A meeting in the above-entitled matter was held on June 14, 2016, commencing at 9:07 a.m. at 1331 F Street NW, Suite 800, Washington, D.C. 20004.

Russell C. Redding, Committee Chair

Michael G. Schechtman, Executive Secretary
APPEARANCES

Russell Redding, Chair
Michael Schechtman, Executive Secretary

Committee Members:
Alan Kemper
Josette Lewis
David Johnson
Charles Benbrook
Angela Olsen
Laura Batcha
Leon Corzine
Lynn Clarkson
Melissa Hughes
Jerome Slocum
Keith Kisling
Paul Anderson
Latresia Wilson
Barry Bushue

Other USDA Participants:
Douglas McKalip, Senior Advisor, Office of the Secretary
Betsy Rakola, Organic Policy Advisor, Agricultural Marketing Service
MR. REDDING: Okay. Good morning, everybody. Again, thank you very much for serving on AC21, very much appreciate the continued work. As we noted yesterday, sort of we're in the final leg of this relay of trying to finish up the new charge and, as we talked about, time line, which we'll revisit here today a little bit, but again, just a note of thanks. I also want to say thanks to, to Michael, a very nice evening, hospitality, and a new adventure but particularly enjoyed the chance to catch up with members of the committee and visit a little bit.

I thought we had, you know, a very good discussion yesterday on the draft guidance document, the models document, and that short list of the difficult issues. I feel pretty comfortable, and my sense is that most around the table are comfortable. We can certainly talk about these a little more, but just the takeaway yesterday, I think we were getting to the point there in the afternoon where there was an acknowledgment of sort of the content, where we had some identified gaps but also some support for what was on the table and before you in terms of the draft documents, so I appreciate that. We can certainly revisit that today.

We do, we do need to look at, you know, the outline, revised outline. I know Michael has circulated
that. So hopefully you have a copy in front of you. I want
to take a look at particularly the, the introduction and
make sure it's clear to the farm community the purpose of
the report and the resource documents, also need to talk
about recommendations. We had mentioned that yesterday but
want to make sure that we can capture -- are capturing
recommendations for the Secretary.

End goal, what we produce, we want to make sure
it's viewed as advancing the conversation on coexistence and
advancing agriculture. I mean, I always come back to that
and say, are we advancing those conversations, not simply
cataloging them and noting them, but advancing them? So I
want to make sure that our work today and certainly the
report to follow, draft reports to follow will live true to
that, I think, the expectation from the Secretary, but
certainly, everybody here at the table wants to do that as
well.

The -- went back and I looked at the November 2012
report. You know, there were a lot of conversations
yesterday about agriculture and the changes, and some of
that is in the framing of our introduction, but I went back
and read the, you know, the first eight pages of the
November 12th document. It was actually pretty helpful
because some of those foundational concerns and
acknowledgments that we had identified in the first report
are, of course, you know, themes of this, of this report and then the task that's before us. So it was helpful to look at that again.

It is also worth noting, you know, the very positive future that we see for production agriculture. Right? This is not, again, simply looking at the complications and, you know, how, how difficult it is -- by, by way of example, yesterday of Oregon. I mean, there are certainly issues out there but, overall, very positive about American agriculture.

The -- as we look at the, sort of the next step, I think, just for all of us to be mindful that this document, it will be important to read this one in tandem with the November 2012. And, you know, I keep -- it's just not a stand-alone; it's simply another installment on our work but important to sort of look back. And I think just in the outline, Michael, I see sort of those, sort of, plans to sort of reach back, at least make reference to, you know, our original report and the work. So that is good, as well, and that whatever we produce, I think, just making sure it's both advancing the issue of coexistence but, again, as we talked about briefly yesterday, just raising this awareness of the importance of coexistence, you know, what we've got to do, you know, between production methods and respecting each of those.
We also have to make sure that we're building the confidence of the farm community to respond to coexistence, to engage in it, talk about it, be comfortable talking about the technologies that they've adopted, the practices that they've adopted, being able to translate that for both the benefit of neighbor but also the benefit of consumer -- and if there's one thing I've learned in the last years of being Secretary, there is no more credible source about food and agriculture than the person who's growing it -- and making sure that in this conversation, where there are questions about what we're doing and how we're doing it, we've adopted those, they are good practice and we respect it, but I think in this conversation it's being able to step one, one step beyond that and make sure that we're also building the confidence of those who are in production ag to both talk about what they're doing and feel very confident about what they're doing, and that needs to be a part of whatever this mix of conversation that we're going to have or expected to have. Right? Does that make sense?

I just worry a little bit about you can make a long list of conveners and all of that; at the end of the day, the person who's adopted the technology and is doing it and earning a living from it is really the most credible source to talk about what it is that they're doing and why they're doing it. I think that's part of what we have to
look at here, going forward.

So, anyhow, so with that, maybe I'll ask Michael just for a quick recap, and then we can get some observations and feedback from you as well, just overnight thoughts. We were expecting Mary-Howell today. I have not seen her yet, so hopefully she will be here.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Good morning, everyone. Let me first note for you that there are two new documents in case you didn't get them on the desk. One is a document that Chuck alluded to yesterday regarding measures that USDA had announced; this is a couple of years ago. At the same time as EPA announced its, its policy to address herbicide-resistant weeds, USDA announced some complementary steps that we were taking to, to help in that process. And second, there is a revised version of the draft Notional Outline for, for the report, just sort of listing how the pieces, the main topics would be rearranged based on my hearing of what folks had said yesterday. So those two documents are there.

In terms of what we talked about yesterday, a brief recap -- you heard one recap of the morning when Secretary Redding arrived yesterday; I'll make that part shorter for now -- again, we had updates on the regulatory developments at APHIS, on the efforts to update the coordinated framework, and on a report that came out from
the National Academy of Sciences a couple of weeks -- a few weeks ago. The subgroups gave reports on their efforts, and they were all very helpful, and their work was very well received and useful in our drafting process.

We talked about -- we talked in detail about two, the two stand-alone pieces, so to speak, the guidance document, and there was quite -- there were a few minor changes to the guidance document, and then there was one issue that was not entirely resolved which was an issue about the subject of seed and the term characteristics that was in there. So we sort of need to, to quickly revisit that issue and see if we can, if we can put that topic to bed.

On the Local Coexistence draft, there was some rearrangements that were suggested in some of the sections and a few small modifications, but basically, people were pretty comfortable with where that is. It'll get, it'll get a little more polished. It was a, it was a quick draft, and we will do a little bit more work on checking some of the information around some of the potential funding topics that either were just alluded to or were not alluded to because we weren't sure about them. So there'll be a little bit of fussing with that, but that document is pretty -- is, is further along than I had thought it might be at this point. So, so that is good.
We talked about the outline, and in the outline there was, there was some suggested rearrangements of pieces, and you have the new version of that and that's something we need to check back with you to see that we captured what, what members' desires were for, for how the report should be structured. We have, as yet, as our chair indicated, to talk further about the piece on Complex Issues as well as what recommendations will be, and we have the revised time line. So I think that's where, I think that's where we are and we can go on.

MR. REDDING: Great. Yeah, thank you. Let's, let's open it up. I mean, observations from day one, thoughts? Keith, you want to lead off? Thank you.

MR. KISLING: Yes, Mr. Chairman. Keith Kisling.

Off the record.

(Discussion off the record.)

MR. KISLING: Back on the record. Mr. Chairman, I sat here yesterday and watched the discussion that we had, and I, you know, in my situation I don't raise organic and I don't raise GMOs. So I kind of don't have a dog in this fight other than to, to be sure that for the wheat people we don't do something that later on is going to affect us, but I didn't see anything in the discussion yesterday that would, that would make me wonder if we have some issue among ourselves that we can't get together on today.
And I think what happens and as we went through the day yesterday, it looked like we got into the weeds so deep, with wording and trying to rearrange things, that it slowed the whole process down a lot and we lost our focus. And our focus is that we develop a joint coexistence plan at the state or local level and, if so, what can the federal government do to assist in that process, and we don't want to get away from that, and I think the more we lug ourselves down on the small issues it's going to happen.

So I would suggest to the committee today that as you do start to discuss, its issues that you have circled that we can discuss and decide on -- we've all been together now a lot of years, and we ought to be able to do that -- discuss those issues that are pertinent to the charge of the Secretary and let's move forward. Let's get out of here by noon.

MR. REDDING: Thank you. Other comments, thoughts of day one? Angela.

MS. OLSEN: I went back last night and looked at the charge again, and I think Keith is right. I went back and looked at the charge, you know, because I think that there are a lot of topics we're all very passionate about, we're interested in; it's an interesting topic, so we want to talk about it. And I went back and looked at our charge, and it seems to me that, you know, we don't want to lose our
focus on what the Secretary is asking us to do, and we put
together two very good documents that I think we can all be
proud of, which are the guidance document but then, also, I
don't know, I can't recall the official name, but the Doug
Goehring document with Michael's edits, with Michael's good
additions, and I think it's a -- again, those are two
documents that we can, we can all get around, and to me that
seems to be our report.

There needs to be initial framing up front about
what the Secretary asked us to do, what this report is, what
it isn't. We need to refer back to our November 2012
report, but it seems that those are the two work products.
And, if that is the bulk of our report, then the next phase
would be advising the Secretary on what our recommendations
would be to use that report, how does he implement it, does
he send a letter, who does he send it to, you know, and
having that discussion. And to me that really seems to
answer the charge, and it was helpful for me to go back and
look at our charge last evening. So interested in others'
thoughts.

There's a lot of things we can say about
agriculture. I know we're all very interested in the topic.
There's a lot of, lot of different tangents we can go on.
People have the opportunity in their comments to talk about
things that they feel, you know, need to be a part of the
report as well, but to me -- you know, originally I was thinking those would be two final, you know, almost annexes, you know, like here's a rip-off and, you know, that farmers could take, but the more I went back and looked at the documents and the charge, the more to me it seems that that is our report.

So interested in what others think, as well, and very interested, Russell, with your comments about, you know, nobody's more -- there's no more credible source than the folks that are actually growing the crops. So I'd like to really hear from the growers what they think, as well, on the charge.

MR. REDDING: Thank you. Leon.

MR. CORZINE: Well, I was reviewing last night too, and I, and I think -- I was really pleased with, with what we, what we had or, as we talked as we left, as far as this new outline. I thought that kind of gets it, and I've been pleased about the, what the charge is because we're finally maybe getting some rubber to hit the road, if you will, or working towards getting some things that actually relate to the farm and where USDA can possibly offer assistance in all the venues that we talked about, but then some of the things we're getting to in this, those things we haven't -- it's too easy for us to lose our focus and get off of that.
I think, you know, we were talking about the Seed Purity Issues and the Functional Trait issues. I mean, there's a place for part of that, but I don't -- you know, to keep the document concise so it will be useful, we don't need a page on everything, and if we need to massage a little bit what's in -- we already have those things talked about in the guidance document. So where else would we put them or why do we need, pick your issue, why do we need it listed in every single thing, because, too, if you go back -- and I think everybody in the room was involved in the last document -- and if we need to refer people back to that document, rather than repeat it all again, I think that really was the intent of the Secretary when he gave us this charge, to not -- we don't need to list and go through all that discussion that wasn't an easy discussion. We don't -- why do we need to do that again? Why can't we move forward with something that really is going to be useful, and like Keith said, I think we can do that pretty quickly.

If we look at this guidance document, in particular, if there are things that you think need added, maybe that's what we talk about. I can see us really getting bogged down in some of the discussion of those -- of this other, I guess we don't call it a document, we call it a parking lot or whatever it is.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The Complex Issues?
MR. CORZINE: Yeah, the Complex Issues thing, because they are addressed, to both sides of the table, I would say, in other parts. So that's my thought. I think for use -- for what the real intent is of our charge, we've got to keep this thing concise, or you know, it doesn't matter if it's a farmer or if it's an extension service guy or somebody in the FSA office; they see this thing and start through all this language that if we're going to add, if you don't get beyond what we've tried to do in this outline with an intro, out it goes, and I, as a farmer, will do the same. So thank you. I think you've done a great job of quickly putting together this outline, and I think we stay on that one and it works.

MR. REDDING: Okay. Thank you. Alan.

MR. KEMPER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Unlike others, I had more to do last night than to read your documents. I actually had a few drinks, a good steak, and enjoyed Washington, D.C. So -- but, but my point is, as just a simple farmer from Indiana, I could probably write this document with two paragraphs, addressing the Secretary's views. I mean, there's a couple key sentences about coexistence and about neighboring farmers working together that sum up what our charge was with that. So I'm having a real hard time with the parking lot document, seeing where it fits in at all. Good
executive reports are really brief and concise, and I think we owe that to the Secretary to deliver that. Thank you.

    MR. REDDING: Thank you. Laura.

    MS. BATCHA: Laura Batcha. I like where Keith started us off in our comments, and I think for me the most productive use of today -- and I'm not sure about the order -- but I'm most interested in spending some time on the recommendations to the Secretary for what USDA can do to facilitate this process, because I don't think we spent a lot of sort of intentional focus on that conversation. So I think if we did that now, that'll help us move through the rest of our, our time line.

    I think for me maybe another sweep on the core documents to circle -- to make sure that Michael's got the accurate notes on the circled items that we think we need to see improvement on, just to sort of confirm that.

