A meeting in the above-entitled matter was held on March 15, 2016, commencing at 9:07 a.m. at 1400 Independence Avenue S.W., Jamie L. Whitten Building, Room 107-A Washington, D.C. 20250.

Russell C. Redding, Committee Chair

Michael G. Schechtman, Executive Secretary
APPEARANCES

Russell Redding, Chair

Michael Schechtman, Executive Secretary

Committee Members:
Isaura Andaluz
Paul C. Anderson
Laura Batcha
Charles Benbrook
Barry Bushue
Ron Carleton
Lynn E. Clarkson
Leon C. Corzine
Douglas Goehring
Gregory A. Jaffe
David W. Johnson
Alan Kemper
Mary-Howell R. Martens
Angela M. Olsen
Betsy Rakola
Jerome B. Slocum
Latresia A. Wilson
MR. SCHECHTMAN: Good morning, everyone. I hope everyone had a good evening last night and thought about the information that was discussed yesterday. Thank you for all of your continuing efforts with the AC21. As Secretary Redding mentioned yesterday, I'll be chairing the meeting today until his hopeful return later today. We wish him well in his state hearing. Just, just a note for information, my chairing this meeting is exactly what is called for under FACA, the Federal Advisory Committee Act, in circumstances just like this one. But having said that, I'm obviously not the secretary, so please bear with me.

I'll first note that we will be having some additional documents today. Diane -- Leon, have the additional documents arrived? I just saw you outside there. No? You didn't see me.

MS. OLSEN: Well, I just peeked, and they were not there.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Okay. They should be down any minute. The additional four documents are the redline comments provided by Angela Olsen on the framework that was submitted by Lynn Clarkson, as well as Paul Anderson's attempted rearrangement, or --

MR. ANDERSON: It's out there.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Oh, it's out there, they're out there now?
MS. OLSEN: No, no. Paul's has been out there.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Oh, Paul's has been out there.

MR. ANDERSON: That one's out there.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Okay, sorry. That one is already out there. Rearrangement of the elements of the document that Lynn provided. I should just note right now, again, these are for your information. There will be a new framework draft, which I and the chair will be working on, attempting to address all of the issues that are raised in comments and to help us go forward. I hope that you'll have that within a week or 10 days. In addition, copies are being made of the two PowerPoint presentations that were given by our two external speakers yesterday from the National Association of Conservation Districts, and from NASDA. And hopefully they will help us in our discussions today as well.

Now, I was recently at an international meeting just a few weeks ago where the chair of the meeting in perfect diplomatic form complemented participants on the day, previous day's discussions and said that we had a, they had a rich discussion. And that was a work I had never heard used for, in that context before. But I think our discussions yesterday were also rich discussions. As, as the committee is moving forward towards common themes and understandings. Clearly we have a number of unresolved
issues and a few places where there are divergences of views
on the scope of, on the scope of the discussions, on how and
where to discuss seed purity, and how to reference previous
AC21 work on that subject, and a few other things.

But clearly, also, there are many common themes.
We've heard about the importance of communication and
farmers engaging with each other, shared responsibility, and
the desire of farmers to be good neighbors, the
acknowledgement that this work is not going to solve all
potential problems and maybe can't offer resolutions when
conversations don't necessarily do the trick.

But I think everyone around this table pointed to
the value of farmer-to-farmer interactions, so that we'll
need to find a roadmap, one with lots of options that can be
tailored to local needs, that can be offered to help bring
folks together and guidance to help farmers identify some
critical factors that can impact their ability to grow their
crops and meet their contractual needs. Importantly, I
think we were reminded yesterday that the committee is not
seeking to educate farmers or to teach them how to farm.
We, I think the hope of what this work is, is to be able to
provide a resource for farmers and communities to bring
folks together.

We discussed two valuable models yesterday that
our outside presenters offered. And I think they offer some
valuable parallels. What makes the MP3 work, I think, is common interest around bee health. There is perhaps a similar common value for producers around coexistence discussions, about the importance of food and feed, and the importance of economic opportunities for, for all farmers.

Both the MP3 and the conservation district models point out that there is some value in knowing who is responsible at the state and local level for doing what, and perhaps it will be important in these efforts to stress that the roles of all the players in our discussion, in the discussions that we will be describing need to be clearly articulated up front. I think we also heard some interesting possibilities for roles both for conservation districts and for state agriculture officials in supporting and perhaps sometimes convening some of these efforts.

So, today we'll dive into some of the more difficult issues. Not that we've been avoiding them. Up to this point, scope of guidance, how to bring folks together, what a model for these discussions might look like. Well, I think the intent is to work through these things, recognizing that as we try to parse them out separately, they do all overlap. And, and that we will try to, when there are, difficulties or disagreements, we'll try to articulate them and then see how we can move forward. But again, I need to ask everyone to try to find common ground
and move forward. Thank you.

Okay. So the first topic for discussion today --
an again, these, the intent for today, we have set up a
series of different topics. But again, they all overlap.
If we move from one to another, if we spend more time on one
or less and the discussion flows in different directions,
that will be okay. But I just want to make sure we get all
of the topics out on the table so we can see where we are.

The first one for today is this discussion around
the scope of farmer-to-farmer dialogues. I think the
committee has noted a few fundamental facts, such as the
fact that most farmers try to do the right thing and try to
be good neighbors. As in all walks of life, some farmers
are more difficult than others. And some have different
constraints than others. Farmers may not always have the
information they need about the critical factors involved in
producing their crop to a particular specification or for
that matter those that are critical to their neighbors'
production.

Farmers don't necessarily even know what their
neighbors are producing in all circumstances, or may not
inform their neighbors about their intended planting. In
the concern that has been discussed over pollen movement,
it's clear that encouraging farmer-to-farmer dialogue or
participation in coexistence-related discussions, that that
encouragement may be challenging because the issue may be, I think we've heard, of more inherent concern to an IP producer than to his commodity-producer neighbor.

So, at the last meeting, I think the AC21 uncovered a bit of a tension over keeping discussions focused on pollen movement, and perhaps not providing enough incentive for full participation by commodity producers, versus broadening the discussion among farmers to include a broader set of issues that would include additional topics of concern to those farmers that may not be specifically GE-related. And that in the interest of getting more of a back-and-forth discussion of topics of concern to each side, issues around soil movement, weed and pest management, water issues, and pesticide use are examples of broader issues that were mentioned previously that might in some instances be considered as topics that could be under discussion.

So the question here today is how can the committee resolve this issue so that there can be a specific recommendation to states and localities, or is this an issue you want to in fact punt to those localities to decide for themselves, or is there a particular resolution or compromise that can be reached here?

Before I open it up for discussion, I should just mention that Commissioner Goehring sent me earlier a document which was circulated that provided his thoughts on
what these discussions might include, and that was provided
to you as a meeting document. It's up to the AC21 of
course, to decide what use if any that document might be put
to or how it might be modified for discussions, and whether
it would be of use for some or all of the coexistence after
all the discussions we talked about yesterday. So with
that, I will open up for comments and thoughts.

MS. BATCHA: Apologies.

MR. BENBROOK: Good morning. I'll start with what
I was going to say last night, but the time had passed. I,
I think that restricting the scope of farmer-to-farmer
discussions about managing pollen flow, for example, or
comingling, does a disservice to the contribution that the
AC21 can make to dealing with the, the, this, I would argue
expanding set of issues around the impacts of GE technology
on U.S. agriculture that we sort of think of as coexistence.

I for one think that it, it's unfair to expect
farmers in, in neighborly dialogue to work out all of the
problems that are being imposed on the agricultural system
by the tensions around this technology. Now, whether you
believe that those tensions and, and the controversies are
misguided or appropriate and overdue, they exist. And they
are making the, they are broadening the dimensions of the
coexistence challenge. They're raising the stakes. And I
think it's, I think, I would like to encourage the AC21 to
point out in its report that there are aspects of the broader coexistence challenge that simply cannot be solved by even the most cordial and cooperative farmer-to-farmer cooperation. And that, in fact, if some of these other dimensions of coexistence are not managed in a way to reduce their spread and strength, if you will, this whole issue that we're trying to, to deal with will become increasingly unmanageable.

So I, while we all have recognized that there is certain responsibilities at the farm level and communicating with neighbors and, and taking the practical, on-the-ground steps that are well-accepted to, to prevent pollen flow from a GE field into a non-GE field, I think there's also important responsibility for this in the input sector that, that needs to be highlighted. I know Alan and Leon have spoken up many times about the issue of synchronous approvals in international markets. I, you know, I think that I would certainly agree that that's an important issue. But there are many other aspects of how this technology has been introduced into the market and, and played itself out in, in, in the policy arena and the market that's making the coexistence challenge ever-more difficult to manage.

And I, I think we would be remiss to not acknowledge that in our report. I am sure we're not going to be able to come up with the solutions, but at least if we
can highlight the fact that this is a, this is a dynamic issue, and, and there, there are really new, new avenues and, and facets of it coming at us at a fairly rapid pace. So I, I think that would be appropriate and helpful.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Thank you, Chuck. Next, we have Angela.

MS. OLSEN: Thank you. I wanted to discuss the substance of, of what you're asking us, Michael, the topic that you're asking us to discuss. But before that, this is a very complex issue, as we all know. If this were easy, we wouldn't all be in the room addressing the topic. So in terms of, you know, I think that in an introductory paragraph, I think that that's really what we want to say, really frame up the report and say what this is and what this isn't.

This report isn't going to address everything. There are a lot of challenges in agriculture. And so, you know, to a lot of the points Chuck is bringing up and that have been discussed around the table, I think we have a limited amount of time. We have a narrow charge. And I think the points are all valid, but then, you know, really framing it up as here's what the report is, and here's what it isn't.

You know, Michael, I think you did a nice job at the beginning of saying this isn't to educate farmers. So,
when people do read the report which aren't, which are going
to be plenty of people that aren't sitting around this table
that haven't had the benefit of the conversation, they'll
understand what this is and what this isn't. We're not, we
don't mean for this to be all-inclusive of, of, of every
topic that could be touched here because we could be here a
long time discussing those various topics. So, you know,
that may be a way to just acknowledge there are other
issues. But here, specifically is what we're addressing in
the report.

In terms of the substance and Commissioner
Goehring's proposal, it seems, I think it's, I think it's a
great starting point for us, for our discussions. I also
look at it with regards to the NCGA proposal that Leon, that
also is available to us outside and that Michael has
circulated. And it seems that components of this may work
very well in Commissioner Goehring's model. I'd be
interested in hearing from Commissioner Goehring about how
does this, how, how similar is this to the MP3 model? Are
there, because I, I had a lot of energy for that model
yesterday and the other speaker that we heard about as well.
That could be a really great model. It seems that there are
components of this that are modeled after that. So I'd be
interested in hearing how similar is that, were there things
that maybe didn't work that we could improve upon here for
this purpose, could I, could I ask Commissioner Goehring to
talk about that a little bit?

MR. SCHECHTMAN: He's up --

MS. OLSEN: Or, okay, we can wait.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: If you're okay, Mary-Howell with

letting --

MS. MARTENS: I'm okay with that. Mine's a
different topic.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Okay. Go ahead. Go ahead,

Commissioner.

MR. GOEHRING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Actually,
a lot of what I put out in that, that particular sheet of
paper was an outline. It's a format along the same lines in
which we developed the MP3 program and pollinator plan. So,
it's kind of a guideline that once you identify what your
issue is, what are the concerns, what are some of the
mitigating strategies that you can put together to address
some of those things.

If I can also refer back to something that Chuck
said. And it has to do with our conversation this morning
about that farmer-to-farmer dialogue. I wouldn't want
anybody to walk away and think that after all of our work
we're going to have farmer-to-farmer dialogue. I don't
think hardly any farmer-to-farmer dialogue is going to
happen.
But I will tell you what I do believe. If you create a venue, you create a public meeting, and you present information, you present an outline like this with a narrative on these, these areas, you give counsel and guidance to those that are probably interested in addressing this issue. And it has to be a two-way street when we talk about coexistence. It's not one way. Because I can tell you when you have a meeting, and if you're going to frame it up, and it's all about coexistence, you're probably only going to get one, you're probably going to have a couple types and groups of people that attend the meeting. But you may have very few farmer neighbors that are going to attend.

So, when you're going to frame it up, a lot of thought has to be behind how are you going to extend that invitation, and what is that conversation going to be? Because coexistence is a two-way street, and I think you can frame it up around identity preservation, identity products. And you're going to get a lot more participation, and you're going to put on the table mitigating strategies. I think you're going to invite a lot of conversation, invite a lot of people to raise awareness, to also inform them. And it doesn't mean that anybody is dumb or not insightful. This is, we live and work in our world. We know what issues we have to contend with. But we might not understand what somebody else has to contend with. And that will certainly
get people thinking about, oh yeah, that, I can see that being an issue. And I think I know how to resolve it. So if you provide the outline with a bit of the narrative to kind of foster and develop more thinking and awareness, you'll provide a lot of, a lot of good material for, for that group to discuss during that period of time. And like I said, whether we're talking about pollagen (phonetic sp.), or pollen or pathogen movement, it works both ways. And it will get the attention of everybody. And it will certainly help to a great degree. Everybody will feel included because they will feel like they may have a dog in the fight, a stake in the game. So with that, if there's any other questions, I'll certainly entertain them or answer them. And that, I kind of included my comments in theirs, what I wanted to day.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Okay. Thank you. You reminded us that this is a significantly a discussion about all kinds of IP production. That's a, a helpful thing. Mary-Howell.

MS. MARTENS: I don't appear to have a working microphone.

MR. GOEHRING: Is it dead already?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: They didn't even turn ours on, did they?

MS. MARTENS: I was in communication with a seed company, one of the seed companies that sells organic seed
last night. They do a really good job. They do some
production on their own. They do buy and resell. They also
sell conventional seed. This is really, really critical for
our overall discussion today. This is, this is sort of the
core of it all.

What I was told last night was, they will not,
they suspect that most of the seed, the organic seed they're
selling, is going to be somewhere around 1 percent AP. From
the get-go, that's not going to meet this contract. If it
goes up from there due to pollen drift or combine cleanout,
or anything else, it goes up. It doesn't go down.

They also won't put that as a guarantee on the
label. That's what they try to achieve. But the problem is
that the inbreds themselves that they're making the hybrids
out of, they have to license, and very often the inbreds
themselves are carrying AP percent. So, this is an organic
seed company that is doing their very best for organic
farmers. This isn't a non-GMO market. It is absolutely
imperative for a farmer to be able to know what their
percent that they start with is. Because if then they
harvest their corn and they take it to Lynn, and Lynn
rejects it, they are immediately going to blame their
neighbor. It came from pollen drift. It was because of Joe
over on the other side of the hill. When indeed, it was
not. They may, they'll, it'll cause friction between
farmers by casting aspersions on neighbors, when the problem started with the seed that was planted.

So if we're going to foster coexistence between neighbors, the person trying to achieve a non-GMO status needs to know from the get-go that the seed that they are planting, if they get no further contamination, or AP, they can meet a contract for .9 percent. If they can't know that information, it's going to make it very, very hard for them to then feel cooperation with neighbors because they're not going to know -- that's a huge gap of knowledge.

So, seed is where it starts. Percent AP in the seed needs to be a piece of information that any farmer trying to meet a contract knows before they put that seed in the ground. It needs to be labeled. It needs to be verified. It needs to be guaranteed. And I understand it's a real problem with inbreds that are being licensed, because that is something that the seed company might not have control over. But it is, it is something that if we're going to foster coexistence, seed has to be where it starts. Because, the information I got last night was, to me, quite alarming.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Thank you, Mary-Howell. Laura, please.

MS. BATCHA: Thank you. I'm going to follow Alan's lead from yesterday, maybe surprise you all by, I'm
going to agree with Doug this morning to get out of the
gate. And I, I want to say that at our first meeting we had
conversations, and I know Commissioner Goehring brought up
this idea a number of times about us needing to have
something for everybody on the table to get people to the
table.

And, you know, I will admit that honestly the
first two to three passes at that, I was resistant to the
idea. I think in, in working with my subgroup and learning
a little bit more about how we might cobble together
something that, that could potentially help smooth some
things out, not as a silver bullet, but help bring this
conversation back to the people who are practical and able
to solve the conversation. I'm increasing embracing the
idea that Doug's put forward about how we position this.

So, I just want to communicate that to the group.
And I really like the idea of it being positioned around IP,
because it can be positioned around IP as opportunity,
particularly in this environment where there are low
commodity prices, and challenges of IP and how you work
within your community to not only be good neighbors but
explore your opportunities within, within that. And I think
maybe that is a more inviting way to bring people to the
table because I think one of the things with this very
narrow charge that if it, if it does mean something after we
do work as a committee, it has to be something that others have a conversation about, that we stimulate something for, for people. And we can't control that all the way down to every meeting room, every gathering. So, I wanted to share that.

As far as I look at the, the models and what Doug laid out, and then the two models that we looked at yesterday, and Lynn and Angela's drafts, there's a couple things that I just want to flag. I, I don't have any real issues with the outline that, that Doug presented. I think the considerations and challenges is one piece of it. I think what Lynn put together could evolve into sort of a BMP set of statements along the lines of what we find in the North Dakota Pollinator Report. I think what the pollinator model doesn't include that we saw in the Conservation District presentation that I think is important for us to be looking at is resources towards incentives and supports to do these things. There's nothing in the pollinator thing that points back to other resources for you to improve your practices.

And I think with the learning yesterday around the funding for buffers and hedgerows, I think sort of pulling together a piece of what the Conservation District model is on the, on their working groups where a lot of what they're doing is when they convene people is pointing them to
resources through NRCS and helping them navigate how to
cobble together the available resources that solve other
problems but also solve the problem they're trying to solve
I think would be an important piece to add to that. So I
think we could meld those together.

My last thought this morning is that I know the
seed discussion is going to be our most challenging pitch
point likely as a committee. But I encourage us to press on
because I think without having something in there around
seed and some mechanisms for visibility on seed, I do think
a lot of what we will present in the end will be
disingenuous because it doesn't acknowledge that starting
place. So, I understand it's going to be the difficult
place for us, but I think let's try to come to something on
that. Because I think to leave it off the table I think is
going to be, we'll be underserving the people we're trying
to serve.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Thank you, Laura. Next we have
Leon.

