

FAB Work Group Meeting Notes
February 17, 2016
OSU Portland Facility
Gwendolyn Ellen, Meeting Facilitator

Twenty- three attended the meeting from Oregon, Washington, California and Idaho. First business of the morning was an excellent exchange of technical information on establishing hedgerows by three Work Group members. Rex Dufour of the National Center for Appropriate Technology (NCAT), California Office, presented *Lessons learned and considerations for specific audiences*. Sam Earnshaw of California's *Hedges Unlimited* presented *Nuts and bolts of establishing hedgerows*. Rachael Long University of California Cooperative Extension's Yolo County Farm Advisor presented (via telecom) *Overcoming barriers for field edge habitat plantings on farms in California's Sacramento Valley*. Sam's presentation was given as a handout. Rachael provided a link to her slideshow. Work Group member Joe Williams from the Visalia, California Natural Resources Conservation Service Office also provided a handout *Appendix A: Recommended (hedgerow) Plants – Central Valley, CA*.

After the panel participants broke out into three small groups and performed the following tasks:

1. Brainstormed what they needed to integrate FAB into their work/farm program
2. Prioritized these needs
3. Discussed the role of the Fab Work Group in helping meet these needs.

Group A (4 participants) consisted of farmers and farm interns. Group B (7 participants) were agricultural students and researchers and Group C (8 participants) included non-profit, industry and agency conservationists and consultants. The tele-participants and the facilitator did not participate in the small group discussions.

Group A's top priorities for integrating FAB practices into their farming program were as follows:

1. Network enhancement around seed/plant availability, perennial as well as short-term options for leased land, with consideration to timing, localized species, and fit to our systems
2. Seed growing and maturity locally to deal with access, sharing and organic sources
3. Information on what plants, where, how, bloom time, and repellent properties

Group B's top priorities for implementing FAB into their research and outreach programs were as follows:

1. Overcoming cultural barriers such as conventional versus organic agriculture

Targeting the farmers that aren't getting the information
 Having a trusted voice for on-ground communication
 Creating media resources

2. Increasing local ecological knowledge
3. Better quantification of risks and benefits (of habitat) and which insects are in hedgerows (habitats)
4. Translating data from academia to farmers using diverse expertise to draw information out; finding out who is receptive to what

Group C's top priorities for integrating FAB into their programs and consulting work were:

1. More data on cost/benefits of agricultural biodiversity in different cropping systems particularly in pollinated crops
2. Doing more on-farm, crop-based workshops around the PNW
3. A coherent approach to BIG funding

The following chart shows how some of the priorities of the separate groups overlap:

Issue	Group A	Group B	Group C
Expanding informational network	X	X	X
Increasing local ecological knowledge	X	X	X
More data on FAB Cost/benefits		X	X

The following were identified in the ensuing discussion as possible actions the FAB Work Group could take in the following years to address the participant named priorities.

Priorities Addressed: Expanding informational network/increasing local ecological knowledge/ Information on what plants, where, how/ overcoming cultural barriers/ translating data from academia to farmers using diverse expertise, and Doing more on-farm, crop-based workshops around the PNW

Actions:

1. Use info-graphics on specific habitats as shown in Rachael's slideshow. Rachael informed participants that these specific hedgerow info-graphics are available for our use from the website listed in her slideshow. The value of creating specific crop/habitat type info-graphics using Rachel's document format was discussed with agreement that this could be done on a program-to-program basis. It was also a desired product for handouts at the FAB Work Group 2016 Biodiversity Tour. The facilitator notes here that development of such optimally formatted documents may be above the venue of the current FAB Work Group awarded program, but she is willing to keep an open, hopeful mind in regards to their production.

