Bledsoe

1. Approval of July 2017 PMC meeting minutes  
**Motion to accept: M. Bledsoe, Second L. Gu - Approved**
2. New Agenda Items  
Food Use Program upgrade priorities, Glufosinate,
3. Brief updates from AAs, NIFA, PMC members (NER, NCR, SOR, WSR, ARS, HQ, CLC)

**NER: D. Rossi** handed out a brief summary for the meeting materials; he reported that various field trial programs in 2017 are going well. Cornell is officially closed relative to doing funded research for IR-4. NE held a regional mtg. by Webex 7/27, and high priority NE food use needs were identified, then achieved at the FUW. A Webex mtg. was held 9/7 in prep for the Orn Hort workshop. Intention is to hold a face-to-face regional mtg. in April or May 2018.

**NCR: J. Wise** reported (no written report provided) that he is delaying job posting to replace retiring Regional Field Coordinator Satoru Miyazaki (last day is 1/1/18), to help them resolve a payroll budgeting issue; in the interim, John will serve as RFC, and hopes to hire a replacement in 2Q18 with a target start date of July 1.

**SOR: L. Gu** handed out a brief summary for the meeting materials; he reported that NC State FRD Roger Batts will serve as interim RFC due to Michelle Samuel-Foo's resignation (last day Nov. 17), and Gail Mahnken will replace retiring Wlodek Borejsza-Wysock (Jan. 2018) as Lab Research Director. Gu discussed the many impacts of Hurricanes Irma and Maria on field trials and facilities in FL and PR, respectively: loss of some ongoing field trials, delay of trials due to lost or damaged crops/need for replanting, loss of a back-up generator in PR from theft, etc. Considering the widespread destruction from Maria in PR (less so from Irma in FL), impacts on IR-4 trial work seems not as extreme as impacts on personnel (destruction of homes, property, long-term loss of electricity and running water, etc.). The lab has made much progress on the sample analyses' backlog, and hopes to meet early 2018 target of backlog elimination.

**WSR:** (report in materials) **M. Hengel** reported that Michael Horak will be full time RFC/Associate Director Nov. 1 replacing retiring Becky Sisco, who will be available to advise until year-end, and

available by phone after 1/1/18. Considerable training/development of relatively new FRDs continues in NM, CA Riverside and WA. Field trial work in all programs proceeded well in 2017. The lab currently has no backlogged projects, and completed analyses of project samples transferred from the FL and Tifton/ARS labs. The lab move to its new location on campus is going slower than anticipated.

**ARS: A. Simmons** reported (no written report provided) there is still uncertainty with ARS being funded for IR-4 work in 2018 (on continuing resolution at least until 12/8/2017). ARS leadership don't seem concerned, so we should move forward based on 2017 funding. Freezer in Wooster has been repaired, with monitoring system. Trials in the field and lab are going well. The cooperative agreement to fund QA and Orn Hort research has been renewed, and \$102K is being transferred to HQ for QA travel and Cream Ridge ornamental research. There is a new interim Research Leader at Tifton.

**HQ: J. Baron** reported (no written report provided) that 2017 food use approvals are down a bit, much due to the transition to the new administration. Slowdown is also caused by open position for minor use officer at EPA since B. Madden went on special assignment then retired. There are still on-going regulatory issues, with some compounds getting hung-up as standards change. Product performance needs remain high, companies often blame data needs on State of California requirements. Problem likely due to product liability concerns. The lack of university researchers doing performance testing continues, so need for product performance data comes back to IR-4. We continue trying to make process changes, to achieve our goals most efficiently and make our work a bit more predictable and manageable.