    As it relates to the, what's being referred to as the Complex Issues or the parking lot document, whether or not we decide to get bogged down in those discussions today or not, I think I have a different view of the purpose of that document. I don't assume that our recommendation to the Secretary will be that that document get forced out to FSA offices, right, but there's the recommendation to the Secretary and the documents, and then there was what we say you do with them.
I think from my perspective one of the purposes of that Complex Issues document from my mind is forging consensus amongst this group so that some of the folks participating don't get left feeling like there are critical issues that were omitted from being included that, that some folks may feel like have a connection to what it is we're doing.

So I would encourage us, whether or not we get stuck in that discussion today or not or whether or not we come back to it at the next meeting, that the role of that document might be to help us get to a consensus position and it might be that it's for the Secretary communicating some thoughts from the committee and not necessarily for a handbook for dissemination to farmers or to field agents that work with farmers.

MR. REDDING: Good. Thank you. Barry.

MR. BUSHUE: I think I disagree with Laura. I'm more inclined to think that we have a very good work product, a deliverable product which will be usable by, by farmers and folks in local communities to be able to address the issues which the Secretary has asked us to address.

When I look at the Complex document, or Complex Issues document, what I see is a disproportionate look at a couple of items out of many that we could go on and on and on about, about the challenges and the opportunities
provided by any kind of technology, biotech being just one
of many. I don't see a lot of purpose in a long
dissertation about all the other things that may or may not
be included in this. That's not what we were asked to do.
As far as, as far as making people feel good about, when
they go home, about issues that may or may not be addressed,
again, I don't believe that's what the Secretary brought us
together to do.

And I like the work, the two work documents. I
think they're appropriate. We have reached consensus on
those, which I think is a good outcome, and the fact that we
have consented around all those, those work documents, I
think, is a testament to the, to the work of the group and
the fact that we're able to, to look at these issues with a
clean and transparent eye and come forward.

I'm kind of like Alan -- as far as the summary of
this, it can be two pages or less: a recognition of the
fact the work that the committee did and its recommendations
in 2012, a look at what the charge is, a recommendation to
the Secretary that he utilizes these two work documents in
the way in which the committee has recognized or at least
suggested they be utilized. And so from that aspect I, you
know, I think that the, I think the large part of our work
is generally done.

As far as looking back over the two work documents
again, I don't have a problem doing that, although I'd hate
to readdress them too much because we have ended up in a
very good place and, you know, in a group like this, with
the challenges and the ideas that we all have, may come
unglued. But, you know, I think we're in a good place, and
I don't think we need to dwell on much of this too much
longer.

MR. REDDING: Okay. Thank you. Other comments?

Alan.

MR. KEMPER: Hopefully, I agree with Laura on this
that we need to come back and talk about what USDA is going
to be doing and things like that first this morning, because
I think we've addressed a lot of the other document. Thank
you, Mr. Chair.

MR. REDDING: Okay. So why don't we start there.
Right? I mean, let's go ahead and just talk about, you
know, from your perspective on, you know, what would be the
list of recommendations, and then let's use that to inform,
you know, the outline, which we want to come back to, the
difficult issues that had been noted, and any other, you
know, sort of thoughts regarding the guidance or models
documents.

So when you think about, you know, this report
being finalized, what do you see as the short list of
recommendations to the Secretary? Josette.
MS. LEWIS: Well, I think one of the -- it's one or it's two, I guess, depending on how you think of it -- but to really strongly encourage USDA to mainstream the availability of these tools within a very diverse set of programs that reach out to different constituencies for -- that USDA interacts with.

So I think we grappled a lot, at least I know in our Venues working group, about whether there was money set aside -- we talked a little bit about that yesterday -- that could be tapped in to host these meetings. We talked about the complexity of different factors that farmers are dealing with and the fact that there's also some incentive programs they can tap into that -- none of which are dedicated to coexistence.

By the same token, it seems like it was a pretty consistent theme that even if money isn't set aside for coexistence and it isn't earmarked for coexistence, there are a lot of very strong programs within the Department that should be aware of these tools and encouraged to make them available and applied where appropriate, because that's -- if we're going to emphasize the local level, that's, I think, where USDA has the most effective opportunity, is at, you know, FSA-run programs or NRCS-run programs or these other things that can be tapped into as part of their overall agenda and really mainstream it within those.
MR. SCHECHTMAN: Was that one recommendation or two?

MS. LEWIS: I'd give it one.

MR. REDDING: Right. And with that, Josette, specific to which, which documents, or you know, are we talking about, you know, the guidance documents, the models, right, or the --

MS. LEWIS: Both.

MR. REDDING: -- the two primary resources, right?

MS. LEWIS: Both.

MR. REDDING: Okay. All right. Yeah. Laura.

MS. BATCHA: Laura Batcha. So I think I have four basic recommendations. I think one of them is aligned with Josette's, primarily, in terms of dissemination, broad dissemination of the tools, and I concur about those two primary tools being the things that are disseminated.

I think I have a question about -- I like the mainstreaming because then there's that wide dissemination, but at the end of the day, I think I have a little bit more confidence that actual individuals make things happen. And I'm intrigued by a direction that we're discussing, unrelated to this, for organic production and some needs around facilitating transition of acres where FSA is moving towards establishing a point person in each state on organics so that that person has some interest, they've
self-selected themselves, and they take on the portfolio, and it doesn't mean they're the convener or they're anything, just they're an individual with an interest who's making sure they're talking to people and people know about it.

So in addition to sort of the mainstreaming, I think it might be helpful to consider this idea of establishing a point person that's self-selected within the USDA network who just takes it on themselves to see if they can help facilitate making a few things happen. That might be helpful, and they would likely be individuals with a natural interest in the subject if they were self-selected.

In addition to that, I think I'd like to see there be an endorsement from the Secretary's office of the value of doing this that goes with the dissemination. I think that that's important with the leadership that USDA can offer.

I think there should be some -- I'd like to see us recommend some sort of collation of available funds that might be used for the convening and this idea of building these types of convening meetings into the RFPs of those appropriate programs so that as conversations start to happen, people know where they might be able to go to organize.

And then I think my last recommendation for what
the Secretary and USDA might be able to do with our recommendations, I, I liked the point that our member of the public that joined us yesterday in his comments to us about building in some kind of evaluation. So is there some way we can recommend to the Secretary that there be some check as to see whether or not this resulted in meetings being convened?

And then my last piece on the recommendation is I'd like us to think about some kind of recommendation to the Secretary about how to build a direct bridge from USDA to state departments of agriculture because there's some way -- somehow we have to hop out of the federal system into the state and local system, and I don't know what that looks like, but I'd like to recommend some bridge. Exactly.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Sorry.

MR. REDDING: Bridge, I, I --

MS. BATCHA: And that bridge could be -- and that bridge could be named Russell, but you know.

MR. REDDING: Yeah. Yeah. Well, and just on that point, I think Dr. Glenn, you know, did express NASDA's interest in being a partner, I mean, with the letter and sort of endorsement of both the coexistence theme and the charge and support. So it's certainly not unreasonable, I think, to really have an engagement with NASDA.

I think I had shared at the March meeting that for
there's actually policy, you know, within NASDA organization on coexistence, and Dr. Schechtman and I presented at the last NASDA midwinter policy meeting. So, so this would be, you know, certainly an appropriate next step, I think, in that State Department of Agriculture engagement. So, yeah, thank you.

MS. RAKOLA: Secretary Redding, could I just explain a little bit about the FSA --

MR. REDDING: Yeah. Yeah, please.

MS. RAKOLA: Just to provide a little bit more context about what the Farm Service Agency is doing -- and thank you, Laura, for bringing that up -- we are looking at an existing model that USDA already has that is a voluntary collateral duty. So we're not creating new positions, but we are looking at whether people can dedicate a portion of their time to the topic of organic. We're calling it the Organic Champion Model, and this is built on the model of something that already exists called the Special Emphasis Program Managers.

In the past this has been used primarily to have folks focus on civil rights for historically underserved communities. So we have special emphasis program managers for African-Americans, Asian-Americans, Latinos, women, persons with disabilities, sort of more identity or demographic groups, and we are looking at expanding that
model to use for more topical subjects.

So both the Natural Resources Conservation Service
and the Farm Service Agency are looking at establishing
these networks of organic champions throughout the nation.
They're doing it a little bit differently, trying to make
sure that we do have locally appropriate models.

So it may look a little bit different in each
state, depending on what the interest and the need is.
Obviously it's going to be very different if you are in
Alabama or if you are in California, but again, looking at,
I think to Laura's point, you know, looking at somebody who
is self-selecting, who is interested, and probably already
has some level of knowledge or interest in the topic and who
would really take the initiative to be a leader within their
own agency on the local level. So in some cases we'll have
one in each state; in some cases there may be multiples in
each state, but thinking about how that person can be a
resource for their colleagues.

MR. REDDING: Great. Thank you. Alan.

MR. KEMPER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think as we
look at coexistence -- and Laura hit a lot on the, on the,
working with the state departments of agriculture to help be
a role model through that -- but as we look at coexistence,
USDA has a lot of bridge-building to build back. The most
discriminated sector in the U.S. American agriculture is the
American white male. They have now eliminated those farmers from farming anything under 10 acres and getting any type of payments. You don't know how discouraging that is to a 35- or 40-year-old son who's trying to farm in the agrihoods or neighborhoods with a lot of little farms and now saying he can't get any type of payment from those tracts.

The rural countryside of Midwest has a lot of disagreement and just, and just very discouraged with USDA at this point over that issue because, even if you're a 2500-acre farmer or a 3,000-acre farmer or a 100-acre farmer, you probably have some 10-acre tracts and, when you go into an FSA office and saying they will, they will let anybody else in the program but an American white male, those farmers are really getting upset with USDA. Thank you.

MR. REDDING: Alan, if you'd -- I mean, I'm not familiar with that 10-acre rule. Is that, is that a --

MR. KEMPER: According to FSA --

MR. REDDING: Yeah.

MR. KEMPER: -- anything that's under 10 acres cannot be farmed by an American white male and be still in the program. You can be a Native American, you can be African-American, you can be a woman, but American white males are not allowed. As a matter of fact, they void the contracts. They're voiding contracts in community offices.
because of that.

So, I mean, you know, with the ARC and that, you probably won't get payment anyway, but when a person walks in like my son or anybody else and says, sorry, we will be calling your landlord because you do not qualify, because you're an American white male. Thank you.

MR. MCKALIP: Al, if we could follow up with you to understand what is being communicated to you, because I think there may be a gap between what the FSA policy is and how it's being communicated out in the countryside. So let's sit down. I'd like to make sure I understand --

MR. KEMPER: No problem with that. It's just -- it's a flat-out black-white issue in the county offices. They just turn you around, send you out the door, and say you do not qualify. Thank you.

MR. REDDING: Leon and then Chuck.

MR. CORZINE: Back to your question, Mr. Chairman, about how we direct this to the Secretary as far as rolling this on out, I think if you look to that Local Coexistence Discussions and you get past your introduction and maybe somehow in the language, as you, as you put language to the outline, that you point out -- when you get to about page 6 on there and then page 7, you really get to the convening discussions, and maybe somehow that should be highlighted or pointed out, that these are things that are possibilities to
help convene those discussions, and I think that really is
the meat of the charge, to get the discussions, whether it's
farmer-to-farmer or community discussions or -- and then
also list the venues and possibilities there. So it looks
to me like that would be the meat of what we're really asked
to do and to highlight that in our report to the Secretary.

MR. REDDING: Good. Thank you. Angela and then
Chuck. So I'm not sure that we're out here, but go ahead.

MS. OLSEN: I really like the discussion about the
broad dissemination. Laura, I liked a lot of your thoughts.
I also had NASDA on my list as well, you know, really
building that bridge. It appears the bridge already exists
but to make sure that they, that they're involved in this as
well, because I think they could be tremendous champions for
this as well.

Just something I know, you know, probably obvious,
but as long as we're coming up with our list, obviously to
have these two tools on USDA's website. The U.S. -- the
AC21 report would be there but maybe also extracted out the
two tools so that they're very easy, easy to find as
stand-alone documents and, also, a reach-out from the
Secretary -- I mean, again, it could be just a brief
communication -- but to different trade associations and
grower groups and seed associations, you know, from ASTA to
Farm Bureau to Corn Growers to the local farm bureaus.
It seems that somebody may want to get together a
-- and I don't think we should do that around this table;
these are just some ideas -- but a list of, you know, who
really has their finger on the pulse of the grower, the seed
companies, et cetera, and what's the easiest way to
disseminate, again, through the trade associations, the
grower groups. That may be another, another way to
streamline and to, you know, for this broad dissemination
concept that we've been talking about.

MR. REDDING: Good. Thank you. Chuck.

MR. BENBROOK: Angela, you stole my thunder. So
in terms of the recommendations to this Secretary of
Agriculture, Secretary Vilsack -- and let me preface my
statement by saying that it is highly likely that whoever
the next Secretary of Agriculture is, they're not likely to
have a lot of time and, and bandwidth to focus on advancing
and implementing recommendations in this AC21's report,
certainly not well into 2017 and who knows what other
intervening events will, in the world of biotech, you know,
might command the attention.

So I think if anything is going to happen with
this AC21's report by virtue of some efforts by the
Secretary of Agriculture, it will have to come from what
Secretary Vilsack does between the date our report is
released and January 22nd or whenever the inaugural is. And
I think, I think definitely our recommendations to Secretary Vilsack should include one about how the USDA should engage with the state departments of agriculture, to use them as one channel of this outreach and accessibility to the two documents and whatever else the Secretary wishes to suggest is important for the Secretary of Agriculture to be working on during 2017 in an -- in a period when there's not likely to be a lot of action at the federal level over this, but in addition, there should be a recommendation to Secretary Vilsack about engaging with commodity groups and grower groups and NGOs and other private players in terms of how they can use the resources and use their networks. And so -- because I think, you know, really, all USDA is going to do is they're going to put out a press release that the report is done and they're going to post the two documents on the website and that's pretty much going to be it, at least for the foreseeable future.

