

Agenda Brief 5.2: ESCOP Multistate Impact Reporting Project

Presenter: Sarah Lupis

Background:

Impact Statements: What & Why

Effective communications of research outcomes is crucial to maintaining as well as building support for such programs. In order to effectively communicate impacts and outcomes of the multistate research program in each region, impact statements will be developed for all terminating multistate research/coordination projects. As part of the approved NRSP001 plan, a professional writer (Sara Delheimer) has been engaged to help prepare effective impact statements for the multistate research activities.

The WAAESD Office (WDO) is providing coordination, editorial oversight, and physical space for this effort to ensure a common voice and consistent approach to impact reporting efforts. The WDO is also providing coordination between this effort and the ongoing efforts of ESCOP and ECOP (i.e., with kglobal, Cornerstone, the ESCOP/ECOP Communications and Marketing Committees, and any joint ECOP/ESCOP joint committee on Marketing and Communication). A total of \$24,000 per year has been allocated from NRSP001 Off-the-Top funding to support this effort.

A 2-page template has been developed with input from kglobal and the NRSP001 Coordination Committee; see examples from each region, attached. Drafts are shared with the multistate project committee for comment/improvement. The entire process, from initial draft to final, complete PDF takes approximately four weeks. Committees are given two weeks to respond to drafts, after which the process moves forward, regardless. Final Impact Statements are sent to the appropriate region, NIFA (Bart Hewitt), and will also be archived in NIMSS.

Ms. Delheimer is also working with multistate project committee members to increase distribution of final impact statements to other outlets. For example, Dr. Way has distributed the final impact statement for S-1029 to:

- Various departments and publications at participating universities (e.g., Texas A&M)
- Texas Department of Agriculture
- USA Rice Federation
- US Rice Producers Association
- USEPA

We have received positive feedback from AAs/participating scientists that the impact statements, especially in a layout that includes photos, are helping to make “their research shine” and will be useful for sharing impacts with legislators and stakeholders.

2011/2012 Terminating Projects Impact Statement Status

	Region				TOTAL
	Northeast	North Central	Southern	Western	
2011 Terminating¹	6	26	5	12	49
Complete/Pending Review	2	16	4	12	34
Incomplete/NA²	4	1	1	0	6
Not yet written	0	9	0	0	9
2012 Terminating^{1,3}	5	15	23	14	57
Complete/Pending Review	0	0	2	7	9
Incomplete/NA²	0	0	2	1	3
Not yet written	5	15	19	6	45

¹Terminating project total reflects research, ERA, and CC projects; Development Committees (DCs) are not included. ²Some projects will not have impact statements written because they lack sufficient source material. This includes projects with no or few annual reports and/or no or few impact statements included in their annual SF-422 reports. ³We are still waiting for many 2012 projects to submit terminating reports.

Issues and Potential Solutions

As projects have been reviewed and impact statements written, a few issues have been identified:

- Projects with no annual reports
- Annual reports that lack statements of impact/sufficient information from which to develop an impact statement
- Projects with no final/terminating annual report
- Differences between regions with respect to reporting requirements; some regions do not require the same reporting for ERAs and CCs, which leads to insufficient source material
- The review process is slowed when the project AA has retired and/or a new AA has been assigned with the project renews

We propose the following potential solutions to address some of the above issues:

- EDs/Regional Offices take steps to inform/educate Administrative Advisors about the importance of impact reporting in annual reports and provide regular instruction/guidance on how to effectively report impact of multistate work.
- EDs/Regional Offices assure that annual reports are submitted on a timely basis and *before* the next meeting is authorized.
- Use MRC mid-term reviews as an opportunity to get a project “back on track” when annual reports are missing/incomplete.
- Standardize reporting requirements across regions to ensure that source material is consistently available and all projects are included in the impact reporting process.

Action Requested: Information only