This fall we successfully completed 3 major meetings. First was the Food Use Workshop in Denver Sept. 20-21, with a slightly lower attendance than in recent years. The target 42 "A" priorities were attained with very little contention that was expected due to the potential for no post-workshop upgrades with the uncertainty of ARS being funded in 2018 to continue IR-4 research. Next was the Global Minor Use Summit-3, cosponsored/chaired by IR-4 with AAFC/PMC in Montreal (many kudos were received for an excellent summit and priority-setting workshop!). About 30 countries were represented, with >200 participants, and more countries offering to get involved. Results of the summit are in the meeting materials. Finally was the Orn Hort Workshop Oct. 17-19 in San Diego, combined with Biopesticides. There were a lot of new faces at the workshop (~25% new participants), and research priorities for the next 2-year period were successfully identified.

Rutgers fringe rate will be decreasing by 2%; new financial systems have been a nightmare; the MI State economic analysis of the IR-4 Project is being updated; and the IR-4 website re-design effort is moving along. There were 2 retirements at HQ the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of 2017, and several recent "temp" hires. Numerous applicants submitted credentials for a junior entomologist/Study Director position, and the hope is to have a new hire by early 2018. The spring 2018 PMC mtg will be at the same Hyatt Place in D.C. as in 2017, Mar. 13-15; a joint summer mtg with Canada is being considered. The 2017 IR-4 SOAR Award will be presented to Barbara Madden and Laura Phelps.

**CLC: M. Bledsoe** reported (no written report provided) this was the second year where the CLC was recognized at the FUW and Steve Salisbury provided a presentation. The sub-

committee that focuses on Congress is having regular conference calls and are very active. They provided a Congress 101 training to the entire CLC and have presented a Farm Bill 101 training as well. They will write a letter to ARS administration to request continued operations of the ARS collaboration with IR-4 and its importance to specialty crop growers. He proposed new CLC member Tim Alberts, to replace Amy Gandhi from Kemin Industries.

**AA (NCR): D. Buhler**, MSU, reported he met with D. Stabenow's office to discuss the budget environment; it's a tax reduce/budget cut atmosphere. He talked about the need to build partnerships, i.e., a new blueberry check off program in Michigan (D. Trinkka of MBG speaks highly of IR-4!).

**AA (NER): B. Hillman**, Rutgers has transitions to Responsible Cost Management budgeting system; many universities use this model where the centers receive all their grant monies but have to buy back services. The RCM model does not work well for AES; often leading to large deficits where the AES owe the Universities significant resources. RU administration has not understood this problem. However, there is a new Chancellor at Rutgers who understands agriculture; it is hoped he will help communicate situation.

**AA (WSR): R. Tjeerdema**, UC Davis, also has a new chancellor but theirs is not familiar with the land grant system. He seems to have a good feel for UC Davis, and is putting together a new strategic plan for the university. They are deferring building maintenance, which is impacting the move across campus of the IR-4 lab.

**NIFA: R. Hedberg** reported that with the federal government continues to operate under continuing resolution. IR-4 FY 2018 grant will be a continuation of the FY2017 award. However, before the FY 2018 award can be process, NIFA needs a progress report on FY 2017 activities. Problem occurs when progress reports cannot be submitted until 90 days prior to one-year anniversary of the FY 2017 award. Unless this provision is waived/changed, it will delay release of FY 2018 awards. NIFA started staffing up again with a number of PhDs in plant pathology, agronomy and weed science. The Tactical Sciences (TS) group has submitted a report; the next steps reside within the agency. A Presidential Advisor visited NIFA and recommended the TS talk in terms of the President's priorities, i.e., the vulnerability of the food security system, trade, and infrastructure. Need to have a cheerleader for these issues. Tom Daschle is very passionate about food security. Need to provide a forum for communicating with other groups.

