

Ellison Chair in International Floriculture Advisory Committee Meeting

MINUTES October 11, 2007

Chair Holder: Charlie Hall
Program Assistant: Tammy Landry

Members Present:

Tony Griffin	Ellen Ellison, Chair	
Stan Pohmer	PJ Ellison-Kalil	
Jimmy Klepac	Eddy Edmondson	Ex-Officio
Jack Davis	Dianna Doss	Ex-Officio
Lela Kelly	Tim Davis	Ex-Officio
Mike Williams, Vice-Chair	Sam Cotner	Ex-Officio
Jack Weatherford	Richard De Los Santos	Ex-Officio
Tom Dickerson		

Members Absent:

Kosuke Ogawa	Rob Ferguson	Jim Ellison	Ex-Officio
Jim Prewitt	Ernesto Velez		

Guests: Todd Staples, Texas Commissioner of Agriculture
Ed Smith, Director, Texas Cooperative Extension
Elsa Murano, Vice Chancellor, TAMUS Agriculture Program



The meeting was called to order by Ellen Ellison, Chair, at 9:30 a.m. after breakfast reception in honor of the Commissioner and commemorating the new Chair Holder.

Entry-Level Worker Training (Charlie Hall, Jack Weatherford)

Charlie Hall provided an update of the materials that have been developed for the Entry-level Worker Training modules. After much discussion, a plan of action was developed that encompassed the following actions to be completed in phases:

- Phase 1 – make the online English version available (completed)
- Phase 2 – develop online study/review quizzes (completed)
- Phase 3 – convert script to online PDF manual
- Phase 4 – translate narrative to Spanish and post to website
- Phase 5 – convert narration to Spanish
- Phase 6 – develop Spanish and English DVD's of the training materials
- Phase 7 – market through OFA and ANLA (and other) bookstores

It was also suggested to determine how “mod rates” would be influenced (potentially reduced) for greenhouse firms utilizing the training models.

DVD will/may be sent to companies to ask for their sponsorship

Suggested price of DVD is \$150.00

DVD to be sent to a few companies for their input

Experiential Learning Update (Charlie Hall)

Charlie Hall provided an update on the internal and external experiential learning (EL) opportunities available to TAMU students. [Experiential learning includes internships, study abroad, undergraduate/honors research, student worker assignments, etc.]. Charlie Hall is to meet with Sharon Duray (TAMU Horticulture departmental undergraduate advisor) and Leo Lombardini (TAMU Horticulture departmental internship coordinator) to discuss how TAMU floricultural students can be better informed of experiential learning opportunities, particularly external ones. Charlie Hall will also see if the internship manual is under revision and learn more about the *Aggies for Hire* website to ascertain whether any modifications might enhance the experiential learning experience for floriculture students.

National Floriculture Initiative Research at TAMU Horticulture (Charlie Hall)

Kevin Heinz, Fred Davies, Carlos Bogan, and Scott Ludwig are currently working together on this initiative entitled, “Optimizing Floriculture and Ornamental Cropping Systems Management Practices” which is funded at roughly \$88,000. Charlie Hall reported that, for the past 3 months, much groundwork has been laid regarding the USDA Floriculture and Nursery Crop Research Initiative. Obviously, TAMU is not receiving a representative share of the current initiative funding given the relative size of the Texas industry nationally. One means of increasing TAMU's portion is to cannibalize from the existing universities that receive a portion of the existing level of funding, however this would certainly not garner us

any friends in the process. A better alternative is to increase the size of the "pie" for all participants and lobby for an increased share of the larger pie to come to TAMU specifically. Either way, it will mean that we (TAMU) will need to make a stronger case regarding the share of funds we receive in the future. We need to "tell our story" and keep telling it until we get the response we are looking for.

Several conversations have been held with Marc Teffeau of ANLA (HRI director), Lin Schmale (SAF), Peter Bretting (USDA/ARS), numerous other folks from the USDA/ARS advisory committee and Ron Lacewell (Assistant Vice Chancellor for Federal Relations). To a great extent, all agreed that it would aid our efforts if we were to put together a short capabilities statement that highlights two things: (1) the research currently being conducted in the floriculture and nursery crop area (to better tell our 'story'); and (2) the research that could be done with increased funding from the initiative. Charlie Hall has agreed to take the lead in writing such a capabilities statement and has solicited input from TAMU researchers.

Report from Marketing Subcommittee (Lela Kelly, Subcommittee Chair)

Subcommittee members: Jack Davis, Stan Pohmer, PJ Ellison-Kalil

Subcommittee suggested several ways to market the chair including news releases regarding noteworthy chair activities; submission of topics for OFA and SGC shortcourses by the chair and floriculture-related faculty at TAMU; presentations at state, regional, national, and international meetings; and by the chair writing articles in the trade press.

Stan Pohmer reported on the America in Bloom (AIB) program. AIB is a volunteer and non-profit organization with the mission of planting pride in communities through involvement in environmental horticulture. Stan met with representatives of Texas Cooperative Extension Master Gardeners (MG) and Junior Master Gardeners (JMG) to explore making this a MG/JMG activity. AIB has a competition that allows communities of similar population size to showcase their efforts and earn recognition for the activities they develop. Stan will be meeting with the executive committees of MG/JMG at their annual conferences to further explore this opportunity.

