NCPN Education & Outreach Committee
Communications Plan
June 11, 2018

Present: Fatima Osman; Irene Lavagi; Kristen Farrar; Sue Sim; Ionannis Tzanetakis; Brent Pemberton; Debbie Woodbury; Pamela Hornby; Natalie Anderson; Erich Rudyj; David Prokrym; Stephen Meyers; Dianne Coats; Catherine Jones; Katlyn Straub; Vicky Scharlau

Absent: Joseph Postman

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: 8:40 AM

Welcome and Introductions (Vicky)

• Everyone introduced themselves and role
• What’s your communication style? (color exercise)
  o BLUE: Katlyn, Pamela, Erich, Catherine
  o BROWN: Vicky, Sue, Irene, Ioannis, Dave, Stephen
  o GREEN: Brent, Kristen, Natalie
  o RED: Fatima, Debbie, Dianne
• Vicky shared “geese” metaphor
• Group shared individually, if there was one thing the group could get done at end of day:
  o Fatima: reach realistic outcomes for all specific commodities, that serve their target audiences
  o Irene: hear from facilitators about more than background but ideas they have; find out about the conferences; strengthen the communication between stakeholders here
  o Kristen: see collaboration, have a productive day
  o Sue: guidelines for people to reach for; excited to work with coordinators, coordinators are each other’s resources
  o Catherine: unified plan so different centers for tree fruit know where everyone is going for outreach activities
  o Dianne: plan to get people to communicate with each other
  o Stephen: how the other commodity groups communicate to their stakeholders; examples to use in his field
  o David: ask and wrestle with question – what next?
  o Erich: grasp reality of tremendous opportunities
  o Natalie/Pamela: want background/context; time management (field vs. office; how to coordinate
  o Debbie: have coordinators understand each other’s strengths so they can work and support each other
  o Brent: on roses – how do we move Comms plan to industry? What are measurable goals for impact (if I do a trade show, what is impact)? Tier 2 – how do we communicate
  o Ioannis: harmonize and move forward

Update on NCPN Strategic Plan (Erich/Dave)

• What need does communication fill in the effort to implement and execute the strategic plan?
• Erich gives presentation “State of the Union for NCPN”
  o NCPN Budget
  o Budget for New Initiatives
  o Strategic Planning
  o Misc. Admin Topics
  o E & O issues (500 members)
    ▪ What is our mission going forward?
- Who are we? Tier 2 group? Working group? Ad hoc team?
- What is our team construction? Decentralized/centralized?
- What is our resourcing and funding?
- How do extensionists and educators fit in?
- What are our creative communications?
- Economic issues?

- **ACTION ITEM:** Please send Erich and David feedback on the NCPN strategic plan draft received

**BREAK: 9:50 AM**

**GROUP RECONVENED: 10:00 AM**

**Background/Clarifying Role of E&O Working Group/Committee**

- Vicky gave quick background on her experience and why she is facilitating and part of this committee.

- **Group conversation initiated on role of E&O and prospect of asking for funding for an FTE:**
  - Erich responded to questions about clarifying what he meant by “…never been an ask for additional funding for education and outreach/communications”. Erich said that a more formalized education and outreach group (which needs resources) is needed. This group has been essentially “volunteer” and Erich said this group can evolve, but asked the question of “how and in what form?”
  - Vicky: “Does the E&O committee have the authority to ask for FTEs? Who is doing the work?”
  - Erich: Why isn’t NCPN’s E&O paying for coordinators to be here? Instead, it’s our individual commodity groups, as this is currently seen as a working group.
  - Fatima: we should figure out our mission first.
  - Irene: we need FTEs staff that are higher level that liaise with the coordinators
  - Catherine: we have no one that is high level strategically coordinating
  - Sue: we are one of the more active sub-committees of NCPN; but we don’t have organized transfer when commodity coordinators change
  - Natalie: the coordinator role at the E&O committee was just thrown on us, we don’t know who we’re supposed to be talking to?
  - Pamela: the outreach we do is to those who want to see roses (FFA groups, etc.)
  - Brent: when he goes out to events, he wants to be able to represent NCPN as a whole, not just roses.
  - Kristen: we need a platform or mechanism to communicate with each other, and we used to use “Collaborative Tools” to communicate through threads
  - Sue: “Collaborative Tools” became cumbersome for group (having to remember passwords, too clunky)
  - Sue: seen NCPN as a grassroots organization and the power has rested in the Tier 2 group; don’t think we have exhausted our network resources
  - Irene: would the FTE be additional funding?
  - Erich: $5.5 M to run the network operationally; but the network is more than operations, we aren’t just a grantor, but we come together collaboratively to figure out what we are granting

