Present:
Stephen Kells, Charlene Wolf-Hall, Hongda Chen, James Stitzlein, Joe Needham, Brian Adam, Mark Casada, and Leland McKinney

Stephen Kells:
The meeting was called to order. Each person introduced themselves. The first order of business for the meeting was to discuss the future direction of NC-213.

Bill Ravlin:
The rewrite process was completed last year, so this is the first year of the new projects. Since we are at the beginning of the new project, it is good time have a discussion about the future of NC-213 and the collaboration that occurs within this group. Multistate projects are intended to establish seed data to obtain extramural funding and an expectation of multistate projects is that there is collaboration between the different stations. To encourage collaboration, there are two competitive NC-213 funding opportunities offered every other year. One is an individual research award, and the other, is a team competition. The team competition award was designed to promote collaboration. An example of the large funding opportunities that can be obtained by collaboration is the grant received by swine researchers to study purse disease. I am a little concerned that if we don’t move this direction, there may be some issues later down the road.

Joe Needham:
Can you clarify what this group should be striving for and are you concerned that this group will splinter.

Bill Ravlin:
There are opportunities for small groups to come together on projects and this project can serve as a platform. The purpose of this group should not be to just share ideas, but to return home and work together. The expectations are that we work together. We have a mid-term review and they will be evaluating this group on whether or not we worked together. The other thing that is evaluated is how dollars were leveraged to obtain other sources of funding. The funds available for multi-state projects can be leveraged and distributed in a number of ways. Some experiment stations may provide funding to scientists for travel. Some experiment stations may actually provide funding for specific projects. How the funds are distributed is up to the Ag Experiment Stations.

Hongda Chen:
Can you elaborate about the swine group and where the funding came from for the award they received?

Bill Ravlin:
An AES committee evaluated the group proposals and selected the award winner. The swine group used the NC-229 as the platform to conduct seed research and to be successful in getting
the proposal funded. What I would like to get a better idea of is the amount of collaborative research taking place within NC-213

Stephen Kells:
One challenge that this group faces relative to collaboration is that we are trying to adapt to a changing environment due to the ethanol industry. We are also trying to cater to food safety. Is this group too broad?

Joe Needham:
Tell us about the last few team competition winners and is there a common denominator among the teams that received the awards.

Bill Ravlin
The team competition began in 2000. In 2000 there were 4 submissions and one award. In 2002, there were two submissions and one award. In 2006, there were 6 submissions and two awards. CO₂ monitoring was one of the team projects awarded. Dirk Maier and Tim Herman received an award on evaluating traceability. I am not suggesting that we discontinue independent research, but I think we should put together a team and go to USDA with proposals. We need to ask the industry what research priorities to pursue.

Stephen Kells:
I am open to working with teams, but there are challenges due to the broadness of the group.

Mark Cassada
It can be difficult to change the culture. What mechanisms can be put into place to change the culture of the group?

Bill Ravlin:
We have complete control over this meeting. We could bring in a professional facilitator to help identify areas to work together.

Joe Needham
Can this committee do things to encourage more group activities? This group could decide that there will be more team competitions to provide the mechanisms for collaboration.

Bill Ravlin:
I would suggest that if this is what we want to do then we need to develop a proposal and make a recommendation to the Andersons and the entire group.

Joe Needham:
I don’t think the Andersons would have any objections to this direction.

Hongda Chen:
Collaboration promotes solving larger more complex problems. The multidiscipline approach is viewed very favorable.
Joe Needham
I think this group needs to have some recommendations for the larger group

Stephen Kells:
What kind of activity can we add to the agenda to promote team building?

Brain Adam
Can we identify a funding source that would provide the catalyst to bring this group together?

James Stitzlein:
Is there some way that this group could better reach out to the industry or a mechanism to encourage the industry to share what their problems are?

Bill Ravlin:
There are many options available. For example, there could be cost sharing with the industry to solve problems. We can put money on the table and the industry can match it.

Brian Adam:
Federal funding would be easier to obtain if they know the industry is behind it.

Joe Needham:
Are there funds available to go to the industry and offer to solve problems?

Bill Ravlin:
Yes, but if the industry is behind the research they should be willing to match it.

Hongda Chen
Is this committee willing to go to the industry with a survey and then bring this information back to the group?

Bill Ravlin:
I think that is necessary. I think that we need to come away from here knowing what the next step is and that we agree that we will collaborate. Another thing that needs to take place is the creation of an ongoing dialog with in this group and with the industry.

Hongda Chen:
I would like to encourage you to think not just on the five year project, but longer term relative to the up-coming technologies and opportunities.

Stephen Kells:
I propose that Bill challenge the group on ways that the group can start bridging the gap and promoting collaboration. The next item we need to discuss is the industry advisory panel.

