

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
WASHINGTON, D.C.

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ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON :
BIOTECHNOLOGY AND 21ST CENTURY :
AGRICULTURE :
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A meeting in the above-entitled matter was held on
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APPEARANCES

Russell Redding, Chair

Michael Schechtman, Executive Secretary

Tom Vilsack, Guest Speaker

Committee Members:

Jerome Slocum

Mary-Howell Martens

David Johnson

Isaura Andaluz

Keith Kisling

Paul Anderson

Julia Doherty

Michael Funk

Jill Schroeder

Alan Kemper

Lynn Clarkson

Josephine (Josette) Lewis

Gregory Jaffe

Leon Corzine

Melissa Hughes

Latresia Wilson

Barry Bushue

Kelly Rogers

Angela Olsen

Ron Carleton

Laura Batcha

Douglas Goehring

P R O C E E D I N G

1
2 MR. REDDING: Good morning. Welcome back. Thank
3 you for coming back. And to the folks who joined the group
4 dinner last night, I'm sure it was another social and
5 culinary delight, if I know SCHECHTMAN's past performance.
6 Right? No -- yes, can't hear?

7 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: You're getting better.

8 MR. REDDING: I'm getting better. I'll be well-
9 trained by the time this meeting is over. Realize, these
10 microphones, you know, there's a secret to turning them on
11 and off. The other secret is you've got to hold it close,
12 right? Yeah, it is.

13 So, yeah, thank you all again for being here.
14 Look forward to another productive day. As I reflected on,
15 on Day One, I was very encouraged knowing that the work that
16 this committee has done set in motion a set of actions that
17 not only changed the USDA's programs, such as the risk
18 management and the greater protection of germplasm, but also
19 made some systemic changes on how the USDA approaches data
20 collection and market information as two examples. I'm not
21 sure that that would have happened without our
22 recommendations and work of the last couple of years.

23 These changes help move us from the aspiration of
24 coexistence closer to the practical. And as with many
25 things, there will always be tension between the

1 aspirational and the practical. We are, we are no strange
2 to that on our own farms, certainly in our government, and
3 in our communities, we know that there is always sort of
4 tension between sort of what we aspire to be and where we
5 find ourselves in a moment, given all of the incredible
6 issues and such that we deal with. But I fully believe that
7 the work of the committee has moved us closer to the
8 practical.

9 Now, part of the practical is getting from the
10 farm level, getting farm level conversations and planning to
11 occur that protects the integrity of crops while respecting
12 the choice of farmers to employ the production practices
13 that they want to employ as part of their business model,
14 but also encouraging diversity.

15 As was noted both in, in our report of
16 discussions, there remains a need for a coordinated
17 education program on coexistence with coequal goals of
18 teaching and, and learning, as Jerry noted yesterday. Our
19 main charge combines these coequal goals to the development
20 of a joint coexistence plan between neighboring farms led by
21 local and, and state, at the local and state level, but also
22 supported by the federal level. The USDA is taking that
23 lead.

24 So we began yesterday to explore other models that
25 could be borrowed and serve as a guide for this effort.

1 While the topic is new, the topic being coexistence, there
2 are certainly existing models that can serve as a guide, but
3 also venues that we believe can also help us in furtherance
4 of this, such as our Pesticide Continuing Education Programs
5 as well as the Pollinator, the State Pollinator Plan
6 development as well, as both NAS appointed, as well as Ron
7 mentioned yesterday as a potential.

8 So that's where we'll pick up the conversation
9 today, really looking at our charge, making sure we're clear
10 on the charge, looking at the models that are, are available
11 to us, what can be borrowed to make sure that, you know, we
12 can still meet the goal without, as noted, recreate the
13 wheel. But it will take, it will take the concerted effort.
14 I think the difference here is it's got to be intentional.
15 It can't be just assumed that somehow somebody else is going
16 to do it. I think our charge from the Secretary now is to
17 say local and state efforts, what can you do in furtherance
18 of that? We'll support you. But what, what incentives
19 should be considered, what the USDA can do to support local
20 and state action in that regard.

21 So, and just a reminder, I would ask you please,
22 if you haven't already looked at your schedule for the next
23 couple of months, if you could mark your calendar, please,
24 and make sure that we've got that so we can have a
25 discussion. Dianne is collecting those, and make sure you

1 give that to her. Because we certainly want to make sure
2 that, before we leave today, that we've got a read on at
3 least some windows of time for the next couple of months
4 that we're going to work, as difficult as that has proven to
5 be, in practice, our practice of trying to find a time that
6 works for all of us. But we've got to sort of come to some
7 agreement on general time frames here before we leave today.

8 So, so let me stop there. And maybe others have
9 their own sort of reflection or thoughts that they have
10 pondered overnight that would help us here in our charge,
11 some framing for the day that you would like to, to share.
12 I'm certainly open to that and any feedback of, both in
13 terms of reflection of the day but also reflection on the
14 charge that we have before us. Anybody? Yeah, Angela,
15 please.

16 MS. OLSEN: Angela Olsen. I was reflecting last
17 night on the good conversation that we had at the, at the
18 table yesterday, and just putting this out there as a form
19 of brainstorming. One of the things that I really liked
20 about our last report is that it started off with some
21 guiding principles. And Mr. Chairman, you walked us through
22 that. And I think that was very helpful. We heard some
23 really good input. Mary-Howell was taking about neutral,
24 based in fact, and there were, there were other good
25 thoughts around the table as well. So I wonder with this

1 charge if we might, if we're looking at this with fresh
2 eyes, is, is there a new set of guiding principles that as a
3 group we may want to come up with that will help guide not
4 only our work here, but also whatever our report is or our
5 recommendations. We want to be inclusive of all farming
6 methods. I mean, there's a lot of good thought that can be
7 put into what are those guiding principles, and then tying
8 any recommendations we have back to those guiding
9 principles.

10 I think there's a lot of value at looking at the
11 other models that were discussed yesterday. I'm really
12 interested in hearing more on the efforts that Doug is doing
13 with I think it was the Pipeline project and the MP3 model,
14 some of the things that you've got outlined, Mr. Chairman.
15 I think that would be very helpful for us to hear, hear
16 about as well.

17 Also, to understand what are the options at the
18 local level. We heard about extension services. We heard
19 there are some pros and cons. That might not be the answer
20 in every location. Is it the state department, departments
21 of agriculture, is it, what are, what are even the options
22 at the local level? And maybe, maybe there are different
23 solutions in the different jurisdictions. I don't know the
24 answer to that, but really so we can all understand what are
25 those options.

1 And I think one of the things that was made very
2 clear is that any solution or any recommendations really do
3 need to be driven at that local level. We're hearing about
4 differences in topography, differences in, you know, it's
5 not going to be a one-size-fits-all. So is there perhaps a
6 framework that we come up with. You know, and again, Doug
7 was describing some of that yesterday, and that's what made
8 me think, maybe it's a framework that we're thinking about
9 that could be very useful for these, you know, for these
10 local solutions.

11 So again, it's sort of just some brainstorming
12 that I was doing overnight and don't know what others think
13 as well but, but defer to my colleagues in what they may
14 think also.

15 MR. REDDING: Thank you. Other thoughts to start
16 today? Josette?

17 MS. LEWIS: All right, the green light. One of
18 the things that I have been grappling with is that we're and
19 advisory committee to USDA and the Secretary of Agriculture.
20 And so what is the leverage that we as a committee have to
21 try to promote action by other entities that aren't just
22 USDA. And so clearly developing some tools, best practices
23 or models that, that other state governments or local
24 organizations, public and private, could utilize is one
25 component of our leverage. But the other that I think about

1 is can we bring visibility to a particular range of
2 organizations and motive them by giving them some spotlight,
3 giving them some opportunities, some visibility perhaps on a
4 larger stage.

5 And so from that perspective, thinking about what,
6 who are some of the types of organizations and maybe even
7 some specific organizations that we could perhaps try to
8 motivate to, to get engaged on this issue perhaps more than
9 they are, either because they have an inherent stake in
10 this, and they're motivated, and we are going to give them
11 some attention to that. Or because we think they should be
12 more, paying more attention. And I, again, I really think
13 about that broadly. It could be both public and private
14 organizations that we could be trying to incentivize by some
15 visibility and attention.

16 The one group that certainly came to mind through
17 our discussions yesterday was this National Association of
18 State Departments of Agriculture. They seemed like the kind
19 of organization that takes on this type, set of issues.
20 We've heard that with respect to the MP3 plans, for example.
21 Within that, I also think about the readout we got from the
22 report from Catherine Greene I believe it is on the, where
23 there have been economic impacts to organic producers. You
24 know, the State of Illinois for example came up as one that
25 has had more problems than other states. You know, maybe

1 that's a target opportunity because that could have, it
2 could have a significant stake in this issue and perhaps at
3 that, whether it's just received Department of Agriculture
4 or other constituencies within the State of Illinois.

5 So that's the sort of, some of the way I think
6 about this as, you know, really the toolkit is important.
7 We could put out a great toolkit and no one can use it
8 because we're talking to you guys at USDA. And so, to me
9 that bringing spotlight, thinking politically about who are
10 some targets of opportunity, public and private, that we can
11 motivate by some visibility and cultivation through this
12 process seems to me like a, a way we could be more
13 effective.

14 MR. MCKALIP: If I could just say a couple of
15 words on that. You know, here in D.C., a lot of legislation
16 is written in a particular way so it gets referred to the
17 right committee. And I would say the charge that we handed
18 around yesterday clearly has that phrase, and help advise
19 USDA as how to facilitate this, to make sure that it is
20 squarely within AC21's charge. But in my view, there is no
21 other body like yours that advises on biotechnology and the
22 future of AG that contains folks with the background that
23 you have. So I would say all of the above in terms of the
24 types of concepts that you're thinking about. We're lucky
25 that we have a lot of organizations that come to USDA and

1 say how can we help. I think what we're looking for is the
2 means to tell them here's what, here's what we do need, or
3 channeling that energy and the right types of follow-up
4 actions to the right folks. It may not be a USDA action.
5 It may be something that was a partnership. I hope that it
6 is a partnership because, absolutely I think we're not just
7 limited to, you know, things that come back to USDA but more
8 leadership and direction on how to facilitate the local and
9 county-based, state-based action on coexistence and on, on
10 the future.

11 MR. REDDING: Good thoughts. All right. I mean,
12 so there's sort of two tasks as I think about it. One is
13 the, what is it that we want to do, all right, is a big
14 piece of this. And be clear that whatever we design it be
15 sort of outcome based. You want changed behavior at the
16 farm level, community level. And then the second part is
17 who or how you do you do that. All right? And that's both
18 by individual and I think by organization. So thanks for
19 framing that up.

20 Angela. Sorry, Laura. Laura and then Mary-
21 Howell.

22 MS. BATCHA: Laura Batcha. As I've been
23 reflecting on yesterday I think, I've got some notes and
24 some ideas about this, the what question and the, and the
25 who and the how. But I'll save that because I think we're

1 going to have a lot of time to sort of progress through this
2 today. You know, I think first I want to share my
3 reflections on the charge itself.

4 You know, I do, you know, just to be clear, I do
5 see real value in the charge. I like the idea that we're
6 focusing on state and local where there may be pockets of
7 activity. But that can, can make a real difference and
8 raise awareness and that ultimately progress on this issue
9 is going to depend on the practitioners in the field
10 embracing the idea of co-responsibility. And so I really do
11 appreciate that focus on the charge a lot.

12 I will say that I have some disappointment that in
13 our last charge, one of the places where we really in my
14 mind hit the wall was around this question of are there
15 truly economic losses happening. And we identified in our
16 report that we needed to be able to answer that question to
17 move forward. And went out and NASS went out and asked
18 questions and answered the question. And we documented
19 losses, and we can, you know, have a lot of conversation
20 about the quality of the NAS data or whether or not it's
21 sliced and diced the way we need to, what's the next set of
22 data. But for me, there is, I am challenged and
23 disappointed that there is not a thread from what was the
24 major open question from years of deliberation as a
25 committee last time.

1 So, I am struggling with that a little bit and,
2 and where is the threat to bring that into these
3 discussions. I do appreciate, Josette, you identifying that
4 we might be able to use that data as a targeting mechanism.
5 And I hadn't gotten there in my mind yet. So I really do
6 thank you for, for thinking, for thinking that way
7 overnight. But I, you know, I just will share with the
8 committee that, that for me that's sort of a disconnect that
9 creates a lack of continuity in the development of our work
10 that to me is notable.

11 MR. REDDING: If I could just sort of pursue that
12 a little bit, I mean, just so we're, I'm understanding. So
13 that the, the, from your perspective, the recognition of the
14 loss, that that was the, you know, created a lot of anxiety
15 in discussions leading up to our recommendations. Right?
16 So we had a report out yesterday that at least begins to
17 inform that. And then I think it can be more robust. And I
18 think there were some observations about why it isn't as
19 such. But at least it takes the step in that direction of
20 quantifying for the first time that there is, in fact, sort
21 of loss occurring. Real loss, right? Economic loss.
22 Right?

23 MS. BATCHA: It's not sort of loss. I think that,
24 I think the data suggests that there is loss.

1 MR. REDDING: Okay. So, are you saying that
2 that's not, that's, you want more detail around that? I
3 guess I'm trying to sort of point to it to say what's
4 missing in that presentation, the thread piece that you
5 mentioned? What does that mean? Yeah, would you please
6 just --

7 MS. BATCHA: Sure. Yeah. I think for me it's
8 that, sort of that was the open question that we couldn't
9 get beyond. And so, the question essentially was answered.
10 And so, but also just sort of put out there, and there it is
11 as a piece of information on a plate sitting out there with
12 no continuity to action plans going forward. And I think
13 not the acknowledgement that that is some of the information
14 we were looking for that we couldn't get to in our last
15 deliberation. So I think, and I'd like to continue to
16 explore the ways to create those threads, like Josette has
17 suggested. Because I do think that we're starting from a
18 place that we didn't start from last time, which is that,
19 that, that data has identified there are, are losses, so.

20 MR. REDDING: So, thank you. Mary-Howell.

21 MS. MARTENS: First, first I'm going to add a
22 little bit to what Laura said. The reason why the answer is
23 ambiguous is that most of us organic farmers who do grow
24 vulnerable crops choose to plant differently. Where our,
25 where our neighbor is going to have GMO corn, we don't plant

1 corn next to it. That would just be stupid. We plant dry
2 beans or soy beans or heritage wheats and actually make more
3 money at those crops than corn.

4 So the fact that the losses are not apparent in
5 the data may not necessarily be that we're not getting the
6 data. It may be that organic farmers are smarter than that,
7 and we are trying very hard to avoid losses by growing
8 different crops. And it isn't necessarily at a disadvantage
9 to us. Now those, those are some real, true realities for
10 organic grain farms.

11 But as a farmer, thinking about this last night, I
12 don't, I don't like talking about things endlessly. I feel
13 like we can, we can accomplish a great deal if we just put
14 our minds together and start doing it. From what it looks
15 like, there are eight crops that we are initially talking
16 about that have counterparts in GM. Eight crops, some of
17 which are self-pollinated, some of which are cross-
18 pollinated. Those take different considerations.

19 What would be really helpful is if we could start
20 drafting a guidance document. And it would be fairly
21 straight forward because as Leon said, a lot of this
22 information is known. A lot of this information is out
23 there for seed producers and for other produces who are
24 trying to do IP. But it may not be all in one location, and
25 it may not be framed in a way that is simple to both, for

1 farmers both to understand and also for cooperative
2 extension or someone else to teach from.

3 It looks like we have three characteristics that
4 we need to discuss, or at least uncover. One would be the
5 effect of pollen drift. And, and that, we need some
6 information about what is an effect of distance on buffer,
7 what geographical characteristics of a buffer would be
8 important for filtering, what about the geographical lay of
9 land, uphill, upwind versus downhill, downwind. And other
10 things that have to do with the effectiveness of a buffer.

11 The second would be the effect of AP in seed. And
12 so that would be another category. What percent AP in seed
13 if you start with. Now, organic corn tends, the threshold
14 for organic corn, non-GMO point is .25 percent. If you
15 start with .25 percent and, and do not have any further
16 contamination, what are you likely to end up at? And will
17 it be within the realm of what is acceptable for feed grade,
18 acceptable for food grade, and acceptable for some of Lynn's
19 more, more sensitive markets. What is an acceptable buffer
20 and percent AP in seed for the amylase gene versus the
21 Roundup Ready gene? Those are two, would be two different
22 categories.

23 And then finally, the third category would be the
24 cleanout of machinery, both planting machinery and harvest
25 machinery. And I know this information exists. I've seen

1 it from Iowa State. I've seen it from Purdue. Researchers
2 have done work on how to clean out a combine so that it is
3 sufficiently cleaned out and not harboring bits of seed here
4 and there. That information is out there. It's not hard to
5 find. But it's probably not all together in one location.

6 So if we could put together something very
7 practical and neutral that covers these three categories,
8 and breaks down the risk for self-pollinated versus cross-
9 pollinated crops, we would have a document that could be
10 talked from that could be distributed and could be useful
11 for furthering the discussion on how to coexist in a, in a,
12 you know, non-judgmental way.

13 MR. REDDING: Very helpful. Thank you. Let's
14 see. Alan.

15 MR. KEMPER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think, I
16 think we need to keep going forward with our vision, not go
17 backwards. We talked a lot about compensation, various
18 means of compensation for any type of unintended
19 consequences of any crops from anywhere. With all due
20 respect to USDA, ERS, Dr. Greene's study, which I appreciate
21 it, was no more than back of a napkin type of approach to a
22 problem. I mean, it identifies \$6 million of valued loss of
23 92 farmers, and you don't know the crop, and you don't know
24 who contaminated it. It could have been their own

1 contamination from their other crops tells me baseline we
2 have nothing.

3 So I can't put much value in that. And simply,
4 that we need to go forward. And as Dr. Greene said, it
5 takes several years to do that. And maybe AC21 will be
6 around for several years. I hope not. Hopefully it sunsets
7 in a couple years. But I think we need to go forward, Mr.
8 Chairman, and find the tools, find the procedure, find the
9 protocol to move us forward into dealing with what the
10 charge was, was how do we get farmers or how do we encourage
11 farmers to create coexistent plans within their local
12 communities.

13 That doesn't need to address us right -- with all
14 due respect to Mary, and I appreciate your comments, right
15 in the nature that university staff do on a daily basis. It
16 might compile it. It might show a tool how we can compile
17 or how the farmers in that respective local area can compile
18 it. It might be, we might put the tools together on who can
19 deliver the message or who can be the neutral side, whether
20 that's the intention. Whether that could be a local FFA
21 chapter or district FFA guys or part of your others. But
22 let's not go back and address the same old stuff you guys
23 dealt with in 2012 at a level on compensation. That's not
24 part of the new charge. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

25 MR. REDDING: Thanks, Alan. Isaura.

1 MS. ANDALUZ: I kind of want to talk about a
2 little bit what you're talking about, Alan, is that, you
3 know, like on the organic surveys when they're asked for
4 losses, I've had departments call me up. And, and there'd
5 be losses in seed, in seed production. And they have a lot
6 of contamination. And what's happened to the organic, the
7 organic producers who work with the organic association,
8 they don't, they don't sell that seed. They have to destroy
9 all that seed. And people are experiencing increasing
10 losses every season. And some farmers have quit actually
11 growing like corn seed and other things because they can't
12 keep it clean.

13 And the other thing is, I mean they, they, when
14 they test it, it's not, they know that that's not their own
15 contamination because they do zero detect. And so, and so,
16 so in, unless it's like that there is so much contamination
17 that we start growing and the aggregated amount increases
18 every year. But if there's, if it's contaminated, they
19 destroy it. They don't sell it. They don't eat it. It's
20 destroyed.