MR. CORZINE: I'm Leon. Good morning, everybody.
I, a couple things that I, I'd like to bring out. One of
the things that we toyed with in our subcommittee and Doug
has, has addressed it, how you, how you structure meetings
where you get folks there. I think in our discussions, you
know, that's where we came up with a neutral party. And
maybe whether it's, if there's a new product or somebody wanting to do something different, you have to create interest to see how that's going to affect the neighborhood. But I think, actually, for my part, and being on the far, what you have to first do is, I think a step even before that is if, if you're going to have a product that, that, that your, that is an IP product, and so you've got to do some things for your preservation of the identity, it's a farmer-to-farmer thing. You don't need a meeting of the community.

You know, there are some things maybe you do, but I think we'd be remiss if we left out the part that it's just the farmer's talking, me talking to my neighbors. I've grown regulated products. And so I talk to the guys around me as far as what the buffer needs to do. Lynn's idea was they send a letter to some, I guess. I, we have not done that in my neighborhood. But it, but that is a step if you have trouble getting a hold of folks. But those are steps I think that maybe we need to make note of that, that is not necessarily a community-type meeting.

I think, you know, and maybe I would appreciate feedback, if now, later. If you haven't looked at it, what our NCGA proposed policy is, because it goes through steps. And part of that is, in the first line, has to do with Mary-Howell's concern as far as the seed purity because the goal,
one, is to understand the contract requirements and practices to meet those obligations. And I think that the deal is, and you know my thoughts on organic policy, you know, with, with, with the very tight tolerances that some of these contracts are doing, if you are, if you are signing a contract, whoever it is you're signing it with, if they want something that tight, then they should be helping you secure the seed. That should be part of the deal. And if you can't, you can't. The folks that I deal with, they help us with the seed, or they provide the seed even. So, so that is an important part of the process. And so I agree with Mary-Howell, but there are things that we can't do about that other than to remind producers, farmers signing these contracts what it's going to take to meet that contractual obligation. Because that's a contract. It's a private contract.

So anyway, and then, part of, of what I did with the NCGA proposal is you know what it might take for setbacks so that you can go through an evaluation, and then, then you decide can I, can I meet this or not. And if you know you can't get the seed for that purity, and, and whoever is wanting you to grow that product for that purity, if, if you can't do it, you can't do it. If you can do it and there's a lot of extra cost, well, what's the premium? You know, it's kind of like just going through the steps.
So, that's what I tried to do with this. And then if you go through the steps and you say, yep, I can meet this, we can do this here. Then you talk to your neighbors and let them know and see what it, what it takes.

I know folks who have done a very, very tight IP, a very, and they, and they have a product that absolutely could not be, they had to contain it all. And it got beyond their own borders, and, but it was very high-value. They paid the neighbors. Okay? If I'm going to get a very high-value product, and it's going to take my neighbor, you know, and you know, it's going to vary on what the product is. But I think that's something that needs to be a concern as you go through this. So, I think these type of things need to happen. And, and I would appreciate feedback sometime as we integrate that.

And then we look, but there are things, too, then that Doug's model outlines the community type meetings, which are fine. But I don't see that happening in every community until there is something that, that necessitates that or something that is going to change. Because, and that's not saying that anybody is anti-coexistence, because there's coexistence going on now. But to enhance coexistence, that's what we're all trying to do with this.

Thank you.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Thank you, Leon. Can I just
follow up to ask you a question? Is what you're talking about, and again, what you've presented from that NCGA policy proposal under discussion, is, is that similar to best management practices being thought of under sort of a guidance document? Is there some similarity between what you're talking about and what the other guidance document would be, the framework thing that Mary-Howell has talked about as well? Do you see, do you see a similarity there?

MS. MARTENS: I actually agreed entirely with what Leon just said. So.

MR. CORZINE: New best friends. I, but I think, yeah, I think you can, I don't know if I specifically put BMPs there. But, I mean, you could certainly do. It's, because that's all around what it takes to grow that product.

MS. MARTENS: Can I see that?

MR. CORZINE: Sure.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Thank you. Alan, do you want to --

MR. CORZINE: Thank you.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Do you want to hop right, hop in here now? Actually, you're next on the list anyway.

MR. KEMPER: Okay, thank you.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Anybody else who wants to comment, just let me know.
MR. KEMPER: I would, I would like to start, Mr. Chairman, this morning first of all agreeing that the Commissioner from North Dakota's paper is good. Although I would just kind of stop this paper after the first paragraph and let us write the rest of it. Voluntary in nature, and that's about where I would stop and say we need to go on. I have a little problem with your best management strategies. I would actually call it sustainable cropping strategies or something like that instead. But, I want to add some new things, Mr. Chairman, to the table's discussion this morning. If you care to take notes, that's fine. I'm going to go slow because I want to get this right.

According to a person that I visited with who was one of the past presidents of NASDA, as well as knowing the seed labeling laws, as well as industry standards for maize, i.e. corn, here are some facts and figures. Seed corn today, according to him, GE-bred, GE-modified, has to have a 98 percent trait purity. That's either herbicide or, or insecticidal traits. Of that, it has to have a 95 percent variety purity. If it's any less than a 95 percent purity, it has to be listed as blended, and they have to list what other varieties it's blended with.

Seed law allows up to 5 percent of off-types in all grades of corn, corn convention, organic, and GE. The organic and GE and conventional off-types can be any other
corn. So, i.e., a GE off-type could also be organic or conventional or a GE, or a -- or organic rather, corn off-type could be a GE or conventional, up to 5 percent. On conventional corn, non-GMO, still the same varietal, 95 percent, otherwise it has to be called blended. There is called a premium conventional, which means it has to have a less than .9 percent off-typing. And that gets a $20 per unit premium for that. And that's based on 80,000 kernel count. And those off-types, again, can be organic or GMO and conventional.

Then you go to organic seed, still the same 95 percent variety. Must be, the 95 percent must be that variety, and up to a 5 percent off-types, which can be any of the three. Industry strives, like Mary said, to have a less than .9. Recognizing all of that, Mr. Chairman, I think it is a point that either we footnote or put a sentence in the preface, preface, or whatever, saying something like seed industry strives to have pure seed. But, however, today's U.S. seed laws allows up to a 5 percent off-type. Or whatever.

I don't think we need to get bogged down telling farmers what they have to do or what has to be on the label, because that's already the law. And, Mr. Chairman, I might be off a percent or two, so we want to research it if we're going to actually use the word seed law or whatever.
Lynn, I don't know if that clarifies it. It clarified a lot for me, because I, even as a farmer, I didn't realize what the off types may be. I also didn't know the purity of a, a trait, insecticide or herbicide was a 98 versus a 95. I always, I saw it on the bags. And maybe that, Doug, is part of our educational process for the farmers in some of these meetings, you know. Not necessarily in the document, but once you have those meetings, whether that is on buffers or whatever, farmers need to recognize that. So, Mr. Chairman, I don't know if that helps or hurts. But I wanted to add that to the discussion. Thank you.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Thank you. Isaura, please.

MS. ANDALUZ: So, like, when you were talking Mary-Howell about you don't know if the contamination would --

MS. MARTENS: What's that?

MS. ANDALUZ: So when you said that maybe if corn is contaminated, it wouldn't necessarily be from the neighbors. It probably came from the seed --

MS. MARTENS: Yes.

MS. ANDALUZ: And you really don't know until you test to see whether it --

MS. MARTENS: But you have to test before you plant it.
MS. ANDALUZ: Well, you have to test after you grow, also, to see if it's contaminated, right? So, so it's not dumping it all on the seed. But that, but it is a problem. I mean, this is why I've been so concerned all along is because I do not want any contamination in my seed. And, you know, organic seed grower trade association, our thing is we want zero detect contamination in the seed. Because if you start with contaminated seed, odds just increases. It is a huge problem the United States has, the contamination in breeding lines. That's huge, because you're starting from a contaminated point. And I think there are other countries in the world that, that, you know, it eventually could severely impact our, our, our trade, if they don't want any contamination, and all we have is contaminated seed to start with.

We, at Cuatro Puertas we have the largest collection of drought-tolerant seeds and native seeds to southwest area. We've been trying to breed these out to bring them back to the communities. And the other thing is that these land-based varieties have a huge resiliency. So, for example, as the climate has changed, like in our area, for like I'd say for peppers, in the last three years, I've seen 10 degrees higher, 10 degrees colder, and they're still doing great. And so this is the type of genetics that we have to preserve. And so I, you know, we want zero
contamination. So somehow, these plants, there has to be, I mean, we cannot grow them in greenhouses, because it is, they're not growing out in, in the natural environment. These seeds have to be grown out in the natural environments.

But we need to be very conscious that there are places that, where people can still grow the seeds. And I don't know, I mean, I mean I don't know. There has to be something, something done because we cannot just have every seed in this country contaminated with GE traits.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Thank you, Isaura. Next we have Angela, please.

MS. OLSEN: I want to address two points, one being seed, and then the other is I wanted to make a few comments on top of Laura's comments that I agreed with as well. So, starting with seed, nobody disputes that, that seed is important. And so I agree with Alan that having something in the report acknowledging the importance of, of purity in seed is important. However, we did hear from Lynn and others that there are companies out there, if, it's a business model. And so there, certain companies have decided that they will include that GE content on the label. And so perhaps those are the companies that, if you want the seed and you want the GE information, and you have a certain, very set purity, maybe those are the companies to
purchase the seed from.

And, you know, again, it's a business model. We can't force all seed companies to go in that direction. But again, if there is a great need for it, maybe that's a model that some seed companies will choose to enter into.

Obviously, they would, you know, probably be charging a premium. I think we heard from Alan it's like $20 extra a bag. I don't know. I don't have that information firsthand. But that could be an opportunity for certain seed companies. So, again, seed purity is important.

Nobody is disputing that. I think that we can address that just maybe in a sentence in the, in the preface section, in the, in the, in the introduction. We don't want to give people the impression that that isn't something that's important.

But it's part of the education in terms of maybe understand what you're buying, what it is, what it isn't. You know, ask around. What are those additional resources? Maybe work with ASTA. Are there are some great business opportunities for certain, for seed companies that they can enter into, you know, that will do that testing, and then you have that on the bag as well. That's not required by law. But again, it can be a business model that certain companies choose to enter into. And we heard, and again, I don't know this firsthand, but we heard that certain
companies are doing that. And I know Lynn has that firsthand experience as well.

So, then in terms of Laura's comments. I like Laura's comments a lot about overlaying some of the good concepts from the NACD model over Commissioner Goehring's draft. Because I think that there's so many very good components in his draft. I do like the idea of resources from the NACD model as well, so people know, you know, where you can go. Maybe there's different funding mechanisms. I don't know. But, but I liked that concept. So I think that there's, we can start with Commissioner Goehring's model, you know, which is based on the MP3 model, but then overlay some of the really good contributions from the NACD model as well.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Great. Thank you very much. Barry, I believe, is next. Who else do I have here? Isaura, are you, are you back up, or are you down?

MS. ANDALUZ: Oh, I'm sorry. I'm sorry.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Thank you.

MR. BUSHUE: Mine's relatively quick. Doug and, and Alan both mentioned something about strategies. And while I may be the outlier here, the term BMP is of great concern to me. It has, it has, what word am I -- I can't think of the right term, but it has implications of what is absolutely best, and therefore becomes in effect a default
MR. SCHECHTMAN: Thank you very much. And could you repeat all of those other options, so we can be sure we got them down?

MR. BUSHUE: I think one of them was mitigation strategies. Alan, I can't remember what you called it. Sustainable District --

MR. KEMPER: I call it the sustainable cropping strategies.

MR. BUSHUE: There you go. I, you know, pick one, anyone except BMPs.

MR. KEMPER: BMP, you open yourself up to litigation.

MR. BUSHUE: Yeah. Okay.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Thank you. Laura, are you back up?

MS. BATCHA: I'm back up.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Okay.

MS. BATCHA: But I'm after Doug.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: You're after Doug. Sorry, I didn't get you down there. Doug, please. Doug, please.

MR. GOEHRING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A couple
things. And I, I agree that I think having some things outlined within the model that would suggest resources are incentives is good. Probably one of the things that becomes a bit of a challenge is how do you do that? So then maybe the best way to talk about incentives or resources is to make sure that we're keeping it at the local level. And understand, when I say local level, I mean state level. Because in some states, there's more 319 funds available, for example. In some states, there are --

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Would you remind us what 319 funds are again? I know they were mentioned yesterday.

MR. GOEHRING: Yes. 319 funds are funds that come from EPA. They're generally used for different practices. They're given to different organizations. For example, in the State of North Dakota, we use 319 funds with the Ag Department, Stockmen's Association, and the Health Department to deal with livestock pollution prevention programs. So, we assist farmers in the engineering and technical assistance in that respect. There has been 319 funds made available to certain soil conservation districts in our state at one time. And each one of those soil conservation districts determined how to best use those. And because there's such a wide array of topography, soils, and conditions, in some of those places, they actually help fund the purchase of no-till equipment or conservation
tillage equipment. But it's very specific. That's why I think in the narrative you put in parenthesis when you talk about resources, leave that up to those local counties and the state to determine what resources exist.

We have a lot of foundations in this country. And a lot of those foundations don't target the entire United States when they want to do something. They will target areas, regions. Sometimes they'll even get down to townships. We've had numerous foundations that actually target North Dakota, but they will target what they would call the Coteau Plateau. Not the entire state. It's a very specific area where they'll put money into types of programs. For example, winter cereals. So, again, I think it's wonderful because that's where you can access some of those funds. But I think identifying that in this document, in this model, you search for resources by identifying what resources would exist, and then, i.e., in parenthesis, these would be examples, some NRCS programs, some EQIP dollars, whatever that might be. Keep it general. Keep it at a higher level. And let those, those states, those counties, soil conservation districts, extension, deliver on that by providing some of that information.

The other thing, and I believe from what I'm seeing here when we talk about some different models or different formats, the one that I provided is probably very
specific to farmers. If you're going to invite farmers to
the table, and to a meeting, this would be the type of
document they'd be interested in because this is what they
do every day. I love the conversation that's going on about
marketing and seed, and that's all relevant. But most
farmers' eyes are going to glaze over because they have
nothing to do with it. They don't care. They won't show up
at a meeting, or they're going to get up and walk out.

But those that are involved in it, maybe in our
narrative, we identify that crop improvement associations,
maybe marketing groups, seed companies, anybody that's out
here working with identity preserve crops, they should think
about having meetings to talk about contractual agreements,
to talk about seed purity. But that doesn't have to be the
full part of this because they're getting into something a
little bit different than the rest of the Ag community
doesn't deal with. It's of interest. It's of interest to
those that are doing it, to those that you might be farming
next to. But most of the farmers would show up to talk
about mitigation strategies and sustainable cropping
strategies, because this is relevant. This comes down to,
and I, it's what I talked about earlier when I said
coexistence is a two-way street.

I think at any one time, we may all feel harmed,
we may feel disrespected, dishonored, because we feel like
something else has happened to us in our agricultural
operation on our farm that we really didn't have any control
of. And quite frankly, we don't have control of much.
There are so many inherent risks in agriculture. But if you
want to get them to the table because they might feel like
somebody's weed seeds or soil-borne pathogens or plant
pathogens might be affecting their crop, they now have to
spray a fungicide because my next-door neighbor won't keep
control, and, and management what's going on over in his
field. And they feel a little frustrated by that.

But this is an opportunity to come to a meeting
like this and to think about things in a bigger picture,
understanding a little bit about what's going on in their
backyard, because they know a lot about what's going on in
their backyard, but they haven't put it in the context of,
well yeah, if I plant over in this area, I'm probably going
to be less susceptible to some other issues.

I deal with this with sunflowers, for example. I
plant sunflowers. And I happen to be in the flightway where
there is a lot of sloughs that bites the heck out of
sunflowers. And unless I can get about five of my neighbors
to plant thousands of acres too, I just give up on it,
because I'll get attacked, and they'll take 60 percent of my
crop. So I have to think about, every year, if they're not
going to plant, I have to change at the last moment and move
sunflower production 27 miles away from home to some other fields that I have to make it work.

But it's about knowing your environment. And you do end up visiting with your neighbors. And that farmer-to-farmer talk, this is just giving them the tools to think about, oh yeah, this might be another strategy I could implement to make work. So, I just wanted to clarify that this document is more about that farmer-to-farmer group discussion because it helps feed that farmer-to-farmer discussion when they have to have it together. Because someone will say, I went to this meeting and I saw some mitigation strategies that would work. Or at least I think they would. What do you think? This is what I was thinking about doing. Thank you.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Thank you very much. You covered a lot of things. I was particularly pleased to hear that you have uncovered some additional thoughts about incentives, which is, was one of the challenges that we've had in this discussion. So, more, more food for thought in these discussions. Now, I think I have the order right here. The next I think is Laura.

MS. BATCHA: So, I hope I'm building off of the conversation we're having here. I tried to get my mind around preferences around nomenclature and recognize that. So, I'll go to management strategies. For the purpose of
this discussion what I think, you know, we'll have to, we'll have to wrestle that to the ground at a certain point.

One of the things that, that I thought was particularly nice about the North Dakota pollinator plan was that it wasn't just farmer management strategies as Doug laid out sort of narrowly. And not that that's not sort of perhaps the bulk of what it would include. But I liked how it talked, and they used the language BMP, so I'm quoting them, not, not me, beekeeper BMPs, and then, you know, landowner, sort of residential. So they didn't just take a, a narrow view. They did provide an opportunity to sort of put out that there are other stakeholders in the mix, and that there would be management strategies there. So I'd like to see us stay open to a, a broader set with the sort of, the farming strategies at the center of that.

And go to the seed question again. So, we think about management strategies. And Alan, thanks for doing the research that you did to lay that out for us. And I think clarifying what the law is in a footnote is, is entirely appropriate. I'd like to see that alongside, these are general ideas that I think would obviously need to be worked a little bit further. But could folks imagine some management strategies being laid out on the grower side, a little bit if an evolution of something that Leon laid out, which is, I think it's not just a contract, but if you have
a market expectation for a threshold, because I think not
everything is sold on contract. And increasingly, the stock
market trades on the .9 as well.

So I think we have to open our minds to the fact
that that's not only a marketplace threshold that happens in
a contract, that it's to your advantage to know what you're
starting with in your seed. Right. Put a statement out
there. And then management practices on the grower side
might be asking your seed provider what the level is. Just
start having that conversation. Maybe we can scour, I still
haven't given up hope that there might be some resources out
there available to help provide affordable testing to the
grower if they get in a pinch and that's the only way they
can get the information. I think we, I'd like to see us
continue to look at that.

