MINUTES
Board Meeting, Western Grape Clean Plant Network (Tier 3)

October 28, 2009
Bruce Edwards Club Room, Aggie Stadium
UC Davis, California

Persons present at the meeting:
Maher Al Rwahnih, Mike Colvin, Cheryl Covert, Mike Cunningham, Phil Freese, Deborah Golino,
Justin Jacobs, Vicki Klaassen, Carole Lamb, Lori Leong, Bob Martin, Jeanette Martin, Dan Martinez,
Fatima Osman, Adib Rowhani, Rhonda Smith, Nancy Sweet

Persons present via teleconference:
Cathy Caldwell, Ken Eastwell, Jan Hedberg, Erich Rudyj

The Board meeting of the Western Grape Clean Plant Network (WGCPN) was called to order at
10:00 a.m. in the Bruce Edwards Club Room at Aggie Stadium on the UC Davis campus. The
minutes of the previous meeting were approved upon motion by Mike Colvin.

NCPN FY 2009 Funding
Erich Rudyj reported on NCPN fiscal year 2009 funding. He explained that the NCPN Tier 1
Governing Body (GB) opted not to award the entire $5 million allocated to the NCPN for FY 2009.
The GB awarded $3,059,843 as a result of applications from programs for grapes (53%) and trees
(47%). It reserved the right to make awards and grants outside the competitive grants program.
Ten percent of the initial $5 million was withheld for administrative purposes. $1,425,099 was
carried over for appropriation in subsequent years. Rudyj gave a breakdown of amounts awarded to
particular institutions.

NCPN money may not be used to harmonize state certification programs nor for state regulatory
programs. $3.8 million of non-NCPN funds in the Farm Bill (section 10201(d)) were allocated to
the USDA/APHIS (Sam Johnson) for state nursery certification programs, pest detection and pest
management. The USDA awarded $225,694 of those funds to various pilot projects and regulatory
harmonization efforts. Rudyj suggested that the grape commodity groups could look to this source
of funding in FY 2010. Sam Johnson is working with the states on finding uses for this money.
Erich Rudyj will discuss these funds again at the Tier 2 Grape CPN meeting on November 13, 2009.

Western Needs Not Funded in 2009

Discussion was held on the Western Grape CPN needs that were not funded in the 2009 NCPN
RFA process.
Foundation Plant Services
Deborah Golino stated that the most critical FPS proposal that did not receive NCPN funding was the proposal for extension and outreach, which included one full-time person producing educational and informational materials and performing outreach for the technical aspects of the network. The proposal was not approved because it was not presented as a consensus plan for the entire grape network. Golino felt that offering a network-wide outreach proposal in 2010 would result in funding. Another aspect of that proposal could be to expand the National Grape Registry, which the industry uses as a grape locator, to include the regulations for all state certification programs and information on the certified status of plant material on the website.

In the 2009 proposal, FPS requested a full-time scientist to review the procedures and protocols at all NCPN facility sites, synthesize those protocols and prepare a standard operations manual for testing and maintenance of clean plant grapes and trees.

Building improvements were not funded in the RFA process. She also believes that the NCPN will outsource the acquisition of large equipment.

Northwest Grape Foundation Services
Ken Eastwell commented that the NWGFS proposal for extension and outreach was not funded; tree fruit work is his biggest challenge. The outreach he feels is needed is exemplified by the OSU and WSU grape websites and also includes in-person visits to industry members to address their needs. Eastwell believed that the NCPN Governing Body declined the outreach funding because the NWGFS presented the proposal from the perspective of the Pacific Northwest, while the GB prefers a national perspective.

Extension and Outreach
Erich Rudyj reported that the NCPN Governing Body decided at the July 2009 meeting that it had the authority when reviewing the proposals to increase or decrease the funds requested or not fund an item at all. The awards were made by consensus of the GB.

He stated that UC Davis (FPS) and Washington State (NWGFS) requested funds for extension and outreach for grapes, trees and hops. The GB elected not to fund those proposals in 2009 because it desired a national education and outreach communications plan for the network as a whole (across commodities). The GB will discuss the issue of a national education and outreach plan at its meetings in December, January or February 2010. One issue of note is whether a national plan should address the NCPN commodities specifically or clean plants in general.

Rudyj noted that one proposal submitted to the GB in the 2009 RFA process was from a group outside the current NCPN. Deborah Golino stated that it is important that scientists who are
familiar with the issues facing industry be included in NCPN outreach efforts. She expressed concern about an outreach effort managed by a group unfamiliar with NCPN commodity issues.