So I would -- I think we need to recommend to Secretary Vilsack some, some real systematic outreach to groups like the corn growers and the soybean growers and grain companies, organizations that represent the grain industry, to encourage them to pick up the ball and try to keep this process going and filtering down into the local level. Thanks.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Just one comment from that, if I
can. I think that's very interesting recommendations, but I do want to just make one point about the life span of reports, and that is that after our report is completed, you know, under the overall FACA process, recommendations get tracked and any department's efforts and success in implementing those recommendations is reported to GAO and then to Congress.

So while I think it's undoubtedly true that a new administration coming in will initially have higher priorities than dealing with a report from the previous administration, they don't vanish and there is a recurrent question that comes to departments about what have you done to, to implement the recommendations of committees that you've spent money on and held public meetings with. So I just wanted to, to put that out there.

MR. REDDING: Yeah, if I could add, I think the -- I mean, two points: one, whatever we produce, like the previous AC21 reports, it's really to make sure that this transcends administrations. I mean, I see this as, you know, Secretary Vilsack sort of, again, advancing the conversation on coexistence.

If you go back and read the very early reports, I mean, some of the foundational work that was done around biotechnology and the evolving issues, I mean, it really helped inform our discussion in 2011, '12, to produce that
report. So I guess I'm looking at this as -- I get that we're in a transition with the administration, but this is a topic that transcends administrations. Right? It is central to agriculture.

The final point would be, I think in our background and context portion of the 2012 document, there was a statement about all participants in agriculture have a role in making coexistence work, right, and I don't want to lose sight of that. I think we can easily say to the USDA that there is a, you know, thank you for bringing it to the table and helping us sort of get, you know, further -- to form that, but the real benefit is to sort of push this out as broadly as we can, from tech providers to managers to markets, I mean, USDA, others, all actually.

So just keep that in mind as we look at the recommendations to certainly the Secretary, that he would have and the USDA would have a reach within that network of stakeholders of USDA. But I think as we look at the group that's here on the committee, that reach is equally as important out to the farm community and technology, and each of us sort of bring a piece of this, you know, to the table, but carrying that back, I think, is really important.

So somewhere in our recommendations is noting that sort of all participants have a role, and maybe we want to speak very specifically about how we could, knowing there's
a transition, to help facilitate this sort of dissemination
of information and keep this awareness level pretty high. I
think the Oregon example was a great exhibit. Right? It is
not going away, and it is not getting easier.

So how do we really position agriculture, and
however you want to define that, to really address those
issues, those contemporary issues around the different forms
of production agriculture interfacing, right, and how do we
in the recommendations say it's, yes, it's to the USDA per
the charge but it's also -- that's who we are, right; that's
what we need to do to carry back and to carry out what we
would see as, you know, dissemination of the documents but
also really giving some serious thought within our own
organizations who would be an appropriate point person to
help, help the USDA but also help us, I think, just keep
this conversation out there about the need for coexistence.

So other, other thoughts, comments on
recommendations?

(No audible response.)

MR. REDDING: Okay. So we have a few other, I
guess, just making sure that, you know, when, you know, we
bundle these different, different pieces up, I mean, making
sure that if there's something else you want to convey to
the Secretary or make sure that you're looking at the short
list of recommendations, that we've captured that. Okay.
David.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There's one paragraph that are -- that's in these documents that I read every day, and it's that opening paragraph of the quote that the Secretary had about we have great diversity in American agriculture. We all know that paragraph. Right? And when I come to Washington, D.C., every three or four months, one of the things I do on Sundays is I go to the monuments. I go to the Lincoln and I go to the Jefferson and I go to the FDR, and I read all these quotes on the walls because they have impact on my life and they've impacted everybody's lives.

So one of the recommendations I'd like to make to the Secretary is that when people visit USDA, this quote that is at the beginning of our documents is framed and put up in the atrium for everybody to read, because I come back to this meeting every time looking at that paragraph, wanting to fight for this issue because of that paragraph. I'm not sure if he wrote it, he had help writing it, but it is one of the most amazing quotes I've ever read about agriculture. And so in the recommendation I'd like to somehow see that people who visit USDA or think about American agriculture get to read that quote. I read it every day before I come to this meeting, and that's all I'd like to add.
MS. BATCHA: Here, here.

MR. REDDING: Good.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Is that something for the next Secretary of Agriculture to do, to frame his predecessor's quotes?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: We forgive --

MR. REDDING: Yeah, forgive us, yeah, but yeah, I, David, agree. In that, in that one paragraph or few sentences, it sort of sums up sort of the charge and expectation and what we see both in the opportunity and challenges that were noted, yeah. That's good.

Other thoughts and recommendations, I mean, things that you want to make sure that at least topically we raise here and keep track of as we draft the document for the Secretary?

(No audible response.)

MR. REDDING: Okay.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Let me just --

MR. REDDING: Yeah, please.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: I just sort of want to ask folks to think back because I'm not, I'm not sure that there might not have been things that came up in the past as recommendations that we've forgotten. So was there anything that was recommended yesterday or in a previous meeting for things that USDA should be doing with this report that
anyone remembers?

I mean, I will go back over the notes to see if there were other recommendations from the past, but I just want people to put on their thinking caps or their memory caps or whatever they are to think if there were any other things that came up in the past that were recommendations for using this. I see Chuck may have --

MR. REDDING: Yeah, Chuck, please, and then Missy.

MR. BENBROOK: Well, sort of consistent with that theme, Michael, I'm struck in reviewing our November 2012 report by the contrast between the substance of this document and what I envision the substance of the document that we've been discussing, and it definitely strikes me that we -- I'd like to see some more discussion about how we can incorporate the, the many -- much more specific and, I think, important recommendations in this November 2012 report as part of our body of work and what we're, you know, recommending to the Secretary that, that he continue advancing.

I know that there's -- you know, Michael, you've suggested a couple of ways that the initial report could be referenced, and other people have said that the new report is an extension of the old report, but, so -- but how do we really do that? I mean, for people that never read the 2012 report, maybe don't even know it exists, how can we more
effectively highlight and reference what's to me a much, a much more substantive set of recommendations in this 2012 report than what we're going forward with now?

    MR. REDDING: That's a good question. I don't -- I mean, we've talked about, if you look at the outline, I mean, some reference, but I mean, there is a base assumption there that folks are actually aware of it, you know, have read it, and do we need to do more -- yeah. So how to connect the two, right? Is it a restatement of recommendations, or is it, you know, somehow in the presentation of this to make sure that folks know that this is a companion piece to the earlier work? So we can talk more about that. Missy.

    MS. HUGHES: To Michael's question about are there any other recommendations, I feel like we at a previous meeting had a good conversation about how the USDA might consider technology in the future, as far as social media, webinars, things like that -- so, you know, to include that, I think, in some form in the recommendation about the USDA being open to using tools like that to help disseminate this information.

    The second piece that I'm struggling with a little bit -- and I'm wondering if Doug and Michael can help, maybe Betsy too -- if you're a USDA employee and you're presented with this kind of -- you know, I see our two documents; I
think Angela used the term tear-offs -- you're presented
with, okay, this group of people came together and wrote
this document, go forth and do something with it, what's the
process that the USDA would take? I would imagine the
lawyers would look at it. I would imagine there'd be a
whole process, and if you can help me just briefly
understand that, it might help inform what other
recommendations we might have. Like, to understand how this
will go through the machine and come back out the other side
might help me to think about helping to direct that machine.

MR. MCKALIP: So just a few thoughts on that --
the policy discussions we have with our agencies over
program priorities, use of resources, direction for the
field staff all come about from results of documents like
this. A recent example is the biogas road map that USDA put
together has placed additional emphasis on funding anaerobic
digesters on dairies to -- for the purposes of greenhouse
gas sequestration.

Going way back in my career, maybe 20 years plus,
concerns over field prices helped drive how USDA marketed
conservation tillage at the local level. So it wasn't so
much that anything changed in the program priorities, but
the word clearly got out to our field staff that a good way
to communicate the use of conservation tillage to a farmer
is fewer passes across the field, thereby less usage of
diesel or traditional petrol.

What comes about as a result of this report can help drive those conversations our Department has with our subcabinet, with our agency chiefs and administrators, all the way down to the field staff to discuss, here is what a producer who is concerned about coexistence is thinking, here is how USDA can help facilitate those discussions at the local level to help come to better plans and resolutions. It just simply helps frame the issue in a different way for our county-based agencies and for our research agencies and otherwise. Michael or Betsy.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: I'll just add one thing. I think, based on what we heard from the committee, the two stand-alone documents are things where we have been pretty careful to have, at most, a very, very limited role for USDA. So these documents are, are documents that, to the extent that they go out further, you know, the, the major roles for USDA are going to be effective at disseminating this to the people who will then use them and to demonstrating our support in the ways that you think is most appropriate for doing that and maybe to be, to have a clearer sense of what kinds of financial opportunities there might be to help this process along and to see how, to see how this all works but not to have the, based on what we heard, not to have our folks have a leading role in these
processes.

So it's a little bit different. We have to be, you know, figure out the way that we can clearly support this process but not be out front on it. So, so I don't know -- you know, it will help our agencies think creatively about how this information can be brought to the local communities, but obviously it's not going to be something that we are -- that we, as USDA, are there, you know, running the process, so for what, for what that's worth.

And, you know, in terms of, you know, because we don't have recommendations -- you don't have recommendations in the report for USDA to take, you know, very significant policy actions. It's not like our general counsel is going to have to be looking, looking through this in the same way as some of the other recommendations, I would think.

MS. HUGHES: So should our -- okay. So I heard two very different things: one, Doug was describing kind of this is a program policy priority and we're going to take it through subcabinet, agency chiefs, field staff. Michael, what you're saying is something different, and so I'm just -- here's all I'm saying, is should the committee include language that says we understand that the USDA won't have a primary role in pushing this out; however, we encourage the USDA to think creatively about just some, some recognition
of that, because I don't want somebody to pick up this
report and go, well, we can't do it, we don't have anything
to do with this. It seems like we're kind of shooting
ourselves in the foot if we don't acknowledge that and
somehow say, but yet the USDA does have a proactive role in
this.

MS. RAKOLA: No, if I could just jump in there. I
think -- that was a question that came to my mind as I was
reading through the committee's -- the subgroups' documents;
that, on the one hand, these are recommendations that are
going to USDA but a lot of the themes that I heard,
especially verbally at the last AC21 meeting, were that USDA
and the federal folks are not who we see as conveners, that
there seems to be, frankly, some negative perceptions of
federal folks getting involved in this conversation. There
was a real strong sentiment that that was not the
appropriate role.

At the same time, when I was reading through the
documents, it seemed like there was maybe a split between
USDA at the federal or headquarters level and then sort of
state or local offices, and I think that that is a little
confusing reading through the document, trying to figure
out, then, what is the role that's being asked of USDA; is
it really trying to get those state and local folks involved
but not necessarily the headquarters folks?
You know, as Doug was explaining, you know, we are certainly a hierarchical organization where these sorts of messages do get pushed down that way. I think, also, if the folks at the field level are not hearing the need from the people that they're seeing day in and day out, it can be hard to make the case for them about why to dedicate their time to these topics.

So I do think that, you know, in thinking about what is the role that you want to ask of USDA, clarifying that. You know, is it simply the concern about something that's perceived as Washington telling people what to do, you know, isn't that where we want to go; however, the state and local structure of USDA would be an appropriate either convener or partner? You know, trying to resolve that, that tension or just clarify that a little bit, I think, would be helpful in us understanding what it is that you'd like us to do.

MR. MCKALIP: Yeah. Like the previous 15 policy initiatives that we launched were all very much federal resource-driven, whether it's review of the germplasm at ARS or various program-level things. This effort underway this year is much more focused on state and local efforts on coexistence, but there -- and I think what Michael and I were both trying to get at -- there are, there's a role for USDA to help facilitate, trigger, provide resources for
those discussions.

And so the recommendations that you all have that are driven in those manners will help us at USDA know, you know, the best way to do that, which may include either directives or work with our county-based agencies to help either with some dollars or meeting space, or whatever it is that you all identify will help those discussions take place.

MR. REDDING: Laura, then -- I'm sorry. Josette, Laura, Missy.

MS. HUGHES: Oh, I'm done.

MS. LEWIS: Well, I think it's a good point you raised, Missy. I guess I feel like there's a very nice space in between any kind of command and control of, from USDA hierarchy saying, this is a priority, you all need to pay attention and do something; and, on the flip side, saying that it's up to others at the local and private level to really take these tools and make something of it.

So I do think we should be clear that we think it's a priority for USDA within its own institution to make sure that these resources are, are made available and understood down to that local level and then leave it to the discretion at the local level as to how they use these. I'm not -- I'm happy to -- I also endorse Laura's point about having some kind of, you know, evaluation checkpoint to just
see if these were useful, if they were helpful to making progress. Presumably, it's a way to help frame whatever future work the AC21 may do under a new Secretary.

