



August 17, 2023

NREC Council Meeting

Held in person: Illinois Soybean Association and via Zoom

10 am – 3 pm

Chairman Don Guinnip called the meeting to order at 10:08 a.m. Members present in-person were: Don Guinnip, Matt Duncan, Chuck Cawley, Jeff Kirwan, Scott Lager, David Wessel, Jake Vossenkemper. Members present via Zoom: Al Grosboll, Cindy Skrukud, Ronaldo Maghirang, Trevor Sample. Staff members Julie Hewitt and Shani Golovay were also present in person.

Others participating in the meeting included KJ Johnson, Stacy Zuber, Liz Hobart, Amelia Cheek (online) and Shawn Meyer (online).

Secretary Jeff Kirwan moved to accept the minutes as amended (to include Research Committee) to the appointment of members discussion. Matt Duncan seconded and the minutes were placed on file.

Executive Director Julie Hewitt provided an operational report and highlighted the activities of staff since the previous meeting. She reviewed the field days, investment insights, annual report, and conference participation. In addition, she reviewed the upcoming activities and staff priorities.

Council member Jake Vossenkemper spoke to the group about the Nitrogen Use Efficiency Conference that he has recently attended. He informed the group that the conference will be coming to the University of Illinois and suggested that staff work with Dr. Preza Fontes to help support that conference. Dr. Golovay updated that group that Agronomy Day is no longer happening on campus but perhaps we could host a Nutrient Loss Field day.

Chairman Don Guinnip asked KJ Johnson of IFCA to provide some thoughts around what he sees as priorities as we move forward. KJ discussed the concern around the use of anhydrous ammonia ahead of wheat and how that may impact nitrate loss. He also discussed the marketing of products that make claims of being “inhibitors” while not being a labeled nitrification inhibitor and ensuring that farmers and retailers understand the difference. He also discussed the continued need for research that is geographically diverse and addresses the specific needs of different growing areas. Julie Hewitt asked KJ for his continued help on getting seats filled on the Council.

The Council then had a discussion regarding the NLRs Retailer Survey and how that fits with the USDA-NASS survey that has been funded by NREC. KJ provided an update on that survey and the Council discussed that they would continue to do a farmer survey for the 2023 reference year and then discuss the path forward after that. Julie will have discussions with KJ, Mark Schleussner (USDA-NASS), Trevor Sample (IEPA) and Michael Wood (IDOA).

Chuck Cawley, IDOA Representative, provided an update on collections and reporting for NREC assessment invoices. For the Fall 2022 period, there was approximately \$10,000 outstanding. For the period of 2015-2021 there is just over \$300 outstanding from a total of 18 accounts. There is also

approximately \$39,000 outstanding from companies that are inactive. This amount will need to be written off as we have exhausted our ability to collect.

Julie Hewitt provided a review of current financials and then reviewed the initial budget proposal for 2024.

The Council took a lunch break from 12:04 pm until 12:37 pm.

Research Committee Chairman Matt Duncan presented the recommendation from the council to fund all projects that were ranked 3.80 and above for a total budget of \$4,123,126. Jeff Kirwan moved and Scott Lager seconded the recommendation. The motion passed.

Staff reviewed the liming project that was proposed by Dr. Andrew Margenot and shared that the project was sent to NREC partners to consider funding.

Julie Hewitt reviewed the OEPP proposals that were received and asked the Council to approve all six proposals at a level of \$39,141.30. Jeff Kirwan moved to fund these projects and Scott Lager seconded. The motion passed.

The Council had a discussion regarding the potential increase of the NREC Assessment. Julie provided a breakdown of what that looks like and the process that would be involved. The Council asked Julie to follow up with IDOA and then reach out to stakeholders to get feedback on the increase. Julie will provide an update at the next meeting.

Scott Lager moved and David Wessel seconded the approval of the 2023/24 budget. The motion passed.

Julie reviewed the calendar for upcoming activities and Don Guinnip reiterated the need to engage the Wheat Association in ongoing NREC work.

Jeff Kirwan moved and Jake Vossenkemper seconded to adjourn the meeting at 1:45 pm.