21 And the thing is, you know, if we're looking to
22 have coexistence, we need clean seed. We need seed that is
23 at zero detect level, period. And that's, and so that's,
24 you know, we're asking for, as I said it before, our
25 foundation seed needs to be clean before we move forward.

1 MR. REDDING: Okay, thank you. Doug.

2 MR. GOEHRING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Looking
3 back, and looking at our charge now, I'm not sure if moving
4 forward at this point and trying to change how we're going
5 to approach this is going to help us much. I think we have
6 a, certainly a challenging task before us, but I think it's,
7 I don't know, I think it's doable based on work we've done
8 in the past. Some of the challenges I see with addressing
9 the issue that we dealt with before was we really did ask
10 some questions about what damage, what harm has been done.
11 Just wanting documentation, verifiable, not anecdotal.

12 And I know that, just as you stated, Laura, it was
13 suggested that there's harm, there's losses. And
14 absolutely, on our farms we see that every day. We talk
15 about those things. But we generally have to pick something
16 up and take it to those lawmakers to show them, here, I have
17 a loss. We experience it all the time with discounts on
18 commodities because we can show where they've, they've
19 discounted, where they've said that this is an issue and the
20 marketplace isn't going to pay for it, isn't going to
21 compensate you. They've actually taken discount. So it's
22 something that we can take and then address too. This
23 management agency, for example. And yet, you always have
24 that no-man's land that, that area that you're just not
25 going to get anything for it.

1 But with all that being said, you know, and just
2 addressing the comments from earlier, and part of what Mary
3 talked about, you know, creating an outline or a model as,
4 as Angela has stated I think is doable. I don't know if we
5 can be as restrictive about just doing certain areas. I
6 think we can make it all-encompassing over all crops. If we
7 talk about this, doing it in just a few areas, I think our
8 challenge is to get ag producers to the table, to get the
9 farmers there to be engaged and to listen.

10 If we talk about this in a broader sense, I think
11 we have the ability of saying let's talk about those
12 challenges as producers we experience every day. We might
13 get more buy-in. We might get more people engaged and
14 involved in this. And I was thinking about it, and I did
15 jot some things down yesterday, and I jot them again, jotted
16 them down again this morning. But if you were to look for a
17 neutral, third party, and I think that's probably one of the
18 bigger challenges we have. And I don't want to say it's
19 impossible.

20 But you do have to stay away from certain
21 entities, certain groups because if they're perceived as
22 being biased, they're not going to carry any weight. You're
23 not going to have any participation.

24 So whether that would be the departments of
25 agriculture in some instances, maybe its extension in other

1 instances, it's about getting the, the stakeholders there to
2 talk about best management practices for all types of crops,
3 and let's deal with it at a state and local level, because I
4 think that's key. It seems like everybody is saying that,
5 and I believe it's, it's absolutely right because they
6 understand the culture, and they can address those things
7 for considerations such as soil type, topography, climate,
8 types of crops, what are your own pests, what are your own
9 pathogens in the area? What are the weed species? Learn
10 the practices that are taking place. Is there tillage?
11 Isn't there tillage? What are the types of systems that
12 exist out there? You have conventional systems, you have
13 identity preserve systems, you have seed, seed producers,
14 you have organic producers.

15 This is all about mitigation. Because to the
16 point, and maybe I was a bit subtle when I was suggesting
17 and talking about it, I have all these in my state. And one
18 of the challenges I have with those producers that do
19 extensive tillage is soil that is moving from their property
20 to somebody else's. Whether it's nematodes, other soil-
21 borne pathogens, maybe it's through wind erosion, maybe it's
22 through water erosion. And I have some conventional farmers
23 that have called and said can you talk to the organic farmer
24 because I'm ending up with some issues over here. Maybe
25 there is water that's moving soil down into a flood plain

1 and someone else is having to deal with it. How they deal
2 with it, they just understand those are the inherent risks
3 that exist in agriculture.

4 But they say is there some way to mitigate that?
5 Is there something that can be done? Is there a buffer
6 strip that could be put up? Is there a situation where, and
7 I dealt with this one where we had late blight in an
8 existing potato crop that affected several thousand acres of
9 seed potatoes. And because they were organic, there was a
10 different method and approach to dealing with them. And
11 yet, the conventional seed producer was challenged with
12 trying to manage this pathogen on a daily basis.

13 So this goes both ways. But it really is about
14 understanding the climate, the culture, the practices in the
15 area, getting producers engaged with each other. Because,
16 quite frankly, they may need, they may not always be aware
17 of what the other one is doing. And I know, Mary, that
18 you've had some challenges. And understandably, we just
19 have some people out there that are just difficult to work
20 with. I've got a few of those too.

21 But this would at least probably get more
22 producers engaged in the process and understanding what
23 mitigation can do. And a lot of it is education, is
24 outreach. But I certainly think there is a model and a
25 format that we can design, and then figure out who should

1 deliver that into the agricultural community and get more
2 and more people informed and maybe taking a different
3 approach to how they're doing some things. But again, it's
4 probably going to be voluntary. I would say with 99 percent
5 certainty it will be voluntary. So how do we entice them?
6 Thank you.

7 MR. REDDING: Thanks, Doug. Greg.

8 MR. JAFFE: Thank you. Greg Jaffe. Reflecting on
9 the charge from yesterday, as well as the discussion and the
10 update from USDA, I guess what strikes me about all this is
11 I guess I'm maybe a little bit annoyed at ourselves, the
12 AC21, for the way we wrote our report or maybe a little bit
13 disappointed with the way that USDA interpreted this
14 recommendation, but, you know, it talks about the idea that
15 we said that the USDA should provide incentives for
16 neighboring farms to develop joint coexistence plans. And
17 USDA seemed to have read that very narrowly, like we don't
18 have the authority to do incentives, so we can't do anything
19 in this area. And I think our, I think what we really
20 wanted to say, we want to encourage people to do this.

21 And so then the second, what's now part of our new
22 charge is to encourage this to happen at the state and local
23 level. And I'm not sure why the federal isn't also included
24 there. In other words, for the sentence that says is there
25 an approach for which farmers should be encouraged to work

1 with their neighbors to develop joint coexistence plans at
2 the state and local level, why doesn't that say at the
3 federal, state, and local level? I'm concerned that USDA
4 has sort of, sort of stepped back and said since we don't,
5 can't provide incentives, we can't do anything in this area,
6 or we need to, you know, we'll leave it to the state and
7 local level.

8 And I guess my perspective is that USDA should be
9 encouraging farmers to, to develop joint coexistence plans.
10 I think that should be, that should be sort of meant from
11 our last thing. And I think what's important, because USDA
12 sets the tone for this issue. If it's not a priority at,
13 with the Secretary and USDA to tell farmers that it's a
14 priority, it's, it, you know, that's how it helps the states
15 and locals do that.

16 So I guess I just, I guess I'm a little
17 disappointed with the narrow view that this was only, if
18 there wasn't incentives, the USDA didn't, really couldn't do
19 very much here. I'd like to, because I'm not sure we're
20 going to find better incentives at the state or local level
21 if we're talking about financial things or legal things that
22 they can do. And I'm not sure this committee is really set
23 up where we can get enough information about what are the
24 legal authorities that states or local levels to figure out
25 incentives.

1 So I think in the end what we're doing is how do
2 we encourage people to do this? How do we give them the
3 education? How do we take something that is going to
4 probably volunteer, but, but make it in everybody's best
5 interest. And I think the first way to do that is for the
6 federal government and USDA to take leadership and sort of
7 be at the head of that. And so, again, I'm annoyed with
8 ourselves because we wrote the word incentives there. Maybe
9 we should have said encourage including the use of
10 incentives. But I hope the USDA is not going to, and I, you
11 know, I still think that that should be part of our work
12 that we're done here, not just focusing on what can be done
13 at the state and local level to encourage farmers to do
14 this, but what can be done at the federal level to encourage
15 them to do it, less the incentives.

16 MR. MCKALIP: Just a couple quick thoughts on
17 that. And again, I can't state enough how important it is
18 for NRCS to open up the conservation program portfolio to be
19 available for coexistence practices. Again, there have to
20 be water quality, wildlife habitat, as well as air quality
21 component to that. But we're talking about a, you know,
22 it's a package of incentives that has at least a billion
23 dollars per year. Often costs shared 75 percent in the case
24 of a new or beginning farmer, a limited resource farmer, 90

1 percent of the cost of that practice can be paid for using
2 those dollars.

3 So, you know, we may not have the, the, everything
4 perfect in terms of the width of the buffers or exactly what
5 the practices look like. I think that's going to be an
6 ongoing development thing that there certainly are a
7 tremendous amount of federal resources that could be brought
8 to bear. And I feel like for where we were maybe 12 months
9 ago, where we are now, we are in a much stronger position to
10 help utilize those programs to help.

11 As we continue to gather data on where losses have
12 occurred, and it was an important first step to do it in
13 this last NASS survey. As I think Cathy talked about
14 yesterday, this is an ongoing process. We're going to
15 expand that and make sure we gather even more data. It's
16 difficult for us as we look at that 0.65 percent of
17 producers having the loss to establish a federal program for
18 it. But I think what we're looking to do is to, again,
19 localized, see where those are happening, what types of
20 crops, what areas are mostly likely to experience the
21 losses.

22 And that's why we're I think really interested in
23 the state and local, county, state approach to, you know,
24 figuring out what the best ways to get those coexistence
25 plans into place and get farmer-to-farmer, you know,

1 speaking to each other to, you know, figure a lot of these
2 pieces out because, and maybe you all have been around this
3 a lot longer than I have. The idea of like a federal
4 program targeted at this effort is really difficult to see
5 based upon the data that we're looking at so far.

6 MR. JAFFE: Can I just follow up for a second? So
7 I think the NRCS program, that's great. And I was one of
8 the big proponents at the time for having that as a two-for-
9 one kind of thing. So I'm very, very glad that USDA has
10 figured out a way to do that. And I hope that it is
11 beneficial in the long run. And I'm not suggesting there
12 should be a whole federal program on this, but I do think
13 the tone for what states and locals do, because as Doug
14 said, they've got lots of issues and lots of problems with
15 farmers that this isn't going to reach a top priority unless
16 the Secretary and USDA says this is the top priority.

17 So I'm not necessarily suggesting that this be a,
18 that a separate program be established at USDA just on this
19 issue. But I do think that, you know, three or four years
20 ago when we were an A-list committee, the Secretary talked
21 about coexistence a lot. And USDA talked about coexistence
22 as a major policy and issue going forward. In the last
23 couple years, that hasn't been the case. That hasn't been
24 talk. But I know that there have been lots of issues and
25 lots of other reasons for that. But I do think that the

1 federal government can set a tone that will give states and
2 locals more reason to do some of the things we'd say here in
3 any report or any solution.

4 So I guess what I'm saying is I still think there
5 needs to be federal leadership in this area if we want to
6 encourage joint coexistence plans. And I'd like to see part
7 of our work being how to set up that federal leadership on
8 making this issue an important issue to the biotech
9 companies, making it an important issue to farmers, to state
10 and locals. That's all I'm saying, is I think that in order
11 to have the effect at the state and local level, there's
12 also got to be federal emphasis on this, maybe not through
13 money. Maybe not through a set program, but saying this is
14 a critical part of agriculture going forward in the U.S.

15 MS. HUGHES: Also, can I ask a follow-question on
16 NRCS before we --

17 MR. REDDING: Sure. Yeah.

18 MS. HUGHES: Sorry.

19 MR. CORZINE: You can have it for a moment.

20 MS. HUGHES: Thank you. Just for a moment. Doug,
21 are there any, is there any precedent in the NRCS for joint
22 conservation plans of farmers working together and
23 approaching the NRCS with a conservation plan that covers
24 both of their farms?

1 MR. MCKALIP: Assuming both farmers are willing
2 and interested in doing that, yeah. In fact, it goes well
3 beyond just adjoining private landowners. There are
4 situations where private landowners are next to the federal
5 government BLM lands, you name it. And I think even within
6 this administration, there's been a lot of movement to
7 develop more holistic plans to even crops boundaries because
8 you've got a ranch that may be grazing on their own property
9 and going into the BLM. So, yeah, I think there's been
10 increasing amount of experience in developing more joint
11 things. Again, it has to be something where both producers
12 are willing and interested to do that. But certainly the
13 agency has the capacity to not just stop at field boundaries
14 or property lines and help develop something that is more
15 integrated.

16 MS. HUGHES: I see. Thank you.

17 MR. REDDING: Leon.

18 MR. CORZINE: You're welcome, Missy.

19 MS. HUGHES: Thank you, Leon.

20 MR. CORZINE: Leon Corzine. Good morning,
21 everybody. I'd like to start a lot of times with it's
22 another great day to be alive. Right? To add a little
23 levity. I took a little different tact or look. And Greg,
24 I kind of, being a farmer, I kind of like the idea that
25 you're finally talking more about directly farmer-to-farmer

1 or state and local type things. Because, you know,
2 especially with a lot of things that are happening out
3 there, it doesn't go over very well in the countryside when
4 you come out and say we're the federal government and we've
5 got a program here to help. You know, it just isn't very
6 well received if you really want to get people serious about
7 some of these things.

8 So I like the idea that, or my thought is what we
9 could do, and it's already been mentioned, and Mary-Howell
10 mentioned it, as far as having some principles that we can
11 come up with to have tools for, in different parts of the
12 country. You know, we're very diverse in what, what works
13 in one part doesn't work in another. Even, even, I don't
14 think we should designate or attempt to designate what group
15 or what organization should handle this because there are
16 places where NRCS might work. Where I am, majority of where
17 I am, it doesn't. Maybe extension works. Maybe Department
18 of Ag works.

19 We have a thing that really works where we
20 cooperate most with is drainage districts. You have a
21 common problem. You get together, and you solve it. Right?
22 But what I see as our charge, we could come up with guiding
23 principles that could be considerations. You know, I kind
24 of snickered when I, when Mary mentioned machine cleanout or

1 clean out a combine. What the heck? We can clean out. But
2 maybe enough people don't know that.

3 We've actually as an organization went to the
4 machinery manufacturers because the combines and a new
5 generation of them were harder to clean out. So we went
6 back to them and said, hey, we've got to make these easier
7 to clean out.

8 What I like about this charge is it is not, and I
9 think we have to get away from, this is not organic-
10 specific. This is for IP products, and that involves a lot
11 of what we do. So you have some of those practical things
12 you can do. You know, there are going to be areas where you
13 aren't going to get interest. Because, in my county we have
14 two organic growers. All right? Both of them happen to be
15 in my neighborhood, and we talk about things, and things
16 kind of work out. But the other guys across the county,
17 they aren't going to go to a meeting and talk about that.
18 But, if you can talk about, and I think there's going to be
19 interest in identity preserved products, or renewed interest
20 with what we're talking about with what economics are.

21 And we look at that every year anyway on our farm.
22 My son and I sit down and say, okay, what's out there. You
23 know, whether it's seed production, whether it is the white
24 corn, whether, you know, and you have all those things you
25 have to consider. Where there are setbacks, you know, what

1 are, what is the extra time cost, what are all of those
2 things? What's the transportation? It's going to take a
3 lot more to deliver 50 miles, especially if you have to
4 deliver at harvest, than to my own grain bins or to somebody
5 that's five miles away.

6 You know, all of those are considerations, and,
7 and I would hope that whoever you're contracting with has
8 those, but maybe not. So maybe that needs to be in the
9 category as well. Or if I'm going to grow a new IP product,
10 I need to call up the guys in my neighborhood and, and talk
11 about that, right, and what I want to do and what and how
12 it's going to affect you in that drainage district principle
13 maybe.

14 But if we had a set and made it known, USDA did,
15 to help, you know, the extension service in, in my neck of
16 the woods, they have annual agronomy meetings. So they
17 could have a segment at part of their agronomy meeting to at
18 least help make people aware of, okay, here are, if you're
19 considering IP, and maybe you should, you know, with, to, to
20 increase your value at Farm B, whatever it is. And if
21 you're in Northwestern Illinois, NRCS probably works. If
22 you are in Central Illinois, maybe not. It's one of these
23 other organizations. Or you do it yourselves, but at least
24 you make an awareness that there are these set of
25 considerations. I don't know that we can make them, we, I

1 don't think we should call them recommendations because it
2 may not be a recommendation in a different geography, right?

3 So then you kind of work things out. I used the
4 example, and you've all heard me say it. The guy I know
5 that grew pharmaceutical corn and needed half-mile setbacks.
6 Well, it was an added-value product, very highly added, so
7 he shared in the value. There was a shared value to get
8 folks in his neighborhood to participate. Because to do
9 that particular product, that's what they had to do. And he
10 went on, and there wasn't a big fight in the neighborhood
11 because they participated all the way. Right? They took
12 care, the guy doing it took care of the setback for, for
13 that guy by paying him, and then also keeping it mowed,
14 whatever it took where they weren't growing a crop.

15 So I think there are a lot of things there that on
16 a, that really gets to a more practical point where we
17 really haven't been. And, you know, you can, you can work
18 on the geography. And here again, it's different. And to
19 your three points, Mary-Howell, the, you know, the pollen
20 drift. The pollen drift different in different areas. And
21 you mentioned that, Doug, as far as where there are more
22 trees, or the topography is different. And, you know, the
23 temporal difference. We worked that out, you know. And so
24 there are a lot of things we can list that maybe are rather
25 obvious to some of us that are actually boots on the ground,

1 if you will. But maybe in general they aren't. So that's
2 where I see USDA can, can, or this committee can, can come
3 up with a, with, that this listing or a catalogue of, okay,
4 you folks need to do that if there's a new product out
5 there. This is what, you know, take a look. And, and it
6 will take a little bit to do that.

7 And then you don't, and then it is a neutral
8 party. You don't have, like I say, for the federal
9 government to come out. That isn't going to go too well.
10 But if it's the extension service, Department of Ag would
11 work in some states. In my state, we've got so darn many
12 financial issues, budget issues in the state that everybody
13 is like this. So that doesn't really work. Or the drainage
14 district type model, you know? Because we've got a lot of
15 drainage districts that works great. And you operate on
16 need.

17 So I think if we move forward and, and categorize
18 or develop a list of what these guiding principles are,
19 because there's a lot of experience. And we don't need to
20 be reinventing the wheel or, or thrashing around old, old
21 arguments here. I think we can get past that and really
22 make a lot better use of our time. Thank you.

23 MR. REDDING: Thanks. Lynn. Lynn, then Laura,
24 and Mary-Howell.

1 MR. CLARKSON: Lynn Clarkson. I'd like to make
2 several points. One starting with something that Russell
3 brought up yesterday at the close of our meeting talking
4 about good neighbors. My concept of a good farm neighbor is
5 one that does his best to avoid damaging his neighbor, and
6 he doesn't want to be damaged unreasonably. I enjoy that
7 legal term, unreasonable. It gives flexibility.

8 The second thing is, almost every dialogue around
9 this table goes back to what I would say is the issue of
10 purity. Inside an agricultural system that's being
11 modernized away from fungible to much more distinctions.
12 And we've got organic distinction, we've got the non-GMO, we
13 have distinctions within the GMO. And we, when we get into
14 loss, the losses aren't just a few million.

15 The losses are now numbering billions of dollars
16 because we have losses of foreign markets, we've got
17 billion-dollar suits going on by farmers all over the
18 country against the seed companies for putting a seed out
19 before it was approved by a major buyer known as China.
20 We're going to see losses. And I don't know what the
21 distinction tomorrow will be. But in the past, we had
22 distinctions that went pretty much to biochemistry, and you
23 might say many of the distinctions now. Good social values.
24 And every one of those values is important to recognize.

1 And the real organizing factor here is this thing
2 called the market. So today, in rough terms, I'll tell you
3 what the market is offering as distinctions. For
4 conventional corn in the middle of Illinois today would
5 probably bring, and some of you guys can update me. But I
6 think we're around \$3.60 a bushel.