And then management strategies for seed companies
might be a recommendation that if people ask you, that you
be able to provide specific purity levels on, on lots rather
than general ranges as a way to foster coexistence and the
marketplace. So those are some ideas that could be
accompanied with a footnote, that Alan laid out about, you
know, oh, by the way, this is the law. Right? And
everybody is already complying with the law kind of thing.
I think that there's no reason why that wouldn't be an
appropriate thing to include.
MR. SCHECHTMAN: Thank you, Laura. Barry, are you back up?

MR. BUSHUE: I am, thanks. I kind of wanted to follow up a little bit with where Doug was at. I would agree, if this, if you're going to get the people to the table that are going to make the difference, it's going to be the farmers. And the way to do that is to make sure, and I would warn us that, to be cautious in how we proceed and how we invite them and include them. The folks that I'm honored to represent, when I talk to them at length, their biggest fear of government is that they just want to be left alone. They want to farm. They're tired of overregulation. They're tired of being told what to do, how to do, where to do it, and when to do it.

If that is the way in which the meetings are portrayed, and I'm not saying anybody's saying that, but I'm saying we have to be cautious that these things are viewed as an opportunity, as Doug said, for farmers to have open and frank discussion without the fear of someone telling them to be and how they're going to have to do it.

You pick an acronym in a federal agency right now, and they're all basically effectively trying to do what they can to put agriculture out of business. That's my opinion, take it or leave it. But, with the exception, frankly, of USDA, and I give, I give Mike and I give the Secretary a lot
of credit. They've done a lot of work to reach out to the industry and try to be partners instead of, instead of adversaries.

But, when I look at Doug's, when I look at Doug's proposals about making sure it's farmers at the table, I bristle a little bit at the community aspect of these kind of meetings that it appears that the pollinator task force are having. And I think in that case, it's probably more valid. But I think in the case of biotechnology and coexistence, it's important that, number one, the community has no stake in this. They have no, they have nothing, nothing invested in this. It's not their livelihoods that are at risk. And there's no shortage of folks in our community that have no interest or actual experience in agriculture that want to tell us how to do it.

So I'm really pushing where Doug was going to in terms of us making sure that these are meetings where farmers are, are free of challenges and transparent enough to have discussion around the things that will impact them and their neighbors. The one thing that I do have a concern about, and this is maybe just from my experience in Oregon, if you start talking to people about pesticides, they're going to view it, if you have that on the list, they're going to view that as here's somebody else trying to take my ability to use pesticides. That worries me.
Not that it's not an important discussion to have, but it becomes part and parcel of a suggested, suggested topic to discuss. I think a lot of my members, anyway, are going to feel very uncomfortable about that because, let's face it, right now there's a lot of attempts to do just that. Both, more importantly in the People's Republic of Oregon, but elsewhere as well. So, with that, I'll stop. Thank you.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Thank you, Barry. Let me just stipulate that all of the credit to USDA goes to the Secretary and not to me. Alan, I believe you're next.

MR. KEMPER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As Barry said, not only farmers, but a lot of property owners get extremely nervous about private property rights and the infringement thereof. But a couple of other thoughts as we're discussing today, one, a lot of farm bills in the past, and other laws have been enacted do a rollout provision in various selected territories or states on various models. Whether that's crop options, whether that's other things, so, just a point of consideration.

As Betsy and us talked yesterday about enhancement plans for CRP on some of the more buffered areas versus an IP crop or organic crop, we might want to select a state or allow states to opt into a program on coexistence as a trial basis, so we don't, even though the document might be
generic enough that it handles the whole U.S., we might footnote or caveat spots where it may work or may not work, and that would be up to the commissioners of Ag states.

I'm sorry, folks. We keep getting down into a maize category that I don't see listed on the charge. The charge is generic enough to address livestock producers or states that are having trouble ash borers keeping their farmer neighbors from having those trees next to them without getting proper cut, it addresses a citrus greening in Florida that's affecting the citrus industry and having that coexistence plan. It affects the orchards around the arctic apples. It affects vegetable legumes, and, and other crops. We keep getting down to just pollen drift in maize.

Folks, I only have so many hours in a day. We've already recognized the fact that all seed, unless it's in a seed bank like Summit is, has some has genetic flaws. Let's, let's put that in our document, and let's move forward addressing all general Ag, which was our charge to start with. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Thank you. I'm just looking to see, ah. David, thank you. Thank you for waving your flag.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. David Johnson. I was really struck when the Secretary came and visited us with, a couple of meetings ago when he talked about the importance of diversity in American agriculture,
and that was one of our strengths. And I think one of the things I've enjoyed most about being a part of this group is our discussions about diversity, the different cropping systems, the different production methods, the different crops that we grow.

I was, I was impressed with Barry's story yesterday about just how diverse his farm is and the pride that he takes in that. And so I think that as we think about this subject, we really all should embrace, and I think that we all do embrace that concept of the diversity in American agriculture. When people are on trade missions and they're in certain countries, they can promote organic production systems. They can promote certain technologies that work well in those environments. And so I'm really excited about that.

The other thing I was really excited about was how fast the MP3 plans have rolled out across the country. When I listened to Dr. Glenn yesterday, she indicated that I believe seven states are done, let's see, I think nine states are close, 20 are in development, 10 are to be done, and only four weren't doing something. That's a 92 percent adoption rate in a relatively short period of time. So I, I think as I look at this, and as we look at it as a group, I think NASDA offers a nice place for us to go. It offers something that they're, they're deeply committed to within
MP3. And this is an extension of MP3, the way I look at it. I'm really impressed with the one-page summary that Commissioner Goehring put together in terms of its simplicity.

I serve on the models group. One of the things I would volunteer the models group to do is take the NCGA, the, the document that we have on coexistence that Paul put together, Dr., or Commissioner Goehring's document, is try to maybe even craft or develop a base MP3 plan that we could share with NASDA and let NASDA decide if there are any states that would be interested in crafting it for their own state and, and taking it. That she, she offered that commitment to work with us.

The seed purity thing, I've been in the seed industry 20 years. I grew up on a farm. And, and there's reasons why the seed law is written the way that it is. And it's because we all live in a biological world. It's a biological system. There's wind, there's rain, there's environment. And so there's, there's these provisions in the seed law to allow that. And I think even when Alan mentions 98 percent trait purity, well why don't we put 100? Well, because it goes both ways, right? And so I think we have to recognize that.

And the other thing that I think I'm most impressed about the MP3 plan was when Commissioner Goehring
summarized to us that when people came together from all parts of agriculture, in fact the people that were farm, farm owners, you had the house owners coming there, the beekeepers come in there. They all learned in this conversation. And, because when I look at this, when we're trying to protect diversity of American agriculture, it's really about food. And everybody at this table, everybody in this room, everybody in this city, everybody in this country, everybody around this planet has a vested interest in food and food production. I mean, we're trying to feed 9 billion people by 2050.

And so I, I think that we want to keep this conversation broad, and we want as many people to understand what each party is up against. And it's not just about farmer-to-farmer communication. It's really about what we as consumers want to consume as food, too. And so I think keeping it broad, like the MP3 did, that allowed states to quickly roll this out. I mean, the adoption rate of how they're rolling those plans out, I'm, and this is voluntary. So, I just wanted to, to comment on a few of these things. I think the models group, I could sure get behind helping craft something. I'd like to volunteer Commissioner Goehring to do that, but I'm not, not going to do that. I don't have the authority to do that.

But I think that the models group, if the
committee thought that that was important enough, if we could sit down and start to bring this together, and then share it with NASDA and let NASDA take it to its membership and see what they would like to do with it at the local level. Thank you.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: If I can just amend that. I think anything that the models group would do would need to be brought back to the Committee before, and again --

MR. JOHNSON: In full agreement.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Yeah. Now, the drafting, I mean, we'll get recommendations from you, but we're still going to try to take the pen out of your hand so that we don't have fighting over every comma.

MR. JOHNSON: Yeah. And probably Michael and Russell would, would do that fine tuning. But, but as a models group, we would be, I think our group would be more than willing to take a stab at that, to bring to the committee.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Okay. Greg, I think -- oh, I'm sorry. Greg, I think, is next. Then Lynn, and Laura. Lynn then Laura.

MR. JAFFE: Thank you, Michael. I guess I wanted to bring up a point that I think we haven't discussed very much that I think is still part of our charge. And the history of our charge was that, you know, we made some
recommendations in our other report, and the Secretary sort of said, well, they couldn't do this. So let's look at states and other places to do it. But the last part of the charge says, if so, how might the federal government assist in this process.

And I guess I think a critical part of our report is to reiterate I think what we had said before, which is, you know, leadership comes from the top. And I think that, you know, the secretary and whoever the future secretary is, and the undersecretaries at USDA needs to make this a priority. Because if they make it a priority, then it comes down to NASDA and others making it a priority. And I can't speak for the pioneer plan but I think that's been a priority and discussed a lot by the leadership at USDA. And they've had, you know, they've given that priority, made that a priority, and therefore the states and others, whether it's voluntary or not, make it a priority.

And so I think we can do all we want about writing models and farmer-to-farmer discussions and things like that. But it, there has to be, I think a role for USDA to play. And I, and I think that's important that our report include something to do with that. And I don't think we've, I'm not sure what those recommendations are at this point yet. I think we have to discuss that. But I think we probably all agree that if USDA doesn't make this a policy
priority for itself, even if it can't, if it doesn't have
the money to do the incentives or it doesn't have the legal
authority to do these things, it clearly has the, when, when
USDA talks to farmers, to extension, to states, and things
like that, it clearly has the ability to make things a
priority at those levels.

And so, I guess I don't want to miss that as a
critical part, I think, of our report is, is that last
sentence there and not get, we -- and so, anyway, I'll leave
it at that.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Thank you. Thank you, Greg.
Good point. I believe it is next, Lynn.

MR. CLARKSON: Jerry Slocum and I at this table
both involve ourselves with marketing grain on a daily
basis. And I listen to Barry's comments about being made
uncomfortable by people trying to tell the farmer how to
farm. And Jerry and I have to deal every day with the
markets. And the consumer has become very much an element
in defining what those markets are. And as Jerry and many
have conversations on the various links in the food chain,
at least I've been greatly impressed that the farmer knows
very little about the linkage beyond Jerry or Lynn. And the
buyers know almost next to nothing about the links on the
other side of Jerry and Lynn. And somehow we need to hold
hands there.
So, again, I look at this as, as a critical effort to maintain market access to beneficial markets for U.S. producers. Jerry and Lynn, especially Lynn perhaps, deals with clients that are tough. We want .9. Get it for me. I don't care whether it's a problem for you. I don't care whether it's a seed problem. You know you can get pure seed out of Europe. So either get me the corn out of Europe, get me the soybeans out of Europe, get me the X out of Europe, or you buy the seed and bring it over here. I don't want to listen to excuses. I don't want to listen that this is inconvenient for you. So that's the hard reality with the merchandising part of the link deals with on just a daily basis.

So, the significant point is we're trying to preserve the opportunity for the U.S. to participate in those markets. It's kind of amazing to me that we're already ceded over 50 percent of our organic seed market to other countries. And I expect we're going to be bumping 50 percent to other countries in corn in the near future. So, we have to fight standards that people set, not either knowing or particularly caring about the difficulties that may cause the farm. And if they can find it anywhere in the world, they will. We're increasingly an instant marketplace.

So, Jerry and Lynn and everybody at this table to
some extent has this dilemma, how do we support the market? If you throw a market meeting today that involves farmers, I'm not surprised you're going to have people there telling you they don't want pesticides, they don't want this, they don't want that. They feel that they're part of every one of those conversations. We're their food chain, and they want us to pay attention.

So, I'm not really saying what should happen. I'm just telling you we at this table have a market dilemma that we need to keep our eye on. And we, and the seed industry I think does a really excellent job. But now we have criteria. We are being asked for a marketplace we've never had before at purity levels that are extraordinarily difficult to do unless you're isolating an entire production area, like the Europeans have essentially done. So it is a daily puzzle here that this conversation feeds into. And hopefully we'll soften some of these hard edges. Thank you.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Thank you, Lynn. I think that we're having a great discussion. And what I want to do is to get all of these comments, then take a break, and then come on back. So for additional comments, we'll just take them after, after we have a coffee break. But now, Doug, I believe.

MR. GOEHRING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Going back to a few things that have been stated here. And I
think they're important, and they are things to think about. I know Greg from where USDA would probably need to be politically, I think you're right. I think if they were to come out and say that AC21 has addressed concerns concerning coexistence, and I believe if they were to say here are some things to consider about mitigation strategies and pass that off, that's where you get the buy-in, because they're still a federal government. So if they were to go out and use FSA or USDA and say here's some things we want you to talk about, here's some public meetings we want to have, I believe a lot of farmers are going to feel this is prescriptive and it's coming from the top down.

Where if you have this other entity, whether it is extension, the Ag Department, whether it is our soil conservation districts saying we understand the concern that exists out there, here are some tools that have been developed or things to consider, that's one of the greatest roles that USDA can hang their hat on. And politically, it puts them in a position where they're not out front and they're going to get criticism about. They're just going to say, hey, the AC21 group, this diverse cross-section in the United States that are concerned about coexistence, just put some thoughts together, some things to consider in every community.

And there's going to be different things to
consider. It's probably going to be one of the best places for them to be. And it still puts those other entities in every one of those states in a position to look at it and say, yeah, this is, this is relevant, this isn't relevant, and develop from there. Because here's the format. Here's the outline. Here's things to consider. And I believe that the narrative that would get put together would give them examples of why they need to think about things in this manner. Because it's a farmer-to-farmer thing, but it's put in a public meeting setting. And this is what I commented about yesterday, why I love the fact those that aren't involved in the industry, they sat back, and they were spectators. And they learned so much about what's going on because they aren't intimate with our industry. And it helped them, and they walked away with a different perception of the challenges that, that farmers and ranchers and the industry deal with. And they stopped trying to point the finger and tell us what to do. Because they went, oh my God, it's a lot more complex than I thought.

And in the same respect, so is this. Because it's going to be different in every county. It's going to be different in every township. So, I think USDA would have something to hang their hat on here. And they could do it, and it would be the one area in all of federal government that most people are going to look at and say, geez, we can
continue to trust USDA and the things that they're doing on behalf of the people, because that doesn't exist everywhere else. But if they showed up and said, you know, we're going to host these meetings, it's not going to go over well. At least not in my state or my region. Thank you.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Thank you, Commissioner. David.

MR. JOHNSON: I didn't put my hand up.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Okay. Alan.

MR. KEMPER: I'm going to switch gears. Lynn, I was going to make a couple of comments that, that reference, when you reference one of those meetings and that farmers don't know how to market. It just kind of got me a little bit. I deal with options and multimillion dollar contracts and stuff, so let's not go there.

But I always appreciate Commissioner Doug because he keeps us, one, at a statesmanship level, and two, at a higher plane. I deal in a couple states, Indiana for one. And Ted McKinney, Commissioner of Ag for that state, is excellent. In Florida, you have Adam Putnam, who is an outstanding commissioner. So I think, Greg, as we talk about it, I think it's really brilliant if we can talk about the teamwork approach of USDA and then the state departments of agriculture to help roll things out.

Further, you meet people that they do not enjoy, one, crowds, or two, being told what to do with that. And,
and so if you're working a team-ship (phonetic sp.) approach like Doug is talking about through the NASDA, or, or through the conservation districts, I think you'll go a lot farther. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Thank you very much. Why don't we take a 15-minute break. We moved seamlessly from the first topic into the second topic. I didn't even have to introduce it. So, I think that was great, and these were I think really productive discussions. So, come back at 10:45, please. Thank you.

Whereupon, at 10:29 a.m., a brief recess is taken.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Okay. Let's get started again. First let me let folks know that the documents that I alluded to before have arrived. They're outside. Next thing, we've just been called. Secretary Redding has finished his hearing and will be on his way back. I think, I think we will have some good things to report to him, particularly if we keep this, this positive work going. What is next on the agenda is talking about the guidance document and the work of the three subgroups. But first, additional comments that folks may have on where we were before. I see we have Barry up first.

MR. BUSHUE: I really appreciated the camaraderie and the collaborative work we've done here. And I don't
want to upset that. But I, I cannot, I'm sorry, Lynn, but I can't let your comments go unanswered. Everything I sell on my farm is directly to consumers. I understand consumers. I understand the needs. We spent 18 years trying to understand them and model our farm for things that they would understand and appreciate. 85 percent of all products in Oregon are sold outside of our state, much of it overseas to the Pacific Rim. 35 percent of agriculture in the United States of America is exported overseas. American Farm Bureau's priorities have always been trade and the importance of trade in the entire food chain.

To make assumptions that farmers are really not educated or smart enough to understand the markets beyond you I think is disingenuous, and I can't let it go unsaid that my members would not be happy with those kind of comments. I don't know what drives them. I don't know what motivates them. I don't know who you deal with or how many farms you deal with, but I deal with thousands. They're smart. They're intelligent. They do well. They understand the chain. They look for markets outside. And to make an assumption of anything else, I can't let go unsaid. I'm sorry.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Thank you, Barry. Next we have Greg, I believe, and then Chuck.

MR. JAFFE: Yeah, I just wanted to respond before,
because there were a couple of comments that were made that suggested that, I was suggesting somehow that the Secretary should have meetings and get everybody together and start the coexistence dialogue as USDA-sponsored activities. And I don't think I was saying that. What I was saying was, I think there should be some leadership from the top to make this a priority, whether that's at NASDA, whether that's at states or otherwise, and then they can go and do all of that detail. So I wasn't suggesting that USDA was getting into the weeds in this, and it was a federal mandate or a, or a Washington mandate.

But I do think that there are lots of priorities for farmers, and lots of things that go on. And, and coexistence can get lost in the mix if we don't have some priority-setting and some statements and involvement from USDA. And that's what I was trying to get at. So I think we still need to impress upon USDA in our report that they need to show the farmers, the bureaus, the extension, everyone out there that this is a priority, that this is an issue that's not going to go away and needs to, and, and could, could use dialogue and help on. So I just wanted to clarify that.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Thank you, Greg. Chuck, I believe, is next.

MR. BENBROOK: Two things. You know, it's a big
country. And agriculture producers relate to their neighbors and markets differently. Different parts of agriculture are much more dependent on government policy and, and farm bills. Where Barry and I live, farmers have had a much more intimate and ongoing relationship with markets, with others, other people that live in the state. And I think we've seen this greater camaraderie in Oregon play a constructive role in dealing with some of the, you know, the, the more contentious issues. And I, Jackson County passes, you know, passed the county-level ban on GMOs, but then things kind of got worked out so that nobody had to tear out any fields of alfalfa. And while it certainly wasn't a perfect resolution from the perspective of a lot of people, it worked out more smoothly in Oregon than I think it would in Ames, Iowa.

