**Goal 7:** The NCPN will develop a plan to evaluate the performance of programs

7.1 The Board of Governors, with input from the stakeholder advisory committees, will establish the process and timetable for program evaluation.
1. What was the first thing that struck you about the goal and/or the proposed strategies when you reviewed the plan?

- Vague
- Has implications on all goals
- There must be a plan to establish baselines, such as the current...
  - Number of germplasm releases/year
  - Time required to ‘clean’ and release
  - Cost per release (in time and resources)
  - Not all areas must be assessed, but a planned assessment from the start is optimum
  - Reassess periodically
- Development of a Qualitative Management System (QMS) development
2. What questions do you have about the content of the plan?

• What/who is NCPN referred to in the Mission/Vission statements?
  – *Such as,* **Who** is the NCPN that “creates” the Board of Governors and Advisory committees

• What authority does NCPN have?
  – *Such as,* **What** determines the location of a regional center and how does a “regional” center fit in a “national” program

• What’s in it for participants?
  – Will this program bring stability to current programs?
  – Will this program facilitate expanded/improved services?
3. What do you like about the goal and proposed strategies?

- There is no specifically defined strategy for Goal 7.
- However, this goal is directly related to all other goals.
4. What concerns or issues do you have about the goal or any of the objectives?

• Is the organizational structure appropriate for the suggested mission & vision?
• Consider clarification and alignment to the final mission/vision before finalizing strategic goals (reconfirmation of goals and objectives with accepted mission & vision).
5. What changes or modifications would you make to any of the **objectives** in the plan?

- Add assessments
6. What issues or objective seem to be missing and should be added?

- Defined authority of NCPN (mentioned before)?
- Absence of an Export goal? – a strong domestic program has implications on export (positively)
- Requirement for inclusion as an NCPN entity?
  - Disciplinary (science) integration
  - Infrastructure assessment
    - What capabilities is available?
    - What personnel and facilities are available?
    - What are the condition of available services and facilities?
    - Are there quarantine needs at sites?
- Economic assessment of value to the industry
- Needs assessment of the system.
  - What we have versus what we might prefer (optimally).
7. What strategies would you like to see included in the plan?

• Assessment plans in each goal area
Suggested Overall Program Assessment Plans

- Baseline data on crops and common pathogens
- Gap analysis by crop identify pests of concern, knowledge, facilities, maintenance of clean material
- Regular assessment of concentration of support on ‘new’ crops \((new = not \text{ currently in program or emerging crop})\)
- Standard Operating Protocols/Procedures (SOPs) are critical to develop new programs \((useful \text{ for assessments})\)
- Consider leveraged “buying power” of the NCPN project \((\$\text{ match})\)
- Structure
  - Frequent assessment of needs (as defined by needs assessment). Should the NCPN avoid redundancies in regional structure (subcenters to address locally specific needs)?
  - Locally supported vs distributed/virtual expertise (not distributed locations) – either could work within the SOP
Goal 1. Management Structure - Suggested Assessment Plans

- Management provides a support function – regularly assess management’s role.
  - Are the boards/committees established in a timely manner
  - Are the boards/committees facilitating function in the system
  - Conflict resolution
  - Who holds trump (authority issue)
  - What structural model will be followed (NPDN, Seed Cert Program)
- Should the Board of Governors establish a substructure based on region or crop?
- Program Reviews.
  - Frequent (annual?) self assessment/internal audits.
  - Less frequent major review – entire process administered by Board of Governors.
- Regularly evaluate deliverables – ability to meet deadlines.
Goal 2. Rapid and Safe Introduction - Suggested Assessment Plans

- Baseline establishment.
  - Is the industry currently satisfied?
  - How many releases, time in process, etc?
- Assess issues identified through analysis of SOP implementation/functionality – *follow QMS standards*.
- Pick important systems as indicators.
  - Impractical to assess all commodities.
  - Rank importance by value ($) and acreage.
  - Biological importance may also work (bridging to economic hosts).
- Start simple. Develop a pilot assessment system such as grapes (LHF).
Goal 3. Provide Foundation Stock - Suggested Assessment Plans

• See Goal 2 and...
• Assess where collections are held – provide redundancy (repository). Reassess later.
• Quantify releases (service).
• Ascertained the role of ARS in germplasm maintenance (long-term repository).
• Develop process for determining…
  – Quality and viability of germplasm,
  – Trueness to type, and
  – Pathogen profile in long-term storage – addresses the expressed warranty issue
Goal 4. New Techniques and Technologies - Suggested Assessment Plans

- Evolution of available number of tests and tools ($T_0$ to $T_1$ to $T_2$, etc.)
- Consider improvements in sensitivity and specificity of techniques
- QA system for diagnosticians
  - Ring tests – results of ring tests provide a regular metric of lab quality
  - Lab certification
- Develop process for validation and adoption of new tests
- Consider how rapidly new technologies can be implemented
- Develop an agreed upon set of tests for important pathogens/varietal purity
- Consider acceptability/relevance of an ET/EIL concept with some pathogens
- Collaborate with NPDN labs for facilities and services
- Develop a National Data Repository to allow quantitative/qualitative
  - Report negative results as well as positive results
  - Assess prevalence of significant pathogens X genotype X location
  - Reporting also helps identify a successes and problems (eradications)
Goal 5. New Techniques for Pathogen Eradication - Suggested Assessment Plans

• Thermotherapy and chemotherapy at this point are researchable topics, but not assessable (other than baseline characteristics).

• As validated SOPs are developed, assess success rate by species/protocol.

• Evaluate successes of affiliated research.

• Develop metrics for what are perceived to be BMPs by crop.
  – What are the comparisons?
  – Expect record keeping (consider barcoding as a possibility through foundation programs).
8. What benefits will the proposed strategies have on the way you do business?

- It could save the service component.
- Crown gall-free stocks to sell in the eastern US would be a huge advantage – currently a limit to development of the industry in the Eastern US (stress related trigger to disease expression).
- Eastern production areas would have the most to gain from indexed stocks.
- Public involvement may sacrifice proprietary advantages that are unclear/undefined, but an offset in the partnership with the NCPN.