

National Plant Germplasm Coordinating Committee

As a follow up to the Report of the *ESCOP Plant Germplasm Task Force*, we are recommending that a *National Plant Germplasm Coordinating Committee (NPGCC)* be established and that it be charged as follows:

ESCOP in collaboration with ARS and CSREES shall establish a National Plant Germplasm Coordinating Committee (NPGCC) to oversee, review and establish priorities for the nation's plant germplasm system and shall annually prepare a summary report on the activities of the germplasm system for the directors and administrators.

- The NPGCC shall have as an overall goal the review and setting of national scientific priorities for the nation's plant germplasm network that should continue to include preservation, characterization, evaluation, documentation, and distribution of the germplasm in the collections. The NPGCC should upon establishment develop a clear set of priorities and directions for the NPGCC including rules of governance and membership.
 - The initial task of establishing the NPGCC shall fall to the Chair of ESCOP, and the administrators of ARS and CSREES. Some consideration might be given to expanding the membership to include representation from a wider array of individuals representing the diverse interests of conservation biology, Ecological Society of America, the seed industry, commodity groups, etc. that also have interests in the national plant germplasm system.
- Once established the NPGCC shall initiate a process to review current funding mechanisms that support the germplasm system and bring forward to ESCOP, ARS and CSREES alternatives for consideration by the directors in 6 months.
- While the GAO report noted several shortcomings, none were sufficiently critical to result in a recommendation for changes to the germplasm system. We would however, recommend that the NPGCC review the GAO reports and determine if issues noted had been adequately addressed. Additionally, the NPGCC might want to use the GAO study to further investigate the needs of the germplasm system and make recommendations for future funding, etc.
- The NPGCC should develop a strategy to convey the importance of the National Plant Germplasm System both to the SAES directors and public stakeholders. Additionally, the NPGCC may wish to consider the development of national marketing and communication materials to use in educating public officials of the value of this network in preserving plant materials that are critical to the nations food and fiber security.