

Revision of Guidelines for Release of Crop Varieties by the Kansas Agricultural Experiment Station

Issue: Shortly after becoming Head of Agronomy, it was brought to my attention that I was responsible for coordinating the Crop Variety Release Committee. No written guidelines were available other than an outdated bulletin and little institutional memory existed. Many of the procedures described in the bulletin were not being followed and it did not take into account genetically modified traits or significant changes in intellectual property issues.

What has been done: A series of one-on-one meetings were held with all stakeholders in the process of formal releases of plant genetic materials. A draft revised bulletin was then prepared and distributed to the stakeholders. Several group meetings were held to discuss the draft guidelines. Numerous misunderstandings and discrepancies in expectations needed to be addressed through additional one-on-one and small group meetings. In particular, the importance of the formal release process needed to be reinforced as well as the value of publishing releases in peer-reviewed journals. The final product was a completely revised and renamed bulletin:

http://www.ksre.ksu.edu/library/misc2/Gen_Mat_Guidelines.pdf

Impacts: The processes described in the bulletin were immediately put into practice and all releases now must be approved by the release committee regardless of any intellectual property issues.

Funding Sources, Cooperators, Partners, Mentors etc.: No outside funding was necessary but considerable staff time was invested in the project. Stakeholders included the plant breeders and geneticists, the Director and Associate Director of the Kansas Agricultural Experiment Station, Department Heads, the Kansas Crop Improvement Association, Kansas Wheat Alliance, and the KSU Research Foundation.

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