So I think that's to me the -- I do think we should be clear that we would like to see as a priority -- I mean, it'd be wonderful if we've spent our time here producing documents that everyone just thought were spectacular and started using, but we're an advisory committee to the Secretary of USDA. So if we can't get USDA to take some action, then it seems to me that we're, we're, we're not quite doing our job appropriately, but I think there's a very happy medium between making sure USDA understands it's a priority to make these tools available and understood at the local level and then leave the discretion at the local level.

I don't see that means USDA has to convene these things. It may be just, you know, USDA talking to its constituents and saying, these things are available and there's some programmatic resources; if you guys want, we could help you tap into those if these are priorities. But if USDA doesn't do that, it seems to me that's kind of falling short on our job of advising the Department.

MR. REDDING: Yeah, and Josette, I just would note, I mean, if you go back and look at the recommendations in the November 2012, Recommendation II and III, II
particularly says, you know: USDA should spearhead and fund a broad-based, comprehensive education outreach initiative to strengthen understanding of coexistence between diverse agricultural production systems. USDA should design and make available to the agricultural community voluntary and outcome-based strategies for facilitating production.

So I, you know, for context, right, I take this conversation and say, okay, I get it, that we made a recommendation and now we come back and we inform that recommendation. It's not simply -- right? So I think that for me helps to say, in terms of next steps for the USDA, this was our initial work; we said in broad strokes, I mean, that was really important and we think that's an appropriate role for the USDA. I think now we can say it is, and we actually have a few documents, resource-wise, that are, that really help facilitate that for the USDA.

Recommendation III then gets into, you know, everything from cooperative extension of the land-grant system to other USDA agencies. So I see sort of Recommendation II and III being really central to how we frame, and that may be part of even some of the outline that we should talk about, is putting this in context, right, because I think that's really helpful for public consumption, is why did this committee spend, you know, this time worrying about these resource documents, why is that
important -- well, because we talked about, you know, in our original work, this was an issue of concern and we felt, as an advisory role to the USDA, that we really would, hoped the Secretary and the USDA would take a lead, a lead on. Right? So just for thoughts. Laura.

MS. BATCHA: Thanks for reminding us of those recommendations, Russell, and I think -- so between that recommendation and our charge, the informing piece was that USDA wouldn't be in the driver's seat with resources but these needed to be things that were facilitated at the state and local level with incentives there. So if we start with that, then we need to, we need to put the hook in there, which you got, got us where we are.

And I think for me it's interesting to hear, Betsy, your read of the document being confusing that way about roles, because I think I've understood the roles all along to be as Josette described them and Doug just described them. So let's be clearer, I think, just in the document about sort of the, the leadership role, sort of the megaphone role of USDA, the facilitation, the catalyzing role, and then the convening, driving, organizing role happening at the state and local level. And I think if we're just clear about it, that will be helpful, but I really, also, like a thread back to where our original recommendation and --
MR. REDDING: Good. Thank you. Jerry and then Alan.

MR. SLOCUM: Mr. Chairman, I really appreciate you reminding us of our recommendations in the first report because, I mean, what we're doing today is the meat of that discussion. At the same time, it, it -- I truly believe that the first users of this information won't use it at meetings. It'll be, it'll be a farmer that decides that he wants to get into organic production, or there'll be a farmer that decides he wants to get into non-GE production and he sits there and thinks about what do I need to know, and he's going to go to the places that he finds what I need to know. You know, 20 years ago that was the local extension office, and since they, in large, don't exist, at least they don't exist in my part of the world anymore, he's going to go to the web. He's going to go to the Internet, is where he's going to go, or he may wander down to the FSA -- to the sole conservation office.

He may wander to those places, but I really think the first users of these things are going to be individuals, and how we position that, you know, how we position that, I think, will be very important because, you know, agriculture has, you know, we have early adopters and then we have those guys that watch early adopters and then they come to the game, and that's when I think you'll have meetings as such.
And it may be, it may be sponsored by the local grain elevators because we'll see an opportunity for ourselves and we'll see an opportunity for producers, and they may be the first real conveners in this business, or it may be the seed companies introducing a new trait, be it functional or be it whatever. They may be the next level of conveners.

But I think that part of USDA's charge has got to be able to communicate these pieces to the field staff, to the guys that work in Senatobia, Mississippi, and the guys that work in Cerro Gordo, that these things exist and, when people wander in and ask about how we might do this, at least you can point to those places and say, hey, this work has been done, it's out there, lots of resources you can tap, maybe even some moneys you can tap but certainly there are resources you can tap, and I don't think we need to lose sight of that. I don't think we're going to start this thing with a bunch of meetings all over the country. I think we're going to start it with some farmers that are looking for better opportunities or at least different opportunities.

MR. REDDING: That's a great point. Thank you.

Alan.

MR. KEMPER: Thanks. I would, Mr. Chair, I'd just like to tag on a little bit to what Jerry said. I mean, he sets up a great situation where a lot of farmers are
exploring changes for their operations, whether that's getting out of GE and going organic or what, and they will go to the web, the Internet, and friends, particularly the millennials -- they'll definitely go there -- and then you have the other scenario, if you're just trying to bring about a meeting on coexistence for your community or your local area.

Mr. Chair, I would suggest that if you do that, though, you need to include the land-grant universities as well as extension. I think it might be somewhat unfair for FSA staffers to -- they can call the meeting and be there, but for them to actually be the, if you call it, the neutral, as you do on the document, it might put them in a little more precarious situation, because they're actually delivering a lot of the programs to those farmers, whereas extension could be kind of, I hate to use the word referee, but the more friendly guy in the middle, if you will. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

MR. REDDING: Good point. Chuck. Oops, sorry. Yeah, go ahead, Chuck, and then we'll pick up with --

MR. BENBROOK: Well, kind of following up on what Alan said, to me one of the really interesting new topics that got on the table during this meeting is the recognition that a whole heck of a lot of the coexistence challenges are going to actually arise within a farm operation as the
farmer looks at their economic opportunities and market demand and chooses to go after some markets that they, they haven't. And I think we should consider writing a special section in -- adding a special section in the documents that focus on the coexistence issues and challenges within an operation and the tools and tactics and strategies that, that farm managers ought to pursue and consider in arming themselves optimally to get through whatever transition they, they choose to pursue, because I think it's, it's a really different cluster of issues than coexistence between neighbors with different farming systems, which has been 99 percent the focus of our deliberations for the last six years. So I think it's worth us trying to really crystallize and focus on that in some way in our new report.

MR. REDDING: Good. Thank you. Lynn.

MR. CLARKSON: Lynn Clarkson. I think Jerry's point that individuals will be the ones that pick up these recommendations is the same way that I see this happening. So while I spend most of my time running a grain company, I am a farmer, and as a farmer, I regularly visit the Farm Service Administration office in Piatt County, Illinois -- other farmers do too -- and about a year ago was the first time I ever saw the word organic in an FSA office. There was a tear sheet, and I'm one of the people who's quite delighted to see that, but other farmers would come into my
office and say, wow, we noticed a flier in the FSA office about organic and maybe I should look into this. So they came to ask more questions.

And where I could see the stimulation of this report going is to farmers who are looking for the benefits of more diverse markets, and they're going to the FSA office, and they're finding out what website they can go to from the USDA there or vice versa, from the website to the FSA office, and having a list of resources that they can tap, which would be extension, the land-grant colleges, their trade associations, and other places. But I can see a role for tear sheets in the FSA offices, pointing out what markets we see emerging and what some of the rules are and what some of the difficulties are and a tear sheet about coexistence issues, and I can see local farmers picking up that issue and being the driving force of this.

MR. REDDING: Good. Leon.

MR. CORZINE: Thank you. I'd just like two things -- one, to add on to the point about the FSA offices and the importance as you think about that, because any IP opportunity that is going to require a coexistence plan, whether it's organic or whether it's some sort of specialty grain, you're going to go to the FSA office anyway if you're a farmer, because you have to check -- nearly all acres are signed up in a government program of some sort; so you've
got to make sure whether it's going to affect where you are in that farm program, right? If you have to have extra buffers or if you -- whatever you have to do could affect your eligibility, and everybody is aware of that that's in the programs, and so that could be a center or a start of the information.

So if the FSA office, whether, as Lynn Clarkson said, whether it's a tear sheet or some sort of acknowledgment, maybe it is a notice from USDA to their field service people in the FSA office, just an awareness that, hey, if somebody comes in, here is a document for suggestions or some guidance about where you go from there, I think that could be useful on dissemination.

I don't agree with, with what Chuck said. I think whether you are dealing with another neighbor or whether you're dealing within your own farm, you've got the same issues, because you've got to segregate, you've got to maintain purity. The only difference is, I guess you'd be talking to yourself instead of talking to your neighbor, right, or -- because in most cases you'd be talking to your landlord either way. So I don't think we need anything additional just because maybe I'm just doing it on a part of my farm, because it'll affect part of my farm and, depending on where that is, that particular plot of land, it may also involve a neighbor.
So I don't -- I think we could just muddy the waters by trying to do anything on a farmer talking to himself, okay, but I do think the FSA office deal is an important one to remember, that we will be in there talking to them about eligibility and that's where you can get information to further what you need. Thanks.

MR. REDDING: Leon, if I could just ask, I mean, we focused on the FSA. I mean, I guess the NRCS office as well? I mean, are we making a distinction here in terms of the dissemination of this being to a program or office focus? I mean, we want it to be fairly broad, right? So am I interpreting that correctly? I just want to make sure that I look at it thinking, how do I push this out, if that's the objective.

MR. CORZINE: Yeah, I guess you wouldn't want to forget that.

MR. REDDING: Okay.

MR. CORZINE: That's a good point, Russell. In my part of the world, the majority of the acres would be FSA and not NRCS, right, but there are parts the other way. So maybe you just -- your local field offices, in both instances, and maybe include soil and water conservation offices as well, or you know, all of those type entities that those programs can be impacted by some sort of IP product or something different I'm going to do that I
haven't done before.

MR. REDDING: Good. Chuck and then Laura.

MR. BENBROOK: Well, perhaps it's a fool's mission, but I'm going to try to change Leon's mind on, on this. Now, you know, Betsy and Laura know the details far more than I, but I know there are a number of new provisions in the crop insurance program and other commodity support-like programs that are either in place or soon will be in place that recognize some of the different risk scenarios and also payment rates and income rates under -- in organic production, and whether there are any involved with non-GE production, I don't know. But who knows? There may be.

So the difference in an individual producer within the land that they own and rent and manage, between two farmers, two separate farmers, the differences are that the individual farmer will capture or have to cover whatever impacts from the marketplace occur, it's fully internalized, but they also, as you said, Leon, need to understand what opportunities or barriers or constraints might arise in a suite of other USDA programs -- in particular, crop insurance and EQIP -- that they might not have been aware of, that they actually could, you know, perhaps get some help or qualify for a higher market price in locking in their -- what is it Laura, the total-farm income guarantee
program?

MS. BATCHA: Whole-Farm Revenue --

MR. BENBROOK: Yeah, all-farm revenue program.

So, you know, I do think there are some really big differences between the checklist of facts and knowledge that a farmer needs to know about and internalize in making their decision and that that's a distinct challenge from what we've focused on, which is fostering coexistence issues between one farmer and another farmer, where the economic consequences of all of the decisions are separate, and just, I think that's really quite distinct.

MR. CORZINE: Well, you're correct, if I may respond, you didn't change my mind, because everything that you suggested -- I have those things that I have to go through whether I am, you know, whether I'm doing it all within my, part of my farm is going to remain conventional and part of it is going to be something else or whether I'm dealing with a neighbor, and all those things you mentioned, the different insurance, different, all those different things and opportunities are, those are -- it's of no consequence whether it is all within my own farm or part of my farm or next to a neighbor's farm because, as we mentioned, coexistence is everybody's deal and, even if it's within my own farm, I could very likely still be affecting a neighbor; and, even if I'm not, I'm still going to be going
through that process, either way. I still don't see any
difference at all, actually. I've just internalized my own
coexistence plan, but that's not really any different than
whether I'm doing it with my neighbor across the road.

  MR. BENBROOK: Okay.

  MR. REDDING: Okay. Let's do this: I mean,
there's a couple other cards up. Why don't we take a quick
break, right, and just take 10 minutes here. Take a break,
and then we'll reconvene and resume this conversation, okay,
and we'll pick up with Latresia and Laura.

  (Whereupon, at 10:29 a.m., a brief recess was
taken.)

  MR. REDDING: Okay. Let's, let's reconvene. We
had a couple of folks who wanted to comment on sort of the
recommendations. I always give Latresia credit, but I think
it's actually Barry's --

    UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Card.

    MR. REDDING: -- Barry's card. Is that right?

    MR. BUSHUE: The card is up.

    MR. REDDING: It just always looks like it's in
front of you, Latresia. So Barry and then --

    UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No control.

    MR. REDDING: -- Laura, I think was the other.

Okay. Barry, go ahead.

    MR. BUSHUE: I'll make mine very quick. I think
we're kind of beating dead horses here. We've, we've got good documents. We've got good working documents. As far as -- I would agree with Lynn with regard to the specificities of what you do on your own property. I mean, most of us -- and I don't think this was ever the intention by anyone -- but, you know, we aren't stupid people. We have the ability to sit down and gather this information. I can gather as much information I need on this phone, especially after this document is out, in terms of what I want to do in terms of diversity on my own farm.

This isn't rocket science, folks. This is just general information that people have access to, will have access to, and the work we've put together here gives us one more tool for that availability of access. I see no reason to separate out an operator that's doing something on his own farm from what he's doing with his neighbor.

