

MINUTES

Name: AGR Advisory Committee

Date: March 28, 2019

Time: 9:00 – 11:00am.

Location: Shull Hall 105

Facilitator: Dr. Susan Everett

Dr. Lawrence Everett

Recorder: Kathleen Day

Attendees:

Penny Dunbar, City of Springfield

Warren Hitchcock, Farmers' Equip

Cecelia Loka-Minnich, Integrated Ag

Jeff Pack, Meadowview

Janice Welsheimer, OABA

Kelly Wood, 5 Rivers Metroparks

Clark State:

Aimee Belanger-Haas

Lesli Beavers

Arly Drake

Dr. Larry Everett

Dr. Susan Everett

Melody Gast

Sue Haddix

Amanda Honeycutt

Welcome and Introductions:

- Susan and Larry welcomed everyone, and initiated introductions. This was their last advisory committee.

Precision Ag National Science Foundation Grant Updates:

- An alliance begun 2 years ago with 10 other Community Colleges across the country including Iowa, Kansas, Illinois, Wisconsin, North Dakota, Nebraska, etc.
- Two annual meetings have been held, and two member schools have been visited.
- Clark State joined, and became part of the SARE (Sustainable Agricultural Research Education) Grant initiative with the Natural Resources Conservation Service group, in conjunction with Natural Corn Growers Association, beginning work in 2018.
- Agreement of understanding: March 19, 2019. Goal: increase producers' knowledge of soil health practices, and help them adopt more profitable and environmentally sound practices.
- In order to do so, a 4-5 acre Land Lab was needed situated on Clark State property. Slides of the land were presented, as Susan explained the topography and landmarks of the area.
- **First Grant:** Primary focus is to grow crops, do some rotation, and use the land lab within many of the AGR classes, looking at soil health issues.
- Sampling, cover crops, compaction, water quality, and weed suppression are identified key areas with that grant.
- Presentations of workshops or field days to surrounding farmers, producers, or other interested parties is also mandated.
- One of the ultimate goals is to develop learning modules for the curriculum to be used in any post-secondary community college situation to cover soil health issues.
- **Second Grant:** CSCC grants liaison has been working with other legislatures, succeeding in getting Community Colleges incorporated in the 2018 Farm Bill. Community colleges were added to the bill as Producer Farms, giving the Natural Resources Conservation Services the ability to work with community colleges, making Clark State and others eligible to work with NRCS to develop conservation/innovation grants.
- February 2019: Clark State was notified of the initiative and the passage of the Farm Bill, as well as notification that another grant was to be put together.
- March 7, 2019: Met with NRC representatives, state, district, county, and local offices who have been very cooperative, contributing excellent ideas, promising a welcome and valued partnership on common endeavors.
- Week of March 18: Submitted first draft. NRCS feedback should be available with first week in April. Looking at the national headquarters. Input on grant from all eight colleges involved will be looked at and combined, and finalized by the 15th with budget and all documentation. May 1 is goal date for approval. Projected date: start right away: 2019 - 2025

- Proposals: NRCS gave great directives. October met with local officers. Their reps suggested NRCS numbered initiatives for a proposal.
- Soil compaction, concentration of salt and other chemicals, desirable plant productivity, inadequate structure composition, excessive plant pressure were suggested as areas of interest, including Hoop houses and High tunnels.
- NRCS maps have been very valuable to the projects.
- Everetts are now waiting on specialized, custom-built equipment purchased through 200K Federal and State grant funding. Some pieces went out on bid yesterday (3/27), and are expected in mid-April. However, some equipment must be specially designed and manufactured, sometimes out of the United States, which delays delivery of those items, which also often have special shipping needs.
- Susan noted that the equipment will be used in many of both the Ag & Hort classes,
- Clark State is gaining 5 acres of land for the land lab, adding a unique reputation as an “urban campus”, which nonetheless offers a highly regarded diverse Ag program.

Action: Continue collaboration with others in the Ag field to expand programs, and broaden students’ horizons.

Student project reports:

- Student teams spoke about their research, the advantages and disadvantages of their agricultural choices and decisions, and how they arrived at their conclusions.
- Topics included Hoop Houses, High tunnel crops, Soil health and Crop rotation, Invasive plant control.
- Susan thanked Amanda Honeycutt for her help in getting equipment quotes.

Action: Continue to discover and nurture agricultural and educational relationships.

A received donation

- A donor, a former student, has provided funds for which the Everetts intend to construct pavilions to shelter the Field Days, and other out of the classroom activities. Susan noted that these structures, as well as the field trial areas are planned to have

Action: None. Informational only.

Work Ready Communities:

- Clark County is working on becoming a Work Ready Community, and Clark State is a part of that effort.
- Dr. Arly Drake, and Lesli Beavers presented information about this program that tests students to see how successful they are likely to be in real world work situations. Work Ready does the same for workplace applicants.
- Key areas lacking for employee success are related to the college in order to provide info relating to gaps in workforce foundational training. Goals and intents are then incorporated into curriculum, from the results of student testing is observed in order to discover the efficacy of the classes, and how they could be improved.
- The program is national, but is worked at a county level, giving greater leeway to tailor the training to local needs.
- Local employers and companies are recruited to support the Work Ready Community initiative. This involves asking for certifications offered by Clark State as part of their application requirements.

Action: Continue building College/Business relationships

Agriculture Spring/Summer Semester Schedule (12 weeks):

- **Spring Semester:** January 14 – April 11, 2019.
- **Summer Co-op:** April 10 – July 11, 2019.
- **Internships:** April 15 – through early July, when they will return to Clark State to do their public presentations.

- **Plant Sale:** Ag Club, and Propagation classes have been growing “lots, and lots, and lots of plants,” for the Plant Sale, Thursday, April 18, 9:00 – 1:00 in the TLC Rotunda. Fruits, vegetables, herbs, and flowers will be available.

Action: None. Informational Only.

Agriculture Faculty Positions:

- Dr. Arly Drake accepted the first Ag faculty position in January.
- The second Ag faculty position has been advertised, and applications will be accepted through April 14th. The position will begin August 9th.

Action: Assist in making others aware of the employment opportunities at Clark State.

Program Review:

- Presentation: Monday, April 29, 2019
- Program Review: Occurs every 3 years, last one 2018
- Community Reach and Jobs Search: Ensure CSCC is teaching the right things, and make students aware there are local positions available for them.
- Now going to combine Precision Ag with all the majors to do them all at once.
- Building extensive research on the job outlet picture in the area, so that the job market, and what students need to get a good job will be in plain sight, and present that info to CSCC teachers, faculty, staff, and whoever else would like to attend.
- Precision Ag ranked #7 in Precision Ag programs.

Action: None. Informational only.

- The Everetts thanked the committee members for their input and support over all the years they have been a part of Clark State.
- Aimee announced there will be a retirement party, the date to be decided.

The Everetts again thanked the assemblage and adjourned the meeting at 11:00 A.M.

Next meeting will be held during the Fall 2019 semester.