In, in the Midwest, where Lynn does business with a lot of farmers and is trying to establish linkages between IP markets outside the U.S. and Midwestern farmers, there are farmers that don't have the same kind of interactions with both value chains and urban people as is much more common in the West. And so I can, I can understand how Barry feels, but I also understand where Lynn is coming from. I do think there, for commodity producers in the Midwest, you know, they harvest their crop and they haul it to the local elevator. And certainly there's some farmers
that pursue other markets, but, but there, there's a much
less intimate relationship between farmers and end-users in
major commodity states than on the coast where producers
tend to be closer to their markets.

You know, having said that, and just in the hope
that we, as a committee, we can understand that things are
different around the country, and the, and the issues are,
are going to be different, as well as the institutions and
political dynamics of dealing with them. I think we all
sort of get that intuitively. But, I just want to reiterate
my view that the, the, the scope and seriousness of
coexistence issues have both grown during the tenure of our
committee. I think they're going to continue to get more
serious and have the potential for more collateral damage on
communities, on the relationship between the general public
and the agricultural sector, on, on our access to high-value
markets.

And that one of the messages that I hope to see
from this to the secretary is that as a nation, we have to
pick up the pace at which we deal with these underlying
tensions that, that exist and, and are impacting this
technology. Again, irregardless of whether you think they
are, they are well-grounded or based on good science or
whatever, they exist. And to ignore that they exist is
really quite foolish, in my opinion. And I, I feel that
until the root causes of the tensions around this technology are dealt with in a more effective way, the coexistence problems and the costs of dealing with them are going to continue to, to go up.

And I, I urge and challenge my colleagues on this committee to, to be as forthright as possible in expressing the view that, you know, we could have all the farmer-to-farmer meetings as we can imagine. And, and really perhaps not even keep up with the, the flow of events that are, that are, are really making it more difficult for farmers to, to coexist, through no, no fault of their own. And, and by virtue of the fact it's not, it's not a problem created by farmers, it's also not a problem that farmers can solve by themselves.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: My apologies. I missed the last sentence. I was trying to see about something I shouldn't have been seeing about.

MR. JAFFE: Your microphone is not on.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: My apologies. My phone, my phone buzzed and I was trying to see something.

MS. BATCHA: I think I was in the queue.

MR. JAFFE: Oh, you're right.

MS. BATCHA: I was in the queue ahead.

MR. JAFFE: Laura is ahead.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Okay. So I have folks in the
queue. I didn't have the order for the folks. If you're, if you are next, Laura, I apologize. And I apologize for missing your last sentence, Chuck.

MS. BATCHA: So, when Alan was talking earlier about sort of remembering this isn't about pollen flow and referenced citrus greening, it reminded me of something that we worked on or are continuing to work on over the last number of years that I think could be considered sort of a coexistence example and maybe a model. So I thought I'd, I'd share it with, with, with the group.

While there is not currently genetically modified root stock on the market for citrus, there's a tremendous amount of research and innovation. Citrus greening disease is devastating. The organic citrus market is primarily focused in Florida and California. And our growers are desperately trying to stay alive just like the neighbors who are non-organic growers. Everybody is under a tremendous amount of pressure.

The different states and the different communities have responded in, in different ways. And starting about three years ago, as this issue was emerging, there, there immediately became tension between growers in, in neighborhoods around production methods. Organic growers don't use the neonic pesticides that are primarily the, the treatment to knock back the psylla populations that
established the disease in the tree. So under a lot of pressure for fear of losing, losing markets, there became a lot of finger-pointing with the neighborhoods about issues that Doug's been raising on coexistence, which is that it goes both ways. Are your, are you fostering psylla populations by not spraying that are then impacting my groves.

In California, as the psylla started to be found, they instituted mandatory spray programs in zones which were knocking organic production out of compliance and losing certification on, on crops because of mandatory sprays in areas. And so there was a tremendous amount of tension. Both communities worked on it a different way, but they both followed a path like we're talking about, about getting stakeholders together. But it wasn't just farmer-to-farmer discussions that was able to shift the table.

So, in Florida, the discussion expanded between farmer-to-farmer and included Texas A&M, the land-grant university got brought in. APHIS agents on the ground got brought into the discussion. And they started exchanging psylla counts and treatment methods amongst neighbors. And it was determined that the organic production areas that according to APHIS test, APHIS's tests, without the neonics have lower psylla counts than their neighbors did.

Nobody was curing citrus greening disease. So
don't pretend like, you know, that's not, I'm not making a statement about where, where the solution is. What I'm saying is that by having those parties at the table and having data available and exchanging information, everything calmed down considerably within the communities looking to each other for solutions. So now some of the non-organic growers are like, what are you doing for micronutrients in your soil, what are you doing for, for protocols. And Texas A&M is involved in a long-term research project on compliant cures and what that could contribute to citrus.

In California, with the mandatory sprays, we had a harder problem. But the state department of agriculture there, CDFA, played an important role, gathered stakeholders together, including the state marketing board for citrus, land-grant universities, growers on both sides. Input suppliers came to the meetings that we held in three places all over the state, shared the data, and the state was able to get to a place where they were comfortable with certain protocols to not impose mandatory sprays on organic production.

Nobody solved citrus greening in either place. But I do think we made a tremendous amount of progress in the area, but it did take having more than farmer-to-farmer discussions at the table, but they were local, primarily locally driven. Everybody knew each other for the most part
or knew of each other in terms of the players. Well-respected, and it wasn't a judgmental conversation. So, I had forgotten about it in the context of this. Thank you for that.

MR. KEMPER: See, we're working on this together.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: I like it. Thank you. Okay.

I'm not sure of the order, but let's say Mary-Howell I think is next.

MS. MARTENS: Barry, I do think we're seeing different parts of the same elephant. I may be the only one in the room who is dealing with a population of consumers who are now asking for no soy animal feeds. And that has to do with a nutritional philosophy that's going around. Well, now it's not just no soy. Now they want no corn. And last week, I had someone come in who said they wanted no soy, no corn chicken feed that also had no gluten.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: No chickens.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Oh, my God.

MS. MARTENS: Oh, my.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: What do you want to feed these chickens?

MS. MARTENS: And therein lies the challenge of consumers, buyers who don't, don't realize the agricultural reality of what they're asking and really don't care. Lynn is right. They have their philosophy about what they want,
and that's what they're going to be asking for. At the break, Jerry and Lynn and I, well, I was listening in. They were talking about the unique challenge of, of being sort of the pivot point between buyers who have a perspective on, on what they want, and they're going to get it, and farmers who have a perspective on what they can produce. But those two groups aren't necessarily sitting down and looking at each other. Those two groups are, have their own worlds that they're living in, and then there are a few buyers who are in the pivot points. And, and that is, that is a unique position. That is, that is a position of a fair amount of difficulty in, in satisfying both sides.

Therein lies a bit of a challenge for coexistence. We are as a world, as producers here in the United States dealing with a buying population, a buying, consumer crowd that is becoming more educated, but not necessarily, they're becoming more opinionated I guess is a better way of putting it, on what they want. And they're going to continue to ask about it, ask for it, demand it, be willing to pay for it, but demand it. That may be increasingly difficult for American farmers to do.

Coexistence between parties is important. I will go back to a point where we have to start. If we're going to try to meet a particular market, we have to know that the seed that we're starting with, if nothing else goes wrong,
will be adequate to meet that. And then we have to have the tools to, to not increase our risk. But, this, this is something that is going to continue to get worse. As, as Chuck said, the dynamics have changed a lot in the past five years. The number of consumers that I have coming into my feed mill right now who are experts on all matters of nutrition is a great deal more than five years ago. And it is making it very difficult to be cooperative, to not stand there and laugh at them. But also to, to do my best to, to satisfy their demands.

This is not going to stop. This is not going to get less. It's only going to get more.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Thank you, Mary-Howell. I believe Jerry, then Leon.

MR. SLOCUM: Thank you, Michael. Jerry Slocum. And most of what I was going to say has been said by Lynn or Barry or Chuck or Mary. But, I think, I think what it all points out is, is, is that the difficulty of what we're trying to do, and there's no doubt that buyers and consumers, whether they're consumers of food or they're consumers of animal feeds, whatever, are becoming more discerning and more demanding. And we are offering them more choices. There's no doubt about it. And that speaks to the, the strength and the versatility and the diversity of the American agricultural system.
What the Secretary has asked us to do is to facilitate that diversity and facilitate those different offerings. And communication is simply the key to it. We've got this simple problem in the Deep South. Now, we can't raise soft red winter wheat. We can't raise Number 2 SRW, the simplest stuff in the world to raise, easiest thing you can possibly farm. Because all of a sudden we've got test weight problems. We've got vomitoxin problems. We've got fumonisin problems. We've got problems that we didn't even test for four and five and six years ago. And this year, there will be another animal in that mix. I'm certain. I just don't know what it is.

So our small elevator chain began to write letters to our customers that raise soft red winter wheat. And we, we prefaced it last fall when they started planting a wheat crop. And wheat is dirt cheap now. Respectively, it's $4.50 a bushel instead of 8.50 that it cost three years ago. And we're not trying to tell our customers how to grow wheat, because they know how to grow wheat. But we're trying advise them that there are things that they have never had to consider before and that there are production techniques that perhaps they ought to explore and adopt that could prevent some of the horrendous market discounts. If your wheat comes into our elevator at 57.9 test weight this spring instead of 58, the prevailing discount now is 40
cents a bushel, 40 cents a bushel. If it's 56.9, it's 80 cents a bushel. So you're turning a 4.50 crop, which is below the cost of production, into a 3.70 crop, which is way below the cost of production.

So there was this need for a conversation, not to teach farmers how to grow it, necessarily, but to apprise them of new market conditions that they are probably not aware of, because Delta Farm Press is not writing about it. Prairie Farmer is not writing about it. Corn and Soy Digest are not writing about this, this new paradigm we find ourselves in. But it's reality. And buyers become more discerning. They become more demanding. And, it's a global marketplace. If we don't sell them SRW, the Ukrainians do. Somebody sells them the wheat that they want. And for us to compete in that global marketplace and domestic marketplace, it makes no difference, we've got to adopt this, this strategy of, of a, of a supply chain from the guy that sells the input to the guy that makes the final process product, whether it's a food product or whether it's a raw vegetable or a raw citrus product, or if it's a processed feed. The conversation has to become, it has to encompass the entire chain I think.

The piece the Secretary is asking us for is a relatively small piece of that chain right now. Okay? It's about how can we foster this diversity at the farm level.
Okay? So I, I encourage us to try to get back into that frame. Mike was reminding us, time is short. Time is short. The calendar is ticking. They want this done before the election. So, we, we, I think we need to maybe try to refocus on our narrower charge, if we might. Thank you.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Thank you very much, Jerry.

Leon, please.

MR. CORZINE: I'm going to try not to regress too much here. But I, so I can just make a comment. I, you know, Charles, your comments get under my skin, and, and Lynn somewhat saying the farmers don't know their markets or know their end user. Now, there may be an element of that, but there's also an element of maybe whatever you want to choose that don't know the chain. But I know who my market is. I know who I grow for. We look at contracts. And you don't, and that's it. We're kind of off target from what we're supposed to be working on here, actually. So, I think, I think with all these market opportunities, and Jerry said it, we're offering more choices all the time. So that's a credit to us and the diversity that we have. There is going to be a point, and I think you have reached your point that it's incumbent upon someone talking to whoever that middleman is, that you say, you know what, you can't, you can't do that. Maybe Mary-Howell's chicken farmer says, you know, may say, you know what, you've got to go, do you
want third world chickens, or, or do you want, you know, do you want any meat on those chicken wings.

You know, there's going to -- the point is, there is a point that I think maybe everybody in the food chain has needs to do some information on the other end. But that being said, what I see our charge and what we're trying to do here is to provide a pathway, or, to where, when a farmer does see an opportunity, maybe the middle man. Maybe Clarkson Grain, maybe Mary-Howell's, maybe Jerry's, maybe my local elevator, maybe my ADM, maybe Tate & Lyle whoever, they come to me and say, you know what, we've got this opportunity. And, and we want to know if you'll do it, because we've worked with you before. You can segregate. You've got grain, you've got the infrastructure on your, and, you know, so you go through that. And that's kind of the process, if you look at what I did on the NCGA thing, if you look at what Doug has put together, the MP3. I think we need to get back to, back to where what are, what are the ways that we can coexist when we're trying to provide those kind of opportunities. But let's not say things that I consider inflammatory or disingenuous to the farm community that we don't know about our markets. But let's help them take a look at, at what, and move forward with what our charge is. Thank you.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Thank you very much, Leon. Alan,
Occasionally, a light bulb goes off with me. And it's kind of rare, I think. So I kind of think it's cool. First of all, I agree with Mary. We have to definitely recognize we have a changing society with changing needs and consumer moods with that. We have a lot of drivers, including Google, Wal-Mart, and others that do food consortiums and others that's going to drive what ingredients we feed our livestock as well. And Mary, I think you would agree with that.

Here comes the light bulb. We have to embrace change. And one thing I have not heard here, change has already happened. We've got to catch up. Delta Press can't do it because they're in print. I would suggest to you the physical means that we're talking about are in the past. The millennials will not come. The farmers my age will not come because we're too busy. You can either give us a Webinar, you can do it email jointly, you can do all types of group texting. You can do Facebook groups, and all of those will build the coexistent verbiage we need without having a physical meeting.

And I suggest to you the sons and daughters of my area, everybody keeps talking, sometimes Maine Farm Bureau even does that, that all, you know, agriculture is aging,
and the median age now is 62.3. I would suggest to you Main Farm Bureau's statistics are way wrong considering our area the average age of a farmer is 35.4. And so that means we have to really stretch on what we're going to put out there for the coexistence areas of knowledge and meetings with that because the groups that I deal with are all under 40. All under 40. And their communication is a whole lot different than Doug or mine. We still enjoy having a beer together. They do too, but they don't want to talk about coexistence having a beer. They've already done that on LinkedIn or, or Facebook or something like that. So just a thought, Mr. Chairman. But I think it's a thought we really need to think about.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Here, here.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Thank you. I think that's a very, a very interesting thought. Despite the fact that I know if the Secretary were here, he would reiterate the point about his statistics on the aging of farmers. And we need to get those other, those other folks here.

MR. KEMPER: Right, right. Well, I do appreciate the Secretary, but what I have to suggest to you, a lot of times USDA data is out of date.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Okay. Mary-Howell, please.

Thank you.

MS. MARTENS: I agree with you, Alan, on one
point, one point difference though. Of the farmers in my area, the average age is probably in the, the 30s to 40s, and absolutely none of them except for a very small handful are online.

MR. KEMPER: Because they're Amish and --

MS. MARTENS: Because they're Amish Mennonite.

MR. KEMPER: Right. We have to recognize that.

MS. MARTENS: And they will never be reached by a Webinar.

MR. KEMPER: Right.

MS. MARTENS: To lower the, the energy level a little bit here. It, it really in a lot of ways doesn't matter. This guidance document, we all, I think we'll agree on the major points. Wordsmithing to include or not include our pet projects probably will not change the topics of conversation in the neighborhoods much. The topics of conversation aren't going to exist. How it's going to be done, you know, we can, we can come up with models, whether they're going to be used or not may or may not matter.

The point is to get something done in the next few months that will be not useless, because the USDA hasn't called us down here to do something useless. And to do it so that it gets done, it gets out there, and we all more or less agree on it, and we can have something just done. The point is not to make it too complicated or make it too
simple, but just get it done.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Thank you very much. I think that actually makes for a wonderful segue into the topic of the guidance document, which is the next thing on the agenda. We've, we've talked about the framework documents that exist. And there is a redline document out there, as well as the other two formats. I don't think at this point we want to talk about the details of the redline documents. There's going to be a new version that's attempting to pull all of this together and address comments within 10 days.

Well, I will commit to that.

I think what we need to do is to talk in sort of a more general term, terms about sort of what Mary-Howell alluded to, which is the level of detail that we're going to have in this document wasn't entirely resolved in subgroup discussions, and of course we would have had to come back here anyway. Again, I think one of the places where there was some tension in the discussions in the subgroup was around a couple of specific, sensitive subjects like the level of detail about things like the exact size of buffers, recommendations on what farmers or others should do with regard to seed purity, as well as whether there are practices that might be provided that would be so specific they wouldn't apply it all over the country, versus a desire to be more principle-oriented, perhaps providing additional
references to things like the question of what, what
information there is around, around buffers, for example.

Another topic on the subject of the guidance
document that was raised in discussions in the subgroup was
this concept that there might be flowcharts for addressing
some questions. If this is the case, then is this, is that
something we would want, or is that, in fact, two
prescriptive and looking too much like something coming from
the government. I've been re-sensitized to that in these
discussions today. But it is a topic that has come up in
those discussions. And any other guidance you can offer on
the, on the guidance framework. I will say --

MS. BATCHA: Can you remind us of the nature of
the flowchart? Is it about the points of entries --

MS. MARTENS: Control points.

MS. BATCHA: Yeah, thank you.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Okay. So, again, the initial
intent on this is to produce this draft guidance framework,
which will not be entire, obviously not be entirely fleshed
out, within, based on what we hear here, getting that back
out to you quickly, and then to work out fleshing it out
subsequently via information we get via email or vial
additional meetings of the subgroup. And again, how much
flesh we need to put on those bones of that framework is
what we wanted here -- and those are not chicken bones --
here from, from people around this table. And when, after
this discussion, sort of a little more generally on what we
want the various subgroups to be, to be doing after this
meeting.

MR. BENBROOK: Process question, Michael?

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Sure.

MR. BENBROOK: Is there a distinction between
guidance document, as you're using that term, and the final
report of AC21 to the Secretary in response to our current
charge, or are they the same thing?

MR. SCHECHTMAN: That's, that's a very good
question that I had teed up for a little later in the
meeting. I will give you sort of my, my sense for this.
There are a few pieces that are being talked about. There
is a report that provides some context. There is a
structure for meetings. There is a guidance document. The
exact, and there may be one more that I can't think of at
the moment, the exact relationship between the pieces and
the sort of guidance that we provide on when, for example,
public meetings might be invoked and who might decide to do
that, and how that process might get kicked off, still,
still to be decided. But I think we have a few different
pieces that will be all part of, in quotes, the report. But
the relationship of the pieces I think are things that we'll
need to talk about subsequently in this, in this group. I
think it's a, it's a fine question, and we need to tee up, because we've been talking about different parts of that elephant.