And I think we should also keep in mind that -- I like all the ideas about having it go out to NRCS and FSA and all those other organizations, land grants -- if you have one that actually cares about agriculture, God bless you -- and those types of things. So with that regard, I think we've done a lot and we need to move forward, and -- I guess that's enough.

MR. REDDING: Okay. Thank you. Laura.

MS. BATCHA: So I think the discussions we're
having right now actually are important because -- I concur, we've got a good start on the documents, on the work, but I think we've got some work left to do. So I encourage folks to try to stay engaged on that conversation so we can get to a place where everybody's comfortable with the final document.

On this question about the applicability of the documents to choices that a farmer makes on their own farm versus between neighbors versus between a farmer and a landowner, I think -- I'm not going to speak for Chuck -- but I agree that I think the emphasis was somewhat of a little aha moment for us, when we were working on our Models subcommittee, about the applicability of it at that level and how that might actually present everything as a way that was just about choices and opportunities and not about conflict.

So I think that was, that was where our intention was when we started talking about this, and I think the intention is not to sort of push any buttons about personal property rights or any of that kind of stuff. So I think it could be done in a way that is a simple enough reference that just says something like, these tools are applicable between neighbors, between a farmer making a farm plan and a choice, and between a farmer and landowners, and then you go through the materials.
It doesn't have to be a separate set of materials geared towards this type of conversation or that or make any judgment about, of course farmers do these plans all the time and have access to the information, but it's just a way to signal that these, these tools are available and this is consistent with embracing coexistence and diversity in agriculture and, if you find them helpful, here they are. So --

MR. REDDING: Okay. Thank you. Any, any -- yeah, Angela.

MS. OLSEN: Laura, I agree with you. I think it can be dealt with in a very easy way and easy reference. My comment or my question really is, is for Betsy and going back to what are some of the things that USDA can do. I agree, let's get back to the charge and let's continue these really important discussions so that we can produce something for the Secretary.

Going back to the what are some of the things that USDA can do, Betsy was talking about the Special Emphasis Program, and I wanted to hear if Betsy's willing to share a little bit more about that program and whether that may be a way to help promote coexistence as well. Is that something that's just for the organic program? Could it be used for other diversity in agriculture, and is that a tool that maybe we can think about as a way that USDA may be able to
assist in enhancing and promoting coexistence?

MS. RAKOLA: Sure. I think this is a rapidly emerging area as we're trying to look creatively at existing tools that we have. You know, the special emphasis program managers have previously existed within the Civil Rights and the Equal Employment Opportunity charge that USDA has, but we are thinking about -- sorry, it is on; I can try to yell louder -- I think we're trying to think creatively about whether that's a tool that we can use for more topical areas, and so certainly I think it's something that's worth exploring and worth a conversation with the leadership at our field agencies.

MR. REDDING: Chuck and then Missy.

MR. BENBROOK: Another suggestion for a recommendation to the Secretary -- all organic farmers have to file an organic system plan every year. The purpose of that plan is to describe the management strategies that the farmer is going to use to deal with all the routine elements and aspects and challenges of growing a profitable organic crop. We should -- we could recommend to the Secretary that he direct the NOP to develop a guidance document to organic farmers about how to address coexistence issues within the context of their organic system plan, which could, you know, provide some, some guidance coming right out of our documents about what -- you know, sort of a checklist of
things to consider, and these could apply both to land that the farmer manages within their own operation and also to coexistent issues across the fence to neighbors. But I think this is relatively new, and since all organic farmers will be required at some point to address and deal with coexistence issues in the context of these organic system plans, some guidance from the National Organic Program could be useful in that regard.

MR. REDDING: Thank you. Missy, then Laura.

MS. HUGHES: So I have a couple thoughts. One is that with regard to Angela's question about the Special Emphasis Program and the folks being identified for organic within FSA, I'm going to, I'm going to strongly discourage putting more work on those people's plate. If they've been -- if they've expressed an interest in helping organic agriculture, let's not broaden that to helping all diversity in agriculture, because organic is desperate for resources to help the farmers be able to access programs within the USDA and that's what I see that role as.

And so I'd strongly -- you know, I've heard lots of conversations around the room about the lack of resources at NRCS and don't put more burden on them. Well, I'm going to ask, don't put more burden on those folks. If they're willing to help organic, can we please just let them do that and not make it broader.
The second piece, you know, goes a little bit to what Chuck was just saying as far as the organic system plan. I just get concerned that what is coming out of the committee is, if you're an IP producer, here is what you need to do, here's the burdens that we're going to put on you. In my mind, a successful moving forward on coexistence says this includes all farmers, not just IP producers, this is a conversation between all producers. I think there's agreement on that.

And, you know, going to the charge, the charge says: Is there an approach -- is there an approach by which farmers could be encouraged? So what we're trying to do is we're trying to encourage these conversations. We're not -- it's not just that we have a great document that talks about the practices that you might consider with, with coexistence, to foster coexistence. It's you need to have these conversations and we support you having these conversations. It's creating an awareness that these conversations are the most important thing.

So our recommendations need to be very much spearheaded to how do we encourage those conversations, not what those conversations are; not, you know, does it include hedgerows, does it include wind barriers, whatever it is. It's you should have these conversations in order to encourage diversity in American agriculture.
MR. REDDING: Thank you, Laura.

MS. BATCHA: I'm just clarifying the comment that Chuck made. The National Organic Standards Board did just recently pass a recommendation for NOP to release a guidance document on best practices for what -- because it's the National Organic Standards Board, they call it, I think, reducing contamination. So words aside for this group, that's -- it's essentially a best practices document about the system's plan and the role of the certifier, et cetera. So that exists at USDA.

MR. REDDING: Alan.

MR. KEMPER: Just, just following up, Mr. Chair, on what Missy's comments were, and I agree with it on how do you encourage it, and a lot of us, and myself particularly, I've been particularly blessed by hearing Secretary Vilsack a lot of times in his speeches and meetings, and I think that we -- I think, Mr. Chairman, we might use it as preface or a start to this document of actually thanking all American farmers for what they do.

I mean, whether that's organic, conventional or whatever, livestock, whatever, they're out there providing choices for American consumers and society, as well as the world, and I think you get a lot more -- if you give them a little bit of gratitude, they will listen a little bit longer, and I always enjoy Secretary Vilsack when he speaks
about it, because he always recognizes that pretty much right up front and maybe two or three times during a meeting or a presentation. We might want to think about that.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

MR. REDDING: Okay. Thank you. So any, any final comments for recommendations? Laura, question?

MS. BATCHA: This is -- we haven't talked about this yet, but hearing Missy's comment about encouraging and then also where we've landed, which is a strong emphasis on the steps the IP producer can take to engage management strategies that allows them to meet the market demand, and thinking about venues, is -- you know, where's the place that the farmer that makes the choice to grow a GE crop -- and my apologies in advance for not knowing this, not being one of those farmers -- where's the place that you go that you register, that you get that contract, and isn't that, whatever that exchange is that happens, isn't that an avenue also to be encouraged to engage in joint coexistence plans if we're looking at places to encourage?

So we're trying to find ways for people to be encouraged to engage in the development of the plan when they're choosing diverse options around IP, et cetera, or in the FSA office. Is there a way to have some encouragement there, when you're making that choice, that says, you know, we're, we're encouraging you to, to, you know, communicate
with your neighbors about your choice and there's some resources available? I mean, it doesn't -- wouldn't need to be more than that, but I'm not knowledgeable enough to know where that interaction is.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Isn't that also the FSA office?

MR. REDDING: Yeah. It could be any number of points. I'm thinking, you know, the tech provider is part of that. It's the Lynn Clarksons that are contracting. It could be, you know, some of the extension or public offices as well. Leon.

MR. CORZINE: To answer that question, Laura, any biotech products you use -- now, and I assume you mean any rather than just an IP situation -- but you sign an agreement, a tech agreement with each company that you may be growing their products, and there are sections in that agreement on coexistence. So there's -- and it's rather lengthy. I think some of them may be up to two, three pages. So they really go into some detail of what to do in regards to coexistence, so if that answers your question.

That's what we do in general, and then in anything that is an identity-preserved product or an added-value product that we need to segregate, you've heard me talk about before, in the contracting there are -- in the seed industry, there are specific requirements that you do, and one of those requirements is you talk to whoever you border,
whether it's one of your own fields or your neighbor fields, to see what they're going to grow and, if they're going to grow -- for example, if I'm growing seed corn and they have corn next to me, I go to a 660-foot buffer. If they're growing beans next to me, maybe it's a 200-foot buffer. If I'm growing seed beans, if it's a deregulated product, you only have to have X number of feet. If it's a regulated product, you have to have maybe 50 feet or something like that.

So there are very specific things, actually more specific than I think we can get that you just may not be aware of. So in each of those areas, we do, we do go through what it takes to segregate, what it takes to coexist with whatever we're going to produce.

MS. HUGHES: So, Leon, is that if you're the IP producer, you sign a contract? I'm --

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Missy, microphone, please.

MS. HUGHES: Sorry. I didn't know I was going to be that long. I'm just trying to understand if that -- I think what Laura is saying is you're the non-IP -- I'm the non-IP producer and I'm just engaging in my normal Roundup Ready farming.

MR. CORZINE: Okay.

MS. HUGHES: At the moment of contracting, when I say I'm going to grow 10 acres -- maybe there is no forward
contracting, so maybe it doesn't happen -- but is there an opportunity at that moment for the non-IP producer to be touched, to say, hey, you should talk to your --

MS. BATCHA: Resources are available.

MS. HUGHES: Yeah.

MR. CORZINE: If you are a non-IP producer and growing anything that's biotech or GE, you have a technology agreement, and that coexistence -- a coexistence discussion happens within that contract. Okay? Does that answer that? And then that's --

MS. HUGHES: Well --

MR. KEMPER: Mr. Chair, Mr. Chair, let me try to help address that, if you'd allow me.

MR. REDDING: Yeah, jump in.

MR. KEMPER: Thank you. First of all, I went to Purdue. We keep it more simple than U of I grads. Anyway --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Ouch.

MR. KEMPER: -- a lot of farmers on their farms grow IP and conventional on various methods. I'm not going to go down the licensing route; that's a given, but as we do our contracts -- and a lot of us do contract our crops. Like, right now we probably have a third of our crop already, our new crop, already contracted to the ADMs, the Cargills in the area.
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah.

MR. KEMPER: So to Laura's point is, those are being used, also, that needs to have maybe a tear sheet on their bulletin board about coexistence, and I think that's maybe what you were driving at. And now a lot of times, just at the elevator, during the fall, up to 80 percent of the grain may be coming in unpriced. Well, those are still farmers on Rural Route 2 that either are IP for Plenish beans or conventional or GE just for like a Cargill or something for ethanol or sweetener. Those can also have tear sheets for it. So I think that's what we're trying to address. There are numerous things for that to reach out to producers. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

MS. BATCHA: Yeah, I think, I think Alan's got what I'm trying to get at, and it might be a combination of both of those things. It might be in our recommendations that USDA do outreach to the tech providers and to the commercial entities that interact with the farmers growing the GE crops and encourage the reference to the tools that we've produced, as well, as a, you know -- you know, getting people where they are is, is one of the biggest challenges of this, and in some ways that's easier, that's more contemporary in the way you transfer data, is to get to where the interaction is happening rather than establish a new location and try to draw participation. So that's,
that's what I'm trying to get at.

MR. KEMPER: That's a good point.

MR. REDDING: Yeah, fair point. Thank you. Okay.

Any other recommendations we want to make?

(No audible response.)

MR. SCHECHTMAN: This is good.

MR. REDDING: This has been really helpful, very helpful. So let's shift now to the revised outline. I think that's one other piece that we've got to talk about just as we begin to frame up discussions this morning, actually, and form this well. So as you look at this revised outline, thoughts?

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Secretary, maybe just bearing in mind that we still have to go back and talk about the Complex Issues piece, just sort of seg, yeah.

MR. REDDING: Yeah. So as noted on this outline, there is a reference here to the Complex Issues. We touched on that this morning. There were a couple of thoughts on that. We've got to go back and talk about that a little more, but in terms of the general outline that we're writing to and expectations of content, thoughts on this outline, please. Angela.

MS. OLSEN: I think the overall framework looks good. I would ask, though, that we, you know, for Item 4, The Evolving Complexity of Coexistence, and then 8,
Challenges, Opportunities Now and Into the Future, I would think that would be something that we would address when we talk about the Complex Issues document that you were talking about, Russell and Michael, to determine does, does that go into our report, is it, is that answering the Secretary's charge, does more information need to be added to the two work products that we've all gotten around, that we've talked about -- the guidance document and the models for local discussions -- because to me those, as I stated earlier today, those are really the crux of our report. It's that and then what can USDA to help -- do to help encourage those discussions.

So it's the -- I think the framing is important up front and then the what will the report do -- so, again, that's part of the framing -- the guidance document, the models for local discussions, then what are the recommendations for USDA, what do we think USDA can do to assist this, this process, and then 4 and 8 I just, I don't know if they're a part of our report. So I'm going to reserve that until we've had the discussion on the, the Complex Issues, because when I look at the Complex Issues, too, if we're going to highlight Functional Traits -- and, again, it doesn't mean we don't mention it; it's important; seed is important -- not to say these things aren't important, but why aren't we then talking about
cross-pollination and have a robust section on that? Why aren't we talking about how to clean out your planters and a robust section on that? And I'm not encouraging us to do that.