Charlie Hall reported on ongoing efforts to market the chair including developing the banner stands (displayed in the room); modifying the chair website; transferring the Horticultural Business Information Network website from University of Tennessee to TAMU; placing a counter at the TAMU Gardens to measure attendance and economic impacts; and an article series currently being developed for GMPro.

TDA Marketing Program (Richard De Los Santos)

Richard De Los Santos is the State Coordinator for Horticulture, Produce and Forestry Marketing with the Texas Department of Agriculture. He discussed his involvement with the following:

- Go Texan Project
- Marketing project underway with TAMU marketing students to explore ways to uniquely promote Texas Green Industry products.

- Floral-related booth at PMA conference in Houston.
- Go Texan *Guide to Landscape Success* which highlights seven steps in taking care of home landscapes
(http://www.gotexan.org/vgn/tda/files/1670/16569_landscape.pdf)
- Publishes brochures, e.g. TSFA – which needs to be updated.
- Federal-State Market Improvement (FSMIP) deadline is February 12, 2007. FSMIP provides matching funds to State Departments of Agriculture and other appropriate State agencies to assist in exploring new market opportunities for U.S. food and agricultural products, and to encourage research and innovation aimed at improving the efficiency and performance of the U.S. marketing system. FSMIP is funded by annual appropriations to the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), USDA. AMS anticipates that approximately \$1.3 million will be available for support for this program in fiscal year (FY) 2007. Approximately 25 to 30 projects are funded each year. The average grant award is \$50,000. The Advisory Committee was charged to brainstorm topics to consider for FSMIP grant for next year. Comments were to be sent to Lela, Richard, or Charlie. For more information, see <http://www.ams.usda.gov/tmd/fsmip.htm>. *Subcommittee will report to Richard by October 19.*

Other Items from Chair (Charlie Hall)

Charlie Hall reported on the following items:

- Potential grant projects have been submitted to the AFE Public Benefits Research Committee and Charlie has received some feedback regarding the projects AFE committee members find most favorable. Two projects will be submitted to AFE by November 30.
- Three grant proposals were submitted to the Texas Ornamental Enhancement Endowment for potential funding in the areas of brand recognition of the Texas Superstar and Earthkind program; consumer preferences for plant containers; and the importance of selected pansy attributes to consumer purchasing decisions.
- A grant project was submitted with Marco Palma to TNLA to conduct an update of the economic impact assessment of the Texas Green Industry.
- Research efforts are coordinated through participation of CSREES Multi-state research Project S-1021, otherwise known as the Green Industry Research Consortium.
- A \$300,000 grant project was recently funded along with colleagues at the University of Florida by the Risk Management Agency (USDA-RMA) to conduct 21 workshops for greenhouse and nursery producers across the Southern U.S. during November 2007 and September 2008.
- An evaluation of the TAMU Floriculture degree programs is underway because of the issue of low student enrollment. A strategy has been formulated and will be implemented in the coming academic year.
- Since June 2007, several meetings have been attended and/or presentations made including the following future events:

Southeast Greenhouse Conference presentation	6/22/2007
Seeley Conference	6/30/2007
OFA Conference	7/13/2007
SNA presentation at Research Conference	8/8/2007
SNA presentation on Trade Show floor	8/11/2007
TNLA Expo - moderate consumer behavior panel	8/16/2007
Far West Show presentation	8/24/2007
Meeting with Charles Gleuck & Danette Cantu - STNGA meeting planning	9/11/2007
TNLA Region 2 presentation	9/11/2007
SAF meeting in Palm Sprigs, CA	9/26/2007
Presentation at Maryland Plants & Supplies	10/2/2007
East Texas Greenhouse Conference presentation	10/23/2007
Lake County (OH) Grower Association presentation	11/12/2007
Mid-Am presentation	1/16/2008
TNLA Shortcourse	1/18/2008
CNGA Pro-Green presentation	1/21/2008
STNGA presentations	1/24/2008
TNLA Speaking Engagement	2/4/2008
Marty Grunder Boot Camp presentation	2/8/2008
ANLA presentation	2/9/2008
Distinguished Lecture & Advisory Committee	4/9/2008
NAHSA keynote presentation	6/10/2008
Distinguished Lecture & Advisory Committee	10/8/2008

Approval of Minutes (Ellen Ellison)

Motion was made by *Stan Pohmer* to approve the February meeting minutes and properly seconded by *Jack Weatherford*. The motion passed.

Advisory Committee Rotation (Ellen Ellison)

Ellen Ellison reported on the status of the “Permanent” seats on the Advisory Committee that will need to be filled with the departure of Rob Ferguson from Hines Horticulture and Tom Dickerson from Powell Plant Farms (recently purchased by Color Spot Nurseries). Terms are also expiring for the “Rotating” seats currently occupied by Tony Griffin and Kosuke Ogawa. Actions to fill these seats will be taken prior to the next Advisory Committee meeting.

*Spring meeting date will be April 10, 2008 with Distinguished Lecture Series on April 9.
Fall meeting date will be October 9, 2008 with Distinguished Lecture Series on October 8.*

The meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.