MR. BENBROOK: And Michael, just one more thing. You're the FACA expert. What is the status of AC21 the day after the inaugural of a new president? Do we still exist?

MR. SCHECHTMAN: It's a great question.

MR. BUSHUE: We just disappear, Chuck.

MR. BENBROOK: Well, we were appointed by Secretary Vilsack.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Okay.

MR. BENBROOK: And he won't be Secretary anymore, so.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Okay. So this is, it's a fine question. This is a discretionary committee, which means that this committee exists not under statute but entirely at the discretion of the Secretary. The charter for this committee has to be renewed every two years. And the charter goes until February of next year. We, I will try to get the charter renewed before this administration, or, or get the process going so that hopefully it's renewed before the administration leaves, as I did the last time around so that the new Secretary, whoever it is, can decide what he or she wants to do with it.

My experience is that discretionary advisory
committees are typically not the first things that new administrations have to think about. Having said that, in addition, some member, a good number of members on this committee may be time-limited for having served for a number of consecutive years on this committee. Even though we didn't meet for a while, you were still on the committee. So the likelihood is that there would be a very significant turnover on the committee as well.


MR. SCHECHTMAN: I believe it's six consecutive years. But, but that, that addresses the question of the committee's -- and typically it has varied from administration to administration as to how different administrations have wanted their committee dealing with biotechnology to be. This committee deals with big picture issues on biotech. Originally, it was called something else. It was called the ACAB instead of the AC21. At one switch of administrations, there was a change of name and a slight change in, in focus, and a significant change in size of the committee. But there's always, there's virtually always a hiatus.

Let's see. So, I lost track of where I was.

COURT REPORTER: Your mic is off.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Angela? Thank you.

MR. BUSHUE: What was the, what did it stand for?
MR. SLOCUM: It was Advisory Committee on Agricultural Biology. Biotechnology.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: It was in the year 2000 when we got started.

MR. BUSHUE: Year 2000?

MR. SLOCUM: Yeah. Advisory Committee on Agricultural Biotechnology.

MS. OLSEN: So I wanted to address your question about flowcharts and just give a reaction to that. I'm generally a big fan of flowcharts. But after, you know, and hearing the discussion today, and then our workgroup, I really like Doug's model. Again, with the, you know, overlaying some of the, the good learning from other models as well. And I, I like the idea of keeping it high level so that the local level solutions, whether they be pathogens, whatever the topic may be, could be addressed. And I think that a flowchart gets us into being too prescriptive when we, you know, now I have an appreciation for how different things are in different geographies on different farms, whatever contracts people are trying to enter into. It's a very complex topic. So I think it would be difficult to do a flowchart, as much as I like, personally, flowcharts.

But that doesn't mean at a local level that those couldn't be created. If there's a particular issue that they're trying to solve, and again, I think Doug has got a
laundry list in his, you know, on his exemplar that he handed out to us, his, his model draft. It could be any one of those topics. And so that doesn't mean that a local level flowchart could be developed if that was useful. But I think that for our purposes, and it's Mary-Howell's really good provocation to all of us, you know, we need to get this done, and how to be something useful, but not too, too detailed and prescriptive, but also not so broad where it's, it's not helpful. But I'm interested in everybody else's reaction as well.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Thank you. I'm not sure what the order is here. I have Doug, Laura, and Chuck.

MS. BATCHA: I think you were next.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Doug, you're next. Okay.

MR. GOEHRING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's actually what I was going to refer to was the flowchart. So the flowchart model probably works, but I would, I'm neither opposed nor very supportive of it. But the concept in general, and I think that's talking about potential solutions. Anybody that's a farmer goes to the operator manual when you're having problems in your combine, trying to clean the drain. It gives you a bunch of different considerations, things to look at. Now, ultimately, if none of those are doing it, and all of a sudden you by and you see you've got a bearing out, that might be your problem.
But it's going to give you considerations.

And I, I believe maybe, again, the flowchart concept without necessarily creating the flowchart, you could certainly have just considerations in the narrative, i.e., what kind of things are you considering, what are you looking at? Have you considered the timing of, of when you are doing planting, when you are trying to manage pests, when your crop is going to pollinate, what type of barriers or buffers exist, natural and manmade. Those are just all types of things that once you say that to a farmer, the light goes on. Oh, yeah. That's, maybe that's something I need to think about. Overall, I think that's a lot of what, when we put the pollinator plan together, it was mitigation strategies. It was thinking about if I do this, what kind of effect happens from this to myself or to others.

So I just throw that out on the, the flowchart issue. Again, I'm neither opposed to it, and not necessarily supportive of it. But I think conceptually, it's part of what we can write into a narrative on each one of these areas. Again, not being prescriptive. Just saying these are considerations, or these things that you've thought about.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Thank you, Doug. I think it's Laura, then Jerry.

MS. BATCHA: I want to comment on the, the
flowchart and the, and the level of detail. I want to start, I'll start with the level of detail. I really like the approach in the North Dakota plan in terms of level of detail because I think it's not too long, number one, but it does introduce sort of, you know, why this is being done. It sets up sort of background, what they've described as challenges, right? Sort of so to put the issue on the map about some known knowns. And I think that that is helpful when you get into, well, the discussions with stakeholders, farmer-to-farmer but also that broader stakeholder group so that, you know, we have an opportunity to sort of put some basic things, basic things in writing that will help encourage folks to pick up the conversation without rehashing a bunch of stuff if, if it's there. Right? So, I think that would be helpful. And then I like, again, what the North Dakota plan calls BMPs, which we will call something else. But, just sort of short paragraphs, and then opportunities to point out to what our details are.

So, for example, if it's about the size of the buffer strip, there could be some general statements about the, the importance of the buffer strip, the range and the size, consult here for the best available data on crop and trait combinations and recommendations for buffer strips. Or you can drop out to it.

On the flowchart, I like the flowchart for a
couple of reasons. I think if you look at what the North Dakota plan has as sort of challenges, I think there's a, there's a place in, in this to sort of, again, identify the known knowns, not that, not that farmers don't know this already, but if you put it in a, in a visual, in writing, and you identify the, the points, to your point, Doug, where, you know, these are, these are the first five things you look at, and then if that doesn't work sort of go from there. I think, I think it would be a little bit of glossing over to not just sort of put that down. I think we can get to something that we agree to that would allow some structure to how you might think about where to look.

And then I think my last point is, I have a little concern in our discussions where our traction is on details, that we've lost a little bit of sight of the charge in that we've been asked to work on this whole idea in the context of joint coexistence plans, and that's part of the charge. So, I, I, I am going to remind us of this so that we don't succumb to the idea of a management plan for the IP producer. Because that's not what the, the charge is. So let's just sort of keep, try to remember that.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Thank you. Thank you, Laura.

Doug, I believe.

MR. GOEHRING: Oh, I'm sorry.

MR. KEMPER: Jerry. Jerry.
MS. BATCHA: Jerry.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Jerry. My apologies.

MR. SLOCUM: Thank you, Mike. I would speak in support of a, of a document that was more general in nature, more principle-based than prescriptive. I think that's what the Secretary is asking us for. I don't know how we would write a prescriptive document. It would become a BMP there, is what it would become. And I don't think that's our, our charge.

I like the idea of, of some different levels of, of a, of a plan because it, and tell me if I'm wrong, because I don't, I don't grow anything. I did try to grow some GMO soybeans, GMO-free soybeans. And we, we ran out of seed stock, basically. And it's a self-pollinating crop. But we just couldn't, we couldn't maintain enough purity in what we were trying to grow to grow it anymore and premiums went from $2 a bushel to $1 a bushel to 75 cents a bushel to 40 cents a bushel, to essentially no premium at all.

So, and so, but I think there, there are levels of specificity that, that the people that want to participate in this, and remember, we're going to be talking to an audience that we've never talked to before about coexistence. You're going to be talking to a guy that's a commodity crop grower, whether it's conventional seed or GE seed, and he's not concerned with pollen drift. So you're
going to be, because it's a joint plan, so you're going to be talking to a guy that is just not aware of all these issues.

And, so it's got to be general enough in nature, but it's got to be, and maybe it's not a flowchart, but it's like, it's sort of like a flowchart in the sense that if this is what you're trying to do, you, you go down this avenue. But if you're trying to do more than that, you try to go down this avenue. And it's, you check this box, and you check the next box, and if that question doesn't pertain, you check the next question. It's that kind of plan, I think.

But it has to be, in my mind, it has to be at a very general level of conversation. And it points into the different resources that are already developed. No reason for us to regurgitate. And we couldn't bring them all of them to start with. But they are there. And every plan, I would think, is going to be somewhat different based on topography, climate, what they're trying to accomplish, what they're not trying to accomplish. So I think we have to be a principle-based document, and it has to be at a pretty high level. And then it points to places where they can go and tailor these plans to suit their specific environments and their specific needs.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Thank you, Jerry. Mary-Howell.
MS. MARTENS: Here's an idea that we don't have time to do. But it really goes along with what Jerry just said. I was at a conference in Pennsylvania in February. And, and I was part of a workshop on putting together a computer-based model for helping farmers evaluate their risk for climate change impacts. And Pennsylvania and Cornell are actually putting together a really nice program online that farmers can participate in where they can go through the kind of decision-making tree like Jerry was talking about and identify control points on their farm that might indeed be, give them, give them more vulnerability. And then get information on what they can do at each point to lessen their, to increase their resilience and lessen their risk.

This is something that I think would be ultimately a tool that USDA or other cooperating groups would really benefit for producing. I certainly don't have the expertise, but there are people out there who do to try to put together a computer model that can guide farmers through the process of asking questions of control points where they're, they, they need to make some decisions and then give them some insight as far as if they make this decision or that decision, what the likely outcomes are.

We can rough something like that out by hand by, you know, some set of control, some set of flowchart. But
eventually it would be really a terrific tool if, if USDA
could put together a, an online program that would help
guide farmers and farmer groups through this kind of
decision-making process.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Can I ask one thing? So I've
heard a bunch of different views on the flowchart issue. I
think what I'm hearing is that a flow, any flowchart-y thing
that would be produced would not be if X do Y. It's think
about this, and then if this way, have you thought about
this, and if this way, have you thought about that. And
that could be either with arrows or in text as Commissioner
Goehring has said.

So I think it might be that we sort of have the
idea of the conceptual piece that, what, what needs to be in
there in terms of guiding the thinking, whether it looks
better in a figure or in text, you know, would be up to
folks to decide when we get some of this stuff down on
paper. Is that, is that a fair -- if, if we have to draw
flowcharts, that will exceed my computer skill. We'll get
someone else to, you'll, you'll get the stickman figure
version of that drawn on a piece of paper from me, and
someone else who is more adept at those things can deal with
it. Does that make sense?

Commissioner.

MR. GOEHRING: Thank you, Mr. Commissioner. I
think you're, you're touching on that, that those that would be facilitating and operating these meetings, if you have some things kind of spelled out in a text, they're smart enough to grasp that. And although, and no one ever wants to in a meeting raise their hand and, and ask necessarily, so, what do you mean, why are we talking about this. But I'll give you a case in point. Crop rotations. In many areas of the country, if you start doubling up on certain crops, and I'll use pulses for example, they become very susceptible to white mold, even though our humidity is less in the northern region, you could probably do soybeans after soybeans three years in a row and be fine, because there's been enough resistance that has been bred into soybeans that they can manage it. But if you do two pea crops back to back, you get some serious issues. And sometimes people aren't even aware, why did that happen.

Now, it's becoming more and more of our second nature to start thinking about those things. But sometimes just spelling out in the considerations that you could end up with some problems if you don't think about your tillage methods, your crop rotations, some of the issues that might cause yourself problems and maybe even your neighbor because as spores leave and move, they present another problem for your neighbor when it comes to plant pathogens. So, I raise that, that we don't have to be too prescriptive, but it's
one of those moments where people think about, oh yeah, I
should think about that before I do that on that field this
next year.

    MR. SCHECHTMAN: Thank you. Jerry.

    MR. SLOCUM: No, I'm sorry, Michael.

    MR. SCHECHTMAN: Okay. So, I think we've gotten
enough information on the general direction that the
guidance document framework is supposed to go. I think what
would be useful at this point would be to have a brief
discussion on the work of the workgroups, how they
intersect, what tasks we see for the workgroups going
forward, do, are we at a point where they need to be talking
to each other more? So we've heard one suggestion already
today about having the models group work on combining
elements from the MP3 and the letter from the National Corn
Grower Association, and the model that Doug provided in
coming up with material that the committee could consider as
something that they may want to have in their report, and
then that could conceivably go to states later down the
road.

    But I want to hear what folks think about whether
the work of the workgroups should be continuing, and what
each of the workgroups should be working on. Thank you.
Leon. Leon, and then Laura.

    MR. CORZINE: Leon. Thank you, Michael. I think
our, our venues workgroup, Latresia, I don't know if we have any more work to do. I mean, we kind of compiled a list. I, whether we need it all or whether you want to, if there's danger in dispersing us into other committees, and you just as soon have us just idle on the sidelines, we can do that. But I really don't know that there's any value in, in trying to have that venues group going further. Thanks.

    MR. SCHECHTMAN: I would only wait to see if the committee has another task that they may want to set forth for you. But, we'll wait and see where the discussion goes. Laura.

    MR. CORZINE: Okay. The point is, the only point is that in the venues part, now if you want to change our mission, I guess that's fine. Because we have a fine group, if we get together.

    MR. SCHECHTMAN: Okay. Thank you. Laura.

    MS. BATCHA: So, I'm on the, on the models and the incentives, and I'm going to pick up on the, on the idea that Dave had in how, how we might think about this. Sort of sketching again, I keep coming back to this great North Dakota pollinator plan. And not that we would write a plan for a state. That's not what that, that I'm thinking of. But I like the framework and how the subgroups could work into it. So if, if we just look at this, in the introduction, this is where the state talked about how they
sort of did convening, et cetera.

So I'm wondering is if we put together this as a template that the models subgroup could sort of begin to shepherd with the pieces coming in from the other subgroups. So, so our introduction might be about recommendations to state and local areas around convening, right? And we take that group and that workgroup, and we put it there. So we're not being prescriptive, but we're talking about the important role that state and local entities are going to play in this discussion, and some ideas from that group about how to convene.

And then we go into sort of what is this previous section that I think is something that could be worked by the full group because this is sort of where we get into positioning and language and everybody needs to be comfortable. So, are we putting on the table the idea of coexistence from a crisis perspective? Are we putting it on the table from IP market opportunity and the future of agriculture, which might be more inviting. Sort of how do we sort of cast the next there.

And then this plan piece I think that's built out from the work of the guidance group around the management strategies and those bullets that I think Lynn and Angela sort of started to work towards, and that kind of drops into that section of the plan, and that this be, that it, we add
a section in the end around resources, because we've been
charged with incentives, and we haven't quite, we've got to
merge that into here.

Greg's idea on leadership, maybe it's a letter
from Secretary Vilsack based on our recommendations about
why it's important or something, and that at that point then
the document can be something that could be handed off as a,
as a resource for others to get going. So, that's sort of
how I've marked up this.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Thank you. Thank you, Laura.
That, that is a wonderful job of segueing into all of the
other interrelated topics of incentives as well as the
relationship between the various pieces that we're talking
about. So thank you. Angela.

MS. OLSEN: In following on what Laura was saying,
I think that kind of structure could work very well for
this. And I'm wondering, Michael, I know that, you know,
we're not merging documents, that you're, you and Russell
are going to take the pen on the work product of the various
workgroups, and then send that back out to the workgroups.
Maybe it might make sense for the various workgroups to,
like I know from the guidance group, to take whatever new
document that you're drafting, Michael, we can get together,
discuss that document, but then if you, if you, if you and
Russell wanted to sort of weave together the document that
Laura is talking about, and again, I think that structure can make very good sense.

You know, but again, it's not simply dropping in work product that we already have right now. So how do you see that, what, how would that work best for you, Michael? Is it doing it as individual pieces, we meet again as workgroups on those individual pieces, and then they get dropped into the document, and then we can figure out what's the next step to review that? Or do you see already you dropping those pieces into the, the framework that, again, I like that framework a lot. What, what would work best from your perspective? Because I know you're going to be drafting whole new pieces based on the discussion.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: I, I do think that I like, and again, it's you all, what you like for this. But, but for me, I like the approach that Laura has, has put forward. The one thing I would say is that it's a little bit the cart before the horse because I think we first have to get the, the sort of revised model structure, that part done, and then the context setting, which is a little bit of other pieces, and assembling, you know, I think is going to happen in a, probably a joint effort with the models and conveners group. But obviously everyone is going to be very interested in seeing all those pieces as, as they emerge.

So, I, and, and again, the, the question of the
guidance group, because obviously that's a piece that is very central to this, and we need to see how that workgroup is going to continue working on this. So if there are thoughts about that. I think we just have to get some of the smaller pieces. But I think the overall concept that you laid out, Laura, is something that we can work with, if other folk on the committee are happy with that. Obviously there's going to be issues around, as always, setting the context and how broadly things are framed, and how narrowly things are framed. And we've heard some of those discussions. And we will be doing our best to pirouette around all of those issues in a way that, that everyone can live with. With, with reservations, of course.

MS. BATCHA: Can I just clarify one thing about the idea that I shared? And I wanted to check with you, Michael. I'm imagining that, like, this work product would exist within the AC21 report back to the Secretary. Because we report back to the Secretary. And I think that report is where we can, as a committee, either agree altogether to make statements, or agree to sign on and add additional statements like we did last time around. And that's where we can get into some of these ideas about why we think it's important, what do we think hasn't been done yet that needs to be perhaps be considered in the future, and that kind of thing. Because I think there's an opportunity to report
back to the Secretary where we reflect on the charge and we
do all those things like we did in, in the last report, and
that's a little bit different than sort of the product
that's in the report. At least, am I missing something that
is sort of nested?

MR. SCHECHTMAN: I, I think the point is well
taken. I think we're going to have, all of a sudden we're
having many more levels of nesting. I think we have the
guidance document, we have a model for discussions, we have
the context that that is going to be put in for, that may be
of use to, to states and localities, and then we have the
report on top of which that goes. I think, I think it can
be done. I think it, the more, the more layers of the onion
you add on, the more, the more complicated it's going to be.
Our time is short. Whether we have to shrink that down a
little bit, I think we'll wait and see where we are at, at
the end of the next meeting. But, but in principle, I see
that it, I see the logical sense to it.

Angela.

