

**Veg AoE Meeting
Minutes
Mar 28, 2007**

Those in attendance were Norm Myers, Fred Springborn, Jim Breinling, Roger Brook, Dave Smith, Ron Goldy, Matthieu Ngouajio, Bill Steenwyk, Mark Trent (GA Peanut Farmer from Enviroweather), Hannah Stevens, Phil Tocco, Walt, Vickie Morrone, Beth Bishop, Chris Reisinger, Daryl Warncke and Bernie Zandstra.

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 am

Budget Update (Norm and a bit from Bernie)

\$2125 is currently in our account. After all our reimbursements are in, we will make a pretty good dent in this. The sense is that carry over in the account is pretty much nil. We have a 21 account that has \$1700 in it with an additional \$714 from the Ag Labor meeting held in Southwest. We also show some through and through in our budget from AoE grants received and administered. There was some discussion about the time lag between those things charged and those things posted.

E-Mail Update (Jim)

Jim passed around a form to verify addresses of current members to update the master e-mail list. He will get the list to Roger and Roger will get it to the web.

Review of MVC Meeting (Norm)

No big red flags from MVC Meetings. The lack of grower opportunity for research input was discussed. As background, the meeting season ends about March, but grants for research are due usually in January. Once growers are up to speed on issues, it is difficult to influence the research needs much (Bill's Comments). Dave's take was that Norm's presentation to the MVC was pretty effective.

Final Draft of Annual Report (Norm)

Norm passed out the final draft of the AoE Annual Report. Everybody gave positive comments regarding the report. Jim moved, bill seconded to submit the report. All approved.

AoE Competitive Grants

The deadline has been moved up for submission of these grants. We have been very successful in this. A letter of support and intent are needed. Vickie has ideas in terms of organic vegetable production, possibly a joint meeting with Field Crops AoE on cover crops. It could be a field-based twilight meeting, or an indoor meeting or a hybrid of the two. Food safety is another issue (Those things other than E. coli). Traceability is also an emerging issue.

Vickie, Matthieu and Bill will work on one competitive grant for the AoE. It will deal specifically with cover crops. They will work on the grant via e-mail. The grant could pay for out of state speakers.

Update on Other Grants

Matthieu has submitted a few matching grants. Matthieu submitted a RAMP grant on phytophthora with NC, FL, and others through Mary's shop. Larry Olsen will provide \$10K as a

match. The money will not be available until 2008.

Ron asked for a Methyl Bromide PESP grant match. This would also be out of Mary's Shop. She'll be showing that there is no economic alternative.

Hannah has an idea. She wants to develop a farmer's market vendor training. Nobody's heard anything on GREEN Grants yet. This could be due in part from the loss of earmarks. Matthieu submitted an asparagus replant problem grant. Vickie submitted a grant on organic grower focus groups.

Co-Chairs and Other Business

Norm agreed to continue as co-chair. Bernie agreed to continue as co-chair. Vickie shared about putting her organic focus group grant together. She is asking for volunteers to come to it. She passed around a pad to gather volunteers. Vickie also put out an announcement for a twilight meeting on April 19th. "Insect and Disease control for organic Vegetable Production Systems via IP Video".

Beth expressed an issue cropping up with the AoE competitive grant that ends in June of 2008, but the work moves through fall of '08. The suggestion was to ask for an extension.

Jim shared that there was an online hoophouse training. John Biernbaum would be the guy to connect with to find out if it's actually functioning.

Hannah brought up the Vegetable IPM EQIP training. Her District Conservationist got a whole bunch of folks together to sign up and now they need scouts. These scouts need training.

Ron talked about submitting a "Dirty Jobs" application for radish growers, onion growers or other muck crop growers.

Dave mentioned he had breakfast with a small group of NACAA directors. They are currently donating 1K. Thank You Dave!!

Pickle Industry was pushing MDA to have a mandatory inspection of all tunnel grown pickles. They even were putting money for indemnification of the cost of production and crop destruct orders in place to help mitigate the problem. The current exhortation on the part of the industry is to scout, scout, scout and ensure the source of plugs. If enacted, the MDA order would be in force at the soonest, on the summer of 2008.

Bernie gave an update for the Monroe county bi-state vegetable position. He announced that they chose not to select any of the candidates that were interviewed. The position will be rewritten and reposted.

Plans for 2007 Expo

Matthieu Ngouagio was appointed to be overall coordinator. Roger went over the basic deadline structure. Let speakers know that abstracts are required in advance to distribute the day of. Our evaluation summaries are available on the web. There was some discussion about how to increase the response rates of surveys. This next year, we will have a checklist for the Master Gardener volunteers to help guide them in their duties. Some discussion was made about conducting a training for MG Volunteers, this was largely nixed due to the relative convenience of the experience.

The evaluation was discussed. It was asked to include some basic questions that are the same on every page. Roger senses that the folks that have the highest return rates are the farm market folks.

Much discussion was made about how to encourage more survey participation. A carrot, such as a gator, a chainsaw, next years registration free, etc. may be required. Bill suggested that you make a sincere plea to get them to fill out the form. Ron mentioned that you also need to

follow up by mentioning those speakers who were a direct result of feedback.

There was some subject matter overlap in future expo programming with fruit AoE regarding ag labor. The content is dependent on legal developments, but specifically about sourcing labor. Another failing last year was that we didn't get to Vera early enough.

There will be an all day symposium on cucurbit diseases. It would be directed at growers specifically as an IPM Training. Two options, either an all day Thursday symposium or an extension of vine crops in Wednesday afternoon that would be cucurbits. There was much discussion that it is critical to have no significant overlap. The general consensus was to have it on Thursday.

There was a little discussion as to where the onion variety display was placed. The consensus was that it was good to have the varieties out in the hall. It was also suggested to bring MSU potato varieties in from Dave Douches' shop.

There was also more discussion about moving some of the organics talks into Wednesday. The response from Roger was that if John B. wants to expand his offerings into Wednesday, that would be okay, but you don't want to lessen the coverage on Thursday.

Farm market folks want to move their sessions to Tuesdays, to avoid a cool cities conflict. Ron's Tomato session is $\frac{3}{4}$ done!!

Changes were made as noted on handout. Scratch Tuesday am Cole crops and Thursday pm Pesticide/worker safety.

There was little if any complaint from vendors to having an overrun into the break for the food safety issues. It was discussed to add a session on the bioeconomy. Chris Schilling was tossed around as a potential speaker. Chris Reisinger and Hannah Stevens will be coordinators for Alternative Energy on Tuesday Afternoon, Matthieu will coordinate a plasticulture workshop on Wednesday Afternoon.

Meeting was adjourned at 3:00 pm.