2. Creating an Oregon “Farms Reach”. Farms Reach is an outline, interactive information hub for farmers that is housed in California. Several participants are active in this hub. The original proposal was to develop a similar agricultural biodiversity hub for Oregon farmers. Participant, Jo Ann Baumgartner of Wild Farm Alliance, informed us that there is indeed an agricultural biodiversity sector of Farms Reach already established. That Farms Reach is more than just for California farmers and that the problem they have had with the ag biodiversity sector is that they need folks to commit to providing answers to the questions posed in this sector. This could be an opportunity for FAB Work Group members to fill this need.
3. Creating a FAB speaker network which led to developing a FAB proposal for a pre-conference workshop for the 2017 Organicology Conference in Oregon. Participant Jen Miller of the Northwest Center for Alternatives to Pesticides informed us that she has been working with former Work Group member, Mace Vaughan of Xerces on just such a proposal and would be willing to have a conversation with us about joining proposals. Gwendolyn Ellen, Jo Ann Baumgartner, WSU’s Carmen Blubaugh and Rachel Long agreed to work together to put together a proposal. It is due the end of February. Rachael could do the presentation she presented at the work group, Ellen could do Oregon on-farm examples of insectary habitat, Carmen beneficial insects especially parasitic wasps that occur in habitat, Jo Ann importance of ag biodiversity and Mace and Jen, organic site preparation of hedgerows and pollinators.
4. Picking an area in the PNW to do focused workshops or intensive efforts rather than just one advocacy tour a year. Rachael presented in her slide show information from a project that involved such a focused-approach of 12 workshops over 2 years. Although this extent of focus is beyond the purview of the FAB Work Group, the group was interested in selecting a focused topic, an area of the PNW to focus our efforts and utilizing our currently funded events and capacities to comprise a focused effort.
5. Establishing FAB buy-in of large buyers of farm products to enable reaching larger growers in higher numbers. This resulted from discussion on which farmers would we want to focus our events toward, the farmers that have not considered FAB to newly adopting farmers or to farmers most likely to adopt or already using FAB practices. Consensus was that for most programs there can be a range that includes all of these farmers with the maturity of the program comprising more farmers who have adopted practices that increase on-farm biodiversity. Also, these farmers that have already adopted biodiverse practices provide invaluable information demonstration, and mentorship for moving a FAB agenda forward.
6. Developing pre-fabricated FAB packages to growers that would include local resources, marketing opportunities utilizing recommendations from a diverse area of expertise to develop and deliver these packages.

7. Target specific types of farmers such as direct marketers including CSA farmers and Farmers market farmers who consistently respond to their consumers concerns. The discussion also included awareness of participants that the average farmers in the 58 age group market very differently than the new and younger farmers.

Conclusions and Event Design:

The 2016 Biodiversity Working for Farmers Tour

The discussion turned as to how to best incorporate some of the identified actions into the next two events that the Work Group has been funded to produce, a 2016 Biodiversity Working for Farmers Tour and a 2017 Biodiversity Summit. Although there was a lot of discussion about producing our Work Group events in Idaho, it was decided in the end to work in Oregon's Willamette Valley. The group decided on keeping our advocacy tour format providing a field course for the big buyers in this area including, Norpac, Food Alliance, Stellar and Organically Grown Corporation in addition to farmers. The first step will be to educate ourselves to their processes to best understand how to build a cooperative process with them. Our major focus will be on Norpac as they sell to the big buyers across the PNW. Participants Paul Jepson and Alana Kenagy will work closely with Gwendolyn Ellen in this regard. Alana's farm, Kenagy Family Farm, grows for Norpac and her father, Peter Kenagy is on their sustainability committee. He was also a host of the first Biodiversity Working for Farmers Tour in 2009. We hope to inform Norpac's own sustainability certification called "Inspire" and provide FAB examples, best practices, local resources and funding sources to their farmers interested in adopting FAB practices.

The 2017 FAB Summit

The group decided to use the summit platform to continue our focus on FAB and big buyers of farm products. We decided to use a format employed in the Ellen's Farmscaping for Beneficials Program called a "Bugscaping Faire" only this time instead of having booths to educate farmers on multiple aspects of FAB we will provide booths to educate big buyers and industry consultants on beneficial aspects of their producers/clients adopting FAB practices. There is also an interactive component of these faires which will utilize to stimulate dialog among buyers, consultants and producers on what each other needs to adopt a FAB platform in their businesses. We will consult with participants of the "Sustainable Food Lab" for inspiration, models and innovation as well as our experiences from our own 2016 Tour. Sustainable Food Lab is a global network of organizations dedicated to creating sustainable foodsheds worldwide by helping businesses such as Sysco and Ben and Jerry's develop sustainable goals and initiatives. They have helped organize supply chain summits.

Jo Ann Baumgartner gave a concise summary of agricultural biodiversity policy issues and steps we can take to support them as a group and individually. She highlighted work of the National Sustainable Ag Coalition. We were informed

that \$40 million/yr of cap and trade funds will be going into agricultural conservation easements.

We ended the meeting with a discussion of the network analysis Ken Vance-Borland of Conservation Planning Institute and Gwendolyn Ellen will be conducting of the FAB Work Group. An example of the survey implement and study was handed out. Ken explained just what a network analysis can demonstrate. Ellen defined our goals being to document the breadth of the FAB Network, highlighting our strengths and weaknesses and showcasing our collaborative work across the western region. Indeed, the results Rachel Long presented at the meeting on her survey of the barriers to adopting hedgerows in California support the importance of supporting networks such as the FAB Work Group. As Rachael and the farmers concluded there needs to be more networking of local resources that support the adoption of FAB practices such as hedgerow adoption as well as more on-farm demonstration. Something the FAB Work Group does very well.