

Cotton Germplasm Committee Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, January 5, 2016
4:00-5:30
New Orleans Marriott Hotel, Studios 7-8

Members present: Ted Wallace, Steve Hague, Jane Dever, Thomas Brooks, Jacob Rieff, David Becker, Jodi Scheffler, and Mauricio Ulloa
Ex officio members present: Richard Percy, James Frelichowski, Johnie Jenkins, Don Jones, and Roy Scott

Richard Percy, acting for CGC Chair B. Todd Campbell, called the meeting to order.

1. 2015 Minutes

Following roll call and introductions, Dr. Percy asked for verification that members received and reviewed 2015 minutes electronically prior to the meeting, and Jodi Scheffler made a motion to accept the minutes, approved by unanimous voice vote.

2. Vice-Chair Election

Richard Percy conveyed Chair Todd Campbell's call to elect a Cotton CGC vice-chair, Mauricio Ulloa nominated Jane Dever, approved and elected by unanimous voice vote.

3. Collection Status Report

James Frelichowski made available 2015 Germplasm Collection report which was sent electronically prior to meeting, and Richard Percy called for questions and discussion. Only Jodi Scheffler and Jane Dever indicated they read the report prior to the meeting, so James Frelichowski gave a brief summary of the report highlights.

- a. Seed increases were less than normal, because limited to on-site in College Station, with closure of Tecoman Counter Season Nursery
- b. With funding from Cotton Incorporated, half of the greenhouses were fitted with programmable, overhead misting system to assist germination and seedling establishment, and improve plant growth so cuttings of critical germplasm could be distributed if seed are not available.
- c. Orders for germplasm in 2015 reached an all-time high, with most orders coming from USA.
- d. An exploration trip to Arizona October 13-22 resulted in excellent passport information for *Gossypium thurberi*.
- e. Financial support from Cotton Incorporated and collaboration from Jodi Scheffler and Jing Yu, resulted in over half of the collection to be described with descriptors and digital images.
- f. The detailed and comprehensive Germplasm Collection report was made available to members, and several thanked Dr. Frelichowski for his efforts.

Jack McCarty, visitor, asked if the descriptor database was up to date, and Richard Percy reported pictures taking longer to be formatted and uploaded, and data covering over half the collection are in CottonGEN, though not in GRIN.

Jim Olvey, visitor, asked if the newly established winter nursery in Costa Rica will carry over material that does not flower the first year; Don Jones answered likely not, and Richard Percy expressed desire to establish a perennial nursery at some time.

Jodi Scheffler asked if material could be grown and descriptors recorded at other USDA locations, and James Frelichowski responded that at this time, other locations would not provide efficiencies over College Station.

The committee thanked Drs. Frelichowski and Percy for their efforts in 2015; especially the continued digital characterization of the collection, and greenhouse improvements. Several members noted the funding from Cotton Incorporated for facility improvement, passport information, and winter nursery establishment.

4. Winter Nursery Update

Don Jones reported on challenges of establishing a new winter nursery in Costa Rica.

- a. Alfonso Palafox, hired as the winter nursery manager, is very sharp, pays attention to detail, and has been instrumental in establishing the nursery.
- b. Don Jones thanked Bayer CropScience for their support; nursery is on Bayer CropScience land.
- c. Thanks to Jim Olvey for accompanying Don Jones on first trip to Costa Rica.
- d. Internally, there have been some accounting difficulties, especially since this is a new venture within Cotton Incorporated, with a learning curve.
- e. Unexpected weight limitation on seed (7kg) mandated the seed be split into two shipments. Seed for James Frelichowski, Sukamar Saha, Efraim Bechere, and Jodi Scheffler has emerged with excellent germination and stand establishment. The second shipment has not yet made it in country. Plans are still to plant it, but seed will not be returned to USA in time for 2016 growing season planting.
- f. The new site is a nice location with lots of potential, easily accessible through Liberia. Achievements in 2015 include: 1) secured location, 2) hired manager, 3) converted 18-wheeler trailer to office space and gin, 4) the first planting is out of the ground. Headaches that may remain are mostly regulatory and administrative. Richard Percy commented that major obstacles have been overcome; not getting seed back this year is minor in comparison.

Several members thanked Dr. Jones for his winter nursery efforts and commented on the critical importance of a winter nursery to maintain both a viable germplasm collection and relevant public breeding programs.

5. New Vulnerability Statement

Richard Percy reported that Chair Todd Campbell has communicated with different members asking for contribution to the write up of an updated vulnerability statement, which is due.

6. USDA-ARS Draft Document 'Procedures and BMP for GE Traits in Germplasm and Breeding Lines' discussion

Todd Campbell sent the draft document to members for review and comment prior to the meeting, summarized comments, and made available to members prior to the meeting.

Richard Percy initiated discussion by clarifying any misconception that the USDA-ARS document is a regulatory document, and stressing it is just guidelines that USDA hopes

will be adopted to address AP issues; there is NO ENFORCEMENT intended. Primary source of AP in collection is publicly-produced material, but there have been no recent foreign deposits, and recent commercial deposits are GE material. Richard Percy reported that USDA intends to test incoming material, and inform originator if AP is detected. If originator chooses not to mitigate AP, the collection will not distribute. Wayne Smith registered concern that this policy represents “de facto regulation” if collection rejects samples submitted as a requirement of manuscript publication in Journal of Plant Registrations. Mauricio Ulloa reported that Peter Bretting says nothing will be rejected, only that distribution will be made from clean samples or that AP levels will be documented. Wayne Smith again expressed concern that manuscripts will not be published in JPR unless a “distributable” sample is submitted. Richard Percy clarified that when a sample is submitted to Fort Collins, the sample is split, and half is sent to College Station. Once split, Fort Collins has already accepted the sample and a manuscript can be published. Several members and guests recognized and appreciated the thorough effort made by the authors of the document.

7. Next Cotton Crop Germplasm Committee Meeting/Other Discussion

The next CCGC meeting will be held in conjunction with the Beltwide Cotton Research Conference in Dallas, Texas, January 2017. No further discussion was initiated.

Meeting adjourned at 5:35.