MS. OLSEN: I wonder, in looking at the, you know,
the model outline, I understand it's not in final format,
that, that Doug had, had circulated, I wonder whether
concepts from the guidance group and the guidance document
could really be folded into that. We are seeing the, the,
you know, the overlap of the various groups. I think that's
quite obvious to a lot of us. But I'm, so I'm wondering if, you know, a lot of things that are in, you know, my document, Lynn's document, my redlines to Lynn's document, Paul's document, a lot of these concepts could be folded into this model that, that Doug had circulated. So, I wonder if maybe, you know, Michael, if when you do the, the rewrite of the various sections, if it might make sense to fold that in. So really we're dealing with one, you know, one document.

It just, there's so much overlap, that's why I was wondering, to try to peel back the onion, not to add more layers.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: I guess -- I'll go to Barry in just a sec. But I guess the, the different pieces have sort of different functions. There is a piece sort of describing how sort of a way that conversations might be started if, if states and localities want to do that. There is a piece about things for farmers to think about which would be sort of contained within that. But the context of having the meetings is a little bit different. There, and that is all going to be embedded into a report that says this is why we did this. This is responding to your charge because of X. We think that these other things, Y and Z, are important, and we want you to know that. And we think that the way that these pieces might be used is the following. And, by
the way, we think you should write a letter telling folks how important we think this is.

So, I think the pieces have different functions. There may be some repetition in there. But they may go to different audiences. But again, it's going to be up to folks to look at the pieces when they come together and see what you think.

Barry.

MR. BUSHUE: Thank, Michael. I liked your explanation. I agree with you. It's, it's kind of multifaceted. If you look at the overall report that will come out, it's somewhat philosophical, as was the original, or previous report. This one has to have a piece at some stage, whatever format it takes, that is going to be understood, straightforward, and welcome by farmers if we're going to get them to the table. Whatever format we use to get them to the table, whether it's state, whether it's some type of an MP3 knockoff, whatever we want to do to get them there, but the document itself that, that provides for the basis of discussion, has to be, I think, fairly straightforward and usable. And that's why I kind of like Doug's format. I, I have tremendous respect for the people who put this document together, the amount of work that went into it. But when I look at it, it makes my head hurt.

I don't have light bulbs like Alan. I, they don't
turn on very often. And that's not a criticism of the document. It's a very well-done document. But if, if this is kind of what, you know, multiple pages of things that are going to be given to people that have open up a discussion, I fear that, you know, they're just going to say, really, I'm going to go home and plant. So.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Thank you. Other questions, comments, at this point? Doug, please.

MR. GOEHRING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do agree, I, I like the document and some of the things it gets into. And I'm, I'm wondering for the same reason, if we keep it simplistic and we keep it targeted at farmers, then we have an addendum for another piece to this, and maybe that's part of what that subgroup would do is put this into a text form or keep it the way it is, because the other element here that we're working with --

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Which document are you referring to?

MR. GOEHRING: Oh, I'm, I'm referring to the one that was submitted by Angela, and also I got, I had a chance to see the one from NCGA. We pulled that together to talk about those issues concerning seed varieties, seed purity, things, some of your contractual obligations, that's targeted at a different audience. And that is going to draw a different crowd. But it's something to think about. It's
something else that they can consider as they move forward
to address some of their, their issues.

Because it goes back to what Lynn was talking
about earlier. You have, you have those farmer-to-farmer
discussions about what you're doing on your farm. I think
overall, and it's probably what I, it's what I brought
together as, you're going to raise the awareness by having
an overall big meeting, but it gives you the outline, it
formats the discussion to talk about coexistence and joint
coexistence plans. That's going to be something a little
bit different. This just raises awareness that gets, this
gets the conversation going and helps you frame up what
you're going to want in a joint coexistence plan, because
some things just aren't going to be relevant in some areas.
But at least it gives you an overall, general concept
providing flexibility.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: So, so let me follow up a little
here, because I think there are potentially, at least some
shades of difference in how the thought of this document
being used. If we're talking about the guidance document,
in the one sense, it's informing conversations, but in the
other sense there was a, there was a big bit about trying to
provide farmers with information that they need to be able
to be sure that they're thinking about all the things that
are important for them to, to think about. So I just want
to make sure that the two are reconciled, because in the subgroup, at least, there had been the thought that we would work from Lynn's general framework, though obviously there were lots of comments about the topics.

And now I'm hearing working from the, from Angela's version, combined with core words, what I want to take everyone's temperature on where we are and which framework we're going to be starting from, recognizing that whichever one we put in, we're going to try to fit pieces in.

MS. ANDALUZ: So you're going to merge these two together?

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Well, again, they're not going to be, it's not going to look like either one because there are lots of comments that were received in both the subgroup meeting as well as in the redline document that, that we received. So I just want to get a sense of where folks are most comfortable, starting from recognizing that other stuff is going to be associated with this material as well.

And I talked so much that I didn't see which order the cards came up. So let me go around this way. Mary-Howell.

MS. MARTENS: I think you and Russell are best suited because you don't have any vested, commercial interest in this, to take a moderate stance between
something that is detailed to the point of usefulness and
maybe doesn't say everything that could, it could say. But,
I think it's really important when you all are writing this
to make sure that it, it does give enough detail so that the
conversations between farmers can be sufficiently informed
with information and not just general. But, but, you know,
let's get, let's see what you can come up with. And then we
can probably micromanage that further. But, definitely it
needs enough detail to be useful, and I'm worried if, if we
allow everybody's commercial interest to dictate what is or
is not in there, we will end up with something that is
perhaps not useful.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Well, thank you for the vote of
confidence, I think. Onto Alan.

MR. KEMPER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think as
long as we keep this at the 35,000-foot level, the documents
will recognize that within various regions of the country,
the methods may vary for implementation of this type of
coexistence communication would be great. I think we have
to definitely also recognize in general that the agriculture
is so diverse in this country that it can be used from Santa
Barbara to Orlando do Des Moines with that. And some of
Lynn's document can handle that. I mean, with the smoothing
out the words and things like that. I think we need to
concentrate on the procedures and the pathways forward in
that document, not necessarily the specifics of what crop
does what. Thank you.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Thank you, Alan. Greg.

MR. JAFFE: So I guess I was a fan of, of Lynn's
draft. I thought it was good and gave lots of examples.
And I guess I think, you know, just having broad statements
without examples is, it makes something hard for people to
then deal with in practice. But I guess, so I care less
about whether all those issues that Lynn raises are in the
guidance part of the document. But I think they need to be
in whatever we're, the total of what we're providing to the
Secretary.

So, to me, that's important, that we don't lose
sight of if, if we end up making the guidance document more
general and more procedural, as Alan said, or other things,
I don't want to lose some of the issues that are in Lynn's
thing that I think then need to be put in other parts of
the, of the report to the secretary of some things. I
guess, I look at, at what we have here as issues of where
things go, not getting rid of certain things, and type of
thing, if that makes any sense.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Thank you, Greg. Next, I see
Latresia, I think.

MS. WILSON: I'm not sure if this is more of a
question or a comment. But what I'm hearing here, it seems
like there may be a, a breakout document, something that the farmers can go home with, as opposed to just our report. And so maybe there is a method whereby we can, we can have items or special areas that can actually just be a tear-out that can be given to the, the modelers or the interveners and so forth that, that are running these meetings. Because I'm kind of hearing both, something that we're going to give to farmers and something that we're not, so.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: I -- thank you for that, Latresia. I think what I'm hearing is there's a guidance document. And that's going to be given to farmers. We haven't quite figured out when, if, if that's only going to be whenever these public meetings happen or what else or how else that information gets disseminated. But that certainly is something that is a document that will be on your Twitter account or whatever it is at some point in the future, even though I have no idea how to do one of those.

MR. KEMPER: You don't Tweet?

MR. SLOCUM: Betsy won't teach him.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: But, but I did, there, there are different sets of pieces in this that are destined for different audiences. And I think, I think you're very right about that.

Laura.

MS. BATCHA: I think my preference is to, as the,
the place to springboard off of Lynn's document as well with provisions based on the conversation from the group, and, I don't have a strong opinion as to whether the details there, whether you drop to the detail, I think that, that all gets, that all gets worked out. I think I would say is the top of Page 2, as a springboard, I think there is an opportunity based on these conversations that we try to frame this in a, and I keep coming back to this, frame it in, in an opportunity way, because I think we can make that a little bit more friendly and set the stage about there being something in it for, for everybody in terms of joint plans, because it opens up opportunities. So that's I think my only point about, about that. I think that's, for me, this is the document to start from.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: I think, again, caution, folks. We're not going to be, you know, we're going to be combining these materials. And it's not, we're not going to be really starting from one or the other. We're going to try to, let me, I'll just finish that. We will try to incorporate all of the pieces in a way that addresses the concern about it not being so complicated that it makes farmers' heads hurt, nor inflammatory, but find a place to address somewhere in the report issues that people think are important. I think Lynn certainly laid out a lot of very important pieces that are going to be, be in there, whether they will be
specifically here or again moved to other places. We just happen to do a little bit of, of work on it.

I certainly take the point about desire to start from the content, from a lot of the, the issues that Lynn has raised. But we're going to try to do some work on, on melding them together.

MS. BATCHA: I just want to clarify, I understood, Michael, the question you just asked us was which place to start from. So I intended to answer your question, not take you down a place that was dictating your work. I was just answering your question.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Thank you. Thank you, Laura. A fair point. I don't know which of you is next. Go ahead. Your finger is on the microphone, his is not.

MS. OLSEN: Mine, mine will be short. I have full confidence in you and Russell to, to write a piece that will include all of the various viewpoints, keep it high-level, and also take out some of the inflammatory language. My problem is all the redline that you all have. And there was some philosophical differences. But also, I did try to take out some of the, some of the negative sentiment to keep this in a very, you know, positive document, to incentivize folks to want to come to the table, et cetera. But Michael, I leave it to you and Russell. You did a great job on the last report. So, you know, take obviously all the input
from the meeting, the NCGA document. Paul also, you know, took a stab at rearranging. So I think that there's a lot of good tools to work from. But I just wanted to point out to folks, I also was trying to take out some of the negativity in, in the document, in addition to the philosophical differences that I've expressed at the table.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: And I do want to not overlook Paul's, Paul's effort. Some of that, I think that rearrangement is useful, is useful as well. Chuck.

MR. BENBROOK: I, I'm a little concerned about the expectations of some people about what this farmer guidance document is. And I, I think that the reason that the pollinator plan started to really get some traction and, and be of some value is that they, they evolved organically in different areas of the country. I don't think it's possible for this, this committee to produce a farmer guidance document that's going to be equally useful everywhere. I think we can describe what a set of materials ought to, you know, try to address for farmer-level meetings, but I, I don't think we can actually prepare those materials. I think that has to be a task taken on by people closer to where the communication is going to, to happen, because I think there is such great diversity. And if we try to craft something that will, that will be, you know, useful everywhere, it will be sort of irrelevant everywhere.
MR. SCHECHTMAN: Thank you. Thank you, Chuck, very much. I think it's Leon, and then David.

MR. CORZINE: Thank you, Michael. Like Laura, I'll try and answer the question on where to start. I guess, and I, and I'm not sure whether you're talking about two things, because we're talking about the models document, and then the guidance document, right? So the models document I, I would suggest starting from Commissioner Goehring's -- okay.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: I was referring to the, to the guidance document.

MR. CORZINE: Okay. On the guidance, well there's already been some work. And I haven't had much chance to look at it, but I would start from the redline because that's kind of a combination. So that's just my suggestion. And I'm sure you will carry on and do well. Thank you.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Thank you, Leon. David.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. David Johnson. I want to support what Chuck just brought up because, you know, I, I think when I was mentioning about the models group taking that on, it's really when I, when we look at the front cover of the North Dakota plan, it says on there, prepared by. And it has a guy from the Pesticide and Fertilizer Division, a guy from, a gal from the Plant Industries Division, another guy from Plant and Fertilizer,
another gal from Plant Industries Division. And, and so I'm in agreement with Chuck that we really want to just provide something, maybe initially to NASDA, that can be shared with whichever states want to take this on. Some will, some won't. And then they will have the expertise at the local level to develop it for that area. And I, I think that's where my comments were hopefully going earlier this morning. And, and so I wanted to chime in that.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Thank you. I think we have a sense of, of how to go forward on this. We have a sense of the work of guidance group, when we'll get a framework back out to you and reconvene some meetings to discuss the framework and then what additional flesh might go on that framework, and how much flesh is too much flesh. And then, we have an idea for the models group, and they will be important in the coordinating of the, of the pieces. But we'll first look at crafting the, this combined model working from what the commissioner has provided and what corn growers have also provided to us and seeing if, what can be assembled from that.

I haven't heard any new proposals for work from, for the venues and conveners group. Do we, are there any topics that we want to direct them, or do we want to just recommend that they, that I split them up among the other two groups, and they can participate as they, as they wish,
or not?

MR. BENBROOK: I think splitting them up is an excellent idea.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Okay. Any other thoughts on that? No. Then, I would like to take just a one-minute break to check something, and then I will return for the last, little bit of discussion, maybe some more discussion on eliciting support from stakeholders and buy-in from potential venues and conveners. So just give me one minute, please.

Whereupon, at 12:16 p.m., a brief recess is taken.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Before we continue on this quick, quick discussion, I want to just check people's departure schedules so we know where we are and what time we can plan to wrap up this meeting. Hopefully, we will have Secretary Redding back here, and we can report glowingly to him on where we are. Can I see how many folks are likely to be leaving before 3:00?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: By 3:00.

MR. BUSHUE: Do we get a job if we stay?

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Not one you would want. You know the way this works, Barry. Those that leave early get the jobs.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: We'll leave before 3:00.
MR. KEMPER: 2:45. Yeah.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: 2:45?

MR. KEMPER: Yeah, somewhere in there.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Okay. So what I would suggest, I want to have a little, a very short discussion now on this topic of eliciting support and incentives. We heard some interesting ideas this morning. We can come back to this this afternoon. What I would propose is that we shorten our lunch. So if we go just until 1:30, we can come back and resume these rich discussions.

MR. KEMPER: I like that. Yeah.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Okay. So, I think we heard some interesting suggestions this morning about the idea that some localities may have some potential sources of funding that we don't know about, but that we might allude to in this discussion around the models for interaction or starting these discussions. I think it's a question of whether it's going to be easy or difficult to get all of the various players that Workgroup 3 or the venues and conveners group, identified, will, will it, will this offer something that they're, they're going to want to get involved in, and how do we get them involved in this. And are there other incentives that we can talk about?

I know we had certainly mentioned the FSA program this morning as something, and potentially some other NRCS
things that have been mentioned that are things for folks to
consider looking for as sources of support for some of these
activities. But I open up the, the floor for these
discussions. And I see Chuck first, and then Barry.

MS. WILSON: Chuck Berry.

MR. BUSHUE: Don't you got a meeting?

MR. BENBROOK: Chuck, Chuck Benbrook. My
expectation is that the ability of federal and state
government entities to constructively address and solve this
problem is, is somewhat limited by a number of factors. But
I think there is untapped opportunity to facilitate some
constructive and innovative efforts through the private
sector, and in particular entities that are imposing
standards and criteria and thresholds and contract
provisions on agricultural producers on the value chain.

And I, I think that it, it is an appropriate role
for the Department of Agriculture to interact with these
other entities and, and try to provide some, some guidance
on constructive ways to address the concerns that are out
there in the marketplace. And also maybe some innovative
ways to foster a more proactive role by buyers, for example,
in promoting coexistence through opening up this, this new
component of the CRP to regional projects that involve a
processor buyer partner in the project. There's been some
really constructive things going on in, in South Central
Idaho that have been if not fully led by buyers, partially supported by them in supporting more diverse rotations and adoption of cover crops, and greater water use efficiency. And, you know, I, I think that there's a sense out there that cooperative models involving the food industry and buyers working directly with farmers can get things done faster and better and more efficiently than, than when government is involved. So, I'd like to see our report address that role for the Department of Agriculture in, in interacting with the value chain.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Thank you. Interesting ideas. I'm going to take half a second and write it down, so. Next, Commissioner -- or, next Barry, and then Commissioner Goehring.

MR. BUSHUE: Do you want me to wait, Michael? All right.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: I'm done. I'm done. Good, thank you.

MR. BUSHUE: I think that incentives are important. If there's financial incentives out there, that's great. If there's grants out there that are, that's great. I just hope that we can provide something that will move forward if there are no financial incentives. Because, we all see that there is less and less and less money available from all aspects, the private sector, the
government sector, whatever. So I hope it stands alone. But there are other incentives, I think, aside from just financial ones. Chuck just mentioned a couple. Tractor dealerships, all the other kind of, all the other kind of infrastructure folks that support agriculture are often more than happy to have a group of farmers come into a showroom to talk about issues, hoping that they'll actually buy something.

I think that incentives, if you look at groups like extension, they're always willing or wanting to have something they can hang their hat on in terms of relevancy. And if this becomes relevant, and I kind of jump back, I kind of support where Greg was coming from in terms of having some type of, of prioritization within the Department. Talk about that this is an important issue. If that's the case, then that kind of follows down to the groups like extension and, and the crop protection associations and some of these other groups that have been mentioned. So, incentives might be nothing more than political incentives to engage with these. So, anyway, thank you.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Thank you very much.

Commissioner Goehring, and then Laura. And then we'll wrap it up for the, for the morning.

MR. GOEHRING: Sure. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
Talking a little bit about incentives, and I know we, we started on this conversation talking about there's USDA programs that certainly could be available to help people accomplish some of the things they wish to, or maybe through much of our guidance document, we'll be able to point out some things that they need to consider or should consider. We also talked about those incentives that could be 319 funds that are available in some states, some watersheds, some areas, and grants and foundations.

And I think what's a key piece here, and it's probably why I've mentioned it before, and I've heard it many times around here from the agriculture community's perspective why they would probably want to have this third party entity facilitating some of these meetings, such as extension or a soil conservation district, or maybe a state Ag department would want to take this on is because they feel, first of all, they probably understand the culture. They probably understand some of the challenges and some of the considerations. They also understand some of the priorities in particular areas, in watersheds and, and concerns in certain regions.

But with all of that, at least it happens in my shop, a lot of the foundations and groups out there that have grant dollars available, they will come to you. They'll ask you do you know of anybody that would like to
access some of our funds. And you have the really heart-to-heart conversation about, well, what's your goal, what's your mission here. And the Ag community, on any given occasion when you get in front of them will ask you point blank, so what's behind this? The real opportunity comes in trying to vet that out and trying to have that discussion to make sure.