So, again, I, I reserve 4 and 8. I don't know that they belong exactly where they are in the report or perhaps in that format. Maybe it's that we beef up one of the other arguments to include the concise information that we think is important to answer the charge.

MR. REDDING: Thank you. Leon and then Laura.

MR. CORZINE: As I looked at this -- and I went back through several times the report on Complex Issues -- each one of these points is brought out at least once and, I think, actually, two or three times within the other parts of the document that we're developing.

So, you know, we can have a robust discussion and maybe even see if we need to go to those other points, whether it's in the guidance document, I think, maybe more than the other one, and see if anything needs to be added to those, but other than that, I, I don't really see the need for this part. I think it just adds another component that, if you take a look at our charge, I don't think it's -- my opinion is we don't need it within our document.

MR. REDDING: Okay. Laura.

MS. BATCHA: I'm going to continue to say that I
don't agree with that. I think from my perspective what I don't understand is this, is the strong resistance to it. There may be needs for revision in the language or a step back to see whether or not we've cast the net wide enough to capture the range of things that fit inside the net.

For me, I think as a volunteer, who has a lot of stuff going on every day, to take my time for years to sit in these meetings and then there to just be resistance to including things that others in the group feel are important, is disappointing. So I will continue to say, while they may need work and they may need rework after work, at this point I'm really not ready to agree to eliminating them from the outline.

MR. REDDING: Barry.

MR. BUSHUE: I am.

MR. REDDING: Josette and then Alan.

MS. LEWIS: I can agree to mentioning controversial and complex issues in the report, and I do feel like there's two places where we can find appropriate references to those, in Section 4, The Evolving Complexity, and Section 8, Challenges for the Future, because the reality is, I don't think we have agreement on what the steps are to address those complexities right now. And maybe it's because I wasn't in the Models working group that -- from which those seemed to come out of, if I'm correct,
but I, I was perplexed in why seed is flagged in so many
places when, in our first round of discussions in AC21 that
led to our previous report, we talked about the whole range
of potential sources of unintended presence and the need for
measures and research and tools to address those.

So I agree they should be mentioned. I'm not
interested in sweeping them under the rug or pretending
they're not there. I just, the, the degree of emphasis of
those two issues at the, at the lack of balance with other
ones that are equally important -- and I think you even said
something, Michael, yesterday about flagging whether things
like gene flow had almost disappeared off of the report,
which for me feels like it has, and that actually is a big
issue around seed, too, I mean, in addition to around
commodity production -- so I guess I'm very comfortable that
they be referenced in the report. I just, the proportion of
emphasis on them didn't feel right to me. So I don't know
if there's a balance to go forward in that regard.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: So, so again, let me just reflect
on, on why they became a separate piece, and again, I think
it came out of the discussions at the last meeting where
there had been considerable comments by several members
about these things needing to be talked about in a longer
way -- be talked about at some length and corresponding
comments from others that a more detailed discussion of
these things did not belong in the stand-alone documents. So that's how they got to the place where they are. Are they too much? Is it not clear why these topics are talked about and not others? You know, those are, those are things, those are things to be, to be discussed, but I just wanted to give folks an idea of why this document, which might seem to be coming a little bit unrelated from the other pieces, is there. I just wanted to reflect on that.

MR. REDDING: Alan and then Missy.

MR. KEMPER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Are we blinking? Yeah. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I appreciate it. I'm somewhere -- and with all respect to staff, I appreciate that, that you did take notes and that people did talk about it in the various committees -- however, I'm between Barry and Josette because I'm at, no, it does not go in; otherwise, we're going to go through 240 other commodities and we're going to tell you why or why not they should be in that document.

But I think there is -- and I think we've addressed it in two of the documents that we're putting forward for the final in that. We just don't need the step-by-step process, but I would definitely agree with Barry, they do not, this whole parking lot or, as I would call it in Australian, talk-about notes, does not need to be
in there. Thank you.

MR. REDDING: Okay. Missy and then Angela.

MS. HUGHES: You know, as I look at these sections, I think that they represent part of the work that the Secretary asked us to do, which is to come together as members of different pieces of American agriculture and figure out how to talk about these things and how to work through these issues in a way that's not confrontational, in a way that moves agriculture forward.

And, you know, if you look at the Functional Traits conversation, to me, you know, over the years that we've talked about this, it represents this concept that it's not organic versus GMO; it's, it's not anybody versus anybody. It's these different types of agriculture out there, and Functional Traits, I think, tries to bridge that concept to say, you know, that there are -- this is coming at us from many different directions. And so I think it serves the purpose that way.

You know, with the seed conversation, we can, we can never talk about that too much. Producers want seed -- there are producers out there who want seed with no GMO material in it, and the choice that they want with that needs to be again and again discussed because, once you lose sight of it, you lose track of it, and so to bring that there.
I'm happy to have a sentence in here that says we talked about so many different issues at AC21 that we can't put them all in here, but here's two that demonstrate what I just talked about, this bridge and then an overwhelming importance on this concept of seed, and that we, we just don't want to lose sight of it.

MR. REDDING: Thank you. Angela and then Latresia.

MS. OLSEN: So I'm, yeah, I'm in no way suggesting that we keep Seed out of the report or that we keep Functional Traits out of the report. I agree with Josette. Where I think it's disproportional, there's so many things that we could write about and then, you know, is it going to misinterpreted why we've identified these two or three, three issues?

What I'm suggesting is, does it make sense -- and we're trying to strike a balance with these, the two stand-alone documents. We all agree they should be short, they should be straightforward, but clearly, whether we could, you know, pull out a few bullets that go into I don't know which of the documents at this point to, to address our conversation. I don't know that they need to be those stand-alone sections because, again, I think it's disproportionate. Why aren't we talking about, as Josette said, pollen flow? Why aren't we talking about how people
clean out their combines? There's so many topics that we could include, and just to sort of, you know, target two or three, which are important ones, I'm not saying they're not, there's many other topics that are important as well.

So is there a balance where we just maybe add some additional language to the stand-alone documents, but I'm in no way suggesting that that stays out of the report, the concepts. That's not what I'm suggesting, but we do address them already, and if we need to address them and, you know, with a few additional points, you know, maybe that's something that we should talk about.

But, again, I go back to the charge of the Secretary, how do we pull people together, and this is, you know, again, one topic that, or one or two or three topics that could go into in a more -- in maybe some additional detail in those stand-alone documents, but I don't think it belongs as a stand-alone section, but interested in what others think as well. I see Latresia has been up for a while.

MR. REDDING: Yeah. Latresia.

MS. WILSON: Well, thank you. I'm finally awake, I guess. I've sat back and I've listened to everything this morning, and, and I do see whereby my training as an engineer and as a technical writer, whereby I can see where there's a need for 4 and 8, just from a technical standpoint
in terms of writing. It gives you balance in terms of, when
you're working up into the document, what you're trying to
say, and then 8 comes in and saying, okay, this is where we
look at down the future. And so I do believe that 4 and 8
should be there.

Now, Angela talked about balance in terms of
whether we need to have just solely those two, Seed Purity
and Functional Traits. I agree, there should be more.
There are less. We need to find balance with the other
technical issues that also are making coexistence complex.

So I would say that 4 and 8 should stay; however,
I believe that we need to balance out Seed Purity,
Functional Traits and add some of the other issues that are
more -- maybe a couple of others so that we do get a balance
of those two things. And in terms of the white males that
are, seem discriminated, I say, welcome to my world.

MR. REDDING: Okay. Leon, then Laura and then
Jerry.

MR. CORZINE: Well, my intent with my comments is
not to sweep anything under the rug. Mine is trying to keep
it concise and keep it where it's a useable document, and my
impression is we have hit all these points in, in the
previous report we did or also in these other areas that I
mentioned, and if we need to tag on to those a little bit, I
guess maybe I could see that.
But, for example, in this, contentious or whatever it is, the whole part about Challenges for Coexistence Now and Into the Future and it talks about farmer challenges, and you know, I think, leading to what Alan has talked about, we look at those as opportunities. And kudos to the writers and what your attempt was, but you know, there are a lot of those things that are there today that really have been there a little while and we look at every year, and I think all farmers do, and they look at what their business plan is going to be, and as I read through that, for example, that section is just, it gets down to added wordiness.

I don't, I don't see what that adds to what we're trying to do here, because we do address in the introduction and some of those other things about what farmer opportunities are, what challenges are, but we go into all of this extra language that is there that I really, if you step back and look at it, nice discussion but it doesn't add to the report, and I think it just adds bulk that will be a detriment to our report as a whole.

And I think you can say the same thing about the Seed Issues. I mean, we addressed those pretty thoroughly in the previous reports as well. And I think in Functional Traits, I mean, we've, we've got a section -- maybe it could be expanded a little bit -- on functional traits in, I think
it's in the, not the guidance, maybe the models document on -- and I would just like to see it stay as concise as we can rather than put some of these things in. We're trying to do feel-good things that really are going to be a detriment to the final document as far as its usefulness. That's all.

MR. REDDING: Laura and then Jerry.

MS. BATCHA: So I think, you know, if the concern is about being concise and feel good is used, then I would bring us back to, I think, our first meeting we had together when there was, I think, in my recollection, a good deal of flexibility sort of granted or agreed to by the group when Commissioner Goehring was insistent on bringing in other issues related to agricultural production to these sessions, other than just gene flow. And if you look at that models document, it includes pages of stuff that is not central to the original charge in an attempt to be flexible, hear each other, trust that each other knows what the constituents they represent need to see to buy in, and so I just want to remind us of that.

So if what we're going to do is just go concise and eliminate anything feel good, then we're going to do that review for the entire work product, in my opinion.


MR. SLOCUM: Well, being sensitive to what Laura has now mentioned what, four times this morning, that there
are certain things that people need to see in this report so we can get consensus, and we all believe that the strength of our previous work has been the fact that we've come to consensus, maybe with a few additional remarks or a few dissenting remarks, but for the most part, we've come to consensus and that's what's made our work products worthy.

So I'm in a place here that I don't know exactly how to address the Functional piece, but I think we can address the Seed piece within, within the document, within the -- which document is it -- within the guidance document, because we mention seed there is a critical component and maybe it's the most, although I wouldn't insist on that, but it's certainly one of the first critical components.

We had a great, a great piece out of first work that's in the Complex Issues document where we quote ourselves: Seed purity is a crucial issue. All AC21 members recognize the important role, yada yada yada. It seems to me that we could simply insert that paragraph from our previous work into Seed Being a Critical Component without, without a lengthy discussion or a lengthy regurgitation of earlier discussions.

And I agree entirely that it's first the seed. That's what ASTA says. Michael Funk, when he was on the committee, said that was simply the most critical and important part of it in his business, was the seed, and I
think we all concur. I think we all agree. I think most growers wish there were more information on the seed tag. I certainly do. I'm pretty damn certain that the soybean seed are not 80 percent germ, although that's what the label says. They're somewhere between 75 and 100, but they're not 80. If they are, it's an accident. And I wish it'd be more precise than that, but it's not going to be, and I can live with that.

But I think that -- and I do understand that for the non-GE community, which is the fastest growing part of agriculture, I assume, and which probably has the most opportunity in it for additional profits in the short run, I understand that seed is a -- is the most critical issue, and I don't think we can ignore that. Okay? At the same time, I don't think we need to reinvent the wheel there and have a discussion once again that we've had in any number of our publications.

So if we can strengthen the part of Seed Being a Critical Component within, within the stand-alone guidance document, maybe that would suffice. Okay?

As to Functional Traits, I'm not exactly sure how we, how we deal with that other than they're just, they're just traits, and while they may have a more punitive impact on the crops that are growing around them that they may escape into, nonetheless, they're just -- it's just part of
a coexistence plan. And maybe, maybe there's a way to highlight the fact that there are some crops that we have an opportunity to grow that will require a better, a better coexistence agreement or a better separation agreement. I don't know how we address that without -- I don't think we want to draw huge attention to these things to the point of discouraging producers from attempting these, these new opportunities, and when we use words like complex, you know, it -- we don't want to scare people away. I don't think we do.

There's a -- I'm impressed with, when I look at my customer base and when I talk to my younger customers, guys in their, in their late 20s or in their 30s that are the sons of old-time customers or the grandsons of old-time customers, I'm impressed with their willingness to embrace the new, the untried. I really am impressed by it, and we don't want to discourage those folks. We want to arm them to take on these new opportunities or slash challenges, because they're all the same, but we don't want to -- we don't want to discourage them to the point that they say, well, it is granddaddy's old farm, we just got to keep doing the same old, same old, because that's not going to be the future of American agriculture. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. REDDING: Yeah. Jerry, I think the, just on the point of encouraging, I mean, we, we want to make sure
in the framing of the document, front side, is that we really are, you know, positive and we're encouraging. Right?

MR. SLOCUM: Right.

MR. REDDING: But we also want to say that there are things that are evolving, that are inherently complex in the business that we've chosen, right, and some of those are under our control; many of them are not. So how do you sort of frame that and capture that? And there are things where -- there are technology, there are BNPs, there's climate, there are all kinds of issues. I think there's a way for us in the document, without sort of, you know, putting a label on those evolving complex, by a section here.

MR. SLOCUM: Right.

MR. REDDING: If you fold some of these things in other places around challenges or, you know, the opportunities or if we can modify or amplify something that's already there, we should try to do that but have a document at the end of the day we can point to and say we started over here with a larger charge, we assessed that landscape, we were given a new charge, there are things in there that are certainly more tangible in terms of what we can present, and then there's some things that we know we're just going to bump into in the course of the conversation.

