

SUMMARY

NTEP Policy Committee Meeting

February 14 & 15, 2004

Marriott Marina and Hotel, San Diego, CA

Following is a summary of the discussions and actions taken during the most recent NTEP Policy Committee meeting:

Present at the meeting –

- Dr. Tom Voigt (chair), University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana, IL
Representing the NCR-192 (North Central) regional turfgrass committee
- Dr. Gwen Stahnke (vice-chair), Washington State University, Puyallup, WA
Representing the WRCC-11 (Western) regional turfgrass committee
- Ms. Chris McDowell, Pickseed West, Inc., Tangent, OR
Representing the American Seed Trade Assoc., Lawn Seed Division
- Dr. Clark Throssell, Golf Course Superintendents Assoc. of America (GCSAA)
Representing the GCSAA
- Dr. David Williams, University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY
Representing the SERA-IEG-25 (Southern) regional turfgrass committee
- Dr. Mike Kenna, United States Golf Association (USGA), Stillwater, OK
Representing the USGA Green Section
- Dr. Leah Brillman, Seed Research of Oregon, Corvallis, OR
Representing the Turfgrass Breeders Association
- Mr. Ike Thomas, Turfgrass America, Inc., Granbury, TX
Representing the Turfgrass Producers International
- Dr. James Murphy (secretary), Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ
Representing the NE-187 (Northeast) regional turfgrass committee
- Mr. Kevin Morris (ex-officio), National Turfgrass Evaluation Program

After the representative from each organization listed above reported on their recent activities, the committee embarked on its review and discussion of old business and consideration of new business.

OLD BUSINESS

- 1. USDA-ARS Turf Position Update** – Position, held by Dr. Scott Warnke, is supported by a technician which has been hired. A shade test for fineleaf fescue was installed. Morris and others have met with supervisors of the ARS Turf Position to review program and allocation of resources to the program.
- 2. National Turfgrass Initiative Summary** – The \$5.4 million request for the Initiative was not accepted; it will be requested again. Current budget climate limits ARS. Morris discussed the lobbying strategy for the Initiative and indicated that targeting state where future ARS positions are planned would be a key approach.

- 3. Turfgrass Initiative Marketing Plan** – Objective is to raise public awareness and increase fund raising. The plan is long-term involving many aspects, some of which has been implemented such as the legislative activity.
- 4. Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)** – The MOU formalizes the agreement between ARS and NTEP to cooperate and work together on the Initiative. It was moved to accept MOU and unanimously approved.
- 5. By-laws/Proposed Structure of NTF** - The structure of the National Turfgrass Federation (NTF) includes the NTEP Policy Committee as members of the Federation (Corporation). Changes to this structure are needed to separate the additional duties that have arisen within NTF due to the Turfgrass Initiative. Chairman Voigt will appoint an ad-hoc subcommittee to further study issue and report at the June 2004 meeting.
- 6. 2004 On-site Overseeding Trial** – Trial is similar to the 1999-2000 overseeding trial work with 12 sites proposed. Matching funding was approved by the GCSAA and USGA. It was moved to approve trial and unanimously approved.
- 7. Listening Session update** - Additional comments from people not able to attend the listening session were provided by Morris. Chairman Voigt provided the Committee with summary of the issues brought forth in the listening session and an assessment of action or future action that was needed to respond to each item. Several subcommittees were appointed. A summary of the actions taken can be found on the NTEP web site at <http://www.ntep.org/newsroom.htm>.
- 8. Automated Sensing Grants Update** – Two projects were approved and the 1st year payment will occur at end of year. The goal of this research is to improve the quality and consistency of trial evaluations.
- 9. Web Site / Reports on CD** – NTEP will change to the use of a DVD storage box rather than a jewel case for distribution and storage of CD reports. Hard copy reports were previously addressed in the meeting.
- 10. S. Ebdon Statistical Project Update** - The proposed study involved trial work at 17 locations using 98 cultivars requested; ultimately, the study implemented was 9 locations using 66 cultivars. Ten entries at each location are being evaluated in blind trials.
- 11. 2003 Tests Update** - Overall comments from investigators on the establishment of bentgrass and fine leaf fescue trials indicated trials were establishing well. No failures of trials were reported except Cal-Poly which had a washout and was re-seeded.
- 12. Policy Manual Draft** – Inclusion of the strategic plan in the policy manual was suggested. It was clarified that expectations of NTEP policy committee members would be included. The motion to approve Policy Manual as constructed was unanimously approved.

NEW BUSINESS

- 13. 2004 National Perennial Ryegrass Test** - Morris summarized the advisory committee report. Brilman, Throssell and Morris will explore re-description of the climatic zones. A motion was made to add Puyallup WA as a test to for perennial ryegrass. Motion was amended to have Executive Director explore the possibility of adding other important test sites to the trial based on key climatic and geographic locations that did not receive a recommendation from the advisory committee to conduct a trial. Motion was unanimously approved. Morris will explore the potential for developing a public site for trial work Oregon. Morris will discuss with cooperators at test sites including traffic and ensure that traffic research has appropriate non-traffic control. A motion was made to review and alter the standard entries. The motion was approved unanimously. The motion to accept the 2004 perennial ryegrass trial as amended was approved unanimously.
- 14. Budget and Financials** - The current balance sheet and budget statements were reviewed. There are currently 6 Certificates of Deposit ranging in term and \$720,000 total in reserve. Throssell and Thomas will review the allocation of reserves and provide guidelines on finances and reporting.
- 15. Granting Policy** – The granting program should be consider as a part of strategic plan so that the funding amount can be budgeted. Discussion shifted towards review of the strategic plan which currently runs to 2005. A subcommittee was formed to review the 2000 strategic plan, evaluate progress on a plan, and start the revisions process, including a granting policy, for the next plan. Recommendations by the subcommittee will be provided at the June meeting. Action on the new strategic plan was targeted for February 2005.
- 16. “Store Shelf Initiative”** – The post NTEP “from the bag” testing was reviewed. It was pointed out the NTEP should not become involved in a “policing” role. A request for proposals on genetic testing might be considered since some method(s) are needed and NTEP could serve as a repository of this information that could used by industry to assure and verify genetic integrity. The Policy Committee was generally not supportive of the “from the bag” testing initiative since the work would be too involved and slow to address issues that are currently resolved more quickly by market forces.
- 17. Cooperator Training Manual** – Development of a well described training manual/policy that could address a number of issues with "new" trial evaluators including graduate students, technicians, etc. was discussed. A motion was made to appoint a subcommittee that would generate recommendations on training of evaluators. The motion was unanimously approved.
- 18. Other Agenda Items** - Morris discussed the used of retired turfgrass scientists to assist in site visits for quality control. Voigt suggested Morris come to the June meeting with a proposed program and budget regarding site visits.
- 23. Next Policy Committee Meeting** – The summer meeting was scheduled for June 1-3, 2004 at a Beltsville/Baltimore location to be determined.