- **Group conversation initiated on audience of NCPN**
  - Vicky presented question to group: What language are we all speaking (extension, outreach, communications)? What do these terms (which have been used interchangeably throughout our group) mean to you, how do you define?
    - Extension
      - Research-based information
      - Noun/entity
One tool (out of many in the toolbox) to do outreach to communicate with stakeholders/growers/nurseries – for those that have extension specialist

- **Outreach**
  - Programs/output
  - Verb/action
  - Reaching stakeholders i.e. growers, etc.

- **Communications**
  - Channels/tools
    - Social media posting/website
  - “Bucket”
  - Responsibility

  - Erich: we need to be aware of how we can most **effectively reach** our industry audience; who is our primary audience?
  - Brent: one of our broader goals is targeting clean plant material (G1 material); so, target audience of NCPN would be nurseries to understand importance of sourcing G1 from the Foundation Centers (how do we communicate that need?)
  - Vicky: who do we think our target audience is? Who do we need to communicate with to move the needle?
  - Primary audience is nurseries, but we get to them to change practices to offering “clean” plants through growers/farmers

**Vicky mentions that before we build a comms plan we needed to speak all the same language.**

**Group exercise:** maps of crop commodities – where are focused crop commodity industry located and what is their level of maturity (L1-L7)

**LUNCH BREAK: 12:02 PM**

**GROUP RECONVENED: 12:55 PM**

**Building a communications plan to support the NCPN strategic plan (Vicky)**

Group defines external strategic assumptions, which inform communications plan:

- **Communication will facilitate the adoption of clean plants by nurseries and growers**
- **Communication among regulators, research scientists and industry will increase the use of clean plants which promotes the development of plant certification programs**
- **Documented and peer reviewed economic studies will increase the adoption of clean plants based on a clear understanding of the cost/benefit analysis**
- **Coordinated creation and dissemination of communications is efficient and effective means of investing Farm bill funds for the benefit of the affected industries and stakeholders.**
- **Measurements will be established for Centers (specifically, and members in general) to demonstrate/verify effectiveness of activities to evaluate if the outreach effort is successful**
- **Communication efforts are guided by and a subset of an overall NCPN strategic plan**
- **We assume that we speak the same language... (i.e. definitions of terminology – G1 issue - who gets to confirm lexicon? NAPPO Guidelines inform)**
- **Communications is a shared responsibility but NCPN is moving toward having a staff person having the authority to execute communications**

Group discussion on strategic assumptions:

- Strategic committee should consider swapping mission and vision.
- Don’t say “elected” as audience, as NCPN walks a fine line (NCPN is federally funded program and can’t lobby)
• Vicky: How do we know if our tools are working or right? How do we know what our objectives are? We need a communications specialist to come in and take our questions and figure out our measurable objectives.
• Erich: we need to figure out a communications committee structure first...
• Do we build, in essence, a Secretariat to create a sustainable structure?
• Vicky: E&O committee has been serving as staff; how do we help move this process along so the not everything falls on shoulders of crop coordinators?
• Ioannis asked the question to the group if they want to hire one of our current crop coordinators to do this communications job? Many said no, they would rather hire another person.
• Catherine: We as coordinators should go to Erich and Dave and ask for funding for a staff person with time and communications expertise.

BREAK: 3:20 PM

GROUP RECONVENED: 3:35 PM

Group stopped creating a communications plan on white board as the realization came that a communications expert was needed to help identify objectives  Vicky asked grouped if there was an end goal or question to address by end of day for Erich and Dave.
• Erich: NCPN as an organization – are we ok where we are at or do we need more?
• Majority response was “we can do better.”
• Debbie: We obviously have external communications to workout, but we need to improve our internal communication because there are internal frustrations to be addressed (new coordinators coming on with no onboarding; overlap of external communications and duplicative work i.e. crop coordinators going to same events or gaps)
• Do we need to have a “matrix” of strengths of certain crop commodity
• Irene: we need to have in person meetings, face-to-face is important
• Dave/Erich: we need to think about funding because on Sept 30, the $100K for E&O goes away; money has to be obligated/allocated/anchor by that date (which can go to a land grant university/center or non-profit); to do this, we need a work plan/timeline and budget