If that's our charge, is to, you know, facilitate
this conversation, you're going to bump into these things.

I would hope that the document at least would point to them
and say, you know, that committee, which is the thought
leaders around biotechnology and the coexistence, they
recognized that there were issues but they're not
conclusive, right, but they at least acknowledged they were
out there.

You know, I think we can do that. It gives us a
way in the document to sort of present it. We're not
singling them out. We're not saying that they are Nos. 1, 2, and 3 but they are just on that landscape as we look at it. It's complex. It's going to get more complex. How we manage that conversation, as we noted this morning, farmer-to-farmer, farm level, will be critical. And we also have to know that in that -- in presenting that, we also need to raise the awareness of those who are engaged in this that may not be as informed as we are, right, in this first circle of understanding of what some of these evolving issues are.

So if we can present that in a way in the report, I think we have done a service to and lived true to the charge the Secretary gave us without calling them out, you know, here in a separate section that somehow these are two or three that are more important. They're among others of unresolved issues, but I think we, I think we can manage
that within, within this framework, okay, because there were
two sort of themes, being don't call them out but
acknowledge them or don't acknowledge them that they even
exist. I would hope that we would be more on you don't have
to single them out but they're out there. Right? I mean, I
hear that. So folding them in would be acceptable here,
just not in a separate section, but --

MS. BATCHA: I have a clarifying question about
that, Russell, if you don't mind.

MR. REDDING: Okay. Yeah.

MS. BATCHA: So my recollection of our discussions
on this, that the reason they ended up in a separate section
-- and I think we had some discussion yesterday about maybe
the questions around international trade would get rolled
into that -- is because there was not comfort with those
more complex issues going into the core documents that we
were producing as products that then would be serving as
guides for these coexistence conversations at the state and
local level, and so because of some folks flagging those as
being inappropriate for those documents, we ended up putting
-- pulling them out and putting them someplace else.

So I'm just reminding that that's at least my
recollection how we got there, was because some of these
more open-ended complex questions people were not
comfortable with having in the core documents. So --
MR. REDDING: Right, but I guess, Laura, just for, for clarification, so noted that they were identified, not in the core documents, but could we fold them into the Challenges and Opportunities section? Right? I'm assuming that there would still be a section there --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Uh-huh.

MR. REDDING: -- called Opportunities and Challenges. Right?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah.

MS. HUGHES: Not in Angela's.

MR. REDDING: Pardon me?

MS. HUGHES: I think Angela advocated for not having that in there.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Use the microphone, please.

MR. REDDING: Yeah, sorry. Yeah. So, I guess, just I don't want to lose the point that they were identified --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah.

MR. REDDING: -- we didn't want to lose sight of them; they were flagged by members of the work group. So what --

MS. BATCHEA: And they were -- they were requested to not be in the two core documents, Russell.

MR. REDDING: Okay. So, okay, so not there, then
somewhere, right? So the question is, in the placement of this outline, do you still try to get them in the document but not in the core documents? Right? Angela.

MS. OLSEN: Yeah. I mean, that was my initial suggestion, but I could certainly live with them being somewhere in the document if they're not singled out as these are No., you know, Nos. 1 and 2 and they're disproportionate to some of the other topics that we've talked about, and also, it would depend on how they're drafted. There's -- you know, the way that the Complex Issues document currently is drafted, there are things that -- language I would not prefer, that I don't think is, you know -- so we'd have to talk about what language goes in.

But certainly, if there was a section, you know, Opportunities, I don't love the word Challenges, we may want to think about another word there, or maybe that is the word, but if it's folded into another section and, again, it's listed out among other things, then, you know -- the words matter; I would have to see what the words are -- but I think that that, you know, that, that would be a compromise I could agree to. But, again, you know, what is it going to look like having these large sections that just call out, you know, functional traits and seeds and have these robust sections when we don't have anything on cross-pollination or, you know, some of the other issues
that we've identified in the guidance document? It doesn't seem balanced to me.

So I could certainly agree to folding it into another section as long as it's more balanced, it's positive, it's in an, sort of an incentivized way. So I would consider that.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Let me, let me just make a point. So in drafting these sections, I had -- we had been focusing on trying to capture all of the things that we had heard from committee members who had raised these as, as important topics, as well as information that I know Lynn, for example, had put in the draft, an earlier draft of the guidance -- his first suggestion on the guidance document, talking about functional traits.

So there was an attempt to include all of those -- you know, basically, all of the things that we had heard around these issues and the things that had been brought up by members around the table. That did result in a fairly long document on these issues, and it may be that -- again, because there was a specific desire to capture all of that, it may be that these pieces could be combined with -- to address these issues but with a lighter touch, you know, having heard what committee members have, have said about this, but still could be included in a Challenges and Opportunities section in a bit, in a bit more abbreviated
fashion but hitting some of these points. So that is a possibility if, if members can go along with that.

I am seeing more separation where there had been a lot of consensus on this issue than on most of the other discussions we've had in the last couple of meetings. So I just want to throw that out as a possibility if folks can, can deal with that.

MS. BATCHA: I think that would depend on where the final models document then landed with the other additional things that were brought in there.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Use the microphone, please, Laura, sorry.

MS. BATCHA: That would then depend on where the models document landed and how we treated all that additional information that was brought in there without a direct bridge to gene flow. So we'd have to go back and look at that possibility.


MR. KEMPER: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

It's nice you guys have two-way conversations. Michael, we're exactly back where we were an hour and seven minutes ago on your discussion of where the parking lot was and all the details. We noted that you took notes on it. We noted that there were thoughts and processes for it.

Mr. Chairman, you had a very good movement towards
a consensus on all your thoughts about eight minutes ago that we were going to do that into the document, maybe one or two paragraphs into Existing Challenges slash Opportunities. And I think we need to go forward on that because I think you'll find much more leaning towards a consensus on that thought than to put several, eight to 10 paragraphs in. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

MR. REDDING: Okay. Yeah. Thank you. Barry and then Josette.

MR. BUSHUE: I would tend to agree with Alan. I did want to make one specific point. There was, in that -- regardless of what happens to the, what are we calling it, The Evolving Complexity Issues, there was a comment in there or a reference in there to the canola issues in the northwest. I hope and pray that does not become part of this document. That was perhaps the most contentious, divisive decision ever made with regard to coexistence. It is not coexistence. It was not collaborative. It was something that in the end the legislature weighed in on, and I don't think anybody in this room wants legislature determining what you can and can't grow on your farm.

If we're talking about coexistence and collaboration and farmers working together, that is the worst example that anyone could cite in terms of where, where I think this group is trying to head. So I would hope
that there's a great big black line through all of that.

MR. REDDING: Okay. Josette and then Latresia.

MS. LEWIS: What I was going to suggest as maybe a way forward is that as a first priority for the next step of work would be to draft the sections 4 and 8 so that we can see those in writing and have more time to discuss those prior to our next meeting, because it seems like we're moving towards an idea there has to be reference to these issues, and the question is, all the devil is in the detail as to how that much reference.

But I think, picking up on Laura's point, because yesterday I raised -- I actually had an equal concern about the other issues in agriculture that I had a puzzling -- I couldn't understand how these were all being listed and they didn't directly relate to coexistence. So for me that's still a problematic question.

It really is in the framing, and I would guess, maybe -- so maybe as a concrete response to Laura's point, I would suggest that, that if we're going -- if we were to take on requesting a draft of Sections 4 and 8, it would also include a redraft of the models, to take some of that detail or that context and make sure it is also moved to The Evolving Complexity or Challenges and Opportunities, because to me that's what these are all about.

These are the fact that there's a lot of factors
that growers have to take into consideration, seems to be what I'm understanding Doug Goehring was suggesting, and also, we haven't resolved how do deal with all those complexities yet because there are these issues for the organic growers around seed purity and the availability of sufficient seed.

So I guess specifically what I'm suggesting is, I'm not -- I think a lot of us feel the need we need to see the text in order to be able to understand where we're getting that right balance of recognizing the issues that people are passionate about but in a balanced way. So that seems to me like some text that we need to react to to move forward and that, sort of going along with that, suggesting that one -- an additional piece of that drafting is to relook at the models and see if there's balance that needs to be achieved there, because it is part of the overall equation on these.

MR. REDDING:  Okay. Thank you. Latresia.

MS. WILSON:  In terms of The Evolving Complexities, basically, what I see there is that it gives credence to what we've done. It tells us that there are some complex issues that we have addressed, and we're putting them in that section and saying, these are things that we can address directly but they're evolving, they may be getting better, they may be getting worse; however, it
gives us credence in terms of this report was well thought out, it was -- those issues were considered by all; there may not be consensus on some of those issues; however, these are complexities that we need to have there.

So I still put forth the idea that we do have No. 4 there, and then No. 8, again, we've come through the storm; now we're getting over. There's some, still some opportunities and challenges we can now face and go on. Again, I think 8 should be in there.

MR. REDDING: Okay. Thank you. Alan, did you have another comment?

MR. KEMPER: Oh, I'm sorry. No.

MR. REDDING: Jerry.

MR. SLOCUM: Yeah, I would, I would --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Got to use your mic.

MR. SLOCUM: Oh, sorry. I would think 4 could become 8. I think we could combine those two issues, and before we talk about The Complexity, or The Evolving Complexity of Coexistence and Challenges and Opportunities, we can talk about this report. We can talk about this report. We can talk about what this report does to arm or to prepare the farmers that want to, that want to participate and have a market through identity preservation. We can, we can point to our two documents that would help them go down that road, and then we can talk about what the
future may hold, that coexistence and farming, just not necessarily coexistence, but farming, will become -- there will be more opportunities as well as more challenges; and, you know, not, not put it in the front of the report, or in the front of the document, but put it in the, in the back as we look to the future.

And we've talked about some of these issues. Functional characteristics will become more important on the landscape as those products are developed, and they will present new challenges as well as new opportunities, but our core work, our guidance document and our models document, you know, will address those issues.

I mean, it -- you know, the conversation is going to have to be had among farmers or amongst participants in the same farming operation. Whether it's me having that conversation with myself or whether it's me having that conversation with my neighbors, our core documents, those two stand-alone pieces, will provide the avenue to have those discussions. It may be a discussion at a greater depth. It may be a discussion that requires more, more scientific understanding than the existing world does, but nonetheless, I think, I think the work we're doing is work that will allow producers to address those things.

So I wouldn't put them in No. 4. I'd kind of, if we were going to talk about those things, I'd move it toward
MR. SCHECHTMAN: Could I --

MR. REDDING: Yeah.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: -- could I make a point? Just, just one point, before that section became The Evolving Complexity of Coexistence and had the pieces of Seeds and Functional Traits added into it, it was a perhaps more positively focused thing that said Coexistence Is an Ongoing Process but Is Not New and that is something that could go before the, and this is the, and this is the bulk of our recommendations. And then conceivably, dealing with these other issues again after the bulk of the document and in a more concise way might, might be a way forward, if we move them back, back to the end, but certainly open to hear what others think about that.

MR. REDDING: Angela and then David.

MS. OLSEN: Yeah, Michael, thank you. I think that is something that could work, the concept of Coexistence Is Not New. I recall it being a positive statement, however you had phrased it. I do think that the topics that we are discussing within 4 could be folded into 8. So I like your suggestion, Michael. I think that could work.

That still puts the topics in the report. It still talks about opportunities and challenges. We may want
a different word for challenges, but maybe not. You know, so it acknowledges that but, again, in a more concise way. The language will matter. I think we need to, you know, it needs to be much shorter than what's here now, and I understand now, Michael, what you were trying to do with the documents. You were trying to sort of capture all the thoughts, but I don't think that's the text that goes into that section.

I also wanted to respond to Josette's point about the models document. What we had heard at the table -- and I don't have strong feelings on this, but I, just to reflect what was discussed at the last meeting -- Doug and some of the growers around the table had said in order to incentivize us, this has to be a meeting to pull us together; it has to be more than just we're going to talk about coexistence; it's an important topic but to talk about -- bring people together to talk about topics that are important for all of agriculture and practical local issues that folks are dealing with on their farms. I think that was the conversation. So I think that's why those other topics were in there.

It's not that I feel strongly about it, but if it's going to be something that's going to incentivize growers to come and one of those topics is coexistence, I think that's a positive, that's a positive thing, but
interested in others' thought as well. Again, I don't feel strongly about it, but if it's something that's going to bring people to the table, I'm in, I'm in favor of it.

MR. REDDING: David and then Barry.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wanted to focus my comments to Seed Purity, Seed Production, and, and I think on behalf of other people that have raised these issues before, whether that's Isaura or Michael Funk or myself or others, I think that those sections are in both the guidance and there's even a section in the models document called Including Seed Production.

Jerry spoke to the fact that he thought some of the people that would read these documents and benefit from them both initially would be farmers, that they would be reading them, and I think there's another group -- and they're already using our, our first document that we put out in 2012 -- and that's seed production companies, people that are actually trying to produce seed that's used then to grow commodities. It's the seed that's used to plant the seed, right? And they're using these documents, and they're trying to become innovative in how to get pure seed, I mean, and we've even heard Lynn talk about seed companies that are, that are actually trying to put stuff on tags now.

And so I think those are, those are, those -- that's at least one subject that we should include in both
of those documents because it, it starts a conversation
that's actually started many years ago but it continues that
conversation and it continues those people working towards
whatever they can do to provide choice in the marketplace.