7 MR. KEMPER: Conventional, or is that GMO?

8 MR. CLARKSON: That's conventional anything. So,
9 it can be GMO. So, to me GMO is conventional too. So
10 around \$3.60. If it were non-GMO, it's \$4.00. If it were
11 organic, it's \$10. So the incentive here comes from the
12 market, and whether those who buy will take away the
13 incentive if we don't get what we want. Because what
14 determines what we want is customer satisfaction, scattered
15 around the country with some degree of purity. And so it's
16 purity definitions that are most troubling to us.

17 So, a policy that would help show farmers and
18 everybody else in the chain, because it's not just a farmer
19 issue. It's an issue for everyone in the food chain. What
20 it takes to satisfy the market would be helpful. At a local
21 level, at the state level you've got grain and feed
22 associations in almost every state. You've got the National
23 Grain and Feed Association. This is increasingly important
24 to them. You've got the Millers Association, you've got
25 farm equipment companies.

1 My company used to pay a premium for people who
2 would harvest specialty crops with a rotary combine made by
3 International Harvesters. And that was pretty clear right
4 up until the day John Deere discovered the rotary combine.
5 And so, then it was no longer so important to us that you
6 have a red combine, we could also buy from the green guys.

7 If we find a farmer that consistently grieves us
8 of too close to the edge on what we would call adventitious
9 presence or in our cruder terms, contamination, we'll reject
10 them. And we don't want to deal with people we reject every
11 day. We like around 95 percent recidivism. We like to keep
12 people in the system, have a long term relationship. And
13 I'm sure that's not unique to my company. I think you'll
14 find it throughout the, the grain buyers. You have major
15 companies that are wanting to please clients with Panamax
16 vessels full of crops that meet certain degrees of purity.
17 And so what vision do we have of U.S. agriculture 10 years
18 from now and 20 years from now? How do we compete in a
19 world where Brazil is much better than it is today, where we
20 have good transportation, where the Chinese have addressed
21 some of their problems, where the Indians have addressed
22 some of their problems.

23 My crude vision of that is we're a country that
24 can provide a reliable degree of purity more so than many of
25 these other countries. I think that goes to address a

1 variety of social values around the table. So I like what
2 Greg suggests about creating a policy to sensitize people
3 throughout the system to the importance of food purity or
4 commodity purity that we're delivering. There's probably a
5 better marketing term for it than I'm using.

6 But I think that's a direction that most of the
7 economists around this table are going at, and how do you do
8 it. Well, the market is carrying the load right now. And
9 it would like help from everybody else in the food chain in
10 getting product segregated appropriately to serve different
11 markets. For farmers' attention this, there has never been
12 a better time in 10 years. Most of the farmers around the
13 table will talk to you about how close to the line between
14 red ink and black ink they're going to be. There are going
15 to be a lot of farmers losing money.

16 And what I told you about a moment ago with the
17 premiums that are paid for non-GMO or paid for a specific
18 GMO or paid for organic are the difference between success
19 and failure in the farm community. There is more interest
20 than there's ever been in the past. Are there a lot of
21 people that aren't interested? Yep. But there's still a
22 higher degree of interest today. So there's a higher degree
23 of interest, demonstrable interest in farmers knowing how to
24 meet the specs the food industry is coming out with to
25 satisfy the client. So, a policy at the national level

1 spread down through the various agencies that work with the
2 USDA to help show farmers how to meet these standards like
3 everybody else said I think would be excellent. End of
4 story.

5 MR. REDDING: Very good. Thank you. Laura.

6 MS. BATCHA: Thanks. I just want to lay out a
7 couple of ideas. But first, I want to go back. Perhaps I
8 wasn't clear enough in my communication. I want to go back
9 to my earlier statements with my colleagues and assure Alan
10 specifically based on your response to what I said and, and
11 my colleagues. I'm not proposing we look backwards. I'm
12 not proposing we rehash old debates. What I was doing was
13 acknowledging a disappointment that I expect will come from
14 the stakeholders that I represent that we took the step to
15 collect the data and sort of left it there and my desire to
16 create some sorts of threads to the future with, with that
17 data. And I liked the ideas that Josette put on the table,
18 and I look for other ideas like that.

19 But I do want to clarify in no way was I
20 communicating my intention to take us backwards and bog us
21 down in a debate that we spent two years on. And I am
22 embracing the charge that's been laid out by the Secretary.
23 So I just don't want that to be confused.

24 So as I think about the work on the charge, I sort
25 of jotted down some notes about what are some pockets of

1 work that we might break this up into as a committee,
2 because I think some of us are going to have natural areas
3 of interest and expertise as we try to tackle the problem.
4 And so I'll just put these out there. I know it's not a
5 perfect organization of the work by any means but my initial
6 ideas, and they are in no particular order.

7 I think one area of work is defining a set of
8 parameters for what a coexistence, joint-coexistence plan
9 could include or look like. And I think Mary-Howell started
10 to articulate that by looking at pollen, seed, cleanout,
11 these kind of things. And within those parameters defining
12 who might, depending on whatever the circumstances is, this
13 is an indication of who must or who might participate in the
14 joint plan for all these speaking.

15 I think another area of work is understanding
16 models, like the pollinator model, joint NRCS conservation
17 plans, and have a group of us tackle those models and share
18 that information with the others. Explore incentives
19 broadly speaking. I don't mean just monetary incentives,
20 but other incentives that might encourage participation in
21 this. Identify targets for where we would get the, you
22 know, biggest bang for our buck if we're going to put effort
23 into this.

24 And then identifying some, either principles or
25 recommendations for convening, adapting the work at the

1 state and local level in terms of a road map for that. And
2 I think, Joe, that you spoke to that yesterday that, that a
3 lot of this is, is going to be about, and again, there's not
4 a one-size-fits-all solution, but there could be some
5 principles about how you go about convening, identifying the
6 stakeholders, and working with the parties at the local
7 level.

8 And then the last one I think is a question
9 around, you know, is there a role for technology and how
10 USDA might facilitate that. So.

11 MR. REDDING: Okay. Thank you. Mary-Howell.

12 MS. MARTENS: There is a case, there is a case
13 study that -- am I on? Yeah. Oh. NRCS, at least where we
14 are, is by far the best federal agency out there in the
15 field. The local NRCS people are terrific. They
16 communicate well with farmers. And they have a package of
17 goodies that beats them all. And, and the case study is, is
18 actually my son, who is a young farmer. Therefore, he
19 qualifies for the best of the goodies. And he also is
20 farming some highly erodible land that he's renting. And it
21 definitely needed some help, some, some drainage, some
22 tiles, some sound waterways, and some buffer areas.

23 But it didn't discretely break up into just the
24 farm he's renting. It, really the, the drainage area went
25 over on an adjoining farm that is rented by another young

1 tiger who is convention and very anti-organic and was not
2 about to do anything to help our son prevent drift issues.
3 However, when JoBeth, who is our local NRCS person got
4 involved, she had this, this wonderful package of goodies
5 for both these young men that was going to help the drainage
6 issues, but, you know, coincidentally also helped some of
7 the contamination issues.

8 And because she was able to work with both the two
9 young men and also the two landlords, and do a lot to
10 improve the land drainage-wise and cut down on erosion,
11 which became a real issue two years ago when we had some
12 serious flooding, she was able to build bridges that would
13 not naturally form between two adjoining farmers. And she
14 was able to build in a package of incentives that both is
15 going to cut down on the erosion, cut down on the, on
16 draining issues, but also create more of a buffer between
17 the two farms and make both farms a little bit more
18 protected.

19 Would that, would these two, young tigers have
20 done it on their own? Of course not. They're, they're two
21 young men in their 20s, and they're going to not find common
22 ground easily. But having the NRCS person there with the
23 money and also with plans because she is also a
24 conservationist, and also with some, some sensitivity to
25 what was going on between these two young men, everything is

1 so much better. I mean, this is just a tremendous success
2 story with 90 percent cautionary.

3 So, I really think that there are opportunities.
4 If JoBeth had had a nice training manual about how to build
5 in, into this conservation plan tools that will also
6 accomplish additional goals for both of the two farmers, so
7 much the better. So this is why I feel very strongly that
8 we have a very short time frame. We have to be done with
9 some sort of deliverable, it sounds like by September.
10 September is not very far off.

11 We can develop something that is a deliverable
12 that can be then distributed to people like JoBeth Bellanca,
13 who then will take it out into the field. The channel out
14 exists pretty easily in different ways. In our area, it's
15 NRCS. Maybe in Leon's area it's Cooperative Extension.
16 Maybe in other places it's something else. But in order to
17 come up with something that can go out, a solid, tangible
18 item that can go out and help people like JoBeth to build
19 these plans to protect farmers, all farmers in a way that is
20 already incentivized I think, I think it's very
21 accomplishable. I really think we can do this, and we can
22 do it in a way that antagonizes virtually no one.

23 MR. REDDING: Thank you. Doug.

24 MR. GOEHRING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A few
25 thoughts based on some of the conversation. I think Mary

1 has got a good point as to maybe some other sources to tap
2 into. So I was thinking NRCS. I know that they have to be
3 charged with the mission. They have to have the funding,
4 the appropriation to do that. And maybe in the next farm
5 bill, maybe something like this can be put together with the
6 conservation programs that would target some money towards
7 conceptually in theory a joint conservation plan.

8 Now, in some cases, you're not going to get
9 anybody to sign on the dotted line. But an agreement worked
10 through program participation, there might be certain things
11 that can be done. It sounds like what's going on in Mary's
12 backyard is, is a great deal. And that would be something
13 along those lines, what can you put on the table that, that
14 helps both parties address some of their concerns and
15 issues. That's going to be the biggest challenge.

16 And I know that Greg had mentioned maybe the
17 resources or the expertise doesn't exist around the table to
18 know what states can or can't do or what federal government
19 can do. I think it probably does based on the fact USDA and
20 the federal government has to be careful how far they step
21 and what they do. Encouraging is a, is a great way for them
22 to get involved.

23 Right now, there is so much sensitivity out there
24 about federal overreach that if you mandate anything, if, if
25 USDA comes up and takes a hardline approach on something,

1 there's going to be such pushback, you won't have any
2 participation except in certain areas around the country.
3 And then it's self-defeating. So we have to be a little
4 careful. And it would be, it would be political suicide.

5 So I like the word you chose, encourage. Because
6 I think if USDA were to come out and say and the Secretary
7 would say we encourage joint conservation plans, coexistence
8 plans, and then provide this framework for people to operate
9 by and under to look at, hold stakeholder meetings, because
10 I think Mary's point, and a few others have said it, every
11 area has its challenges.

12 We talked about temperature, humidity, all those
13 things will affect what's going on in an area. What are the
14 natural barriers and buffers that exist in an area, hills,
15 trees, wind direction, you know, prevailing wind direction I
16 should say. Those are some things that I believe we can
17 outline, put together, and drop as a deliverable that could
18 be utilized clear around the country in so many different
19 ways. And it would help, help further the conversation and
20 take us a step closer. I don't believe there are any
21 dollars. I'll tell you in a state like mine, the
22 legislature would have to appropriate it. Even if all
23 prices were up right now, they probably still wouldn't
24 appropriate it.

1 So to that end, it would probably have to be
2 something that Congress would do in the next farm bill to
3 set, set aside a little bit of money for NRCS to look at a
4 program within their realm to help deliver that into the
5 whole agricultural community, and something that would be
6 just put on the table for them is going to get a whole lot
7 better participation and acceptance. So I, I think that
8 would further the cause. Thank you.

9 MR. REDDING: Yes. Thank you. Josette.

10 MS. LEWIS: Okay. Now I'm in the John Deere realm
11 in my International Harvest sort of red. So I want to pick
12 up on the discussion around tools. And I see two potential
13 work streams or efforts around tools. One is, and actually,
14 I went to a website that you told us about yesterday on
15 USDA.gov/coexistence. If you go to that website, and it's
16 unfortunate we can't do that while we're all sitting here,
17 that it's a set of tools. Now, they're a little bit of a
18 mishmash. There's some very broad-based kind of factual
19 components that help you think about the policy dimensions,
20 so you can think about the policy level tools. And then
21 there's a really hands-on, extension-oriented stuff from
22 Clemson University, University of Minnesota, the American
23 Seed Trade Association. So you have some very technical,
24 hands-on kind of toolkits in there.

1 So starting from that, and listening to
2 conversation, I see two kind of tools that we're identifying
3 we could put some more clarity behind. One is a set of very
4 practical tool for producers, the farmers who are going to
5 be trying to navigate the world of coexistence. And that's
6 kind of some of the things I think that Mary has been
7 talking about. And again, when I go to that website,
8 there's probably not enough of those kind, pretty clearly.

9 The second kind of tool I think is at a more
10 aggregate level and is oriented toward, it could be producer
11 organizations, it could be state extension, it could be
12 state departments of agriculture. So again, extension in
13 this world happens in a lot of different ways. And I know
14 in our state a lot of it is done by non-profits and
15 commodity organizations. Because we're in the world of
16 specialty crops where unfortunately USDA doesn't have so
17 many resources to bring to bear.

18 So, but it's a set of tools that help get at what
19 are the models for promoting coexistence, either models that
20 could be facilitated to bring growers together to work on
21 this challenge at a more aggregate level, or it could be for
22 states to incentivize growers to work together. So that's
23 kind of the MP3 models that we heard about yesterday. So
24 it's kind of a more policy or process-oriented model. It's

1 not the hands-on for the grower. So those are kind of two
2 sets of tools I've heard about that we can do some work on.

3 And then kind of picking up on Greg's point, I
4 personally will always promote a direct recommendation back
5 to USDA, even if it's for USDA to help provide leadership
6 and facilitation. And I think about, I'm right now at a
7 webpage for, for the USDA agriculture marketing service.
8 And they have a federal, state marketing improvement grant
9 program. I'm sure the director of that program would
10 dislike that I would say it seems to me the scope of that
11 program could be grants to state organizations, state
12 departments of agriculture who they give matching funds to.
13 It could be a grant on something related to coexistence.

14 So I think about AMS, NIFA, BRAG, who we heard
15 about yesterday, USDA has grants they give to cooperator
16 organizations. There's a broad set of tools not having a
17 dedicated federal program but just integrating in
18 coexistence under the development of the tools for the
19 producers or the development and implementation of the tools
20 at kind of a more aggregate process level that USDA does
21 have the capacity to facilitate. And personally, I think
22 that actually was the thing that impressed me the most about
23 the report we got out yesterday is how many pieces of USDA
24 have made coexistence part of their program.

1 You know, we didn't, we heard from, I think we've
2 heard from, what, you know, about a dozen different, or half
3 a dozen at least, different USDA agencies. So to me, that's
4 power that USDA has without making a dedicated program. And
5 it seems to me that would be always on my mind as an
6 explicit recommendation that we did come up with.

7 So, I just put that forward as, on the two pieces
8 of the toolkit. And again, I'll come back to my earlier
9 point. As I think about what, who we want to have speak to
10 us in future meetings, who we want, is going to be in part
11 based on who are we trying to incentivize to actually make
12 this a priority for their own organization's action. And
13 how can we give them visibility in front of our Secretary of
14 Agriculture and at a more national stage that would
15 hopefully incentivize them to do something differently, and
16 to take this up as part of their mandate.

17 MR. REDDING: Thank you. Mary-Howell, and then
18 David, and then we'll take a break.

19 MS. MARTENS: As an organic corn grower, among
20 other crops, I guess I'm kind of a canary in the mine in
21 order to figure out whether or not this information is
22 getting out to us. Because if it was getting out to us, I
23 would know about it. And it isn't, because I don't know
24 about it. My certifier, organic certifier will say things

1 like you need to talk to your neighbor, or you need to have
2 a GM protection plan or something like that.

3 And then when, when asked, the certifier, when I
4 asked the certifier or the inspector, what exactly does that
5 mean, they really don't know. You know, you've got to have
6 something effective. Well, what is effective? Is 880 feet
7 effective? Can you give me data to show that that is going
8 to be sufficient to limit pollen? No.

9 The other thing about your websites, yes, I've
10 looked at those. And there is information out there. 80
11 percent, or probably 60 percent of the people I work with at
12 our feed mill are older Amish or Mennonite farmers. That is
13 where the growth area of a lot of organic farming is right
14 now. They are never going to see those websites. They
15 don't have Internet access. They don't have more than an
16 8th grade education. They don't have the scientific ability
17 to read a lot of the data that's out there. Data is not
18 helpful. It has to be digested into something that is a
19 practical, actionable response that a farmer can understand.

20 So what I, what I feel like is if this information
21 was getting out to farmers growing organic corn, I would
22 know about it. And it's not. And, and this is not just,
23 just the guidance but what to do. What is sufficient? What
24 data has shown that the buffers or the seed percent AP is

1 sufficient to produce a sufficient level of AP low level in
2 the harvested crop.

3 Maybe the data is known. Maybe the cleanout
4 procedures are known. But for farmers to be able to use
5 the, they have to be digested into a form that makes sense
6 to them and is actionable on their farms. And yes, I
7 understand that there are going to be differences in
8 different areas of the country. But a lot of the practical
9 considerations aren't that much different in different
10 areas. You know, they have to be adjusted, but they aren't
11 necessarily different. So, you know, again, I'll just say,
12 we have a short time frame. But, what I'd like at the end
13 of the time frame is to be able to stick my finger in the
14 air and actually feel something up there as an organic corn
15 grower. Because if we're not seeing it, it's not out there.

16 MR. REDDING: Thank you. David.

17 MR. JOHNSON: David Johnson. First, I think that
18 the Department has done an excellent job of shining light on
19 coexistence and the conversation that we have before us
20 today and the thread going on over the last several years,
21 since 2011. And as I think about what we're trying to do
22 next, I look back at what our committee name is. And it
23 says USDA Committee on Biotechnology and 21st Century
24 Agriculture. And our actual title of our last report was

1 called Enhancing Coexistence, you know, a report to the
2 Secretary.

3 And so as I think about coexistence, and I have
4 listened to everybody around the table, we focus a lot on
5 plants and crops. And I, and I think, you know, having
6 heard people talk about birds and animals and microbes, air
7 quality, viruses, soil, water, nutrients, I think anything
8 that we do from a policy perspective, our recommendation
9 should take into account agriculture.

10 You know, I grew up on a wheat farm in Western
11 Nebraska. Our coexistence strategies really related to soil
12 and water erosion. And so, you know, I think this
13 conversation is going really well. I like how we're, we're,
14 you know, we're debating these issues and discussing them.
15 But I, I don't really think we should get fixated on a
16 particular segment because coexistence is really a large
17 subject about so many things. I think we ought to keep,
18 keep that in mind as we, we debate what we want to do next
19 and develop these tools. And I'll leave it at that.

20 MR. REDDING: Thank you. Let's take a short
21 break. But again, when we come back, I would just ask you,
22 we'll start sort of looking at the, the work plan, and I
23 think there were some themes that sort of evolved here this
24 morning. I put it in sort of two, two buckets. One is
25 around sort of the content question, right. What is it that

1 we want to have, that you want to deliver, right, in terms
2 of, of practices and information, education? What is that
3 content piece so far? And then the, the process, I mean,
4 who actually does it? How do you want that to occur?

5 They're two, very distinct pieces. I think the,
6 the value that we add to the conversation, making sure that
7 the content piece is right. And then we can figure out, you
8 know, is that a USDA piece supported, is that a local, any
9 number of entities. And I don't subscribe to there is one,
10 single entity that's going to do this. I look at it much
11 like the conservation conversation where is a sheer
12 challenge and, and objective of many. Just to make sure
13 we've got a good, solid conservation practices is one of the
14 field. That's as much a Farm Bureau conversation as it is a
15 regulatory agency. Right? So this is not unlike that
16 conversation.

17 Time is short, both today, but also in the months
18 to come. So be thinking about how to organize the work.
19 But if we could have a really good, solid content piece,
20 then the rest of that becomes major conversation of how do
21 you push it out, and how do you incentivize that, and where
22 does it show up in conversations of education. But let's
23 get the content piece done right. Okay?