James Stitzlein:
The previous discussion ties into this. How does this group interact with the industry to help come up solutions? How do we get the industry to become aware of what this group does?
Getting more industry-university interaction would be very useful. Reaching out to the industry with a survey may be helpful.

Joe Needham
Particular if the industry would get excited about what this group is doing.

Stephen Kells
KSU has ties with industry groups such as wheat quality council and GEAPS. Perhaps KSU could help to get NC-213 to interact in their conferences.

Joe Needham:
NC-213 could contribute to the NGFA newsletter, for example, to update the industry relative to what the group is doing.

Stephen Kells
The next item on the agenda is a report on progress

Bill Ravlin:
The new format of the progress report matches the CRIS report format, so hopefully this has made it easier to submit. One question that needs to be answered is: who is the report for and who reads it.

Hongda Chen:
The report is important to provide decision makers with the impacts of these projects.

Bill Ravlin:
The impact statements need to be more of an impact. Impact statements need to answer the questions, so what and who cares. It does not just need to be tied to money. It can impact the environment or food safety. Impact statements need to be written so that anyone can understand them and carry the important message.

Stephen Kells
Could Bill provide definitions for impact, outcome, and outputs? To me they are very similar.

The next item to discuss is the summer conference.

Bill Ravlin
There used to be two meetings per year, this meeting for technical sessions, and a summer meeting with the industry. The attendance for the summer secession slowly began to fall off. Then it evolved to where it took place some other conference was planned. The group needs to decide if we need to have a summer meeting.

Brain Adam:
It would probably be worthwhile once the group has decided on a project to work on.

Bill Ravlin:
It may be difficult in these economic times to get industry together.
Stephen Kells:
We will leave it for the group to decide. The next item we need to discuss is the 2010 meeting. It is proposed that NC-213 meet with GEAP, however, there may be potential problems with hotel accommodations. Bill Koshar will find out more information about the schedule.

Note:
Brain Adam agreed to serve as the next secretary.

NC-213 Business Meeting
February 18, 2009
Kansas City, MO

Stephen Kells called the meeting to order and initiated discussion regarding the future direction of NC-213 and how this group could better serve the industry.

Dirk Maier suggested interviewing the industry to better understand their needs. He recommended that NC-213 funds be used to hire a consultant to interact with industry and gather data.

James Stitzlein supported this idea and suggested that an industry perspective would also give NC-213 more visibility.

Dirk Maier stated that the number of researchers working in the area of Grain Quality has declined. This group needs to be more proactive in working with the industry and promoting the research that we are all involved with.

Bill Ravlin agreed with Dirk Maier’s proposal, but felt that for it to be worthwhile NC-213 participants would involved with the scope of the survey.

Brain Adam suggested that another way to increase the visibility of NC-213 is to submit NC-213 activities to industry trade magazines.

Dirk Maier agreed, stating that trade magazines are always looking for ideas and items to publish.

Stephen Kells suggested that a committee be established to be responsible for contacting trade journals and promoting the NC-213 group.

Bill Ravlin said that the problem is that Bill Koshar ends up writing all of the material.

Charlie Hurburgh said “that is the way it is supposed to be”.

Rill Ravlin disagreed and stated that at the very least we need the engagement of the group. It needs to be more of the group and less of our office.
Brain Adams suggested that the objective chairs need to solicit material from participants and send the material to Bill.

Dirk Maier said that this is not a new idea. It is part of the responsibility of objective chairs.

Charlie Hurburgh suggested that a spread sheet of all participants and their contact information be distributed.

Stephen Kells suggested that the group submit at least 2 articles for the newsletter by mid-May.

Stephen Kells asked for a vote for Dirk Maier’s proposal to hire a consultant to evaluate NC-213 and survey the industry. Fourteen participants voted yes and zero voted no.

Bill Ravlin said that you would present this suggestion to the Andersons for their feedback.

Stephen Kells stated that the deadline for reports and presentation titles for next year’s annual meeting is November 15, 2009. He also suggested that the deadline be enforced this year.

Bill Ravlin emphasized the importance of impact statements. He has received a number of impact statements that were not very well written. Impact statements are critical for promoting the importance of the research that this group is conducting.

Joe Needham stated that most people who are interested in this group’s research attend conferences such as GEAPS. Representatives from this group need to attend these types of conferences and present research results.

Stephen Kells proposed that we decide on whether NC-213 participants want to meet in conjunction with GEAPS in 2010 in Wichita, Kansas. Ten participants voted yes and 2 participants voted no. In case meeting with GEAPS is not feasible, Kansas City, Kansas, and Omaha, Nebraska were selected for alternative locations.