

Agenda Item E: ESCOP Science and Technology Committee 2007-08 Report

Presenter: Gregory Bohach

Background Information:

1. Committee Membership:

- Chair
 - Greg Bohach (WAAESD)

- CSREES Liaisons
 - Bob MacDonald (CSREES)
 - Meryl Broussard (CSREES)

- Delegate
 - Steve Meredith (ARD)
 - Ambrose Anuro (ARD)
 - Richard Rhodes (NERA)
 - Gloria Wyche-Moore (NERA)
 - Clarence Watson (SAAESD)
 - Nancy Cox (SAAESD)
 - Larry Curtis (WAAESD)

- Executive Vice-Chair
 - Dan Rossi (NERA, Executive Director)

- Past-chair
 - Steven Pueppke (NCRA)

- Representative
 - Terry Nelsen (ARS)
 - Cornelia Flora (Social Science Subcommittee)
 - Cliff Gabriel (Office of Science and Technology Policy)
 - Adrianna Hewings (ARS)
 - Frank Zalom (Pest Management Strategies Subcommittee)
 - Edwin Price (ICOP)

2. Meeting

The Committee met on March 27, 2008 in Baltimore, Maryland.

3. Committee Charge and Membership

The Committee developed the following new charge which will be considered by the ESS at its annual meeting on September 22, 2008:

“The ESCOP Science and Technology Committee is charged with promoting and enhancing science and technology in the Land-grant university system. The Committee will assist ESCOP to identify future directions and anticipate and respond to research needs and opportunities for funding. It will assist in linking science and technology programs to multistate and national research initiatives. It will recommend how ESCOP will respond to reports, recommendations and planning documents from the national science community. It will provide guidance to ESCOP strategic planning and priority setting.”

Changes to the Committee membership were also discussed and have been submitted as recommended changes to the ESS Rules of Operation.

4. NIFA Research Priorities

A task force was formed to develop and implement a process for identifying priorities for the 2010 NRI RFA. The task force included Greg Bohach, Cornelia Flora, Debby Sheely, James Wade, and Dan Rossi. Given the changes in the 2008 Farm Bill, it was decided that research priorities should be identified for the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (formerly the NRI) and the four new competitive funding initiatives (Biomass, Specialty Crops, Beginning Farmer and Rancher, and Organic Agriculture) mandated in the Farm Bill. The Committee conducted a survey of SAES, CES and APS directors and AHS to identify high priority issues/problem areas that will be transmitted to CSREES to feed into the development of the RFA's for National Institute for Food and Agriculture competitive research programs. The Committee used the results to design a one hour workshop for the ESS/SAES/ARD meeting on September 24. The workshop will be used to confirm, refine and prioritize the issues. The results of the workshop will be compiled and Greg Bohach will present draft recommendations at the November ESCOP Executive Committee meeting for approval. Final recommendations will be transmitted to CSREES by the end of December.

5. Funding for Integrated Projects

The Committee passed the following motion at the March 27, 2008 meeting. However, the final Farm Bill language addressed this issue.

“Motion to recommend that if 406 is folded into NRI that a minimum of 35% of NRI funding will be allocated for integrated projects. If 406 does not go into NRI, a minimum of 25% of NRI funding will be allocated for integrated projects.”

6. Multistate Research Award

The Committee was assigned the task of evaluating the regional nominations for the ESS Excellence in Multistate Research Award and selecting a winner. Four nominations from the regional associations were received in April. The Committee members individually scored the four nominations and then discussed the scoring on a teleconference call on

May 9. NC-229 “Porcine Reproductive and Respiratory Disease: Methods for Integrated Control, Prevention and Elimination of PRRS in United States Swine Herds” was forwarded to the ESCOP Executive Committee as the S & T Committee’s recommendation for the 2008 award. The Executive Committee approved this recommendation and the documentation for the award and winning project was forwarded to NASULGC for inclusion in the 2008 NASULGC Awards Brochure. The Committee has also documented the process and a schedule for handling the awards in the future.

7. Grants.gov

The Committee also discussed the potential unintended complications that may arise as a result of the requirement to use Grants.gov for submitting formula grants. For most land grant universities, the responsibility for using Grants.gov resides in the Office of Sponsored Programs or an equivalent entity. Concerns included: (1) the possible shift of funds management and fiscal responsibility from the experiment stations to central administration; (2) imposition of internal university indirect costs on “formula” grants; and (3) state matching implications. Bob MacDonald agreed to bring these concerns to the attention of the CSREES leadership. CSREES subsequently sent out letters of clarification concerning the policy change to deans and directors and to university officials.

8. Future Meetings

The Committee will meet by teleconference in October or early November. The next face-to-face meeting will be scheduled in conjunction with the AHS/CARET and ESCOP meetings in Washington, DC, in the first week of March 2009. The committee will attempt to meet jointly at that time with the Social Sciences Subcommittee.

Actions Requested: For information only.