ACTION ITEMS:

By June: pick a Center for all comms money to be allocated to → figure out short-term work plan by NCPN E&O “planning to plan” committee → respond to RFP by August 1, 2018

BY AUGUST 1: SEND PROPOSAL TO ERICH/DAVE TO ALLOCATE/ANCHOR $100K
• Ioannis Tzanetakis will draft proposal for Education/Outreach initiative (deliverable in form of a 1-pager that includes short-term plan, framework and budget for FY19) and send to all crop coordinators by Monday, June 18, 2018 for review.
  o To include:
    ▪ $70k allocated - MEETINGS/OPS (provision for two, 2-day meetings (paying for lodging, event space, facilitator, food/beverage; salaries & overhead)
    ▪ $30k allocated - PREP FOR THE “PLANNING TO PLAN” COMMITTEE (individualized crop research/prep offline to help prepare for next in-person meetings; guest speaker, etc.)

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 5:08 PM
NCPN Education & Outreach Committee
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June 12, 2018

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Absent: Brent Pemberton; Vicky Scharlau

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: 8:45 AM (Sue)

Team Icebreaker Activity (Sue)

Sue introduces day agenda, purpose for being here, and gives presentation on her perspectives of NCPN.

- NCPN has very close ties to industry.
- NCPN is a network of people, we need good pictures for external collateral.
- Sue feels the mission of NCPN is to: produce, distribute and promote clean plants.
- Crop coordinators want to figure out their own mission/core activities and figuring out what their critical project responsibilities are, etc.

Coordinators give their individual crop reports:

- Grape (Kristen Farrar/Sue Sim)
  - We need a handbook/guidebook to help define crop coordinator role; spends about 50% of time on her work on NCPN, but sometimes it can increase to 100% of time depending on week
  - Sue

- E&O (Debbie Woodbury)
  - Mostly works on the NCPN newsletter; has a communications background and wants to help craft the critical messages of NCPN.

- Citrus (Fatima Osman/Irene Lavagi)
  - Both Fatima and Irene shared their professional background; they divide the work load of citrus between themselves and they spend about 50% of their time on NCPN work

- Fruit Trees & Hops (Catherine Jones)
  - Main responsibilities: develop crop meeting agendas, meeting logistics, facilitate ad hoc process; business manager for NCPNNW; responding to Tier 2 questions
  - We need an SOP that describes basic responsibilities and lists steps in how to accomplish charge of crop coordinator role.

- Sweetpotatoes (Dianne Coats)
  - Wants to be able to strengthen interaction with her Tier 2 group but it’s difficult to communicate with them because they’re always in the field

- Roses (Natalie Andersen/Pam Hornby)
  - Natalie: organizes meetings of her groups, spend tons of time “herding cats”; time spent on NCPN varies especially when Tier 2 meetings hit the schedule; doesn’t feel like she has direction on her role – wants examples of what other crop coordinators are doing
  - Pam: spending less time on NCPN work due to supervisor

- Berries (Ioannis Tzanetakis)
  - He became an interim crop coordinator after Rose retired.
  - We need to let our Directors know that we, as crop coordinators, need authority to make decisions and have independence in making decisions. It’s better to make a decision than not make one at all.

- NCPN (Erich Rudyj/Dave Prokrym)
  - Erich reviewed National Coordinator duties and some of the emerging issues
Dave and Tammy 100% NCPN work
Erich 70% NCPN work, other 30% is agency government duties
Program threats approaching network
  • USDA retreats from post-entry quarantine
  • The pre-release conundrum
  • Export phytos support
NCPN 2019 – potential new crops (e.g. olives, garlic, white potato, caladium, canna lilies, taro, cassava, kiwi, etc.)
  Dave presented ideas on future governance of NCPN
  NCPN needs to figure out succession plan after Erich, for funding security
  Need a new leadership structure for NCPN!
    • Future leadership team >> advisory committee = Network Governance Team
    • 8 GB members to represent the USDA and states (budget, some permissions)
    • Commodity Governance Coordinators (variation of current coordinator types) (meetings, F2F, national, succession planning)
    • Communication/extension coordinator
    • Industry liaison (ad hoc review)
    • Operations coordinator (technical)
    • Special initiatives coordinator (data, quality, standards, certification, material retention)
    • Budget coordinator (fed employee, grants manager)
    • Multi-crop coordination duties.