And when they ask that question, you're in a way lending some credibility also to this foundation, that they're willing to put dollars up. And this is what they'd like to see you do with it. So, maybe it's about planting trees as a natural buffer. But it also accomplishes some other things with respect to water quality, or maybe soil erosion. All of those things can play into this that will help provide some resources to any of those farmers that believe they have a problem, believe that they want to mitigate the problem, and it can be part of the whole solution. So, I believe that just as been talked about this morning here, the incentives, the, the resources that could be available to producers could probably be best distributed through those public entities that are held accountable. So it goes back again to soil conservation districts, those extension agents, departments, and any other of those entities that we can identify would probably be very good at delivering on this, providing the deliverables and vetting
it out.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: So, let me follow up. I'm not quite sure that I understood. So, these are the entities, soil conservation districts, extension, et cetera, will be the folks who would be the vehicles for delivering whatever funds came from elsewhere? Is that what you are saying? Or delivering the message, or, I didn't quite understand.

MR. GOEHRING: I'm sorry. I was misinterpreted. I'm working out of what the conveners group did. They brought so many good entities to the table. They showed them, I'm, I'm just working out from that. I think those are some real good deliverables.

What I was really getting to the heart is, there's going to be some pointblank questions from the Ag community, which is, so if you're saying that these dollars, these resources are available, tell us about that. Because they always believe there's agenda behind it. And, quite frankly, there probably is. There's groups that come forward, they want to see things happen in a particular area for different reasons. How can you work with those groups to say, okay, this may not be able to be accomplished. If you're willing to change your thought process or your motives, your grant dollars could be a part of this program.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Thank you. That's much clearer. Laura, please. Last, last comment of the morning.
MS. BATCHA: So, the question on how to illicit support from stakeholders and potential conveners, and hearing the discussion, so I'm struck with two things that bring me back to an idea. I like what Chuck said about tapping sort of a corporate role in this, because I can only speak from the organic side, but there is interest in development of acres and making sure their specs get met, a preference for domestic, if they can get it right where they can meet those specs and that kind of thing. So I do think that there is, there is some good potential there.

I think Doug's question about this having to be queued up to elicit support from stakeholders and venue conveners, they have to be able to legitimately answer, and trust the answer to what's behind this. So I do, I think let's not lose sight of that. That's like learning for me. I don't have an answer, but my mind is spinning, and I think you're right on that we need to anticipate that that's where people are going to go. Nobody wants to get trapped by something.

To that end, I'm wondering if, for both the corporate folks and the Ag community in addressing the question about whose agenda this is, there's a, there's a role for endorsement of a template that might put this on a little bit more of a neutral frame. And the places that we've had presentations from and we've discussed would be
the Department of Agriculture, obviously with leadership from the top. And then, this is a question for Doug, or we can ask Russell when he gets back. Do you see a way where on our timeline we could get to a place where NASDA might be able to endorse in theory the value of joint coexistence plans, the template that's being presented?

If we could get strong leadership out of USDA for the product of our work, an endorsement from NASDA, and an endorsement from the Association of Conversation Districts, it might help have corporate folks think, hey, I'm getting involved in something that has some legitimate vetting, and it might allow the Ag community to have a, a little bit more openness around what's behind it. So those are, that's my idea.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Doug, the final-final word.

MR. GOEHRING: I believe that the work product that comes from us captures some of their concerns and puts a deliverable out there that I believe the Ag community will embrace because they see it as being outreach, educational, and goes towards that goal of coexistence. I can tell you right off hand there will be about 20-plus state departments of agriculture that would embrace it and probably want to see what kind of venues could be created where they could start reaching out and just provide a resource.

Really, what we're talking about doing is creating
and providing a tool to assist them. And, I could very much see that, much like the pollinator plan when it came forward, they had a chance to think about it. They offered suggestions. They said, well, there's some things we might want to take a step further in our state. Absolutely. And they, they quickly adopted it in concept and moved forward with it. So, yes.

MS. BATCHA: Do you think NASDA would consider --

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Microphone.

MS. BATCHA: Do you think, could you see a way where NASDA might consider, you know, adopting a policy to encourage states to consider that kind of thing, sort of from, from the association level?

MR. GOEHRING: Oh, absolutely. If, again, if the working --

MS. BATCHA: If we get it right.

MR. GOEHRING: The work products, yes. In a heartbeat.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Yeah. Again, I would presume that that would also have to be dealt with in a larger way in NASDA at some big, scheduled meeting. So, that's for the future. But I think conceptually that's a very important thing.

MS. BATCHA: I'm just trying to have us be cognizant of, of the time line for that with our work and
the end of the administration. And I think September is the
next gathering for NASDA at the annual meeting, correct,
Douglas? And so then they don't come together again until
February. So just, you know, as, as we think about it.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Thank you. So, we will break
now. I will take folks that are interested over to the
cafeteria in the other building. And we'll try to get back
here at 20 of 2:00.

Whereupon, at 12:38 p.m., a brief recess is
taken.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: So, I'm very pleased to welcome
back Secretary Redding. You have shown your devotion to
come back for the wrap-up for this afternoon. We all hope
your hearing was as successful as those things can be. I
think probably what we should do for your benefit is to give
you a 35,000-foot version of our discussions this morning.
I think they were really good. We had a lot of consensus on
ways to go forward. I am not going to remember all of the
key features, so please, I will turn it over to other people
to help me summarize some of the things.

We have been given, first off, I think great, a
vote of confidence in being able to draw the pieces together
and try to find the appropriate middle ground around some
conflicting issues and to provide context for the various
pieces. We've heard about the guidance document. There was
good discussion on how to position the guidance document and sort of the level at which those, the, the discussion should be contained. We had a discussion about the relationship, the role of the various pieces that we're talking about, which is to say the guidance document, the model, the creating a model for discussions within localities and communities.

And there was agreement that a model for those discussions could be put together starting from Commissioner Goehring's outline and information from the National Corn Growers as well, and trying to assemble those things together. There was quite a bit of discussion around the context in which these documents should be provided, as well as the fact that both of these pieces are to be embedded in a report, and that report will address some of the other issues. We'll call upon the secretary to provide, to announce his support for work to be taken on based on these activities at the local level.

There was some very interesting discussion about incentives, and how localities may have, we may be able to describe some opportunities that localities may have, as well as some of the caveats and needs for explanation when some of those potential sources of funding are tapped into. What else? I am just drawing a blank. There were lots, there were lots of other things. If folks would like to add
some of the other points that were made.

    We will be redrafting the guidance framework and providing a redrafted framework within the next 10 days or so. That will attempt to incorporate all of the comments that we've heard in the session. There was discussion about the need to make the framework. It's again the delicate balance between, straightforward enough to be useful and having enough information to be relevant.

    MS. MARTENS: And not having too much to be offensive.

    MR. SCHECHTMAN: Yes, and not having too much to be offensive. There was much discussion about positioning the work in the, that will be offered in the model that we present as opportunities for farmers of, of all sorts, IP, organic, and as a means to facilitate conversations between farmers.

    Okay, so now tell me all the things I've forgotten, because I made it up on the spot.

    MS. OLSEN: That's pretty bad.

    MS. MARTENS: That was good.

    MR. REDDING: The redrafting of the guidance document, is that based on the redline version plus the morning's discussion?

    MR. SCHECHTMAN: I mean, I think what we're going to be doing is we will take into account what we heard on
the redline. We will merge the two documents, the two versions, and we will try to come up with something that strikes that fine, that fine balance. And there was a recognition that some of the materials that are in Lynn's, some of the issues that may be raised in Lynn's document may not need to be in the guidance framework but may go somewhere else into, in the report.

    Commissioner.

    MR. GOEHRING: Thank you. Going back to a little bit of what you had said. And I am again probably interpreting and taking a little bit from our, our discussions that took place this morning. Keeping in mind and understanding that we probably have two different groups we might be targeting. But for the most part, we're trying to speak to farmers, just to raise awareness, have the conversation about mitigation strategies. The other component, which comes from the redline paper, NCGA, and Lynn's paper, probably is targeting a different group, and maybe in the narrative we talk about some mitigation strategies there. But that's going to again be identifying that other group. Because if you introduce that type of information at a farmer meeting, most are going to feel it's not relevant to them. They're here to talk about issues that they may see or perceive as being issues in their backyard.
So, and, and I guess to that point, Mr. Chairman, one of the things that we talked about this morning, and I think we've, we probably all understood this to a great degree over a period of time, coexistence is a two-way street, and it may be about how one views what is happening to them. And you could be a conventional producer, you could be an IP producer, you could be an organic producer. But I think understanding that brings people to the table to talk about it. And part of these mitigation strategies would certainly be able to present it in a way that just gets people thinking, may or may not be relevant to their farm, but they probably would be interested in coming or hearing about it from somebody else that did go, and say, hey, they have this outlined in this format that talks about some of these issues that you said you were having concerns about on your farm. You might want to just go look at that, that tool, that draft and see. I just wanted to make mention of that.

And also, when we talk about local, and I guess I've always meant it in this way, so this would just be my opinion, that I think of local as being state. And I think this thing has to be, I believe it has to be drafted and formatted in a way that provides a lot of flexibility and latitude. And it's general in nature. But that would be the outline and the, and the format. Certainly when you get
it into some regions, some areas, because of topography, precip, humidity, temperatures, all of those things are going to be things that farmers have to think about when they manage and mitigate some of the risk and issues that they have. But, we're probably going to be able to provide a lot of information for them to work with.

MR. REDDING: But, but it's only one guidance document, right? We're still, there's, there's one guidance document that could be parsed out, that would be farmer-to-farmer, and then there's some others? Just --

MR. GOEHRING: Well, I guess part of what we talked about this morning, or at least I believe, is you'd have this guidance document that would certainly refer to that. But there would also be that piece that talks about there's other issues of seed purity and how you need to look at contractual obligations and things that need to be considered that aren't going to be relevant to probably many in the room. But if you're an IP producer, that's very relevant to you. So if you get into that stuff, eyes are going to glaze over. A lot of farmers are going to get up and leave or say that was just a waste of time. Because part of that meeting had nothing to do with my farm specifically.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: I would just add one thing, that there's a guidance document, and embedded in the report,
there will be sort of this model for community discussions. I'm not clear who will necessarily call them, what the, what the trigger will be to get those. Maybe it's an opportunity. Maybe it's something else. But sort of a model for what those discussions might, might cover. And to a certain extent how, how they might work. But again, not in a very, not in a prescriptive way, but just attempting to bring, to bring folks together. And that would be embedded in the whole report that provides the context. So it's a little bit like an onion, layers of an onion. But hopefully with a little different aroma. Chuck.

MR. BENBROOK: Yeah. Well, welcome back, Mr. Chairman. That was a speedy trip. I hope you observed all the speed limits.

MR. REDDING: Every one of them.

MR. BENBROOK: Good. First, a procedural request. I don't think I'm the only member of the committee that would appreciate receiving from you and Michael sometime in the next month a prospective calendar for the remaining steps in the process for bringing our work under the current administration to a close. Michael, in particular, I think it would be good for you to make an inquiry to the secretary's office to, you know, how, how, how much time before January 22nd would he like to receive the final report of AC21, in the event that he might want to have some
time to officially respond to it. I think we certainly, you know, owe him that courtesy. So, if he says, oh, I'd like it by the 5th of January, then you've got a hard date that you can work back on, you know, where we need to be in the, in the process of compiling a report.

And I, I think that, you know, all of us hope that we do have an opportunity as a committee to make whatever kind of final statement that, that we can, and also some of us may wish to offer additional thoughts, as we did in the last round. And, you know, I just, I think we, we are obliged to deliver that, regardless of the content. And I kind of leave it to you to figure out when you're going to communicate and how you'll communicate that to us. But I think everybody would like to know that at some point.

Now, to the substance, you know, I, I feel that there's really, there's very little written material that will likely end up, you know, being in our final report. I think there's been thoughts put on paper. I agreed with Greg's comment from the other day. I mean, none of the drafts are ready for prime time, and I think they need to be much farther along before we really start, you know, fine-tuning the message and deciding whether, you know, important topics are even addressed.

I personally don't think it's useful for this committee to be thinking about writing a guidance document
to, to guide or frame farmer-to-farmer dialogues. I just, I don't think that we can do that usefully at the, at the national level to apply to the vast diversity of context and frameworks in which that local level farmer-to-farmer discussion.

I do think like the, the framework for the pollinator plans that has been picked up and utilized in different states and different ways, I think we can in our report describe a process and some of the central elements, and some of the important people that need to be around the table, but I don't, I don't think, you know, we can go so far as to really provide concrete and specific guidance to the type of dialogues that, that ought to happen. So I, I kind of am bristling a little bit at the thought of us putting out a, you know, a guidance document for farmer-to-farmer dialogue.

So, that's, that's my opinion. And the last thing that, that, you know, I, I feel that there are, there are going to be a number of market-related and marketing-related challenges in the coexistence area. And frankly, those issues are going to have to be worked out within the private sector, many of them through the contracting process. And I don't think that there's a single person around this table that wants to invite government into a more active role in trying to work through the challenges that exist at the, at
the local level. But the way I see agriculture going, it's more and more to contracts. Big facilities are getting built in a particular place when they feel that they can secure the kind of supplies and cooperation from the agricultural community in the surrounding area. And a big part of that is whether the farmers can get along and, and whether, whether what the needs of the plant or the new infrastructure, whether those can be reliably and cost-effectively met by the local area. And that's, that's a, a discussion that, that's going on all over the country now, and, and I think more and more of agriculture is moving in that direction.

So, if that's true, then, within the context of conveners and venues, this member of AC21 feels that it's the private sector and food companies and marketers who are going to be a much more important, both convener and venue, for coexistence issues to be worked out. And I think we should acknowledge that, and I think we should provide some, some suggestions and guidance on how that can unfold in as effective and efficient way as possible. And I would include that there is some government role in some of that happening. You know, some of the big, big agreements in, in, in the Pacific Northwest involve a commitment by various government agencies to deal with water issues. You know, let's fix this water issue and know that we're going to have
long-term access to irrigation water. And then the big, the
big money gets committed, and everything goes forward. So,
I, I, I would, I would highlight that the private sector
and, and the marketing chain, it needs to play a much more
proactive and significant role in redressing coexistence
issues than, that they have in the past.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Thank you. You had mentioned
that earlier, and I hadn't included it in my summary.
Appreciate it. Doug.

MR. GOEHRING: Thank you. I agree that it should
be the private sector talking about these marketing issues.
And maybe in the document itself, that's where you spell out
these are the entities that need to work on and address
these issues because those contractual obligations are going
to be different. There's probably no way you can address
that, but in the sense that, here are those entities that
you point out are going to be working on this issue, it kind
of takes it off the table, then. Because, I will tell you,
government is asked to intervene and step in. And then you
have to remind people, well, there's either legal recourse
here or there's issues you have to, to visit about with the
company, the organization that you contracted with, what are
the parameters, what, where are the discounts, the
thresholds that exist?

And I think that's, it's a good point. I mean
it's, it's something that could certainly be stated to clarify so that we aren't delving into that too deep, because there's so many different standards that you have to work with. It's like phytosanitary certificates and issues, it's going to be a different crop, and it's going to be a different level that you're going to have to meet. So, same in general, I think can probably state some things.

And when it comes to an issue about trying to draft a guidance document that's going to tell farmers how to do a farmer-to-farmer conversation, I guess I personally didn't envision that, because that would be a bit too prescriptive. You're right, it is very diverse. There's a lot of diversity out there. I think overall just mentioning some issues gets them thinking about what's in their backyard, what's the climate, what's the soil types, what are the conditions that exist. Those are going to help you start to manage and think about what is it we can do.

MR. REDDING: Yes, I've thought about this going up and down the road. If we borrow the MP3 model, I mean, what I really like about that is the level of engagement by a pretty diverse group of people. Right? And some of those are, are sort of what I call core, and others are, have a secondary role to play, you know, either in, either in their own habits and/or just sort of conservation management specific to, to the MP3. But there's a, there's a
recognition that there's a pretty broad group of
stakeholders in that conversation. Right?

So if I borrow that for this, I mean, I really
think this is much the same in that you really want a lot of
people to recognize they actually have a responsibility.
And that maybe at the retail level, it may be extended sort
of business, supply chain, Chuck, somewhere. But there's a
lot of people. And I guess my point, and then there's going
to be at the farm, at the interface, that that will be a, a
farm-to-farm, farmer-to-farmer, right, that's consistent
with our charge. But I think positioning the, the report,
is to also acknowledge that that is key, and that's
consistent with the charge.

But there's also some things that we would expect
the larger Ag community going back to our draft and the
context of our report that there's really a pretty broad
recognition that multiple stakeholders have responsibilities
around coexistence, right? So, I'm just sort of laying that
out as a narrative to say does that sound right, right, that
you've got an umbrella piece and you've got a component
that's going to be to the charge, the farmer-to-farmer. And
while we can't prescribe that, there probably are some core
elements that are consistent, context of what it is and the
communication principles, how to engage maybe.

So, I'm just trying to process what I've heard the
last sort of half-hour or so to say as we approach the
report, and approach the framing, to acknowledge that we
can't tell people how to talk or respect each other, but we
can certainly guide that. Right? And we can lay forth sort
of an expectation by way of what we put in the guidance
document.

Does that sound right? Let's do Mary-Howell, and
then Chuck.

MS. MARTENS: We have six months to develop some
product out of the amount of time that we have invested
here. To then not produce a product seems like kind of a
waste of money, and our time. I think I would be all for
allowing, encouraging Russell and Michael to develop a
guidance document, and then allow all of us to look at this
as a filter for the nine crops that are currently on the
market that have counterparts that are GE. And then ask
ourselves, is this too prescriptive.

Because I think we can't just say in a general
term it's going to be too prescriptive or not enough until
we have something to use as a lens, and then use that to
evaluate corn grown in upstate New York versus corn grown in
Iowa versus corn grown in Oregon, and, and then say is this
appropriate. Do the same for soybeans, do the same for
cotton and canola. Certainly some things like papaya, it's
going to be a little bit, not quite pertinent. But we've
got, we've got to have a product to be able to look at as a lens before we can describe whether it's too prescriptive or not sufficiently prescriptive.

MR. REDDING: All right, Chuck, and then Angela.

MR. BENBROOK: I guess the, the dimension of the coexistence challenge that I, I keep trying to bring up and I, I just, it's, it's, it doesn't seem to be sticking in any way. And maybe I'm just not being clear. So let me give an example. I believe that there is a new transgenic corn trait that's been approved, and it will be coming onto the market very soon. I'm, Leon will pick up which one I'm talking about. I believe it alters the way that pigs metabolize the phosphorous in the corn. And the approval is only as an animal feed, not as a human food. And the stewardship agreements for farmers purchasing the seed are very restrictive in that the feed has to be grown on the farm and fed to the pigs on the farm, and blah, blah, blah.

