**2015 New Crops CGC Meeting, Overton Hotel & Conference Center, Lubbock, TX and teleconference, October 18, 2015, 2:00 PM**

In attendance: David Dierig (chair), Terry Isbell, Brad Morris, Win Phippen, Diana Jasso de Rodriguez, Hussein.Abdel-Haleem, Dipak Santra, Von Mark Cruz; via teleconference: Peter Bretting, Gary Kinard, Stephanie Greene, Claire Heinitz, Vicki Bradley

Agenda and associated discussion:

1. Welcome and introductions. All persons in attendance introduced themselves. Dave Dierig distributed hardcopies of submitted reports and presentations.

2. Gary Kinard shared the past year’s activities at the NRGL and presented the PEO supported domestic and foreign germplasm exploration activities, conservation of crop wild relatives, facilitation of germplasm exchanges, and activities of the Database Management Unit and Plant Disease Research Unit. He encouraged the committee to update Crop Vulnerability Statements. Gary provided the status of GRIN-Global and mentioned that a test version is already online and a source code security audit is ongoing. Terry Isbell asked about the plant exploration activity in Armenia and information on the collected *Camelina* germplasm.

3. Gary Kinard provided to new CGC members a background about the committee. He gave an overview of the responsibilities of the committee that include ’advising’ the NPGS, bringing emerging issues, and assessment of vulnerability of particular crops. He discussed the general mechanics how CGCs operate.

4. Stephanie Greene presented updates at NCGRP and concerns about staffing changes including loss of five technicians at the facility, the shift in seed monitoring tests to prioritize short lived species whose seeds have not been tested in 10-20 years, and the coordination of two pallets of seeds (18,000 accessions) to the Svalbard Seed Vault. She shared that 92% of new crops germplasm are backed up at NCGRP. David Dierig inquired if NCGRP can provide the status of new crops collection. Stephanie said yes and added that NCGRP will also share information about germination protocols for wild species and provide assistance in addressing dormancy issues of new crops. Brad Morris asked if any USDA samples were sent to Syria by Svalbard when it repatriated their collection that was destroyed during the war. Stephanie replied that only Syria’s germplasm were sent back by Svalbard.

5. Brad Morris presented regeneration activities on castor bean, sesame, guar, and *Leucaena leucocephala*. He presented new installations in the cold room of the PGR unit at Griffin, GA, and distribution of new crop species to public and industry users including purpose of studies. David Dierig inquired if *Cannabis* accessions will be conserved at their facility in the future, and information about user demand for jute and kenaf for fiber. Brad said that legal issues have to be resolved on Cannabis first, but should include consideration about germplasm materials with low THC. Mark Cruz asked if the *Leucaena* accessions are being kept as living collections in a field genebank.

6. Vicki Bradley presented updates on the *Carthamus* collection regeneration, evaluation for resistance to rust, backup germplasm at NCGRP and Svalbard, and distribution activities. She mentioned that about 97% of the entire collection is already backed up and just waiting to meet the required amount of seeds to back up the rest of the accessions. Vicki shared the link to home page of the safflower genetic resources. Dipak Santra asked about the number of winter type safflowers in the collection. Vicki said there are three types from RC Johnson.

7. David Dierig went through other submitted curator reports: noted from Laura Marek’s report the staff retirements in Ames, IA, the transfer of 43 oilseed genera to the new crops CGC, and reviewed the submitted report from David Brenner on amaranthus, Barbara Heillier on *Taraxacum*, Susan Stevie and Pablo Jourdan on *Asclepias,* andJohn Preece and Mallii Aradhya on activites at the NCGR. Win Phippen inquired about how ecotype populations of *Asclepias*, being an obligate outcrosser, are maintained to avoid weakening its gene stocks.

8. David Dierig specified to new curator Claire Heinitz the items to include on the curator’s report that will need to be submitted at next year’s CGC meeting, among which include regeneration and characterization plans.

9. Peter Bretting presented the status of NPGS, updated number of accessions in the germplasm system and user demand for NPGS information and germplasm. He mentioned that Google already indexed the NPGS web pages, and discussed the NPGS budget in current dollars as well as converted value with the ERS research deflator. He presented that the NPGS budget for 2016 including funding increases to support the following: Sustainable Farm Initiative (to expand the NPGS and provide training to Native Americans), Translational Crop/Livestock Genomic Initiative (to analyze germplasm using advanced genomics and genetic technologies), and Vertical Farming Initiative (to develop high value horticultural varieties for greenhouses and urban environments). Among the challenges to the NPGS budget include conserving crop wild relatives and germplasm with GE traits. Details about the DiversitySeek (DivSeek) Initiative and the ARS Big Data Initiative SciNet were also presented. Mark Cruz asked if SciNet setup is similar to iPlant. Peter Bretting replied that the SciNet’s coverage will be broader because it will include data dealing not only with plants but other organisms as well.

10. Claire asked if *Opuntia* will be part of the new crops CGC and David Dierig said it was previously decided that it will be included, but there is still no crop expert in the committee. He added that Andrew Salywon may know more about *Opuntia* but hasn’t been able to come to CGC meetings. David mentioned that the committee needs to address what crops are taken in by the New Crops CGC and require that experts on the species being assigned should join as members. Committee members for Brassica oilseeds are lacking and suggestions were made. Dipak Santra suggested to invite the canola breeder at North Dakota State to the CGC. Hussein.Abdel-Haleem mentioned that his research at ARS include Brassica and can also invite other possible researchers working on the genus to be members.

11. David Dierig mentioned to Claire Heinitz that the lesquerella collection at NCGRP needs to be moved to Parlier. He cited that collection upkeep has to be performed because of the increased demand for germplasm by industry users according to Terry Isbell.

12. The next New Crops CGC meeting will be scheduled during the 2016 AAIC annual meeting in NY.

13. The meeting was adjourned at 3:41 PM.