BREAK: 11:03 AM

GROUP RECONVENCED: 11:10 AM

Group began Coordinator Processes discussion
  • Ad Hoc Process (Fatima and Irene present)
    o Discussion followed regarding process best practices with their Tier 2 group Ad Hoc review; it would be helpful for both the Tier 2 group AND crop coordinators to have a general, step-by-step ad-hoc review process guideline. Training industry members who serve on the Tier 2 group would be helpful to industry and demonstrate greater value of NCPN.

ACTION ITEM: Include “Coordinator’s” handbook:
  • An onboarding, general, step-by-step ad-hoc review process guiding document (Kristen will produce)
  • An event-planning 101 document for Tier 2 meeting coordination
  • A guiding document on how to develop an agenda and includes suggested (possibly by quarters) standing agenda items (i.e. priorities review at Q4 meeting)
  • Generic email templates (RFP request, etc.)
  • Charter
  • Crop Coordinator job description
  • Coordinator contact list
  • Newsletter editorial calendar
  • Crop Coordinator processes sample documents
  • Branding guidelines/printing process

LUNCH BREAK: 12:00 PM

GROUP RECONVENCED: 1:04 PM
Group continued Coordinator Processes discussion

- Tier 2 meetings (Natalie and Pam present)
  - Natalie gave group handout on Event Planning 101 “How-To”
  - Dianne mentioned she uses HelmsBriscoe and delegates all Tier 2 meeting planning
  - Dave asked question to group, “would it be helpful to have an NCPN staff to coordinate with all the Tier 2 meetings, to help the crop coordinators?
  - At their Tier 2 meetings, Roses invite more than voting members, creating a large group. Other groups open it to public and subject-matter experts. Discussion on how to structure agenda: do you have
  - Another option is to have Tier 2 meetings in conjunction with industry conventions (they are already there and it’s cheaper)
  - Discussion on how to develop agendas. Who develops the agenda? The coordinator? The chair? If chair is a Center Director, should they be crafting agendas? Should it be an industry person? Are there standing agenda items (like priorities review)?

- Tier 2 elections (Dianne presents)
  - Discussion on Tier 2 group structure, how many chairs, should there be co-chairs?
  - Discussion on how to facilitate elections. Do you have emailed votes? In-person votes?

- Priorities (Kristen presents)
  - Kristen shares how she helped facilitate a Tier 2 discussion on their priorities, a ranking sheet was handed out.
  - Discussion on how other crops facilitate the review of Tier 2 priorities. Should there be a standard amongst all commodity groups to review their individual Tier 2 priority lists at least yearly.

- Proposal writing (Ioannis presents)
  - Discussion on who is part of proposal writing process. Are crop coordinators involved?
  - Irene and Fatima present their example of proposal

- NCPN reports (Catherine presents)
  - Discussion on process of reporting. What are reports on? The Centers? Or unified groups? Who are the people actually reading the reports? Catherine sends her CPCNW Center reports to the Tier 2 group.
  - Sue reminded group that there is a report guidance document available to coordinators.
  - The report goes with the requirement of receiving the money. Erich reminded group that now the federal gov’t requires report before money can be received.

- Publications (Sue tables for offline discussion)

Debbie hands out a newsletter editorial calendar

Coordinator Resources, Website, Handbook Discussion (Kristen)

- Kristen presents on current coordinator resources
- Group is looking for platform to have discussion, store documents, video conferencing, etc.
  - Katlyn suggested Google platform
  - Dave suggested WebX platform
  - Irene suggested Zoom platform

- NCPN website: Kristen will be updating website
  - Discussion about whether or not each individual page should keep with branding of NCPN

ACTION ITEMS:
1. By June 30, 2018: Kristen will develop first draft of Coordinator’s Handbook (review process will be via Google Docs)
2. By July 15, 2018: Crop Coordinator review your pages on the NCPN website and send updates to Kristen or do it yourself on sitebuilder.
3. After final Coordinator’s Handbook, Kristen will upload final documents of Coordinators handbook on a new password protected webpage on the NCPN page.
4. Irene will work with Dave on coordinating the next video conference for Coordinators Unite meeting.