So it's, there's a whole lot going on with this particular new trait that could have, if everything works out, it could have some real benefits for water quality, et cetera, et cetera. But, it's also got all sorts of potential problems from past experiences. So I, I think a part of the coexistence challenge involves how a technology like that can be responsibly rolled out, and, and used in a way that, that doesn't lead to trade disruption with China
and panic in the street if somebody picks up the gene in a, in a corn tortilla. So, I, I hope that we have something to say about that, in addition to this farmer-to-farmer, you know, communication that has to happen about gene flow.

But the, the issue that, that I find very, you know, very sort of troubling and, and challenging is that the coexistence challenge is, is rapidly changing as we speak. And I, and, you know, I agree with Mary-Howell. I hope our report is actually relevant to the emerging challenges as well. So, you know, I, I, perhaps that helps people understand where I've been, been coming from.

MR. REDDING: Angela, and then Michael.

MS. OLSEN: So I agree with Mary-Howell in that, you know, after all of this work and these discussions, I think we can produce a work product. I think we want to produce a work product. I think the folks around the table want to produce a work product. And I go back to the document that Doug had circulated on the MP3 plan and some of those broad categories. I don't think, you know, is it necessarily crops that have GE counterparts, I think it's any IP production. And I think all of the things that we've been talking about are IP production.

And, and a lot of these topics are ones that are relevant. We talked about how do you bring farmers together? Is it just one topic, or is a variety of topics
that may be important to them on their farms, in their particular locality. It won't be the same in every state. It won't be the same even within a particular state. So, I still believe that we, we can, Russell and Michael, I think with your, you know, very good, even-handed drafting, I think that we can produce a work product that will have enough in it that's a framework. It can't be prescriptive because there isn't one-size-fits-all.

But again, I think it's for IP, which is what we've been talking about. And I think it's those -- I'm staring at his because he has the page open. But, you know, some of these, like pathogens and soil and, you know, just some of these high-level topics that are really going to be relevant to, to farmers. But I recognize what Mary-Howell said. We do have a limited period of time, so. Yeah.

MS. ROGERS: So you guys think I haven't been paying attention. So, one of the questions that I have, so I look at what the guidance document is, and then I look at the different conversations about that, and so I hear the two different conversations have to be in this same document. And one of them is effectively Leon's idea about a case study, you know, question, that there has to be a real application for what's in there or it's just general talking. All right, so maybe one way of looking at it, unless this is the teacher in me going back, is you have the
guidance, and then you have an inset box that says, you know, consider the case of this new corn product. What considerations would go in there? It doesn't necessarily have to provide the solution to that. It just has to present the real-world example of why this guidance document would then translate, you know, into decision-making. Right? So, there's no flowchart, there's no nothing that becomes prescriptive. But it's just a good example of we said this because this real world situation exists, and these are considerations that apply to that. So, you know, just a thought.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: I wanted to address a couple of things. First, Chuck, to your point about crops with specialty uses. I think that was something that Lynn pointed out in his outline for the guidance document. And I'm not sure exactly where it will go in the report, but it clearly is a significant issue that, that will need to be there.

Secondly, I wanted to respond specifically to the question about timing and, and our thoughts about that. I think our intent, we'll see if we can, if we can meet it, is that we would like to have a report in the Secretary's hands before Election Day.

MR. BENBROOK: Before the election?

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Before Election Day.
MS. MARTENS: Why not?

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Is what, yeah, what we would like is for September to be providing you a report, or excuse me, the September-slash-October meeting, providing you a report that you would discuss that we would then amend based on the discussions that we would then send out. And then shortly thereafter, send out the folks for concurrence, signing statements, et cetera. What -- and that's a very tough, that will be a tough thing to do. I had originally thought, in thinking about putting this report together, well, at least it's going to be a lot shorter than our last one. But as we add more layers to the onion, it gets a little bit longer. But we're still, still very hopeful.

What I would, what I would like us to be able to provide for you for the next meeting, we will, we will have more quickly provided a draft, revised draft framework for the guidance. And I hope that that will get fleshed out in discussions with the guidance workgroup. And by the next meeting, there is a rather further-along guidance piece that can be discussed at the meeting. And I would also hope that by the next meeting there is a, an outline for the report. And that may have more in it, including perhaps a draft version of what this new model will look like, as well as sort of an outline containing what we think the, the kind of points that might be, might need to be addressed but not
actually how they'll be addressed, necessarily unless we're really productive by the next meeting.

MR. BENBROOK: When is the next meeting?

MR. SCHECHTMAN: The next meeting is June 12th, 13th, 14th, 14th, 15th.

MR. BENBROOK: Yeah, June 13, 14, Monday, Tuesday. Yeah.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: So that will be actually quite a lot to do between now and then. I'm, I'm going to be --

MR. BUSHUE: What were those dates again?

MR. BENBROOK: June 13, 14, Monday Tuesday.

MR. BUSHUE: Okay.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: That's, that's the hope.

MR. REDDING: Leon, then Barry.

MR. CORZINE: Just a point, as you draft this, Charles brings up a good point. You know, if, you know, we're talking about corn, a product that was approved for only feed use didn't work out very well last time. And so as you draft this, it might be worth a look at corn growers' policy. I could help you with that because we got really specific with some things with those limited use products and how we've worked with the industry to try to do containment type systems. Just a thought on that, because that is a very important one. And there could be more of those as they come along.
MR. SCHECHTMAN: I'll just note that I don't think that's a product that has been approved by USDA as of yet.

MR. CORZINE: No. Right.

MR. REDDING: Barry.

MR. BUSHUE: I just want to know if we're going to have a discussion about October versus September, or are you just going to make a call based on the calendar?

MR. SCHECHTMAN: What we have to look, we have not looked through all of those yet. And we haven't seen what days meeting rooms are available. If there are any days in October that work, I certainly have heard from everyone -- has anyone not passed in their schedule yet? Lynn?

MR. CLARKSON: Yes, I have it.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Please, please do so. If you can't, if you can't do it today, by the end of the week for sure.

MR. CLARKSON: Sure.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: We understand the difficulty that folks have on this. We want to, again, accommodate the most folks we can. I will say, it is difficult to get meeting space that's large enough that we can use. This is, this, I like this meeting space, obviously. There's one we, it is a little more comfortable than this one, if we can get it. This has worked this meeting. We'll see what, what is available for, for the next meeting. And if, if it turns
out that October is worse than September, we will keep the
September dates. But I need to look through it all and see
what, see what else we can get. And of course meeting the
November time frame is a little easier with the September
date, but we'll do what we can. Other --

    MR. REDDING: Chuck.

    MR. BENBROOK: Again, kind of on the process. You
know, given, given that the goal is to have a finished
report delivered to the Secretary by Election Day, it would
seem to me that we need at least some preliminary drafts of
the, the difficult issues for the next meeting to talk
about. Not, not to see the first written attempt to resolve
the difficult issues perhaps two weeks before we have to put
a final report to bed.

    And the other, the other thought I have, I, it
might be useful for everyone on the committee to send an
email to you and the Chairman in the next month with sort of
the, the things that we, we are, are going to argue very
strongly to be reflected in the report. You could almost
think it as a first draft of our minority reports if things
don't get in. Because I'm not so sure, you know, whether a
lot of people might agree with some of the things that I, I
put in. But I just, at the rate we're going with two more
meetings, we're just not going to have time to flesh a lot
of that out. So it might be, it might be useful to the
process if those of us that, that, you know, feel that they, you know, want to get some additional information reflected in the report, if we put it on the table early so people can react to it, it might actually get into the report and make it not necessary to have so many minority reports.

MR. REDDING: Alan, then Angela.

MR. KEMPER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate over the last two days to have the opportunity. I'm going to slip out. The cooperation, collaboration, and consideration of this group is dynamic. This group has grown in our mannerisms, and I, including myself, so to a point where it's actually super enjoyable to do this hard task with that. Michael, I would suggest to you, though, if we cannot deliver a document to the Secretary by, by Election Day, we shouldn't be delivering anything really. Because I think it's only fair to Secretary Vilsack to give him an opportunity in the last few days to look at it and do what he wants with it. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. REDDING: Safe travels. Thank you. Angela.

MS. OLSEN: Mine is just a, it's a process comment. I appreciate Chuck's views on, you know, sending in. I think everybody at the table, though, has had the opportunity to express what is important to them. I think Michael and Russell did a fantastic job last time. I think Lynn Clarkson on one call said well I didn't think we agreed
on anything until the report came out last time. And it's true. I mean, I think they did a, just a fantastic job really keeping it neutral, keeping it productive, and producing a good work product.

So, I think they've heard the views expressed at the table during this meeting and the last meeting. And so I think we should give them a shot at producing a report, you know, as opposed to us pinging them all with, you know, additional bullet points, again, just my, my point of view. I have full faith they're going to do a really nice job on this. But, Michael and Russell, if you think differently, and if that exercise would be helpful to you to get emails from everybody, I'd be happy to send an email. But I, I think you've heard the various discussion points at this meeting.

MR. REDDING: Yeah. I guess just, just one comment. And this is, I mean we, we certainly feel the pressure, right, of both time and content, and not easy to do. And I certainly look, look to Michael to, you know, to help sort of do that front-end processing. But just listening to a lot of the conversation, I think it's important here that, particularly around this guidance document that, that, that means a lot of different things to different people. And having some clarity around what, what you believe, walking away from here, what a guidance
document, a meaningful guidance document as a final word from this AC21 to the Secretary would look like would actually be very helpful.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Yeah. I think it's more than the guidance document. I mean, there's other, there's other pieces to it.

MR. REDDING: Yeah. I just take that as an example.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Yeah, okay.

MR. REDDING: To say, as I listen to it even, even this afternoon there are, there are variants of what that guidance document should look like and what that could, could be, what would be useful guidance to the agricultural community. So, having some feedback just on that point, but, but others, right, some reflections on this meeting and what the final report should look like, I see no harm in that. Right? Some feedback from committee members is actually pretty helpful so we can look at it and pick through it and decide, you know, maybe we've got that in the agenda, and maybe that informs the outline. Right? Those kind of things are very helpful. I, I wouldn't view that at all myself as a waste of time or, you know, and overreaching, I think, in committee responsibilities.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Yeah. Yeah, I would just add, you know, we encourage comments from members at any time on
stuff that's important to you for the report. I don't necessarily want to say send us your comments. But we welcome them at all times. We chose, you were chosen on the committee because the Secretary thought you had something important to say.

MR. REDDING: Um-hmm.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: So, we want to have that information. As to the point of at the next meeting having descriptions of the difficult issues in text, I'm not sure we can do that. But I certainly would strive to get you more clarity on that shortly after the next meeting so that it's not two weeks before. I mean, I think, I think, you know, we'll, we'll be working at full speed trying to do this. And I don't want to, to, to, the committee to work to founder on folks having different views of what's most important and not in what I would call context setting, important context setting, but nonetheless context setting. And we need to figure out how to have all of those things in there.

Because, some of these subjects are very important to biotechnology and to the future of relations between farmers, but they're not specifically to the language of the charge. So we need to figure out how to capture those things in a way that raises them as issues but does not distract us from getting the report out, in my view.
MR. REDDING: Mary-Howell.

MS. MARTENS: We need to have some reality checks built into our process before we release a final document. And what I would really like to see in June when we come is to have somebody or some member or some agency provide four or five case studies of where coexistence, where AP, AP presence has caused market loss. And then we can look at that through this, through again, through the lens of this document of whether, how, how this could have been an avoidable situation. Is this something that the kinds of, the kinds of guidance that we're putting together could have made a difference to, to change anything? We, we really, we really need a little bit more reality check in our whole process of what, what is playing out on the ground, where there is market loss, where is, there is issues, and perhaps Betsy can help us -- or, no, Cathy, Cathy Greene said that there was some, some data that she'd gotten in about where there'd been market loss.

You know, it would just, it would just be really helpful to use real-life case studies to look at our document as we get toward completion.

MR. REDDING: Yeah, Greg.

MR. JAFFE: So my suggestion was, it sounds like we've gotten rid of one of the subgroups, the venues and conveners one. So we're down to two, one option for getting
more work done between us is, is to have another, I mean, anybody can come to any subgroup anyway. Adding more people officially to a subgroup I don't think, you know, does much because they could come anyway.

The question is, for maybe some of these more difficult issues, whether it's seed purity or whether it's my issue about, you know, recommendations of the, on the federal level or things like that. Maybe having some more ad hoc groups, it might only mean one conference call, a couple of hours, but it would then give Russell and Michael, both of you, more of, more food for thought for what would be written on some of those sections.

So, my suggestion is either having one or two other subgroups or just having some subject-matter conference calls between now and then where whoever wants to participate can participate for two hours and hash out a couple of these, I don't know if they're difficult issues or not difficult issues, but other things that are key issues that need to start going into the outlines. And maybe that would just help with the outlines.

While we're all working on the manual, while we're working on the guidance and working on the models, we can do some of those other things to get some of these other issues more set so there would be more, a more framed discussed in June, and we wouldn't just be waiting until September,
October to do that. So that's my suggestion.

MR. REDDING: Thoughts about that?

MR. BEN BROOK: I can --

MS. OLSEN: Oh, well --

MR. REDDING: So --

MR. BEN BROOK: Are you up? Okay.

MS. OLSEN: Yeah. I had a, right, I was going to respond to, to Greg. One thing I didn't want to lose is Greg's point about part of our charge was just the federal government and how, how USDA might help support these programs. We've heard a lot from Doug on this point as well. We heard some high-level thoughts. It's one I feel that we haven't fleshed out as a committee yet, though, is there, are there additional -- maybe there isn't anything more, but is, are there additional things that maybe the federal government could do to help support these programs.

We haven't had a lot of opportunity around the table to talk about it. I haven't put a lot of thought into it either. But I don't want to lose sight of, of Greg's point that he made on that. Maybe that's something that this third group could do. Maybe it's one call. But that is another part of our charge, and, and I think that could be productive, particularly if that's expected in our report.
MR. JAFFE: The last line of the charge.

MS. OLSEN: Yeah, exactly. Exactly.

MR. BENBROOK: We started, when we started out, Michael, in one of our early meetings, we met the folks starting the, the new Seed Committee, the Germplasm Committee. Correct? I would appreciate, and I think some other members who are interested in the seed issue, some kind of a, if you, if you could send us an email about where we could find out what they've done in the last two or three years, that would be helpful.

One of the things that the federal government does is it does testing, and it does monitoring. The federal -- we could ask the Agricultural Marketing Service, or ARS to do a periodic survey of seed purity and establish some baselines of, of AP. You know, they test for bacteria in food and pesticides in water, and lots of things and lots of things. Why couldn't they start to conduct an annual survey of AP in conventional seed, especially in the, in the years following approval of the first transgenic trait. Wouldn't it be nice data if we had that for alfalfa? So, that is something we, we could suggest that would be a helpful and legitimate federal role.

And then, back to another process question. I recall in the early-going of AC21 that I sent either you, Mr. Chairman, or Michael an email, and then you
automatically forwarded it to everybody. Do I remember that, if we send you a communication, we're supposed to cc everybody on the committee? Do I remember that correctly?

MR. SCHECHTMAN: I mean, certainly I don't, if we, if we ask you a question about your schedule or your availability, I don't want that to go to everyone. But I think for subjects that are, you know, intended to be relevant to the discussion, it's probably a good thing that everyone sees them.

MR. BENBROOK: Okay. I mean, I agree with that. But, you know, I just, I think everybody should understand that if we have a, something substantive to say to, to either of you, it goes to the whole committee. And then we, we all know that's the rules of the road.

MR. REDDING: Okay. Greg, did you have a comment?

MR. JAFFE: Oh, no. I'm sorry.

MR. REDDING: Okay.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: I'll just say something to the question of the USDA doing, doing testing. I think that is something that I'm not sure we have the authority to do. But, I mean, we can't just go and test proprietary stuff, I don't think. But this, you know, as a general markets creed. I don't, but I, but I don't know.

MR. BENBROOK: You might be surprised how much authority you have for, by the Secretary.
MS. MARTENS: But they come out and pull seed samples at my place all the time, you know, it's Ag and Markets. They're testing for germ and purity. Why not run a GMO test on it? It would be really easy to do.

MR. REDDING: Leon and David, safe travels. Thank you.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Safe travels. Thank you both.

MR. REDDING: Okay. We also need to know before we -- oh, sorry. Barry.

MR. BUSHUE: I just, maybe I got lost in this conversation. I don't see it as USDA's --

COURT REPORTER: Microphone, please.

MR. BUSHUE: I don't see it as USDA's responsibility to be expending taxpayers' dollars on tests that benefit the market and should be market-driven as opposed to government-driven.

MR. REDDING: Yeah. Any final comments for the good of the order before we wrap up? I think I have a pretty good sense of what we need to do. Yeah, I'm not sure how it all comes together, but, but we all understand the time line and I think our charge from the Secretary. And we'll certainly make a good faith effort to pull this together and inform the discussion and, you know, have it really at the end of the day be something meaningful that, that we want to deliver. So, that's our overarching charge,
right? So, I would just say to all, as you think about this issue and, and as you're driving, working, just processing, you know, think about this conversation of the last couple of days and, and what you would like to see.

Input I think just is accepted, just send us a note, thoughts, reflections, as you travel back, just to make sure that we've got a good list of things that you want to make sure we consider and that we come back to you in June with having those points sort of captured somewhere.

Okay? It may not be built out as much as you'd like, but at least making sure the points are on, on paper. We would appreciate that. Okay? Any final word?

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Yeah. I'll just, I will just say that I thought that the spirit of working together and cooperation today was, was really strong. And I leave this meeting scared by the amount of work we have to do, but really encouraged that it's possible, and having a much better sense of direction of where, of what it is we need to do and where we need to go, and what the ideas and thoughts and critical issues of the members around the table are.

So, for that I thank you all very much.

MR. REDDING: End where we began with a simple thank you. Appreciate the input. Good work. Safe travels back. Have a safe spring, productive spring, and we'll see you in June. Okay? Thank you.
(Whereupon, at 2:39 p.m., the meeting was adjourned.)

Digitally signed by Mary Rettig
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ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON BIOTECHNOLOGY AND 21ST CENTURY AGRICULTURE

By:

Mary Rettig, Transcriber