And I know there's a lot of people around the
table that have been asking what can we do to improve purity
in seed at various levels, and I'm not talking about
necessarily commodity that's produced and taken to the
elevator, but the seed that's used to plant all of those
deals, what can we use to do that. So there's a big
undercurrent that's underway in seed companies. I worked at
one for 20 years. We spent hours talking about how were we
going to get pure seed, where are we going to grow it, what
are we going to do for buffers. I mean, it changed our
whole culture in how we thought about seed production in a
crop like cross-pollinated alfalfa.

So I would encourage everybody to just kind of
think about some of the things that we put in various parts
of the document and how they're having a bigger impact on
conversations all around the country that we're not even
maybe recognizing. Thank you.

MR. REDDING: Jerry.

MR. SLOCUM: I'm sorry.

MR. REDDING: No? Okay. Okay. So we have --
good discussion, good feedback. I think, you know, we can
look at, you know, how to, how to produce this, sort of a hybrid between 4 and 8, right, informed by sort of content that probably folks need to look at and see what's there, but as noted, I mean, a placement of that will be important as well. So if it ends up being, you know, sort of in the, what is now the Challenges and Opportunities -- and we can find another way to say that. I think what we're trying to forecast in the document, that there's a lot of opportunity there. We state that, I think, in the very intro of our report, but there's a way to also say, as we look to the future, these are things we see, right, and trying to -- again, don't know what the right words are -- but trying to capture that in that section is what we'll, we'll attempt to do and then come back in a draft. Okay?

But getting, I think, some acknowledgment that there are issues there, they're not resolved, how we place them and what we term them will be important but don't leave them out, right, that we're not doing a service to either the Secretary's charge or to American agriculture to simply ignore them; put them in, but put them in context, fair?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: That's right.

MR. REDDING: Okay. So when you look at the, the outline, the revised outline, are there other sections, other things that you, that you want to have identified? Missy.
MS. HUGHES: I'm going to, I'm going to try and add --

MR. REDDING: Okay.

MS. HUGHES: -- to what you just said.

MR. REDDING: Okay.

MS. HUGHES: Before talking about, you know, anything else, I just -- it occurs to me, you know, this whole conversation about challenges versus not, I wonder if there's a way to say that we believe following on these recommendations, taking these recommendations up may help alleviate some of the things we see coming in the future; in other words, good conversations among farmers about coexistence might help provide more transparency to consumer expectations, whatever, you know -- so trying to say, what we're trying to do now is trying to help what we see coming in the future.

MR. REDDING: Good point. Okay. All right. So anything, when you look at the outline, you want to see, we need to highlight, avoid, just so we have clear guidance when we get to this, to this outline that's going to be our blueprint to draft? You're okay with what's here given the conversation and the changes around No. 4 and 8 and however that sort of presents itself in the final document, but the content pieces would be there? Okay? All right.

MR. REDDING: So we have an outline. We have the recommendations. We have the guidance and the model. What else do we need? What else do we need to go forward here?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: Lunch.


MR. KEMPER: No, that's fine if you want to break for lunch, Mr. Chair. That's fine, but I think you're pretty wrapping the day up. I mean --

MR. REDDING: Yeah. I guess I'm just --

MR. KEMPER: -- you've given us that. So I don't know --

MR. REDDING: Yeah.

MR. KEMPER: -- do we stay an extra 15 minutes here and then release us so we can catch flights, or do you want to drag us back and we sit another hour? Thank you.

MR. REDDING: Yeah. So let's, let's just take a moment. On the agenda, what else -- I guess that was my open-ended question -- sort of what else, beyond sort of what we've noted this morning, do we need to sort of take time to address prior to adjournment? It's not the agenda. It's not the recommendations. It's not the two core documents. Correct? So what is it? Right? What is it we're going to focus on when we come back to the table? Is there something that, that we need to finish here? I just want to make sure that we're on the same page in terms of
where we're expending time and expectations here for the afternoon. Angela.

MS. OLSEN: Mine is an easy one. It's just process, and that is that we came up with our calendar yesterday of when Michael, Michael, when he would have certain drafts to us, and of course, now we're talking about sort of a rewrite or a new section. You know, we all will want to see, you know, Coexistence—Why It's Important; there are different sections. And so my question is simply process: Do we need to rejigger any of these dates so that we get the work product? And, Michael, we want to respect your schedule as well, you know, if we want to -- you know, if it needs to be on, kind of on a rolling basis, because this section is one that I think we're all going to be very interested in seeing.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: So, so based on what I heard, there's going to be considerably greater amount of work that will need to be done on what up until this meeting was called Complex Issues but will be a new section going later into the report and will be a little shorter.

So what I will say is that this schedule, I think, is still basically right. I can imagine that that document could be a few days late, but you know, it's not going to be much off from this July 1st date to have the other pieces, you know, if it -- and if you'll just give me a couple of
days past the Fourth of July, in case I need it, to get that
piece out to everyone. But the schedule should be basically
as we talked about, and we'll still get, try to get you the
draft full report by around the 10th of August.

MR. REDDING: I mentioned yesterday, you know, it'd be important, I think, in this document somewhere to
have the inventory of actions that the USDA has taken from,
from the point of our initial recommendations to the point
of reconvening with the new charge. So there's not one
spot, but I think that helps to address both the issues that
were raised by way of recommendation but also important to
note that that's not simply, you know, it's not just
list-making. Right? There really were substantive changes,
whether it be on the risk management products or the, the
National Genetic Resources work that they've done,
et cetera; so having someplace that points to, you know,
what we said initially were concerns and priorities but the
intervening actions, because this will be sort of a final
report of this AC21 and who knows what, you know, the new,
you know, what that future looks like in terms of transition
and use of product, but it would help, I think, answer some
of the questions, again, to put this in context.

You know, a lot of things were identified, a lot
of actions taken, you know, a limited charge on a couple of
points that we're delivering on, and then being able to sort
of -- particularly for whatever the, as we look at the
future section looks like, being able to reach back by way
of reference to actions already taken and work underway,
right, because it's continuing as well.

So somewhere in here I would hope that we could
agree to put those types of things. They're not -- I'm not
sure what the right presentation is or even how to get it,
but being able to fold that in, I think, will help tell the
larger story of the work of this AC21 over the course of six
years. Comment?

MR. SCHECHTMAN: I guess, I guess I would just
raise the question whether the report wants to list the
things that USDA has done or simply to acknowledge that a
lot of things have been done or to provide an appendix of
things that we've done, just as a few potential choices.

MR. KISLING: I would say just acknowledge.

MR. REDDING: Okay. All right. But having some
point to it, saying work done, right?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah.

MR. REDDING: Okay. All right. Anything else
then on -- sorry. I get the wave that I'm not speaking to
the microphone. So, okay, so we'll consider, you know, this
revised outline as our rough outline with some modification
of the sections noted. We have agreement on the proposed
time line and feel like that's still realistic, and we have
agreement on, on the sections around guidance and models and recommendations. Correct? And the recommendations, we'll work on, you know, putting the thoughts this morning into recommendation form and the course that'll come back to you. Anything else that we need, that we set out on the agenda for you in a formal way and/or you walked in here expecting some further discussion about that -- you know, next time you'll see some product, but when we come back to the table, it's going to be in pretty final form, right, with some discussion around it, but it's going to be in pretty final form. So any thoughts of what needs to be in the agenda and/or you're looking for content on tell us, tell us now. Okay?

(No audible response.)

MR. REDDING: I don't -- hearing none, I think there's some consensus around sort of what, what we have. Keith, are you going to make the motion?

MR. KISLING: How about we adjourn? Keith

MR. MCKALIP: I wanted, I wanted to just say --

MR. REDDING: No, no. Yeah. I don't want to rush past. I just want to make sure, content-wise, that we're okay, yeah, and then we'll have a few, a few comments here.

MR. MCKALIP: Thanks, Secretary Redding. Thanks for all of your work guiding us through this very difficult
process, incredibly important. Thank you, all, for your very hard work. The Secretary is very aware of how hard you're working on this task. I was out on the phone with him just a few minutes ago, and he's very appreciative of the work of this committee.

I did want to follow up, before we adjourn, just on one item that was brought up earlier in the day. We had an assertion that there was a USDA policy or rule that prohibited white-male farmers, less than 10 acres, from farming or that USDA had a rule that denied them benefits. We take every assertion of discrimination incredibly seriously, and rest assured, we follow up on it.

I just want to report back on follow-up that I had gotten from FSA on this issue today, and that is that there is not a USDA policy or rule. However, the 2014 Farm Bill included language from Congress for two of the new programs that were created in the 2014 Farm Bill -- the Ag Risk Coverage, which is the Countercyclical program, and Price Loss Coverage -- included language that stated that the sum of base acres on entire farm must exceed 10 acres in order to qualify for those two programs.

I asked our FSA staff why, why on earth would Congress put that into the farm bill, and the response I got back from our FSA staff was that apparently the Hill was concerned with administrative costs of the program and felt
that for a farm of less than 10 acres, that the administrative cost could end up outweighing the program -- benefits in the program.

So I wanted to report back to you that those -- it does affect two FSA programs. Just whether you agree with the policy or don't agree with the policy, it does not affect the loan programs at FSA, it doesn't affect NRCS programs, doesn't affect rural development but, for those two FSA Countercyclical and Price Loss programs, that there is a prohibition on less than 10-acre farms participating in those programs. I did also learn that Congress did include language for limited-resource producers, can get Countercyclical program or Price Loss Coverage at any size farm.

So, again, these -- it is important to USDA whenever any farmer brings up an issue of discrimination. I wanted to make sure that this wasn't something that was a USDA policy, that it was not a USDA thing that we had put into place, but I did want to report out on the facts, which is that there is two programs in the farm bill that do have a size prohibition.

So, again, just, you know, wanted to make sure we did that before we closed out this discussion. I really appreciate all of your hard work, as does the Secretary and the whole USDA team. So thank you.
MR. SCHECHTMAN: A couple of last words.

MR. REDDING: Yeah.

MR. SCHECHTMAN: Okay. So maybe just switching back to the subject of the, of the report, I want to thank everyone for the hard work. We've had some difficult discussions today, and I think the discussions really point out that the report that we get is the report that no one member would have written and that it brings people to a place that nobody finds ideal, and that's in large measure part of the charge from the Secretary. And we will do our best to try again to, to find that point based on the guidance that you've all given us, and if we have to make some more adjustments based on what we hear on the pieces that you will be receiving, we will do that. We will keep trying to find that spot.

And now I have -- sort of before, before we adjourn, I have just one other small message to give to people, and that is, if -- since we are adjourning early, if any of you are going to be trying to change your flights to go back earlier, I am instructed to tell you that you should do that not through the travel agency but through the airline. That's correct, Diane, right? Yes. And so, so that's the -- that was the one other housekeeping piece of information for you, and now I'll turn it back to our chair.

MR. REDDING: Michael, thank you. Just a couple
of final comments here, just to -- want to say thanks again for the engagement and time. You know, it really -- it's a challenge for all of us to sort of carve out a couple of days and travel, and I know what it is just sort of being local, how difficult it is, and for those who are doing extraordinary scheduling and stepping away from running businesses and managing policy and family and life, thank you very much.

Also, each time I'm at the table I'm very grateful to have the committee that was selected by Secretary Vilsack and just sort of the reengagement of AC21. I know we get into these conversations and sometimes wonder why am I, you know, hearing this for the 10th time, but I also like to believe that this conversation that we're having really is what outside we're expecting to have, right, and to model that discussion and behavior and engagement. If it can't happen here among this group, it's very difficult to expect that to happen external, right?

So I think the engagement here is instructive in terms of the difficulty, the sensitivities, the biases that are built into sort of our life experiences; at the end of that, trying to make sure that we also have a product, that we have guidance that is going to work as well in the San Joaquin Valley as it does in the Susquehanna Valley, right, and that's a 3,000-mile -- and there's a lot of territory in
between that's got to be managed.

So I look at what we do as really critical to that conversation and that there certainly are challenges and opportunities, but I think all of us can appreciate that what we do in this business is find an equilibrium between them. Right? It's sort of the motivation for, for us to be in this business of ag.

So there are many issues that we'll have to sort of tackle going forward, but just want to say, working with this committee, I appreciate the engagement. We're almost there and then we can sort of have another conversation in September when we're back together and consider that sort of our final product.

So just would ask you to think, you know, about the conversation the last two days, reflect on the conversation, the opinions; really, you know, as you travel, look at this outline again and the thoughts, just make sure, you know, that what we have presented here as our sort of blueprint is what you're expecting to see in the final product and, at the same time, is, is it going to advance that conversation of coexistence. Okay?

So with that, just thank you, good to see you, safe travel in between, and we'll see you in September. Okay? Thank you. And we have the motion to adjourn. All the best. Thank you.
One final, I mean, I forgot Diane, sorry. I mean, I looked over there and want to say this would not happen without Diane, sorry, appreciate the good work, and Betsy as well, thank you for all the good work. Thank you.

MR. KISLING: And you, also, Mr. Chairman and Michael. We appreciate you and accolades to you guys. At home they call me Mr. Plywood because of all the, all the boards that I'm on, and I use this for a model, the way you guys keep us from crawling over our tables from one side to the other and keep it organized, and we appreciate that. Thank you, guys.

MR. REDDING: That'll do it. Dr. Schechtman deserves the credit. Thank you.

(Whereupon, at 12:11 p.m., the meeting was adjourned.)
Digitally signed by Wendy Campos

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ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON BIOTECHNOLOGY AND 21ST CENTURY AGRICULTURE

By:

Wendy Campos, Transcriber