1 So let's take a short break, and we'll come back,
2 and we'll pick up with discussions here around work plan and
3 addressing our charge. Thank you.

4 Whereupon, at 10:42 a.m., a brief recess is
5 taken.)

6 MR. REDDING: Okay. So let's pick up the
7 conversation here. We're going to put this on, sort of
8 looking at that work plan and coming back to the charge.
9 But really focus on what it is now as we see. And again, I
10 put them in two buckets. Maybe there are other thoughts
11 around this. We've had some great conversation this
12 morning. I think it was really, really helpful, some ideas
13 and perspective, some way of organizing our work.

14 I guess I look at our charge and being able to
15 provide, you know, some broader themes and, you know, just
16 for illustration, probably being able to provide a good sort
17 or table of contents and not necessarily worrying about
18 whether I'm writing the content to that table. Right? But
19 I want to know the table of contents. I want to know what
20 it is that we are focused on specific to coexistence and how
21 to, you know, get the, you know, the neighbors to, in
22 agriculture to develop these joint coexistence plans.

23 So, so let me stop there. I guess I'm just trying
24 to look at our next hour. We're going to break about a
25 quarter of. The Secretary will be here at 1 o'clock. I

1 want to leave you an hour to, to grab lunch and come back.
2 We'll try to have you back here before 1 o'clock since the
3 Secretary we're expecting to be here at 1:00. So we'll make
4 sure we're taking full advantage of his time and be able to
5 start right away.

6 But we've got an hour now to really focus in on
7 the work plan. And I would ask, ask us to think about what
8 we heard this morning, you know, look at the charge,
9 admitting, Greg, that, that there's a USDA piece here and
10 whether from my perspective whether it's explicit. It is
11 implied here that I think the USDA will certainly be a
12 partner in that.

13 I think our charge from the Secretary was, given
14 whatever set of authority or lack thereof, recognizing that
15 this is a conversation that is probably best held and
16 managed locally anyhow. We really need to sort of look at
17 that as our first step, and then say where can the USDA sort
18 of echo that to make clear in policy guidance and
19 encouragement, they can certainly do that. So I don't take
20 them out of this conversation. I think it's still attached
21 to the Secretary for sure. It's his charge to us, right?
22 And it builds off of the recommendations we had made in
23 2012. That's our base. Now, the question is what can we do
24 relative to the joint coexistence plans to encourage that.

1 So, my recommendation is here in the next hour, as
2 we look at that work plan, let's talk about the content,
3 what has to be in that table of contents for, for the plan.
4 That would include, you know, the BMPs. That would include
5 some of the points that both Josette and Laura and Mary-
6 Howell and others have made this morning relative to, you
7 know, some of the, the key components.

8 And then we'll look at, as sort of a second phase,
9 the process. How do you put this out? Who puts it out?
10 How do we, how do we put this in the best form? Who would
11 be in the best position to sort of lead these conversations
12 with, with producers. I think Mary Howell's example earlier
13 with, with her son, the case study, is, is sort of how you
14 would like these conversations to evolve, with a more,
15 they're going to occur out of need, out of recognition by,
16 by farms or are going to be spawned by some folks who are
17 service providers. So, a good example, but again, I think
18 that's one among many of how we could see this work
19 progressing, okay?

20 So let's look at the, let's identify from what
21 we've heard this morning just sort of the outline, what is
22 it that we would want to see in this content around the
23 joint coexistence plans? What is important for someone to
24 consider, be considering as they develop joint plans? Make
25 sense? All right. So you're going to have some, some

1 planning. Now we're into a planning phase. Right? There's
2 something that's got to happen for folks to take action to
3 develop, you know, a set of practices, an approach. If
4 there's, if there's items out there already on websites or
5 of trade associations, what needs to go into this plan?

6 Paul.

7 MR. ANDERSON: So, just thinking about components
8 of a coexistence plan, and assuming more than one need to be
9 addressed here. And one of those I would see that's
10 critical is information sharing about who you want to talk
11 to to develop that plan, what you need to talk about, and
12 the mechanism for getting, easily getting that information.

13 Listening yesterday, I really liked what I heard
14 about the MP3, Pollinator Protection Plans, and their
15 mechanism for populating a database of who is doing what,
16 where. And I think that is, that's a good point of
17 departure for developing a plan for this type of activity as
18 well. And someone just mentioned to me recently, if you
19 just take pollinator out of it and plug in whatever you want
20 to plug in, but getting, getting a digital database that one
21 can access really quickly to know again who to talk to about
22 a lot of types of things.

23 MR. REDDING: Latresia.

24 MS. WILSON: Latresia Wilson. I pretty much agree
25 what Paul's saying. I think first we should start off with

1 at least the definition of what a coexistence is. And then
2 the next step would be who are the players, who is going to
3 be looking at this and who is going to be participating.
4 And then we get into I guess a, perhaps, maybe a website
5 link or somehow whereby they are directed to the different
6 players and who will they need to speak with. And then
7 further into what are the actions that you can take from
8 that point on.

9 MR. REDDING: Paul? Is that you're -- I'm sorry.
10 So what do you want to see in the plan? All right, I keep
11 thinking about if I'm going to have this conversation, you
12 know, with my neighbor, what is it that I need to be
13 thinking -- sorry, Jerry, did I miss you? I just want to be
14 thinking about what is it that is going to be important to
15 convey, right? What am I talking about and what am I, what
16 am I also doing myself if I am a producer. Right? But
17 also, if I'm going to engage in some, some conversation,
18 what is it would be, would be important to consider in that
19 conversation? Jerry.

20 MR. SLOCUM: Jerry Slocum. Mr. Chairman, I think
21 the very root of co-existence plans is the, is the
22 realization that, that drift occurs. And I think early,
23 early in our content piece we need to talk about the reality
24 of drift, whether it's pollen, whether it's herbicides,
25 whether it's weed seed, whatever it is. So that just the

1 basic recognition that, that at the farmer level, at the
2 fence level, at the crossroads level, at whatever you want
3 to call it level, that's things most in the farmer's
4 control. And I think we ought to address that early, early
5 in the piece. And there is lots and lots of data. Some
6 might have contradicted Mary-Howell about how far, what
7 realistic distances are. But you have to have that
8 conversation because that's going to be the part that most
9 affects those guys on either side of the fence. Thank you.

10 MR. REDDING: Yes, Alan.

11 MR. KEMPER: Mr. Chairman. I pretty much agree
12 with Jerry and others --

13 COURT REPORTER: Your mic is out.

14 MR. KEMPER: You're right. Oh, right, it's got to
15 go green.

16 COURT REPORTER: You just press it once. You
17 don't -- there it is.

18 MR. KEMPER: It will eventually go green. There
19 you go. I agree with Jerry, as far as that goes. I think
20 we need to recognize that there are certain natural drifts
21 that do occur, whether that is crop protectants or that's
22 pollen drift or what. But, but we do not need to get down
23 in the quagmire of determining what the right orders are. I
24 think there is a line of universities like Purdue, Ohio
25 State, Iowa, Illinois that have great publications on

1 setback requirements for various crops. And so maybe we can
2 do the guidance on the hyperlinks or how you get to those
3 various sites for various regions in the country. Thank
4 you, Mr. Chairman.

5 MR. REDDING: Angela, and then Laura.

6 MS. OLSEN: Thank you. Angela Olsen. It seems
7 we're, we're talking about what might go into a coexistence
8 plan. And certainly there are areas that we have identified
9 around the table that likely would go into that. I wonder,
10 though, given that we've heard that there is differences in
11 location, you know, what might work in New York might not,
12 you know, there may be completely different issues in
13 Illinois with regards to coexistence.

14 Whether we should focus on a process, because
15 really I think it's the local folks that are going to know,
16 if we think about agriculture broadly, and I think David was
17 right with that comment. If we think about agriculture
18 broadly, there's going to be different types of pressures
19 and different considerations from location to location, even
20 within the same state. So that's why I like the idea of
21 coming back to these local solutions.

22 It may be difficult for us. Maybe we can come up
23 with some high level points about what should go into a
24 coexistence plan. But I think a lot of materials have been
25 developed number one. And number two, I think it really has

1 to be customized to those local areas. And it's those local
2 stakeholders that come together that know what's important
3 for their particular location. I think it's difficult.

4 So again, I just put that out that I like the idea
5 of pulling the stakeholders together, having the
6 stakeholders locally come up with what needs, you know, what
7 are the issues that are important to them and what might go
8 into a plan. You know, sort of that next level of
9 definition.

10 MR. REDDING: I guess, you know, thinking in just,
11 from the USDA or the Committee's perspective, I think
12 getting some broad framework around sort of what are those
13 BMPs that are production practice neutral, they are
14 geographically neutral. They're just things that, I mean,
15 the drift is, is the drift. Right? There are, cleaning out
16 machines is cleaning out machines. There is, there is
17 purity questions and seed purity questions that are
18 universal. And so there is that set of just things that are
19 going to be transferrable whether you're in Pennsylvania or
20 you're in, in Illinois.

21 And then there will be some other things, all
22 right, when you get down to how do you really sort of manage
23 that. And so looking at this is sort of two pieces, right.
24 What are those top-line sort of BMP things that you would
25 want to have happen regardless of where, where the

1 agriculture is. And then those other things are going to
2 have to be tailored just because they're, they're going to
3 be driven by either the practice, the region, the
4 topography, whatever. Right? So, yeah, agreed.

5 So I think for us, looking at those top line
6 things would be important, with a footnote that this, this
7 clearly is going to have to be tailored to other regions or,
8 or areas that. But, but there will be, as pointed out
9 yesterday, there will be the, what was the term used, but
10 basically having a set of standards regardless, right, as
11 around the curriculum in education. You've got a set of, of
12 teaching points that are universal that we want to be able
13 to, to focus on. Laura.

14 MS. BATCHA: Thank you. When I think of the
15 elements of the plan, I think, I almost imagine a product
16 that is recommendation or whatever language we want to use
17 for our template. And within that, a piece of it is,
18 there's an assertion of the, you know, what we know about
19 the BMPs on a crop-specific basis, because I think there's a
20 general agreement we can get our hands around that as a set
21 of information, it can get cropped in. And then a template
22 that guides the participants in the development of the plan
23 through the questions that they should be asking as they're
24 working together.

1 And so the things that, that come to my mind are,
2 I think absolutely it's who is doing what where, and the
3 stakeholder identification. Are we talking about farmers,
4 landowners, who are you identifying that can participate in
5 your plan? Is it your NRCS agent, whatever it is. So, you
6 know, identifying the stakeholders and who is doing what
7 where would be a critical part of the template.

8 I also think we might be able to look at sort of
9 the HACCP model where it, it asks the questions of what are
10 your particular critical control points that you need to pay
11 attention to based on this identification of who is doing
12 what, where, and who are your stakeholders, and what are the
13 BMPs for those crops that may be concurrently planted, and
14 sort of use that as a, as a template that then could be
15 populated and adapted, et cetera.

16 MR. REDDING: Mary-Howell.

17 MS. MARTENS: I was going to mention the HACCP
18 plan too. Because a HACCP plan, and there are good people
19 out there that maybe we could get somebody to come to our
20 next meeting, probably there are people in the government or
21 there could be specialists out there that could be called in
22 to talk about how to write something like the HACCP plan. I
23 mean it's not, it's not rocket science that we have to
24 reinvent. But identifying control points and then
25 identifying what needs to be done at each control might, is,

1 is a really straightforward, linear way of looking at this
2 that can then be adapted to geographical area.

3 I do think that our, our danger will be to not be
4 too vague so that it, you know, moves forward beyond saying,
5 you know, you need to develop a plan but is not too specific
6 that we cannot adapt. One thing I'm going to throw out one
7 more time, and I think this is really important, be it in
8 Chapter One, or, you know, of your outline, is the
9 difference in risk between self-pollinating crops and cross-
10 pollinating crops. And then within cross-pollinating crops,
11 those that are wind pollinated versus insect pollinated.
12 Because all of which, those are different risks that need to
13 be treated differently.

14 MR. REDDING: Okay. Doug.

15 MR. GOEHRING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just
16 listening to some of the conversation, people are really
17 starting to come together with some framework here. So if,
18 I think we start off by asking the question, who is going to
19 direct or provide on those deliverables. And I know we've
20 spoken to that a couple of times. There's going to be
21 multiple entities that, that can do this. And second would
22 be the stakeholders. Third would be the stakeholder
23 meetings, who would all be involved in those type of
24 meetings.

1 Considerations, and I think you picked up on
2 something that was very good to, to outline here, and that's
3 the geographical neutral, what type of considerations and
4 best management practices, you know, overall that can work
5 everywhere conceptually. And as I spoke to earlier, then
6 you go through those considerations. But I don't know, what
7 are you mitigating? I think that comes down to something I
8 continue to hear around here. It's pollen. It's soil.
9 It's pathogens. It's seed. And on that, the seed part
10 could be anything that's on your property, or it could be
11 weed seeds. It could be something that's being found not to
12 be very advantageous to your specific situation.

13 So, at least I picked up on those four, pollen,
14 soil, pathogen, and seed as being items that we'd want to
15 mitigate. And it fits for every operation because everybody
16 could have these concerns, whether you're a seed producer,
17 an organic producer, an identity preserver. Thank you.

18 MR. REDDING: Okay, thanks. And just for clarity
19 I guess around the web piece, the pollen and the germplasm
20 piece I think we can have, introducing the soil and the
21 pathogen component to this, and just sort of opening that up
22 here just to make sure that I'm thinking about it correctly,
23 is that, how do you, like, how do you see that sort of
24 being, being molded into the, the content around the
25 coexistence plan?

1 MR. GOEHRING: I guess I'm looking at coexistence
2 in a broader term. If you want to capture everybody's
3 attention, think about all of those things that farmers are
4 considering and are concerned about. If you want that,
5 people come to the table to think about pollen, start
6 thinking about some of the challenges that they have to deal
7 with right now. Which may mean, you can talk about
8 pesticides for example. We're concerned about how
9 pesticides may affect our neighbor. That's a coexistence
10 issue.

11 But to that degree, pathogens. If you have a
12 producer that has aphids, so a pest or a pathogen, for
13 example, or they have scab. And if you don't have the right
14 type of seed or the types of plants that are necessarily
15 resistant who might be susceptible, then you're concerned
16 about what's happening next to you.

17 In other words, I'm trying to capture I guess
18 overall, everybody's interest in this. They might want to
19 come and learn, sit down and talk about these things on a
20 broader scale. But in all this, you also introduce the
21 concept about pollen. And it gets people thinking, first of
22 their situation, what's relevant to them. And then pretty
23 soon it expands their thinking to think about other things
24 that they should consider or could consider. And then you
25 start to mitigate some of those risks, some of those issues,

1 and some of those challenges out there that everybody is
2 doing. And that's why I went through to talk about whether
3 it's pollen, whether it's soil, whether it's seed, weed
4 seeds, pathogens, and pests. I think overall you captured a
5 farmer's attention. And you ultimately do get to the part
6 of the plan of what we're talking about when you talk about
7 coexistence. It's just another, broader scale, but it gets
8 their attention.

9 MR. REDDING: So you end up with sort of this good
10 neighbor policy, right? I think it is --

11 MR. GOEHRING: I like that, good neighbor policy.

12 MR. KEMPER: That's a good phrase.

13 MR. REDDING: Right. And it really is. There are
14 things that just, you need to be considerate of, you simply
15 would want your neighbor to also consider for your
16 operation, if there is a virus or a pathogen or a concern
17 that you know is going to have a negative economic impact.
18 You know that because you're experiencing it yourself
19 potentially. And you would want that to be in the, in the
20 conversation about, or with your neighbor. Right? Yeah,
21 okay. Okay, Mary-Howell.

22 MR. KEMPER: Mr. Chairman, before Mary, could you,
23 a halo effect is starting to take over. Could somebody --

24 MS. MARTENS: Okay.

25 MR. REDDING: You're seeing red?

1 MR. KEMPER: No, I'm seeing angels. Don't go red
2 on me. Sorry Jerry.

3 MS. MARTENS: Just to clarify a little bit,
4 because I'm not sure that everybody knows the definition of
5 HACCP. H-A-C-C-P is Hazard Appropriate Critical Control
6 Points. And I think that follows directly to what Doug is
7 saying. Hazard appropriate, you know, it can be, what is
8 hazard appropriate to me might not be exactly the same as to
9 somebody else. But we can identify the critical control
10 points, and then go from there to develop a policy or a
11 plan. Not a policy, a plan, that satisfies the needs for
12 everybody involved. But identifying the control points
13 where the issues may occur is important.

14 MR. REDDING: Yeah, Leon.

15 MR. CORZINE: Mary, we're thinking alike because I
16 needed to look that up to double-check. So I just Googled
17 it. And it's, you're almost right. It's Hazard Analysis --

18 MS. MARTENS: Okay.

19 MR. CORZINE: -- Critical Control Point. And I
20 have a lot of issues with using that term. We talk about
21 some terms that are appropriate for us and some that are
22 not. And, you know that, especially if you use that out in
23 the country side, a HACCP plan, are you kidding me? That
24 will go nowhere. So I think we've got to be careful with
25 that term. And I know farmers in my part of the world, and

1 me personally, that one is not going anywhere. So, be
2 conscious of that.

3 Because we aren't talking about things that are
4 hazards. We're talking about coexisting. It's kind of like
5 talking about if you look at the, the term contaminant, we
6 moved away from using that word for the definition reasons
7 as well. So I think it's important we be careful with our
8 terminology.

9 MR. REDDING: Fair point. I think there are some,
10 some, at least principles around, you know, the approach
11 that producers take with HACCP plans that could probably be,
12 be borrowed. Maybe it's a coexistence control plan. Right?
13 You're taking themes of, you want somebody in a HACCP to
14 look at their operation and say I'm vulnerable at this
15 point. Right? There's a, the vulnerability may be things
16 that come on your farm. Was the machine cleaned out?
17 Right? Is someone bringing a problem to me that I don't
18 have today. Am I taking a problem to somebody? That's the
19 critical control point.

20 Fair point, Leon. I think that you couple HACCP
21 as a tendency to be food-safety related. And that's not. I
22 think you're borrowing the principles of the HACCP thinking
23 and plan per farm. Right? But there are some things within
24 that that I think are, are really helpful and probably

1 appropriate here. But not in, in total. Right? You're
2 okay with that? I want to make sure you're --

3 MR. CORZINE: I am okay with what you said, but I,
4 we aren't talking about hazards, I guess is --

5 MS. MARTENS: Those of us who are invested,
6 though, we are talking about hazards.

7 MR. CORZINE: You're talking about trying to
8 coexist. It isn't, I mean you're talking, when you look at
9 hazard, and this is under the FDA. We're talking about
10 hazards to food. I don't think so. So, and I don't want to
11 spend a lot of time on that. But that's my caution, that --

12 MR. REDDING: Yeah.

13 MR. CORZINE: You're talking about HACCP, we're
14 going to have a meeting about HACCP that's not going
15 anywhere. You won't get anybody there in my part of the
16 world if you want to get something that's going to work.

17 MR. REDDING: Yeah. I think the key under the
18 HACCP is identification of critical control points and the
19 ability of, of the person who is responsible for the
20 operation being able to identify, you know, what those
21 critical control points are, and then some mitigating
22 strategies around that, that, you know, control point.
23 Right, so.

24 MR. CORZINE: Okay.

1 MR. REDDING: So putting that screen I think on
2 our work here to say we look at individual operations, I
3 mean, there are going to be things that are required and
4 priority concern for farms and others that are, that are
5 not. Right? So, and I think the other principle of HACCP
6 is it's individualized plan. There's a general framework I
7 think we're talking about here. There is individualized
8 pieces of those, of those plans for a farm and farm
9 operations.