Several alternative possibilities for a national plan were discussed. The National Education Outreach Initiative model envisions a national outreach effort by either the federal government or an institution, emphasizing the value of clean plants and certification programs in general. This plan would not be commodity specific. A second alternative is for a particular Tier 2 national commodity network to do outreach on a single commodity, tailored to a specific crop. Rudyj mentioned that the Tier 1 GB is considering creation of a Tier 2-like entity that focuses solely on extension, education and outreach. He urged the Tier 2 Grapes Board to revisit the issue and resubmit a proposal in 2010.

Deborah Golino spoke in support of a key element of outreach designed to improve the quality of nursery material within the clean plant network. She and FPS staff have recently spent time in the field with nurseries and growers at problem sites, explaining the importance of clean plant material, and advising, sampling and testing specific plant material. Erich Rudyj commented that this type of traditional extension and outreach is on the edge of what the Governing Body believes it should fund. Such a proposal may succeed, although in this grey area, if it is placed well within an Extension and Outreach module and has a reasonable cost. Discussion of grape diseases may be more appropriately funded from other sources, while extension activities designed to assist with using clean plant material are appropriately funded with clean plant funds.

Cathy Caldwell stated that any outreach proposal should extend beyond the growers to the end user of the product, in order to generate sales for the growers and nurseries. Golino indicated that an important part of outreach is educating people regarding what the Clean Plant Network is and its value to food safety and the environment. Caldwell commented that CPN education and outreach must show a financial benefit to the use of clean plant material to justify the additional expense incurred by participation in the program. Rudyj stated that the Tier 1 GB seeks a specific national entity (perhaps through a university) to perform that type of education and outreach.

Standard Operating Procedures
The discussion then moved to the proposal for standard operating procedures across the Grape Network. Ken Eastwell stated that he already has standard operating procedures for his facility and that UCD and WSU already work closely together on trees and grapes. Deborah Golino said that she anticipated documenting standard practices and creating efficient standard operating procedures for the lab and field to share with the entire network.

Erich Rudyj indicated that if the Grape and Tree Networks conclude that standard operating procedures are necessary and identify a person do the research and writing, Rudyj would present the issue to the NCPN Governing Body. Historically, the Core Working Group has opined that NCPN money should not be used to fund standard operating procedures across the networks. Funds in a
different portion of the Farm Bill (section 10201) were allocated to regulatory harmonization. Deborah Golino considers the standard operating procedures to be essential to the network and believes they would add meaning to regulatory harmonization.

**Grapes Tier 2 Review Process for 2010**

Initially, Deborah Golino reported on the evaluation process used by the Tier 2 Grape CPN for the 2009 proposals. She indicated that the Fruit Tree CPN had a more uniform process as the industry is not as fragmented as is grapes. The Tier 2 Grape CPN did not prioritize proposals because several of those proposals related to an Eastern foundation vineyard, and Golino felt that it was not appropriate for the Western CPN members on the Tier 2 Board to choose the successful proposal for the eastern vineyard. Unlike the Fruit Tree Network, the Tier 2 Grapes Network did not include an industry group pre-review in the process. Golino prefers that Tier 2 Grapes have an ad hoc industry review in 2010, involving industry representatives who are familiar with grapes and the grape network. She suggested that Tier 2 Grapes might want to consider improvements in the review process for 2010 NCPN RFA proposals by adopting some of the features used by the Fruit Tree Network in the 2009 process.

Ken Eastwell described the Fruit Tree Network 2009 proposal review process. First, the Tier 2 Board created a vision for the FT Network and established a benchmark against which to measure the proposals. One concern was that the vision and benchmark were not shared in advance with the applicants who eventually submitted proposals. Next, the Tier 2 Board created an ad hoc committee composed of 2 nursery members and one state regulatory member (all of whom were member of the Fruit Tree Board), who did a pre-review of the proposals in advance of the FTCPN Board review. During the Board review, the group focused on the individual components of the proposals from each applicant. The institutions were not ranked in order of priority, but the Board had ranked the priorities of the Fruit Tree Network. The individual components of the proposals were evaluated against the priorities for the FT Network.

