

Minutes of the NECC-1099 Business Meeting MultiDisciplinary Evaluation of Tree Fruit Cultivars

November 11-12, 2005
Indianapolis, IN

Administrative Advisor: Steve Goodwin
Chair: Rob Crassweller
Secretary: Renae Moran
Host: Peter Hirst

In attendance:

Elena Garcia, Univ. of Arkansas
Steve Goodwin, Univ. of Mass.
Duane Greene, Univ. of Mass.
Jon Clements, Univ. of Mass.
Steve Miller, Appalachian Fruit Research Station, USDA, Virginia
Rob Crassweller, Penn. State Univ.
Thor Lindstrom, Utah State Univ.
Peter Hirst, Purdue Univ.
Bruce Barritt, Wash. State Univ.
Win Cowgill, Rutgers Univ.
Charlie Embree, AgCanada, Nova Scotia
Cheryl Hampson, AgCanada, British Columbia
Renae Moran, Univ. of Maine
Greg Lang, Michigan State University
Dave Rosenberger, Cornell University
Kieth Yoder, Virginia Tech.
Diane Miller, Ohio State University
Kathy Taylor, University of Georgia
Jules Janick, Purdue University

Meeting convened at 8:30 am.

Ed, Ashworth, Head of the Purdue Dept. of Horticulture and Landscape Architecture welcomed the NECC-1099 to Indiana and gave a summary of current activities in the Horticulture Dept. and at the University. This was followed by each attendee introducing themselves.

The meeting agenda was approved.

The minutes from last year contained two typos in participant's names, but were approved.

Status of the publications from 1999 Planting. No referred publications have been written for the first five years. This planting had 22 locations, 18 of which submitted data, with Ohio terminated due to fire blight and one location being unable to verify its data. Sixteen sites have data that can be used for publication, and these have been preliminarily checked. Ron McNew has assembled the data and may have questions about how to analyze it. The data sets for the

disease plantings have been compiled and will be set to Ron McNew, as well. Following analysis, papers can be written for publication in an issue of the Journal of American Pomological Society.

Steve Goodwin, administrative advisor, went over the rules of operation for a coordinating committee and stated how it differed from a Multistate Project. A one-page description was also given to each member. Funding is available for travel to a Coordinating Committee meeting. Additional funds are available, but they are more limited than with a Multistate Project and activities of a coordinating committee must meet the same criteria as multistate projects to obtain funding. Funding of salaries is not allowed, but costs such as tree planting could be considered for funding if the coordinating committee's activities are similar to a Multistate Project.

R. Crassweller drafted objectives for cultivar evaluation, and sent these to each member via email, but no one responded. However, he wants to expand the research beyond apples to pears and stone fruit. R. Crassweller's statements were followed by a long discussion on the current problems facing cultivar evaluation. C. Hampson suggested that the US switch from plant patenting to Plant Breeder's Rights. D. Rosenberger led a discussion on the ethics of publicly funded experiment station personnel evaluating "club" varieties. There was no clear resolution to the problem of disclosure of cultivars that will be patented or evaluating "club" varieties.

S. Goodwin asked the group what we hoped to learn from variety trials. Two overall objectives were mentioned:

- 1) Adaptability to different regions
- 2) Factors that contribute to adaptability

R. Crassweller asked the members which species of fruit they were interested in evaluating. Each member indicated which species and this was recorded on paper. A coordinator for each fruit species was named and others not in attendance were also suggested based on their expertise and current interest in this topic. The coordinator is asked to identify research needs, contact all interested members, select possible cultivars and selections, and write a proposal by the next meeting.

Apples for a retail market: AFRS, AR, MA, ME, MI, NS, MI with NJ as the coordinator.

Apples for a wholesale market: BC, MI, PA, WA.

Apples for processing: AFRS, MI, NS, with PA as the coordinator.

Apples with disease resistance / pathology: AFRS, AR, MA, ME, MI, NS, VT with NY-HV and VA as coordinators.

Apples for cider or juice: BC, MA, MI, NS, PA, with D. Rosenberger and possibly I. Merwin (NY) as coordinators.

Heirloom apples: AFRS, OH, NY and PA with I. Merwin (NY) as a possible coordinator.

Peach: AR, MA, ME, PA with NJ and GA as coordinators.

Sweet cherry: AFRS, MA, NY-HV, OR, UT, WA, with MI as coordinator.

Tart cherry: MA, PA, UT with MI as coordinator.

European pear: AR, IN, MA, NS, WA and possibly CA (Rachel Elkins) with AFRS (Bell) as possible coordinator.

Asian pear: AR, GA, NJ, VA with Walsh as possible coordinator.

Apricots: ME, MI, NY-HV, PA with NJ (Joe Goffreda) as possible coordinator.

Plums: AR, ME and NY-HV.

Greg Lang has previously tried to organize a multistate cherry evaluation and breeding project, NCT-197, and would like to continue this effort with the NECC-1099. He has been named the coordinator for the cherry section and will contact all members who are interested in future sweet and tart cherry trials.

J. Clements and W. Cowgill gave a summary of website activities. There were few updates. Published papers will be available as PDF files directly from the website. The future of the website was discussed. S. Goodwin agreed to provide funding to maintain it, but also requested that members provide NIMSS with information for its website. Minutes of the meeting should be posted on the NIMSS website. J. Clements suggested the group consider compiling a database on tree fruit characteristics by region and by season.

An apple tasting of five varieties was conducted to measure how much we agreed on descriptive traits such as tartness, sweetness, firmness, crispness and juiciness. Each of these traits was rated on a scale of 1-5. There was close agreement, with the exception of sweetness.

R. Crassweller was nominated as the chair for next year's meeting and R. Moran as chair elect. The secretary will be elected at the meeting next year.

Next year's meeting will be held prior to the NC-140 meeting in New Jersey.

On the second day, the NECC 1099 met with members of the Mid American Apple Improvement Association (MAIA), growers from Ohio, Indiana and Illinois who are developing new cultivars adapted to the climate and markets of the midwest. Jim Eckert gave a summary of MAIA history and goals. R. Crassweller and D. Greene did the same for the NECC-1099.

Jules Janick gave a presentation on the joint apple breeding program at Purdue Univ., Rutgers Univ. and the University of Illinois. The presentation also included the recent apple breeding cooperation between Purdue Univ., the MAIA and Dawes Arboretum.

Diane Miller gave a presentation on collaborative breeding efforts of Ohio State Univ. and MAIA. She gave a second presentation on new and promising germplasm from Central Asia.

Members of the MAIA discussed future activities with members of the NECC-1099. Questions about methods of evaluation, selection and propagation arose. C. Hampson, D. Miller and B. Barritt summarized how these processes are conducted in their respective breeding programs.