10 And I keep saying farm. I think you could say as
11 well within the market channels, right, that there are
12 critical control points for Lynn and Clarkson Grain or
13 critical control points for technology providers. There are
14 critical control points that really ought to be, you know,
15 aware, all should be aware of. That's what a HACCP plan is
16 really designed to do is to elevate the awareness of where
17 am I vulnerable. And that is not something, while we are
18 talking about farmer to farmer here, I think in this, in
19 this food system, there are critical control points around
20 the issue of coexistence and how, how is that, one, going to
21 be identified, and two, addressed.

22 MR. CORZINE: Well maybe, you know, we're in the
23 acronyms, so I can say, you know, maybe like it's C-cubed-E,
24 like it's coexistence or CECCP. We've just got to get that
25 hazard thing out of there for --

1 MR. REDDING: Got it.

2 MR. CORZINE: -- our discussion.

3 MR. REDDING: Okay. We'll take that out and sort
4 of keep critical control points if that, that would help.
5 Right? Because that's what we're after. At the end of the
6 day, it's the identification of mitigation of critical
7 control on the, on the operations in furtherance of
8 coexistence. Okay?

9 MR. KEMPER: Mr. Chairman, I think you have to be
10 very careful with your keywords and phrases that you're
11 using. You just, well, to a lot of us, say, you know, first
12 of all, you need the whole buying chain involved in this
13 process. This is not farmer to farmer coexistence. This is
14 the whole buying chain of coexistence. This is all the
15 stakeholders coexistence. Because you can't worry about
16 spray drift or something else with farmers if they're not
17 spraying it their self and they're actually using a
18 different vendor to do that. So they need to be in those
19 type meetings.

20 I think that's very key. And if you start putting
21 a whole bunch of really, I'll use the word nasty acronyms
22 that are each, we'll say there are EPA to sort of help them
23 too, at the same meeting, it's not going to work. You're
24 not going to have the farmers get there anyway. You're

1 going to have to bake them a pie or something to get them to
2 come to the meeting. Why a lot of them --

3 MR. REDDING: I just want the critical people.

4 MR. KEMPER: And one good acronym -- seriously.
5 One good acronym, and they'll walk out on you.

6 MR. REDDING: Yeah. Well then the -- words are
7 important for sure. And I hear, I think what we're trying
8 to say is that in this discussion around coexistence, really
9 what brought --

10 MR. KEMPER: They'll go to the first bar and have
11 a beer, and you will be the subject of discussion.

12 MR. REDDING: Yeah. Well, I think the, you know,
13 if you go --

14 MR. KEMPER: They'll coexist, around --

15 MS. HUGHES: Very nice. Right? We got them.

16 MR. REDDING: All right. And we're making great
17 progress.

18 MR. KEMPER: That's my rant.

19 MR. REDDING: No, and I think the, maybe go back
20 to what sort of brought us to the table when the Secretary
21 sort of relaunched the AC21, it was really this concern
22 about what was happening out in landscape lands and farms,
23 it was interrupting, you know, business models and markets
24 and stuff. It was, it was these elements, right? And so we
25 took our approach. Our approach was in the recommendations

1 to identify these things that ought to be considered by the
2 USDA. And this charge here is saying, what do you do at the
3 farm level to address these issues around coexistence.

4 How do you get that really top-of-mind thinking?
5 Part of it is you have to sort of understand sort of where
6 you're vulnerable. Right? Both in terms of the individual
7 farmer thinking that, but also having your neighbor going
8 through the same sort of analysis if you will to say where
9 am I vulnerable. And then it allows for a conversation.
10 Because the vulnerability may be in the air around pollen.
11 Right? It may be in the machine. It may be at the seed
12 that I'm bringing on the farm. It may become sort of really
13 tangible things for us to sort of think about as you look at
14 the coexistence.

15 At the end of the day, if you don't change the
16 behavior and practice, we're not furthering coexistence.
17 Right? You're simply adopting that a market and the
18 dysfunction of a market is, is acceptable. And I don't know
19 whether any of us here would say that that's what we want or
20 desire. We really want to improve that marketplace. So how
21 do you do that? Right? It's really putting a new screen on
22 the thinking of stakeholders. Alan, I'll agree with you.
23 It's not, it is not singly a back-and-forth.

24 MR. KEMPER: I don't want any misunderstanding
25 here. This, Mr. Vilsack, Secretary Vilsack, is the first

1 secretary in a long time that I have known that actually,
2 truly cares about production, agriculture at the ground
3 level. I have worked for numerous secretaries over the
4 decades. And I've seen them fly coast to coast without
5 looking at agriculture. But actually, Secretary Vilsack has
6 his feet on the ground. And he really cares about all
7 farms. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

8 MR. REDDING: Yeah, thank you. Something, just
9 to, on that point, because I think the critical control
10 points, you can play with the words but, but again, this
11 critical control review that we want folks to be thinking
12 about needs to be somewhere in our, in our content. Right?
13 Okay. We'll drop the hazard, and we'll drop analysis, but
14 we'll keep, you know, critical control. Okay?

15 Okay. Isaura. And then Missy.

16 MS. ANDALUZ: Okay. I think I'm a little bit
17 confused here. Because under a HACCP plan, it's, you have
18 like a temperature, it uses like a temperature maximum and
19 minimum that you have to have. And you have to do a certain
20 process if something stays out for a period of time. So
21 what you're saying is an individual, it would be like an
22 individual HACCP plan, but the critical points would be,
23 would it be something that's set nationally, or would it be
24 something that's for each operation? I mean, you know,
25 because the HACCP, it's national. It's critical. I mean,

1 you have certain things that you follow. It's not just
2 everyone has an individual plan that when you make this
3 product it's one certain way. And if he makes, you know,
4 the product at a different level, it's not the way to do it.
5 There are some national standards.

6 MR. REDDING: Yeah, there are, there are some, at
7 least some common principles around HACCP, right, and
8 they're applied to, to different, any number of
9 manufacturing or production practices. But there are some
10 basic principles that are followed that most importantly is
11 having the individual who is, is responsible for the
12 production or the manufacturing line, whatever, is to look
13 at that sort of system and identify the, what the
14 vulnerabilities are in there. Okay? And then take
15 corrective action around that particular plant.

16 So a good example is, I live in the fruit industry
17 in Adams County. So the fruit growers are always looking
18 at, from production to packaging of that product, or looking
19 along the way to say where am I vulnerable in terms of the
20 pathogens, the, you know, where am I adding an unnecessary
21 exposure or hazard, right, and then how do I address them?
22 It may be on the water quality. It could be on the worker
23 protection standards, it could be the transportation. But
24 there are some, you know, the broad framework around HACCP,

1 but there's, every plan is individualized to look at their
2 own operation. Okay?

3 MS. ANDALUZ: But there is, it's inspected
4 sometimes too. I mean --

5 MR. REDDING: Pardon me?

6 MS. ANDALUZ: But some of them also inspect it.

7 MR. REDDING: Oh, yeah. There are, there are
8 retailers which inspect, you know, I want to see your HACCP
9 plan, right? Completely acceptable. But I think over the
10 years, what has happened is that producers have accepted
11 that as a good management practice. I really should have,
12 you know, critical control points identified, and then take
13 corrective action to address them. Right? So what we're
14 saying here is bring that principle forward in this type of
15 planning. Let's see. Pardon me? Yeah, I know Missy was
16 next, and then we'll do Doug and Keith and Josette. Okay?

17 MS. HUGHES: I think I have two thoughts. One, in
18 the dairy world, and as I look around the room, I'm thinking
19 that I'm not sure how much exposure there is to what's
20 happening. But a number of groups have developed what,
21 what's called a FARM, and it's F-A-R-M, audit. And
22 producers, both conventional and organic, are being asked to
23 participate in that so that the retailers, the big retailers
24 can confirm compliance with things like animal care
25 standards and some sustainability standards, and, you know,

1 looking to, for that. And so, I guess it's just perhaps a
2 model that we might want to look at. And I'm also thinking
3 about this kind of a whole value chain and where we might be
4 able to find some incentives in the marketplace for people
5 to participate in these kind of programs, farmers to
6 participate in these kind of programs. And maybe we can
7 draw some incentives out of the marketplace as far as that
8 goes.

9 The second thought I have, again, is dairy. And
10 we are not using it, but I know of two other companies that
11 are using something that's called Caring Dairy. And what it
12 is, is an opportunity for the farmer to go through an online
13 tool that looks at what the farmer is going on the farm and
14 offers opportunity for the farmer to become more
15 sustainable, things that the farmer might want to consider
16 doing. And it basically takes the farmer through a whole
17 decision tree, and participating in, in Caring Dairy is
18 incentivized by these companies. Their, their, their dairy
19 producers are incentivized to participate in this. If you
20 don't participate in it, you're not dinged. But if you do,
21 you get some kind of a bump.

22 And I just, as we're talking about the work, or
23 the plan that we might want people to engage in, it seems to
24 me that it almost needs to be a facilitated decision tree
25 kind of a conversation. Like, okay, so you have, you know,

1 you're a farmer. You have six neighbors. How do you, you
2 know, approach them? And, you know, this one is doing this,
3 and this one is doing this. You make these decisions based
4 on that, you make these agreements.

5 And I think there's a way to make it a
6 sophisticated but yet simple conversation. And how might
7 something like an online tool or something like that help
8 that. And also maybe, you know, bring a degree of
9 objectiveness to the conversation or neutrality to the
10 conversation that we're all I think feeling is key to this,
11 to this whole, the success of this. Thank you.

12 MR. REDDING: Again, sort of on our list of
13 models, all right, we want to, we could look at a couple of
14 those. So just in terms of, you know, think ahead in terms
15 of task of the committee once we leave here, looking and
16 exploring different models. So we've heard several in this
17 conversation that we could certainly take a look at. Okay.
18 Doug.

19 MR. GOEHRING: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I
20 would, I would suggest that it sounds pretty complicated.
21 Or we're making this way too complicated when we talk about
22 all the things that we're discussing. I think it's very
23 easy, and I think everybody is right in what they're trying
24 to identify and say, and maybe making it more relevant to
25 themselves. But it is about mitigating strategies or

1 principles that we want to put in place to analyze those
2 critical control points. But quite frankly, it all comes
3 down to what we ask the food processing industry, for
4 example. It's best management practices. What are we going
5 to put in place. So I think conceptually we, we already
6 have it. We're looking at best management practices and
7 utilizing tools that are out there certainly helps us in
8 some areas.

9 And I think of the same thing Melissa had spoke
10 about. Keystone has the Fieldprint Calculator. And it's
11 one that's used for outcome based metrics on sustainability.
12 There are different tools that we could use, but quite
13 frankly, when we get right down to ground zero, we have to
14 look at those farmers, their operations, the resources at
15 their disposal, and things they need to consider. So it's,
16 I don't want to dismiss a lot of those models out there.
17 They help us learn more about ourselves or operations. That
18 it really is going to come down to where am I, what are my
19 soil, what are my challenges and conditions, and working
20 with all my neighbors to figure out what is it that we need
21 to be mindful of?

22 And there's a lot of questions in that in itself.
23 So it's good conversation, and I understand why we're going
24 there. I just don't want to see us make it too complicated
25 because ultimately we all have to come back around to this

1 whole issue about best management practices and analyzing
2 that.

3 MR. REDDING: Fair point. Thank you. Keith. And
4 then Josette.

5 MR. KISLING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Keith
6 Kisling. One thing we haven't really talked about yet is
7 private property rights. And when you, if you have a
8 meeting, and we're asking our farmers to all get together
9 and come up with a plan, that they can all get along with,
10 that's, that's, that's well and good. But if you want
11 people to, if you want farmers to walk out of the meeting,
12 you try to dictate to them their private property rights.
13 So, we have not mentioned that yet. I'm just, just telling
14 you as we come to a model that we all can agree on, we want
15 to be real cautious about that part of it, the property
16 rights.

17 MR. REDDING: That's a good point. Josette.

18 MS. LEWIS: I want to make two specific
19 suggestions on perhaps the creation of working groups, two
20 working groups, and also two sort of agenda of people, types
21 of organizations and issues we'd like to hear from in our
22 future meetings. One would be, to kind of pick up on the
23 discussion we have been I'd say generally agreeing, the sort
24 of practical tools for producers, and that the Mary-Howell
25 examples of her son's case study, if he had this manual in

1 hand. So it seems to me that a group could dig into that a
2 little bit more to kind of come up with an outline and maybe
3 the key principles or elements.

4 I don't know what this thing is doing. It goes
5 red and it goes green. It's a Christmas blinking light.

6 MR. REDDING: Technology. Now it's going.

7 MS. LEWIS: Well, okay. We'll keep trying. So,
8 it seems to me having a group dig into a little bit, kind of
9 coming up with what are the key things that need to be
10 addressed there to equip producers to meet coexistence,
11 thinking these are the things they can largely take action
12 on themselves, even if that actually means reaching out to
13 other people. Okay? So that's one program of work, and
14 maybe it's a working group and/or some talks that we might
15 hear in the future.

16 And I specifically in that area like to look more
17 deeply at this example from the University of Minnesota,
18 which is the Organic Risk Management Handbook. And that
19 looks at, it's a whole lot of different types of risk, a lot
20 of different types of risk for organic producers, including
21 adventitious presence or unintended presence of GMO. So
22 maybe that's where we would focus, obviously more of our
23 attention. But it's, to me it's an interesting model that
24 seems to address a number of the different types of issues
25 here today. So, that's just one preview.

1 The second is a working group and/or kind of an
2 issue to dig into in terms of hearing some speakers, is on
3 information sharing to facilitate coexistence management
4 plan. I think this is actually, there are some models out
5 there. We heard about the MP3 plans that some states have
6 that have facilitated information sharing. Geez, I can
7 somehow remember several years ago when we hear from the
8 American Seed Trade Association about pinning maps in the
9 seed industry as a way to facilitate information sharing.

10 But I think there's a little bit of interesting
11 challenges in this world because you're dealing with
12 potentially market-sensitive information about who is
13 growing what. So I think there is actually some depth of
14 work that needs to be thought through on that. So that may
15 be another working group and/or some speakers we could hear
16 from on that topic. So it's two kind of specific
17 suggestions I make.

18

19 MR. REDDING: Thank you. Ron?

20 MR. CARLETON: Ron Carleton. I just wanted to go
21 back briefly to, and not to beat a dead horse, but this
22 concept of a control plan. And, you know, how we term it,
23 what it looks like, you know, whether it's a HACCP or a,
24 it's CCP3 or whatever. One of the things that, that jumped
25 out at me as I was listening to it is that how we present

1 this, how it's done, I mean, I'm thinking about the producer
2 who hears that, you know, am I going to have to develop a
3 plan? If so, what's that going to cost me in time or money
4 or both? Who's going to be looking at this, and what are
5 the consequences if I either don't develop a good plan or I
6 don't follow it.

7 So, I mean, we also have to be careful about
8 making it look like we're imposing another obligation of
9 some sort on, on our producers because I think that's
10 another thing that gets them to walk away pretty quickly as
11 well. You know, it's one thing about promoting
12 conversations and promoting coexistence and promoting, you
13 know, whatever sort of collaborations or partnerships that
14 we might want to be promoting. But I just, bells went off
15 when I got to thinking about this being seen as the
16 imposition of an obligation to develop a plan that somebody
17 is going to pass on. So.

18 MR. REDDING: That's a good point. So there's,
19 there's a fine line in there, right? Because we want this
20 to be taken seriously. I mean, this is not just for one
21 more thing to either write or worry about. It really is
22 trying to change behavior at the farm and marketplace to
23 avoid a problem later. Right? Either economic personally
24 or economic in the marketplace. So there's that fine line.

1 But I agree with you. You don't want to, you
2 know, you've got to be careful on how you position these
3 things and attach them to existing obligations in the, in
4 agriculture somehow. But at the same time, we want them to
5 say I get it. Right? And okay, I get it. I mean, I need
6 to be thinking differently about my practice, my behaviors.
7 So how do you do that? All right? How formal does that
8 need to be? Okay, good point. Lynn.

9 MR. CLARKSON: Lynn Clarkson. Following up on
10 Josette's suggestion. In my mind, this is a two-channel
11 approach, one government, one private. Under the
12 government, I look at the inputs coming from Ag Marketing
13 Service because we're talking about markets, making the
14 distinction. NRCS, because they've got a great platform and
15 good access, and extension. And in the private sector, the
16 ones I think we would be dealing with from the parochial
17 perspective of my world, it would be the Grain and Feed
18 Associations, which has a national presence right here.

19 Secondly, we have a member of this committee who
20 is with the Farm Bureau. And over the roughly 30 years
21 we've been involved, or my company has been involved with
22 identity preserved in a, in a serious level, we have seen
23 the trade associations of the farmers move away from looking
24 askance at IP to more and more embracing it.

1 The Indiana Farm Bureau recently put on a program
2 about conversion to organic or participation. We've seen
3 the Illinois Farm Bureau do that. We've seen the Iowa Farm
4 Bureau make that. And the Farm Bureau or the Grains, or
5 some of the other farm organizations have a footprint in
6 almost every county in the country. And they put together
7 meetings of neighbors. And so you can do neighbors at one
8 level, your immediate neighbor, neighbors at two levels, the
9 next field away, and three levels, and talk about good
10 neighbors make good markets, good markets make good
11 neighbors.

12 And at those, what we see, the invitations going
13 out to, to seed companies. What are you doing to help me be
14 a good supplier to this market? What's the degree of purity
15 that you're offering for next year in terms of genetically
16 engineered product in the bag or not in the bag? The
17 technology companies are sometimes invited. Technology
18 companies may blend with seed companies in talking about
19 using some of the methods of blocking pollen transfer.
20 Others would be talking about sensors that would allow you
21 to cure a problem after you got it, which you would do by
22 looking for markers in things.

23 So, a good working relationship with these farmer
24 trade associations would have sort of neighborly meetings.
25 And those would be happening sometime probably in August of

1 2016 in preparation for the 2017 crop. Because when you get
2 into identity preservation and the market distinction, you
3 think ahead of time. You can't come from behind and pull it
4 out of the commodity. And you would invite market
5 representatives because what you're talking about is local
6 market distinctions.

7 The organic market is not so big that any farmer
8 anywhere in the country would want to participate in that.
9 But there are other markets that are important here for good
10 behavior that are localized or regionalized. For years, the
11 main non-GMO market was located along the Illinois,
12 Mississippi, and Ohio Rivers because the demand for that
13 market came from Asia. Only recently have you seen an
14 increase in domestic demand for non-GMOs, and that expanded
15 the market into Nebraska and, and Colorado and all across
16 the mid-West. So if you're trying to set up good management
17 practice, a good management practice for what? If nobody in
18 the discussion group has any interest at all in a certain
19 market, then that changes your good management practices.
20 So that seems to be a starting place.

21 So, I would like to hear from the government
22 agency that I just mentioned between now and the end of our
23 sessions. And I'd also welcome inviting some of these
24 representatives, these private organizations to talk to us.

1 MR. REDDING: That's good. Mary-Howell and then
2 Josette.

3 MS. LEWIS: Oh, no. I'm fine.

4 MR. REDDING: No? Okay. Mary-Howell.

5 MS. MARTENS: This is to follow up a little bit on
6 what Ron said. As a farmer, on our bookshelf we have our
7 conservation plan notebook. We have our manure management
8 plan notebook. We have our organic system plan notebook.
9 We are, we are kind of used doing this kind of thing. And
10 also we go into FSA at least once a year to, to report our
11 crops. Our banker wants to know everything that we've done.
12 Farmers kind of do this as far as these system plans that
13 lay out for other, other groups or agencies or people to
14 know what we're doing. It's invasive, sure. But it's
15 already being done. And it's something that qualifies us
16 for various perks. Whether it's organic certification or
17 farm programs or the continuance of our line of credit, you
18 know, it kind of has to get done.