Golino proposed that the industry members on the Grape CPN Board serve as an industry subcommittee for the Grape Network in 2010. Eastwell indicated that it is important to have technical expertise on the industry subcommittee, but conflict of interest issues could arise. Bob Martin suggested that an expert from another commodity or experts from institutions not submitting proposals could be invited to be on the committee; it would be important that the expert be knowledgeable about the network. Eastwell suggested that perhaps someone from the USDA would be acceptable. The gist is to acquire the technical expertise without conflict of interest.

Erich Rudyj felt that the prioritization of the proposal components across all proposals was very helpful to the Governing Body in evaluating proposals.
Dan Martinez stated that there is no purpose to a Tier 3 review of proposals. Additionally, prioritization would not help if all proposals contained similar components.

**Eastern foundation block**

The Tier 1 Governing Body will focus on the issue of the foundation block for the eastern region in 2010. Three proposals for a foundation vineyard in that region were received in response to the 2009 RFA. None was funded because the proposals seemed more competitive than collaborative, while the GB prefers to fund a collaborative effort. In 2009, the GB did fund importation, therapy and diagnostics activities at Cornell and also provided funds to Missouri State for similar activities related to grapes in the heartland region of the United States. The GB is not opposed to sponsoring regional foundation vineyards if there is a scientific reason for the vineyards, such as reasonable redundancy. The Tier 1 body needs to see a vineyard proposal that is one part of a network.

Erich Rudyj met with the proponents of an eastern mother block proposal in Washington D.C. He indicated to the proponents that the Tier 1 GB would support a reasonable eastern foundation planting that is harmonized among the interested states under the following conditions:

1. the proposal could encompass either a single location or (a harmonized) split location
2. the cost must be reasonable
3. the proposed foundation vineyard must not be in competition with other established foundation blocks.

The Tier 3 Grapes East Board has agreed that they have failed to present a unified collaborative proposal to date. Rudyj has urged the Board and other interested parties to construct a consolidated proposal or agree that the eastern foundation vineyard will not be accomplished at this time.

Dan Martinez suggested that a needs assessment be done. Rudyj indicated that that possibility is under consideration. However, the most appropriate institutions to perform the assessment are the ones interested in establishing the foundation vineyard. Tom Bewick has taken the lead in the GB on this issue. One possibility is the USDA Economic Research Service. Martinez commented that any needs assessment should include the marginal cost incurred by the existing foundation vineyards to do the same work. Rudyj is willing to let a small contract to perform a needs assessment.

The foundation vineyard issue is also a political issue, apart from the needs assessment. There is a disconnect about the needs in the eastern region between growers, nurseries and extension representatives. Rudyj was uncertain as to whether the industry members in the eastern region would be willing to support an eastern foundation block.

Rudyj stated that, should the Governing Body ultimately fund a foundation vineyard in the eastern region with the funds reserved from 2009, that vineyard would be a small eastern mother block for a
very specific purpose and would not detract from the work of the other foundation plantings at UC Davis and Prosser, Washington. The eastern vineyard would be for redundancy.

**Grape Network Charter**

The Grapes West Board discussed the term length for Tier 2 and Tier 3 Board members. At prior meetings, the Grape Board had selected a two-year term for Board members, which was reflected in the charter. The Tier 2 Fruit Tree Board has agreed upon four-year terms.

Mike Colvin proposed that the terms for the Tier 2 and 3 Grape Boards be fixed at four years, with staggered terms and elections to be held every two years. There should be no term limits. Phil Freese moved, and Rhonda Smith seconded, a motion to recommend Colvin’s proposal to the Tier 2 Board for inclusion in the charter. The motion passed.

Dan Martinez recommended that the ad hoc committee of stakeholders and regulatory personnel (to be chosen from the Tier 2 Board members) be added to the charter.

Mike Colvin clarified that the Tier 2 Chair and Vice-Chair should alternate between the persons currently represented by Tier 3 East Grapes and those by Tier 3 West Grapes. Bob Martin stated that the alternating regions should be maintained even if the two Tier 3 entities are merged into a single Tier 2 Board.

Deborah Golino and Erich Rudyj both support the merger of the regional groups into a single national group, with an active regional coalition to be maintained by the eastern region. The Tier 3 regional groups were created because the eastern region distrusts the western region. Should there be a merger, Golino would ask that the new Tier 2 (national) Board consist of all Tier 3 (regional) Board members in office at the time of the merger of the Tier 3 networks.

Dan Martinez suggested that the charter provide for meetings of the Tier 3 regional groups ‘as needed’, rather than mandate meetings twice per year.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Sweet

February 5, 2010