4. Communications Update (including Website Redesign, Economic Assessment Report, and Communication Plan) **S. Novack** submitted a Strategic Communications Plan (in materials) that she developed with input from L. Phelps, J. Ricotta, K. Coleman and some advice from B. Simerly. We have started to move content over to the new site. The new site will be housed at WPengine. The Economic Analysis has been updated with lower impact on jobs but greater impact on GDP.
5. Executive Session I

**Wednesday, November 1<sup>st</sup>**

In attendance: M. Bledsoe, J. Baron, J. Wise, T. Barkalow, M. Hengel, L. Gu, S. Novack, D. Carpenter, B. Hillman, M. Braverman, V. Starner, D. Rossi, C. Palmer, A. Simmons, R. Hedberg

## 6. Reports/Updates

### a. Food Program (D. Kunkel, D. Carpenter, V. Starner, T. Barkalow reports in materials)

#### i. Outputs – Approvals/Submissions/FDBs progress:

In 2017, there are so far 490 new uses with 12 chemicals, down from 2016 possibly due to new administration, plus other factors. There were 13 product submissions. Submitted the final crop group, Cereal Grains, for EPA's internal review (for which B Barney is doing a lot of EPA's work!). Field Data Books are moving well through the QC/Regional/QA process. One active was pulled by the company. There are some delayed notebooks from Canadian studies. It is likely that plans surrounding the GMUS-3 have caused the delays.

#### ii. Regulatory/30 Month timeline:

There are currently 78 studies pending submission, held-up for various reasons. There was much discussion about these delays, especially registrants not providing submission docs in a timely manner, (sometimes for 2 years or more), and issues around frozen sample storage stability due to very long storage periods (lab backlog, etc.) beyond what is supported by registrant data, and inadequate IR-4 stability testing. ASR backlog is going down but still have a backlog, similar to July 2017.

#### iii. Research Planning:

**MOTION:** To proceed with funding upgrades proposed by RFC/HQ at Oct. meeting: 7 upgrades - 6 were residue studies and 1 was a PPWS project for ~\$45k. Approved

**MOTION:** That it is acceptable for the Food Use Program to work on a requested need for use of a biopesticide (i.e., biopesticides are available for funding within the Food Use Program), in addition to being addressed through biopesticide funding; communication between the two programs is critical. Approved

#### iv. QA/eQA:

EPA conducted 9 audits of IR-4 sites so far in 2017. Decommissioned UC Cooperative Extension Center – Holtville, CA; WSU lab – Tri City, WA; and Cornell field site, Geneva, NY. U of Arkansas is on the list for decommission. IR-4 HQ was inspected for the first time. eDocs has now been appended to eQA, and houses docs such as protocols/changes, COAs, analytical methods, etc. There was much discussion about the FTEs involved in QA activities across the project, and how current personnel can be used most effectively.

#### v. Laboratory issues/ACAC:

The labs are headed in the right direction regarding working off the backlog of ASRs, but are not quite there yet, particularly with concerns regarding the ARS and FL labs – expectations are still that 2018 targets will be met. Five of 9 glufosinate studies in 2017 (veg crops) may not be supported by the new owner of the AI (from Bayer to BASF), so we should be able to make the 2018 backlog deadline. With glufosinate on back burner, that frees up resources for other backlogged chemistries. Is there another block

of chemistry we could move out of contract lab? The PMC reiterated to D. Carpenter that she has the authority to make lab move decisions as needed.

vi. Company issues (BASF & Adama):

BASF is very risk adverse and since they have taken over glufosinate, they have indicated they may pull support from some 2017 studies, and possibly from 4 new 2018 priorities. They have imposed some considerable performance data requirements in recent years (they are providing 50% funding support), and with commercial liability issues in 2017, this conservative approach is not likely to lessen.

ADAMA has been taking years, in some cases, to provide submission documents required from registrants to accompany IR-4 submissions to EPA for their products. This has led to many delays well beyond IR-4's 30-month timeline goal, and has resulted in high priority stakeholder needs not being labeled for their use.

These situations bring into question the future of IR-4 working with such companies. IR-4 should consider a strategy of face-to-face meetings between the company's management and IR-4 management to discuss the issues and reach workable resolutions.