19 As far as coexistence plans that are somehow
20 required, and that seems to be coming up as, as a threat to
21 farmers, I don't think any of us are talking about that. I
22 think what we're talking about is putting together a, a
23 guide, a guidance document that allows farmers to make,
24 first, first and foremost, good decisions on their own farms
25 as far as where their, where their vulnerabilities are,

1 where their control points are, and, and then figure out,
2 you know, what we can do on our own farm to minimize the
3 risks to producing a product that will meet the markets that
4 we want to meet.

5 That is the HACCP plan, or CCCCCP, or whatever we
6 want to call it. I think we've got to be careful about
7 those acronyms too. But to just come up with a plan on our
8 own farm that identifies where our, our control points are,
9 and then know what to do, know what the tools are in the
10 toolbox that can minimize our risks at each certain control
11 point.

12 At some point, this will include neighbors. But
13 first and foremost, it doesn't. First and foremost it
14 includes knowledge on our own farms what we have to do.
15 And, and so as much as anything, I see a guidance document
16 helping the farmers doing IP to better understand where
17 their, their vulnerabilities are, and what the tools are out
18 there for them to control those vulnerabilities. Does it
19 mean buying their seed from a different company? Does it
20 mean planting something different on this particular field
21 where the perimeter is vulnerable? Does it mean that we
22 need to plant some hybrid willow along this particular
23 hedgerow that is a fast-growing species that's going to
24 create more of a pollen filter?

1 But, but really, the tools we're talking about are
2 not just coexistence as far as a relationship between to
3 farmers, but just getting information out to the farmers who
4 want to do IP, what are the tools in the toolbox. These,
5 yes they are on the Internet. But they're not in a real
6 farmer-friendly form a lot of them that just, just hands,
7 both the farmer and also there are professions like the NRCS
8 staff or, or the Extension staff, something that is, is
9 easily understood and easily incorporated into a farming
10 system.

11 If indeed then we do need to go and talk to our
12 neighbors, we have something to talk about. You know, one
13 of the problems I've had with the advice we've gotten from
14 organic certifiers is you need to talk to your neighbors.
15 Well, what do you talk about? You know, do we, we go, want
16 to go sit down with Dave Ingraham and tell him well you
17 can't grow this on this farm? Well, that's not going to go
18 anywhere.

19 What we need to do is to say, be able to say to
20 Dave, if you and us can figure out how to better put in a
21 buffer, and the buffer needs to be approximately this
22 distance, and, you know, maybe, maybe there are reasons,
23 other reasons or other programs that we can tap in that will
24 help us pay for this buffer, I think that discussion would
25 go somewhere. So, identifying what the topics of

1 conversation and the tools that we can use in those
2 conversation would be really helpful to make those
3 relationships work. But, you know, first and foremost, it
4 isn't about necessarily changing our neighbors behavior. It
5 might be about changing our behavior.

6 MR. REDDING: Great. Yeah. Doug.

7 MR. GOEHRING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mary, I
8 just wanted to share a little bit when we talk about farmers
9 are doing. And I know that organic farmers and, and our
10 identity preserved producers and our seed producers are
11 doing a lot of what you're talking about with documenting.
12 But our other farmers are not. And that would be, boy, that
13 would be a real challenge to try and get them to do that
14 voluntarily. I will cite some examples, though, where they,
15 they do get involved in documentation. The conservation
16 security program or EQIP, in fact, I was one of the first in
17 the first two years the very first conservation security
18 programs that came out, I actually signed up for one because
19 it sounded pretty alluring.

20 And then I found out what the paperwork was.
21 Well, they had already initiated the payment, which kind of
22 locked me in because it wasn't a matter of not doing it and
23 getting paid. It was not doing it and then having to give
24 them back their money. That was quite, quite an incentive
25 itself. And I would suggest if you're ever going to develop

1 and design a program, that's probably the best way to do it,
2 because you lock people into doing it.

3 MS. MARTENS: Yes.

4 MR. GOEHRING: But to Ron's point before,
5 producers don't want more thing to do. But certainly
6 outlining some things so that they think about what they
7 could do to mitigate risk would, would take us down a path
8 along ways of doing a lot of good in many respects. And I,
9 and I think you hit on that point beautifully when you
10 talked about planting a hybrid willow that grows quickly and
11 can act as a buffer. That, again, is a local issue, and it
12 works so well because I have counties in my state where they
13 can do that, and other counties, they can't even support the
14 growth of an old elm tree because even though it's as
15 drought tolerant as it is, it's challenge is just getting
16 established and staying alive, let alone a willow tree. But
17 there are so many things that we can look at. And at the
18 local level, you can consider so many different options,
19 again, to put barriers and buffers up. Thank you.

20 MR. REDDING: Alan.

21 MR. KEMPER: I just, Mr. Chairman, I'd just like
22 to reinforce what Doug said. I mean, a lot of farmers are
23 doing a lot of plans where, and most of it is driven around
24 economics. You know, that's caused survival mode, whether
25 that's financial or, or others, with FSA or with if you have

1 highly erodible land, you need your conservation plan for
2 it.

3 Mr. Chairman, I also have, you mentioned
4 somewhere, and I'll misquote this. Changing the mindset of
5 the farmers. I almost resent that because you're not
6 changing the mindset of most farmers. You're changing the
7 mindset of a few bad farmers that are not maybe following
8 best management practices. So don't, let's not lump all of
9 American agriculture into the bad guys or trying to change
10 their mindset.

11 Let's maybe say we're going to encourage everybody
12 to strive to do better, and maybe the bad apples in
13 agriculture will do a lot better to do that. But there are
14 so many people out there doing the right thing for the right
15 reasons. I mean, they are the American dream of a lot of
16 people. If you look at most of society, and we all have a
17 contract with society in agriculture to provide them good
18 food and give them choices. But if you look at most society
19 and you ask them about American agriculture, as we do out in
20 the Midwest, they think we're pretty wholesome people. So
21 let's just create the, the tools necessary to get the bad
22 apples up to the best management practices that a lot of us
23 are already practicing. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

24 MR. REDDING: Yes, Alan, but just for the record,
25 I mean it wasn't, it wasn't good, bad, evil. I mean, I'm

1 just trying to say this, as we look at our task is that I
2 think even for all of us on the committee is sort of looking
3 at, looking at the, the issues of ag and how do we address
4 those. And there are those clearly who on this, on this
5 spectrum of adoption of good management practices you see
6 around water quality, you see around production, I think
7 this is one of those spectrums of, of agriculture where you
8 have folks doing exceptional work today or well-informed,
9 some generally aware. And others, you know, may not be.

10 I mean, a very simple question of biology and
11 science is do you know how far that pollen will drift on the
12 crop that you're planting. A very good question for
13 everybody in agriculture who is growing crops as one
14 example. And that's not to point out that that person who
15 doesn't know is bad necessarily. But it's really, trying to
16 really help ag think what is it that I need to do. Right?
17 Do I know what I'm doing? How do I talk about that?

18 A piece we haven't really engaged on here is the
19 narrative that goes with this, this coexistence guidance
20 document is as important as the content. Right? Like a lot
21 of things. Right? How do I present this? I mean, why am I
22 presenting this? Why do I have an interest in this? And,
23 you know, there's not a lot of context on most farms for,
24 for this conversation. So part of, part of this I think

1 we've got to think about what is it that we're saying? Why
2 am I even in this conversation around coexistence?

3 And that brings us back to who those stakeholders
4 are and where that level of responsibility, that
5 relationship is really going to be critical, if that's an
6 Extension, if that's a trade association, if that's my, you
7 know, service line individual somewhere will be really
8 important as we go, go forward here. Okay? But I
9 appreciate your, your point.

10 So we're at 11:45. So, what I, what I heard,
11 again, a great conversation, sort of three pieces. One, the
12 joint coexistence guidance document and some key points
13 around what, what has to be in that guidance document, and
14 how we set that up is for, for further conversation.
15 Secondly, there are a number of models that need to be
16 explored, and we should look at what those models are and
17 wherever they exist. We've identified some, but I'm sure
18 that there will be others. And a third is around sort of
19 future work, and particular agenda items of the committee.
20 And, and Josette mentioned one and others have here as well.
21 So at least in terms of the three points that --

22 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Could you explain the third
23 one?

24 MR. REDDING: Well, the third I think was, was,
25 Josette, you were simply looking at, and Lynn, another, I

1 think looking at, I think your point was around Minnesota,
2 right?

3 MS. LEWIS: As one example on the --

4 MR. REDDING: As one example --

5 MS. LEWIS: -- grower toolkit.

6 MR. REDDING: Yeah, could be toolkit related.

7 Lynn, you mentioned several agencies and private sector as
8 areas that would inform the guidance document. Right?
9 That's our focus is really getting the content and the model
10 piece. Does that work? Okay. Other sort of big pieces
11 that I've missed in those three? Does everything we've
12 talked about sort of in the last hour and even this morning
13 sort of fit into those three categories? So guidance
14 document, content, model, models for delivery, models for
15 approach, and looking at future considerations for agenda
16 items, or at least folks that we'd want to hear from. Greg.

17 MR. JAFFE: And I do think, Lynn and I both talked
18 about the idea of some sort of federal policy statement or
19 some federal, some federal overarching viewpoint on this to
20 help encourage people at the state and local level to do
21 things. Right, Lynn?

22 MR. CLARKSON: Yeah.

23 MR. JAFFE: That would be --

1 MR. REDDING: Right. So having that sort of
2 presence as we, as we develop what we're doing is the
3 federal, the USDA piece of that?

4 MR. CLARKSON: Yeah.

5 MR. REDDING: All right. Okay. Okay. Any, any
6 clarity on the last hour? I always feel like I'm in this
7 position to try to, to process, you know, what I, what I've
8 heard. And I don't want to pretend that we've got it all
9 right. But I'm trying to at least get the categories to say
10 we'll come back to the table, when we start talking about
11 work groups or assignments or where to from here that we can
12 have a little better idea of what, of what we're doing and
13 what we've heard. Michael. And then Jerry.

14 MR. SCHECHTMAN: Yeah. I think just the one other
15 thing that I heard sort of interspersed with some other
16 things is maybe there's need for some specific discussion of
17 just, just, just looking very deliberately at how we try to
18 bring everyone to the table. I think that was mentioned by
19 a number of people I know. Doug was talking about in sort
20 of broadening the discussion. And so I think I heard that
21 from a couple of people, but I wonder if that's something
22 that needs on the agenda is how specific, explicitly looking
23 at how we entice everyone to join in the conversations.

24 MR. REDDING: Jerry.

1 MR. SLOCUM: Jerry Slocum. Mr. Chairman, I think
2 that part of the preamble to our work needs to be a USDA
3 piece to talk about where we see agriculture going in the
4 21st Century, more and more specialty crops offered, more
5 and more opportunities for niche productions and why a more
6 formal coexistence structure or strategy may be required. I
7 think, you know, I think coexistence is alive and well in
8 American agriculture. And it's worked at by the people that
9 practice it. And, and I don't think we want to do anything
10 to diminish that or to suggest that it doesn't exist. But
11 the opportunities that, that agriculture holds in the future
12 may require more formal plans.

13 And then there's this reality, Ron, that when we
14 write a coexistence plan with our neighbor, we are entering
15 into a contract of sorts. Whether we sign anything
16 officially, or whether we just shake hands, but we are, we
17 are entering into a contract of sorts. We talk about this
18 contract we have with society. Well, when you have a
19 coexistence plan with your neighbor, when you agree to
20 practice certain practices, and you agree not to practice
21 certain practices, you have entered into an unwritten
22 contract that if you practice long enough becomes a written
23 contract and courts will recognize it as such.

24 So I think, I think, I think as we have this
25 discussion with this universe of growers, some of us that

1 are not familiar, some of us that are more familiar than
2 others, we, we need to write a pretty good narrative. We
3 really do. And we need to pretend that we are writing to an
4 audience that, that knows very little about it because
5 there's a huge array of people out there that know very
6 little about it. Thank you.

7 Mr. REDDING: That's a good point. Excellent
8 point. So on that note, let's break. Let's grab lunch.
9 Back here, you know, quarter of, 10 of 1:00. The Secretary
10 will be here at 1 o'clock, and, and then again, don't lose
11 the conversation. We're going to pick it up for this
12 afternoon and goal will be to, to really define sort of the
13 work plan and future actions of the committee to include
14 meetings. Okay? Thank you.

15 Whereupon, at 11:51 a.m., a brief recess is
16 taken.)

17 MR. REDDING: Good afternoon, everybody, and a
18 special welcome to Secretary Vilsack. We, first of all,
19 appreciate very much your service to agriculture and public
20 service. You've done a great job for ag, and continue to
21 admire the good work that you've done.

22 We want to say thanks as well to reconvening the
23 AC21. I've said it before, but coming back after several
24 years of, you know, work being done by the USDA on
25 recommendations, hearing those recommendations and the

1 report out yesterday, really impressive work. But also
2 knowing that this, this group here that you appointed really
3 is a great group of people, good thinkers, great, very
4 diverse. And the staff as well have done a great job.

5 We have spent the last day, you know, talking
6 about the recommendations but, but also --

7 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Here. You want to use this
8 one?

9 MR. REDDING: Also picking up the charge that has
10 been put forth here about the joint coexistence plans. A
11 lot of good conversations, spirited conversation as you
12 would expect. But all in the furtherance of coexistence,
13 which we know personally is a priority of you, and that has
14 shown in your commitment both to the reappointment of these
15 folks and relaunching, but also just personally staying
16 engaged. And that engagement certainly has been noticed and
17 valued. So welcome. Thank you.

18 MR. VILSACK: Well I want to, I want to -- do I
19 have to hold this?

20 MS. LEWIS: You can leave it on the table.

21 MR. VILSACK: Okay. I want to thank the Secretary
22 for those kind remarks and certainly want to acknowledge his
23 personal commitment to this process. I think all of you
24 have done incredible work. But obviously it requires that
25 someone who is chairing this effort, and I want to thank

1 Secretary Redding for his tireless work in connection with
2 this, this committee. And I'd like to thank Michael and the
3 team at USDA for, thank you for the work that they have done
4 collectively through this process. I think they have been
5 invaluable and certainly have been working hard to try to
6 make sure that folks got the information that they needed to
7 feel satisfied about the process.

8 And last but absolutely not least, I want to thank
9 all of you. I know this is not easy work. But I will tell
10 you, I think it's some of the most important work that is
11 currently being done in terms of looking at the future of
12 agriculture and the diversity within agriculture, and
13 figuring out creative ways to respect that diversity and to
14 allow it to continue to move forward.

15 I have some prepared remarks, and I want to
16 deliver them. And then I have a personal note at the end
17 that I'd like to share, and then I'd be happy to try to
18 respond to questions in the time that, that's left.

19 You know, I'm really very grateful personally for
20 your continued engagement in this issue of coexistence,
21 which I honestly do believe is a topic that is critical to
22 the future of agriculture, and agriculture's responsibility
23 for feeding the citizens of this country, and frankly people
24 around the world. Despite the differences in production
25 methods, at the core, the reason I think all of you are here

1 is because you care as well deeply about the future of
2 farming and agriculture in this country.

3 You all are passionate, and you are all passionate
4 about the shared responsibility that you've assumed to work
5 to try to provide the American consumer and billions more
6 around the world with safe, affordable, accessible food. To
7 allow agriculture to innovate in the face of a changing
8 climate. To care for the land and the water and air that
9 serves all of us, and to build up and reinvigorate our
10 important rural communities. And frankly, this requires a
11 necessary drive toward innovation and exploration and a need
12 to respond to evolving consumer needs and tastes in the
13 shadow of increasingly taxed and limited resources.

14 And last but certainly not least, to ensure that
15 we indeed have a strong next generation, a diverse group and
16 generation of farmers and ranchers. And we have great
17 diversity in American agriculture in terms of its size, in
18 terms of its products, in terms of production methods and
19 technology. And that's one cornerstone of the rural and
20 agricultural economy in this country. Embracing diversity
21 has helped, in my view, to make American agriculture
22 resilient. And I think that same attitude hopefully will
23 ensure that American agriculture remains resilient and
24 preserves in the future.

1 The United States I think continues to evolve when
2 it comes to agriculture and when it comes to our attitudes
3 about food. And we know that agriculture is constantly and
4 consistently trying to meet consumer demands. And we really
5 have to make space for all forms and all types of
6 agriculture, so long as the science tells us they are safe,
7 in order to maximize our ability feed a growing world
8 population in the face of constrained resources.

9 It's been nearly seven years that I have been
10 Secretary of Agriculture. And in that time, I have seen a
11 vigorous expansion of our agricultural sector, in terms of
12 value, productivity, and a level of innovation. As much as
13 an enterprise is dependent on the forces of nature can be
14 described as robust, I would say that American agriculture
15 continues to be robust and resilient.

16 And as a result, American consumers are blessed.
17 You know, they trust the products that they find at the
18 grocery store shelves. They trust them to be wholesome,
19 safe, and of the highest quality. And that in part is the
20 result of the need for and embracing of innovation in the
21 agricultural sector.

22 The topic of coexistence and in fact the role of
23 technology in the future of agricultural production and
24 consumption has never in my view been more critical to
25 achieving the goals of feeding Americans and world

1 population. And candidly, nor has it been ever as
2 controversial as it is today. Since you all last met, there
3 have been some significant advances in breeding and
4 production technologies, and many new products have come to
5 market that weren't even available a few years ago. By this
6 time, 13 months from now when this administration leaves
7 office, I have no doubt there will be additional new
8 innovations that will present opportunities and challenges.

9 As an industry, agriculture is in a different
10 place than when you last met. And will be in a different
11 place five years from now, 10 years from now, 15 years from
12 now. But one thing remains the same, and that is there is a
13 public perception challenge surrounding new agricultural
14 technologies. That challenge is not just here in the United
15 States but frankly around the world.

16 In just the past month, I have traveled to China,
17 Japan, Belgium, France, and Cuba. I've been in discussions
18 on trade, on climate change, and on sustainable development.
19 And it didn't matter where I was or who I was meeting with,
20 one topic was on everyone's mind, and that is what is indeed
21 the appropriate role of innovation in all forms of
22 agriculture. The issues that we discussed internationally
23 at the micro level -- or, excuse me, at the macro level, all
24 intersect with the work that you've done here and will
25 continue to intersect with the work that you're doing.

1 Your role for USDA is to help us provide a path
2 forward that's going to help all farmers and consumers here
3 and around the world balance the need to use technology and
4 innovation to meet production demands while also meeting
5 consumer needs to know more about their food, where it was
6 grown, the impact of its production on land, and how it
7 might impact their health and how it was cultivated.

8 Back in 2012, you gave a report that offered USDA
9 a host of recommendations to address some of these
10 challenges. I am pleased to say that we've responded to
11 many of the recommendations. And I think you've heard about
12 many of those actions at a session yesterday. I want you to
13 know that I am committed personally to continue working on
14 implementing the recommendations in order to bolster
15 coexistence.

16 You gave us a wide range set of challenges, and we
17 have taken action. In the terms of research in the next few
18 months, we will publish a report that broadly examines
19 economic issues relating to coexistence. Now this report
20 will build off of the information we've gathered recently in
21 the 2014 organic survey. We need to find a way to lessen
22 the frequency of situations that potentially compromise
23 organic production. And hopefully this report will help
24 expand the knowledge base as well as allow us to work
25 towards a solution.

1 We're going to continue to prioritize research
2 that looks at ways in which we can mitigate or inhibit gene
3 flow. And perhaps the most important thing we have achieved
4 in terms of research is working with the American Seed Trade
5 Association as they further efforts to make a wide variety
6 of seed available to meet producers' needs. We've also
7 taken a look at our own seed banks to ensure that we
8 maintain a wide variety of seed. We've also made new risk
9 management tools available to farmers not growing commodity
10 crops, many of whom have not had access to crop insurance or
11 to risk management tools in the past. They now do.

12 You also asked us to do some things that today we
13 lack the legal authority to do, particularly surrounding
14 compensation and incentivizing neighbors to work together to
15 minimize unintended presence issues. Now, we still lack
16 those authorities, but this debate and conversation has been
17 helpful as we begin the process of, yes, working towards yet
18 another Farm Bill. And yeah, it never ends.

19 And for some of what was recommended, we obviously
20 will need to gather additional information that will allow
21 future secretaries of agriculture to inform Congressional
22 leaders and potentially formulate additional requests to
23 Congress for legal authority. These are activities that are
24 taking place on different fronts, and there are other
25 activities that are also operating simultaneously with our

1 efforts here. The APHIS effort to revise its biotechnology
2 regulations has been launched, and the White House recently
3 announced an effort to modernize the coordinated framework
4 with reference to biotechnology and to look to the future to
5 better understand what is on the technological horizon as it
6 relates to biotechnology.

7 All of these efforts are going to continue, and
8 there will be opportunities for you as interested citizens
9 as, and as stakeholders to offer your views and expertise.
10 And as this administration comes to a close, the work will
11 continue. I really need from you to know how best we at
12 USDA can empower states and localities to more effectively
13 reinforce the farmer-to-farmer cooperation, the neighbor
14 efforts that you've identified in the past.

15 I think we've made some important and necessary
16 progress over the last three years, but I would like to
17 leave you with this caution. We truly need diversity in
18 agriculture. We need diversity in production methods, crops
19 produced, and in the farming community itself. And failing
20 to recognize and act on that fact, in my view, compromises
21 agriculture's future, and I would argue the future of our
22 country.

23 It's imperative from my view for us to find common
24 ground on coexistence. To do so, we have to listen hard to
25 one another, as you all have done over the years. We have

1 to think big picture about how to advance a diverse
2 agriculture that's ready to meet the multiple challenges of
3 the future, not the least of which is a changing climate.
4 We must fix this in a way that respects the needs of
5 everyone involved and ensures that agriculture in its most
6 diverse forms can thrive so that food supplies, meeting
7 consumer demand can remain abundant, affordable, and safe.

8 In the long term, we also need farmers and
9 stakeholders to be forthright and forthcoming about the
10 problems agriculture faces today and how together we can fix
11 them in a way that respects everyone's needs and ensures
12 that all forms of agriculture can thrive.

13 Now, during the last almost seven years as
14 secretary, I've had a unique responsibility, and not
15 necessarily the option of focusing on one aspect of
16 agriculture, one method of agriculture, one type of
17 agriculture producer. Many people who articulate certain
18 needs and desires related to agriculture have, in my view, a
19 luxury of being able to represent a particular point of
20 view, to advocate passionately for that point of view. The
21 real hard work comes when trying to respect and identify
22 ways in which all forms can move forward.

23 The work that you're doing is the most difficult
24 work that's being done in this administration in terms of
25 agriculture because each of you has been asked, in part, to

1 in essence check your particular individual or personal
2 focus and try to find the collective wisdom within
3 agriculture in the U.S. That is really a hard job, and you
4 have done an admirable job at giving us a set of
5 recommendations that helps move this process forward.

6 More importantly, I think you've set an example.
7 An example for all of us within agriculture, of the need for
8 us to listen carefully, to respect other views, and to try
9 to figure out where the common ground is. I have lived in
10 this city for now almost seven years, and common ground is
11 not easy to find. And it's unfortunate, because I think
12 America works best when people do operate out of a sense of
13 community and operate out of a sense of shared
14 responsibility. So I am hopeful that over the course of
15 this meeting and into 2016 that you can give us some very
16 specific set of recommendations in terms of how we might be
17 able to better formulate a sense of community within
18 agriculture.

19 And I realize and appreciate that there are going
20 to be divisive issues. We're dealing with several of them
21 right now. And I realize that it's perhaps not totally fair
22 to ask folks to check their individual feelings at the door.
23 But you're the best of the best. You've been selected for a
24 particular reason, because you're accomplished, you're
25 thoughtful, you're creative, and I've dealt with just about

1 all of you in one form or another during the course of the
2 last seven years.

3 As I traveled around the world the last 30 days, I
4 was struck by the role American agriculture plays. I was
5 struck in Cuba about the role that we could play in
6 agriculture in formulating a closer relationship with a
7 country that has been our enemy for as long, almost as long
8 as I have been alive. I mean, I do remember as a kid
9 watching Fidel Castro make the decision to turn away from
10 the U.S. and more towards a communist approach. And I was a
11 kid when the Cuban Missile Crisis hit this country, and we
12 all thought that we were very, very close, and indeed we
13 were, to World War III.

14 Agriculture has a unique opportunity to, organic
15 agriculture has a unique opportunity to, to be helpful in
16 producing more agricultural product so that the growing
17 demand for that product, those products can be met in an
18 affordable and accessible way. But they are not down in
19 Cuba prepared for that. And they frankly don't even know
20 how to start. America has the opportunity to provide that
21 direction. That's exciting.

22 When I traveled to China, I was struck by the fact
23 that they continue to struggle. They have anywhere from 60
24 to 100 million farmers in China. And they simply cannot
25 feed all of their people. And they are, from a security

1 standpoint, concerned about the fact that they can't feed
2 all their people. And they are looking for ways in which
3 they can extend their reach beyond China, establishing
4 relationships with countries in Africa, in an effort to try
5 to become less dependent on the United States. At the same
6 time, they continue to need what we grow. And they continue
7 to look for ways in which we can work collaboratively
8 together to meet each other's needs.

9 In Japan, the conversation was about trade, about
10 developing an even closer relationship between our two
11 countries based on agricultural trade, a way in which we
12 could meet the needs of Japanese consumers with American
13 products that we know the Japanese like because they've been
14 purchasing them for years.

15 And the discussion in Belgium and Paris was about
16 agriculture's role in helping the rest of the world get to a
17 point where there was a collaboration and agreement on our
18 collective and accumulated responsibility to do something
19 about greenhouse gas issues. It was agriculture that
20 allowed the U.S. in part to make a very significant
21 commitment of reducing its greenhouse gas emissions so that
22 it in turn could provide pressure on China and India to do
23 the same, which in turn created pressure on non-aligned
24 countries to ultimately reach an agreement.

1 Just think how difficult it was to get 196
2 countries to agree on something this controversial.
3 Agriculture in the U.S. and its willingness to look at cover
4 crops, its willingness to look at irrigation systems that
5 are different, its willingness to embrace renewable energy,
6 its willingness to look at creative utilization of wood
7 products, its willingness to look at a rotational grazing
8 and conservation on highly-erodible lands. All of that
9 allowed us to make a significant commitment to the overall
10 U.S. commitment, and it helped to lead the rest of our
11 country to a better place.

12 So, just in that 30-day period, I saw the power of
13 agriculture and the power of U.S. agriculture. But the
14 reason we were able to do that is because I was able to talk
15 about the diversity of American agriculture. I could talk
16 about organics in Cuba because we have a thriving organic
17 industry here. I could talk about conservation in Belgium
18 and in Paris because our farmers are now reaching historic
19 levels of commitment to conservation. I can talk about
20 meeting the needs of the Chinese population because of the
21 amazing productivity of the American farmer. And I can talk
22 about the opportunities and the challenges of a trade
23 agreement that could allow us to meet an ever-increasing
24 global population of middle class consumers in Asia and

1 Japan, all because of the way in which we approach
2 agriculture in this country.

3 So we need to preserve that. And we need to
4 educate our friends and neighbors in rural areas, our
5 friends and neighbors who want to engage in urban
6 agriculture, that they are not working at cross-purposes
7 here. They are working in concert to advance sustainable
8 agriculture. They are working in concert to allow America
9 to continue to be an agricultural leader in the world and to
10 allow us to be a more secure nation because we meet our food
11 needs, unlike most other countries in the world. That's the
12 importance of the work you all are doing. And we just need
13 a way in which you can help us figure out how we can engage
14 states and local communities in passing this message on.

15 And the last thing I will say is when you do this,
16 and as we do this, the ramifications of this will extend
17 beyond agriculture. It will reacquaint the United States
18 with, and the people within the U.S. of how reaching common
19 ground and searching for common solutions is actually a much
20 more creative use of time than trying to figure out how to
21 divide this country.

22 Now, I can't think of a greater gift to future
23 generations. Not just future generations of farmers and
24 ranchers, but future generations, period, than figuring out
25 how to get America back on track in terms of focusing on a

1 common purpose as opposed to this divisiveness that we see
2 all too often.

3 So with that, let me just simply thank you again.
4 And I'm happy to take questions in the time that I've got
5 left. I apologize. I am headed to the White House after
6 this for a discussion about 2016.

7 MR. REDDING: First of all, Secretary, thank you.
8 You have been consistent over seven years in the vision for
9 American agriculture and your commitment to coexistence. I
10 think that was our first conversation even prior to our
11 committee being appointed and relaunched. So thank you for
12 that commitment and consistency across time. I'm pleased to
13 have the results of that work and really to see the results
14 of the USDA over the last couple of years. It's really,
15 really important. Thank you. Alan.

16 MR. KEMPER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Secretary
17 Vilsack, it's good to see you again, my friend. Thoughts,
18 definitely some of my thoughts are, with the Chairman
19 Redding's help, we're going to give you some pathways
20 forward to help incentivize state and local governments and
21 local organizations to have a dialogue on coexistence. The
22 challenges in the next couple years, Mr. Secretary, unlike
23 the three years prior, was when agriculture was in great
24 shape and great economic shape, and nobody was fighting.

1 Everybody was happy. Coexistence conversations would have
2 been a lot easier.

3 Unfortunately, even with ERS and other studies,
4 net farming income is going to be down 40 percent this year,
5 40 percent next year. A lot of farmers are having their
6 loans pulled from them. They're fighting over the land.
7 They're fighting over different markets. So our challenge
8 will be not only to get the right vehicle down there for
9 them, but get the right climate for them to be able to
10 discuss it. I just wanted to give you that thought coming
11 from the heartland. Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

12 MR. VILSACK: Well, I certainly appreciate the
13 economic challenges. And, you know, there are, as everyone
14 knows, Alan, many reasons for the current state, not the
15 least of which is actually, I mentioned China. The Chinese
16 economy is not growing at, at the rate it was once growing.
17 That has obviously impacted demand from China's perspective.
18 And for the first time in several years, Canada has now
19 become our number one customer again. China was for many,
20 many years, and now, because of the reduction in Chinese
21 demand, we're seeing a realignment there.

22 But I'm optimistic in the short, short to medium
23 term because I think we're going to continue to see trade.
24 And I am hopeful that in 2016 it's a positive year for trade
25 and trade agreements. We're continuing knocking barriers

1 down, and we're continuing to make progress on, on markets
2 that have been closed.

3 You know, one of the challenges that we obviously
4 faced in 2015, and, and maybe we'll face it again in 2016 is
5 Avian Influenza. That certainly didn't help. But I think
6 the, you know, I see a tremendous opportunity in, in the
7 renewable fuel industry, not just in the domestic market but
8 there's a very robust export market. Recent trade mission
9 to India indicates a desire, a potential desire on the part
10 of India to, to begin contemplating a purchase of American
11 biofuel, and that's also true in China.

12 So I'm, I'm optimistic about this, but I'm not
13 naive to know that it's not going to be, it's not going to
14 be easy. But, you know, if we don't have this conversation,
15 then there is very little way in my view in which new
16 people, people that aren't necessarily fortunate to be born
17 into a farm family in which new people can enter this, this
18 way of life. And so what happens is we're getting, you
19 know, potentially a smaller and smaller universe of people
20 who know how to farm.

21 And I honestly don't think that's particularly a
22 good thing for rural areas because there are certain,
23 there's a certain level of population that has to support a
24 school and a hospital and other social services and quality
25 of life things. So I believe we want to keep those small

1 towns vibrant. So if we figure out ways in which
2 coexistence works, well then potentially the smaller
3 operator can get in business. Maybe they've got a local,
4 regional food market that they can meet while the production
5 guys are meeting the export markets and the demand for
6 domestic consumption on a large scale basis.

7 So I think this is important to, to the, you know,
8 to the ability of rural America to get back on track. And,
9 you know, we're beginning to see, you know, while the farm
10 economy is struggling, we're beginning to see the rural
11 economy generally coming back a little bit. Unemployment is
12 coming down. The bio-based economy, new manufacturing
13 opportunities are being created.

14 So, it's not an easy conversation today. It may
15 not be an easy conversation in 2016. But I think beyond
16 that, I think our projections are that we're going to see a
17 return. And, and at the end of the day, we're going to have
18 to figure out how to feed all these people. Because one
19 thing for sure is that this, at least at this point in time,
20 there doesn't seem to be a slowing down of the global
21 population increase. Somebody has got to feed them.

22 And I've been trying to tell our European friends
23 that it's not a competition, that we're in this together
24 because it, you know, it's not a, it doesn't have to be a

1 winner-loser kind of thing. It's, we can all win here if
2 we, if we figure out ways to work collaboratively.

3 MR. KEMPER: Thank you.

4 MR. REDDING: Mary-Howell, and then Leon.

5 MS. MARTENS: It's not lost on us in the organic
6 community that you are treading a very fine line between
7 representing everybody. And we appreciate what you have
8 done because it is challenging to not take sides and to
9 speak for everybody without looking like you're taking
10 sides. One of the things, and I think it's working thinking
11 about is that more and more people coming into organics now
12 are not coming in with a philosophical lifestyle approach
13 but a more practical farming approach. We're seeing this
14 with a lot of the young farmers that we're working with.
15 And I think that's going to make coexistence a little
16 easier.

17 A lot of them aren't coming from farm backgrounds.
18 And again, that means that we're not carrying in baggage
19 that we might, might make it difficult to speak with our,
20 our neighbors. So things are changing rapidly in the
21 organic community as far as the composition of the people
22 involved and, and making decisions. This is going to make
23 things challenging because assumptions that may have been
24 made in the past may not be still pertinent. But it may
25 make things a lot easier for you and for who comes after

1 you. And, and there are those of us in the organic
2 community who would love to be able to help with Cuba if,
3 indeed, some of the expertise we have learned could be of
4 value.

5 MR. VILSACK: Well, the last point, there's no
6 question that you can, you can be of help. The challenge
7 right now is that the law prohibits us from using any kind
8 of USDA program to facilitate that dialogue. And until
9 Congress gets serious about lifting the embargo so that we
10 could use our programs, it's going to be a little bit
11 frustrating because people are going to go down there, state
12 ag commissioners and secretaries and so forth. They're
13 sending delegations down there, and they're ready to go, and
14 they are anxious, and everybody, and the Cubans are anxious.
15 I mean, they are very anxious.

16 But, but the reality is you've got this huge
17 barrier. Right? And the President recently, I think
18 yesterday or so, indicated that it's his desire perhaps to
19 get down there in 2016. So that, that will create a
20 continued impetus I think and momentum for change. But once
21 that happens, then the organic industry needs to be prepared
22 to be aggressive in terms of providing that assistance and
23 help because there is just an incredible opportunity. And,
24 and these people are hungry.

1 And, you know, they are, they must be like amazing
2 mechanics. That's all I can figure. You know, they have,
3 you know, it's not just our great tractors that were built
4 in 1940, it's the Soviet tractors that were built. It's
5 pretty impressive. And, and you know, they're, they're
6 proud of that. And, but if they had access to up-to-date
7 technology and information about organics, I mean, they
8 could be the center of the organic production world in a
9 very significant way. And, you know, they're beginning to
10 embrace the notion of private ownership of land. I mean,
11 it's obviously going to be a huge transition for them.

12 So that's one point. And the second point I'd
13 make, you know, I sometimes debate with myself when you all
14 aren't around. And I get in a room, and I, and I, and I
15 think to myself, you know, is, is being someone who is
16 trying to get folks to coexist, is being moderate, is that,
17 is that a sign of strength or is it a sign of weakness? Is
18 it a sign of, of, of, you know, being a realist, or is it
19 just that you're trying, you're just punting the tough
20 decisions. And, and I struggle with that almost every day.

21 But as I, as I, as I talk to people, intuitively I
22 think people want to get along. And, and I don't think that
23 they necessarily get helped in terms of the dialogue, in
24 terms of, from, from leaders. I don't think we've helped
25 them much. And, so I'm going to continue to stay the course

1 here, recognizing that it does, you know, it's, you know,
2 there are going to be people who see this as something as a
3 cop out and so forth. I don't think it is. I think it's
4 much tougher to do what you all are trying to do than it is
5 to stake out a position and say, by God, this is the right
6 position.

7 I mean, I could do that. Anybody can do that.
8 Not anybody can do what you folks are trying to do. And
9 that's, to me, what, that's why I value so much the fact
10 that you're willing to do this, because it's not easy.

11 MR. REDDING: Leon, then Doug.

12 MR. CORZINE: Leon Corzine. Secretary Vilsack,
13 thank you very much for your comments and for the work
14 you've done to represent all of agriculture. You've, you
15 have really been a great voice for all of us. And I
16 appreciate the opportunity to be on this committee because
17 it's right what you've said. It is a strength trying to get
18 along and coexist and take that pathway.

19 I think especially when you look at the times
20 that, that we're looking at, especially in crop and, and
21 livestock agriculture that Alan alluded to. My son, Craig,
22 is looking a lot more at identity preserved opportunities,
23 to increase the value of corn and soy and whatever else we
24 might look at at the farm gate. And so the charge you gave
25 us, I appreciate because it really, for this, really directs

1 us to take a look at local and state levels so that we can
2 come to solutions that are developed there with some
3 guidance with USDA. But, but we have, we're so diverse we
4 have different issues and, and with technologies, not just
5 seed technologies, but the equipment technologies that we
6 have are awesome now and are going to help us do even
7 better. But we all have to learn about that.

8 So some of the guidance that we can develop to
9 take to those local communities, to our communities, will
10 help us with added-value products I think that the consumers
11 want. And it isn't one added-value over the other. I, but,
12 that's what it's going to take, I think, for all of us to
13 help our rural communities and, and our farms to be
14 sustainable and, and do all the things that we need to do
15 moving forward. So, thank you.

16 MR. VILSACK: You know, you make an interesting
17 point. And I, and as you were making it, I thought about
18 the manufacturing business in this country. You know, when
19 I was growing up as a kid, America basically had the
20 manufacturing economy to itself. I mean, World War II
21 devastated Europe. Asia, and Africa and South America were
22 not particularly developed. And we just sort of had it to
23 ourselves. And we built a lot of stuff. And, and all of a
24 sudden, along came a few countries that figured out how to

1 build a lot of stuff a little bit less expensively. And we,
2 we saw our manufacturing base decline.

3 And now we're beginning to see it come back, but
4 it's coming back not based on trying to compete with that
5 low-end sort of commodity item, but the high value-added,
6 quality product. And that's why there is so much emphasis
7 on education and STEM and all that because it is what's
8 going to be necessary for us to take that next level.

9 If you look at agriculture and you start thinking
10 10, 15, 20, 30 years down the road, you know, at some point
11 in time, China is going to figure, figure out what we
12 figured out. And they're going to be more productive. And
13 at some point in time, there are a lot of African nations
14 that are going to figure this out. So how is it that in
15 addition to the growing world population, how is it that
16 America maintains profitability in farming? And I think
17 over a long period of time, it is that value-added
18 proposition. It is the, the efficiency that we create with
19 precision agriculture, and it's the, it's the high-value
20 proposition.

21 So, you know, as you think about this, what you're
22 doing is you're laying that foundation, I think, for
23 identity preserved, value-added, organic, more efficient
24 production of commodity-based crops that will provide the

1 competitive advantage that the U.S. has to have in order to
2 sort of maintain people in the farming business.