**ACTION ITEM:** Put together a formal expectation packet (what IR-4 expects and needs from them) that companies must agree to before IR-4 decides to work with them.

b. Biopesticide and Organic Support Program (M. Braverman report in materials)

The question was asked – can an RFC pick a project of interest for the region if the need has not gone through a prioritization process? PMC response was, “yes, this can be done.” Update was given on status of work to fight chestnut blight with OxO transgenic (SUNY, Syracuse), the CHV3-GH2 virus (MSU). Priorities for 2018 that came out of the joint workshop with Orn Hort include conifer fumigation, bee-friendly alternatives in flowering crops and algae management. The program has been asked by the US Forest Service to provide regulatory assistance for *Verticillium nonalfalfe* VnAa140 for the management of the invasive tree called “Tree of Heaven,” *Ailanthus altissima*. Also, Tianna DuPont from Wash State Univ. has requested regulatory assistance for mustard meal to manage replant disease in apples.

**MOTION:** To approve the Biopesticide and Organic Support Program to provide the regulatory assistance for these two projects. Approved.

c. Ornamental Horticulture Program Update (C. Palmer report in materials, plus additional slides presented)

Completed and posted 12 project summaries. EPA approved 1 new label based partially on the efficacy and crop safety data IR-4 generated for Orkestra Intrinsic Fungicide. 2 products were discontinued based on IR-4 data. There is a new process for 2018 that includes a RFC input portal on the website. The Ornamental Horticulture Workshop was successful with a number of new people attending (~25% first-timers), and top priorities were selected for the next 2 years. A proposal was presented regarding a name change for the program to “Environmental Horticulture – no action was taken. The next workshop will be in 2019, during the same week as the Food Use and Biopesticide workshops (proposed).

d. International Activities (D. Kunkel report not in materials, but distributed to PMC prior to the meeting - Capacity building, GMUS)

The GMUS-3 in Montreal was well attended (~220 delegates) with over 35 countries represented. The breakout sessions provided good interaction and collaboration among the participants. Minor use champions were identified to move priority projects forward; 7 key areas of work were identified. There are a number of champions who meet on a more regular basis to keep things going in the international realm. The Specialty Crop Farm Bill Alliance may be taking from the TASC grant and putting it in the Farm Bill as an institution.

7. 2018 Funding Cycle

- RFA out early 2018 and due into NIFA in March
- Preliminary Discussions on Distribution - Earliest timeframe for the fund distribution is June 1<sup>st</sup>. The continuation of funding depends on submission of progress reports from FY 2017 award. Timely submission of progress reports are important, make sure you turn those in.

8. Strategies for FY 2019 funding – The CLC is looking for direction as to the how to proceed. M. Bledsoe, J. Calabro and J. Baron attended the Second Tactical Sciences meeting. They felt some degree of encouragement. Some TS partners have gone out on their own to receive funding. There is a lot of hope TS will be an answer to funding shortfalls, but IR-4 should not put all its eggs in one basket. It doesn't seem there will be new monies for 2019. IR-4 should plan on Congressional Lunch-n-Learn opportunities in early 2018 to introduce members to the work of IR-4 (J. Baron to organize this). Some CLC members are interested in meeting with reps from OMB in January or February.

9. Nomination of New CLC Member

**MOTION:** to add Tim Albert (Kemin Industries ) as new CLC member replacing Amy Gandhi.  
Approved

10. Discussion of Efficiency Improvement Teams deferred to All Hands Meeting.

11. Upcoming Meetings

**Spring PMC/CLC Meeting**

Hyatt Place

Washington, DC

March 12-14

CLC March 13 AM

Joint PMC/CLC March 13 PM

Reception March 13 PM

PMC March 14 all day

**IPM Symposium**

Renaissance Baltimore Harborplace Hotel

Baltimore, MD USA

March 19-22, 2018

**Canadian Priority Setting**

Hilton Lac Leamy in Gatineau, Quebec

March 20-22, 2018

**Western Region IR-4 Meeting**

Davis, CA

April 24-25, 2018

**Southern Region**

**IR-4 Meeting**

August 2018

**North Central Region**

**IR-4 Meeting**

East Lansing, MI

August 20-21, 2018