3 You know, the worst thing that could happen would
4 be for us not to figure this out and be overwhelmed by other
5 producers in other countries, have our guys go out of
6 business, decide to do something else, have that land now be
7 owned by a relatively small number of folks, and, and be,
8 you know, concrete over as our cities extend. And then all
9 of a sudden, we find ourselves on the other end of the stick
10 asking China to supply us with the food as opposed to the
11 other way around. I mean, that's not too outrageous an
12 idea.

13 So again, figuring out ways in which we can make
14 sure that we move forward, that value-added proposition is
15 very, very important.

16 MR. REDDING: Commissioner, you get the last,
17 short question.

18 MR. GOEHRING: Okay, sure.

19 MR. REDDING: We're about --

20 Mr. GOEHRING: Yes, sir. Doug Goehring. Thank
21 you, Mr. Secretary. I have appreciated how consistent you
22 have been from the very beginning talking about embracing
23 diversity, embracing choices, and respecting that. You have
24 also been supportive of technology and techniques as, as
25 you've stated so well today, and I think it, it says

1 something about your knowledge of American agriculture, how
2 resilient and how tenacious farms are in this country, and
3 where we came from.

4 When I think back, historically when you think
5 about some of the challenges we've had with the extremes in
6 our, in our business, go back to the '30s for example. Some
7 of the highest temperatures that were ever recorded in the
8 United States and what farmers had to deal with were during
9 the '30s, '33 and '36, droughts, extreme heat. And yet,
10 look at how they, working with USDA, with NRCS back then in
11 the soil conservation districts started to look at planting
12 wind breaks and do conservation tillage and while thinking
13 along those lines, anyways, doing things to conserve that
14 resource and enhance it. I think it speaks volumes of where
15 USDA and American agriculture was then. So I appreciate
16 that you continue to strive towards that and build on top of
17 that.

18 My, my question goes back to, and we were having a
19 conversation about Cuba. And I appreciate the fact that
20 those people are resilient. Having been there a few times
21 now, yeah, it's amazing how they can put a Chinese motor
22 into a '53 Chevy and a Russian chassis. I mean it's --

23 MR. VILSACK: And make it look good. They make it
24 look good.

1 MR. GOEHRING: Yeah. And it's, it's amazing. Can
2 you tell me, because we do need Congress to address this
3 issue, when you were down there, I thought it was so
4 enlightening and encouraging that they were now talking
5 about decentralizing business and agriculture, and they
6 talked about, in their words, verbatim, giving the land back
7 to the peasants. And depending on what type of system you
8 were going to adopt, they were going to take that approach.

9 But they brought up two things and points well-
10 taken. They said they wanted access to credit, and they
11 wanted the embargo lifted. And, and that's very real, and I
12 think it's an opportunity to really help them change and,
13 and move forward. Do you believe that Congress is engaged
14 in this conversation? Do you see any timeline for when they
15 may revisit this?

16 And I, and point taken that if the President goes
17 down there, it's probably going to reengage us back in this.
18 But is there some timelines that you may be aware of, or do
19 you know where some of the thoughts are of some of those in
20 Congress about this issue?

21 MR. VILSACK: Well, I would like to, I, you know,
22 in a perfect world, I'd like to see folks act on this in
23 2016. But it is an election year, and the chances of that I
24 think are pretty, pretty slim. So I think 2016 is about,

1 about educating the public and educating candidates so that
2 in 2017 people get serious about this issue.

3 Because we're at a disadvantage when it comes to
4 Cuba. I mean we've, they have relationships with South
5 American producers. Right? That can provide them some
6 information. And they develop a relationship with South
7 America as opposed to with us, we're going to be at a
8 competitive disadvantage. They also have relationships with
9 European producers which is a little bit longer. But still,
10 they value that relationship. So we're sort of behind here.
11 But we have this 90-mile advantage. We're only 90 miles
12 away from each other.

13 So I would hope that in 2017 that people would get
14 serious about this conversation and would understand the
15 long-term significance of the relationship in the region.
16 You know, that's the under-appreciate thing about
17 agriculture. It is a national security, you know, advantage
18 that we have. You know, this TPP is about national security
19 as much as it is about food security because we can balance
20 China's influence in Asia.

21 If we end the embargo and we open up relationships
22 and we are able to produce product down there in Cuba and
23 begin to trade back and forth, guaranteed, guaranteed that,
24 that we'll have a, ultimately an ally in that part, in the
25 Caribbean, which will help us immensely in Central America

1 and South America in terms of our relationships with
2 countries down south, which makes our part of the world a
3 little bit safer and allows us to be a bit more secure than
4 we are today.

5 So, agriculture is just critically important. And
6 I think when that case is made, and aggressively made, and
7 the generational shift that's occurring in places like
8 Florida with the Cuban exiles, I think you're going to,
9 you'll see a shift.

10 And clearly that same generational issue is
11 ongoing in Cuba. If you talk to someone who is in their 70s
12 in Cuba, they have a completely different attitude about the
13 future than if you talk to somebody in their 40s. Right?
14 And within their government, they have, they still have some
15 of the old guard. But the younger guard who is going to be
16 taking over, they're just biding their time. They know what
17 has to happen. So, I think there's going to be a
18 convergence of the, of that generational shift in both
19 countries. And that's when the barriers are going to come
20 down.

21 And I've just jokingly said I want to have the
22 implement dealership down there, but, or I would take a
23 hotel. You know, that coastline, Lord, I mean there's just
24 going to be billions and billions of dollars invested down
25 there. And, you know, they really have a tremendous

1 opportunity. And, you know, the folks, Laura can tell you,
2 there's a great demand for organic supply, product.

3 And the real concern I have about organic is that
4 that supply squeeze becomes so intense so quickly that the
5 price of organics gets to the point where hardly anybody can
6 afford it. And at that point, that just, that does damage
7 to that important segment, that high-value segment of our
8 agriculture. So it's, you know, it's that balance, that
9 delicate balance of supply and demand.

10 Well, let me, let me let you get back to your, to
11 your work. Again. Again. I'll just finish where I began
12 with a big thank you. No, this is not easy, but this is
13 really, really important work, and I look forward to your,
14 to your recommendations. And I really appreciate the
15 Chair's leadership on this.

16 MR. REDDING: Yeah. Let's say thanks to the
17 Secretary for his good work and leadership. Thanks. We'll
18 take a minute? Yeah, we'll take a two-minute break. Let's
19 take a two-minute break, then we'll come back to the table.
20 Okay?

21 (Off the record.)

22 (On the record.)

23 MR. REDDING: Okay. Thanks again. Always
24 appreciate Secretary Vilsack being here, but also his just
25 engagement generally and perspective about agriculture and

1 the challenges, but also the opportunity. So, just a note
2 of thanks to him. And also, we don't say it enough, but the
3 appreciation for the staff who support AC21, and certainly
4 Dr. SCHECHTMAN and Doug McKalip, and I really appreciate,
5 and Dianne who is there. Thank you, Dianne. Yeah. All
6 good work. So thank you.

7 So let's pick up -- yes, Lynn?

8 MR. CLARKSON: Lynn Clarkson. I want to make one
9 follow-up point to what the Secretary said. He painted a
10 future where there is a failure or a decline in U.S.
11 agriculture being fed from overseas, U.S. population. In
12 organic today, I'm not sure this is an issue of coexistence.
13 But the reality is we're importing more organic soybeans
14 than we produce in the land of soybeans. Within the last
15 two years, the annual increase in corn imports organically
16 certified in the United States went up 67 percent. That has
17 been happening too many years in a row because, before we
18 are on the short end of that stick as well.

19 And some of those things are associated with
20 policies, the way we defined organic, the way we allow
21 transition into organic. But it's a future when you can
22 see, if you're looking at the high-end markets today. So I
23 very much appreciated the Secretary's point.

24 MR. REDDING: Very good. Yes, Laura.

1 MS. BATCHA: When the -- Laura Batcha. When the
2 Secretary was sort of laying out his vision around embracing
3 diversity and, and making American agriculture resilient and
4 well-positioned for the future and future changes, it really
5 struck me that that, that could be our framework and concept
6 for the preamble to the document in terms of setting the
7 stage for the importance of this and how to make it
8 important to the practitioners all over the country to sort
9 of articulate why those conversations at the local and state
10 level are important. And I think building that around
11 diversity and resilience and opportunity for agriculture is
12 perhaps a, a good way to sort of set the stage.

13 And I was struck when the Secretary was speaking,
14 I think, Lynn, my mind must have gone in a similar direction
15 as yours. There might be a positive, unintended consequence
16 of this idea of joint coexistence plans. The Secretary
17 spoke about it. We have concerns about supply pinches and
18 the challenges with accelerating acreage adoption in the
19 U.S. for certain crops versus overseas, and may be a
20 derivative outcome of this exchange of information between
21 farmers would be the opportunity for more folks to explore
22 opportunities to diversify their own farms and take
23 advantage of those value-added opportunities.

1 MR. REDDING: Very good. Any other comments,
2 observations to the Secretary's remarks? Very good. Thank
3 you. Yeah, Keith.

4 MR. KISLING: I'm going to make a comment about,
5 you know, he talked a lot about Cuba. And he talked an
6 awful lot about organics in Cuba. And I've been there four
7 times and met with Fidel twice. Those people are hungry.
8 They're really hungry. They'll, if they have credit or they
9 can buy product from the United States, they just want food.
10 And so I appreciated his concern. And I think probably
11 that's the case maybe lately, but five, six years ago, they
12 just wanted food, and they didn't care whether it was
13 organic or traditional or whatever it was. They're hungry
14 people.

15 And that's how we're going to, as soon as we open
16 up trade with them, a lot of things are going to change down
17 there because they are all wearing Western-fit clothes, they
18 pay a lot of money to be looking like Westerners and, and I
19 want to be down there and buy them '57 Chevrolets.

20 MR. REDDING: Very good. Okay. So let's pick up
21 our conversation from this morning. I've asked Michael,
22 maybe he could, just to provide some comments on where we
23 are, sort of next steps, and how we want to apportion our
24 time here today just to make sure that everyone departs sort
25 of knowing the game plan and has a sense of the calendar,

1 right, and how the committee's work is going to be
2 organized, and sort of expectations for us. Michael.

3 MR. SCHECHTMAN: Okay. Thank you, Secretary
4 Redding. I think what I've heard at this meeting has been I
5 think a really productive conversation. And I hear folks
6 who come at these issues from very, very different places
7 coalescing around some, some common themes. And that is
8 refreshing on the first day, at the first meeting on one of
9 these, on a subject as difficult as this. So I'm, I'm
10 incredibly encouraged by that.

11 I think there are perhaps four, four things that I
12 have on my list to mention here as where I think we're going
13 or where we need more specific input from people around the,
14 around the table here. The first is that I think I heard
15 that there is a need for, for us to set up two work groups.
16 And one is one that is gathering and examining or, or
17 describing for the committee models that exist around, and I
18 think associated with looking at the models is providing
19 some options for the committee to consider on how, how any
20 of those models might be used to help bring all the, all the
21 relevant stakeholders to the table. So that's, that's one
22 work group.

23 The other one would be on putting together what
24 this guidance document framework, principles that farmers,
25 the things that farmers need to think about, both on their

1 own in terms of their farms, and conceivably in conjunction
2 with their neighbors' as well.

3 I think there's an open question as to whether, as
4 to how the information that the framework refers to is going
5 to be populated into that document, whether that is a charge
6 for USDA to gather available sources, whether it is a charge
7 to states to figure out the best place to get the relevant,
8 local information. I think that's another thing that, that
9 group might make some suggestions back to the, to the full
10 committee on.

11 The third thing, the next thing on the list is
12 whether the committee has particular bits of other
13 information apart from those two things that the work groups
14 would be working on that you specifically want USDA to
15 gather information on so that we can have that before the
16 next meeting.

17 Now, let me go back to the first one on, on work
18 groups. I think we've certainly heard from folks around the
19 table, gotten some sense of different people's interest. I
20 suspect that setting up these work groups may perhaps be a
21 little less controversial than setting up work groups in our
22 first go-around on all of this. If you will permit, I have
23 a sense of people's interest from the discussions. If you
24 will permit us, we will put together a first-cut at balanced
25 work groups on each of these subjects for the people who we

1 would like to have initially on the call. And of course,
2 the calls will be open to everyone if they want to join in.
3 But we will set, we will set up a pair of work groups which
4 we will start at a manageable size so that there's, we can
5 have dialogue between a few people and not a lot. But
6 again, if more people want to join in, that's fine, and
7 we'll send those out to you probably very early in the
8 beginning of next year. We'll send out work groups and
9 start soliciting calendars for that.

10 The next topic on the list is speakers to bring to
11 the meeting. We heard --

12 MS. HUGHES: I have a comment on the work group.

13 MR. SCHECHTMAN: We'll come back, we'll come back
14 in a minute. I'll just finish, finish this list, and then
15 I'll come back. Speakers to bring to the meeting. I think
16 we've heard a bunch of different prospects from experts on
17 critical control to experts on MP3 programs and other state
18 activities, to public and private sector participants. We
19 may have one or two meetings to bring people in. I think we
20 have to be parsimonious about that because the more we have
21 speakers, the less time folks have to discuss either the
22 general dialogue here or reflecting on the work of the work
23 groups.

24 So, that's something that we'd like a little
25 advice on today. And then the last thing is just my sense

1 of sort of ideally when I think we could get three meetings,
2 we don't have, we have not analyzed people's schedules
3 except that Dianne looked at all the schedules and there
4 essentially no dates that were free for everybody which is,
5 which is not surprising. But I'll talk at the end or later
6 on before we, before we leave about the reason we picked the
7 range of months that we did in trying to get three meetings
8 in place.

9 So that's the, the general concept. We can start
10 off with, with the work groups. I guess Missy, you have a
11 particular comment on that.

12 MS. HUGHES: Thank you, Michael. Missy Hughes. I
13 guess what I heard you say on the first work group was a
14 group looking at the models that we've talked about, variety
15 of models. And then bringing, that, that conversation would
16 bring together the stakeholders. And I, I just get a
17 little, a little concerned that that muddies the water.
18 Like the -- sorry. What I can see is a work group that's
19 looking at the models. But I also wonder if there is a work
20 group that is looking at nationwide who are the state and
21 local groups that can help facilitate this conversation.
22 And that might ultimately inform who we want to bring in and
23 have conversations with and learn from. So I, I mean I can
24 see how there is some overlap there, but I also feel like
25 there is an opportunity for this group to really think about

1 who we can access to help make this whole process work. And
2 is there an opportunity for a working group to be working on
3 that.

4 MR. REDDING: Other thoughts relative to that
5 stakeholder question? All right. I guess --

6 MR. KEMPER: Mr. Chairman?

7 MR. REDDING: Yeah, Latresia.

8 MS. WILSON: Oh, in that same -- Latresia Wilson.
9 In that same vein, not only knowing who but what they do, I
10 notice we haven't spoken about what, what things are being
11 done by, for instance the NRCS, where we can integrate what
12 we're talking about into their programs if we don't know
13 what programs or what things they're doing. So somehow, in
14 that same vein, not only the stakeholders but what the
15 stakeholders do.

16 MR. REDDING: Yeah. Laura.

17 MS. BATCHA: Just to clarify question. I think
18 when I heard you -- this is Laura Batcha. When I heard you
19 lay out the two groups, Michael, I kind of in my shorthand
20 on my notes was the first one was process, which is the
21 models and options for bringing stakeholders to the table.
22 And the other one was more the product. And so I kind of
23 assumed that that inventory of stakeholders happened in that
24 first working group, which was process. But splitting it
25 apart might shortcut getting that list out so that we could

1 engage people earlier rather than later. But, at least
2 that's what I thought I heard.

3 MR. SCHECHTMAN: Can I just get a little
4 clarification? Is this stakeholder inventory or an
5 inventory of who might be convening these discussions? I'm
6 trying to, I was, I was writing and listening at the same
7 time, so I want to make sure I understood what you meant.

8 MS. HUGHES: In my head, it's the convening.

9 MR. SCHECHTMAN: Okay. Thank you.

10 MR. REDDING: Josette.

11 MS. LEWIS: Just to pick up on those last two
12 points. I think maybe having a workgroup think about some
13 key organizations that we want to engage, public and
14 private, could be a helpful third working group because for
15 me, politically this is where we can promote the uptake of
16 whatever best practices at the farm level and best practices
17 at the convening level by getting them invested in this
18 early on. So for me, that's part of our effectiveness as
19 we're going beyond just speaking to USDA here. So having a
20 third working group think strategically about who we want to
21 engage proactively in this process so that they will be
22 primed to be, and incentivized to put the stuff into action
23 makes sense to me.

24 MR. REDDING: Missy, do you have another comment?

25 MS. HUGHES: No. I'm sorry.

1 MR. REDDING: Okay. No? I'm sorry. So making a
2 distinction in that, in that first work group, right, so
3 you've got, you would have someone, maybe a group looking at
4 the different models, and they've been referenced here. And
5 then looking at another group that really, you know, almost
6 irrespective of what the models are and the guidance
7 document, there are still, still an A list of, of
8 organizations and such that you would want engaged in
9 delivery of that, right? That's what you're saying. So it
10 really is identification of the A list of organizations
11 that, you know, local, state, federal, whatever, could be or
12 should be involved in, in the delivery of, let's call it
13 program. Right? But the development of that joint
14 coexistence plan. Is that right?

15 MR. SCHECHTMAN: I think there may be delivery of
16 a couple of different things. There's the delivery of the
17 joint coexistence plan, and there's the delivery of the
18 message of the importance of farmers plugging into this,
19 into this process. So I think, I think given the range of
20 organizations that you might be looking at, there may be
21 two, two different --

22 MS. LEWIS: Or more than two.

23 MR. REDDING: Yeah.

24 MS. LEWIS: Possibly. We'll let that group figure
25 out how many.

1 MR. SCHECHTMAN: Okay. So I'm, I'm fine with
2 setting up three work groups.

3 MR. REDDING: Anything we've missed in the work
4 group that you were expecting to hear out of our
5 conversation on the last day? So you're okay with those
6 three? So you've got, you've got an A list of
7 organizations, you've got models, and, and then the guidance
8 document structure. Right? Okay. All right.

9 MR. SCHECHTMAN: Then perhaps just one other
10 thing. I'll just note that some of the things that were
11 mentioned have not yet gone into a work group. And maybe
12 they are things that are better discussed in full committee.
13 So this was the, sort of the scope of the issues around
14 which one might want to have dialogue between farmers. I
15 know Commissioner Goehring was talking about a broad range
16 of things to, to have under discussion to bring, to
17 incentivize having people wanting to work together. And I
18 think that's a topic that may be ripe for having the full
19 committee discuss when we get a little information down the
20 road.

21 MR. GOEHRING: Value.

22 MR. SCHECHTMAN: Okay. So, so then, moving onto
23 the next topic, and that is the, the question of what other
24 information you may wish for us to gather for you between
25 now and the next, next meeting. Is there other, are there

1 other things besides what these, what these hardworking work
2 groups are, are going to do?

3 MR. REDDING: Laura.

4 MS. BATCHA: I think the, the two things that I'm
5 most interested in taking a look at, regardless of which of
6 the working groups I might participate in are some, just
7 some more information. It doesn't have to be a speaker, but
8 just to peruse in advance, point us in the direction of info
9 on the joint conservation plans. I'm very interested in
10 that, and also then the state pollinator plans. I think
11 that just, for me, wherever I land in a working group, I'd
12 like to sort of get familiar with both of those.

13 MR. REDDING: Angela, then Leon.

14 MS. OLSEN: Yeah. I -- Angela Olsen. I second
15 that as well. I'm very interested in learning more about
16 those. They're programs that, that I think we could all
17 benefit from, from knowing more about as part of our
18 discussions. So query whether those are part of the work
19 group, and again, I'm happy to participate even if I'm not
20 on those particular work groups. Or, if there is enough
21 interest, might one or both of these even be webinars that
22 we all are able to dial into and, and benefit from. That, I
23 know we did that in our first AC21, and that was very
24 effective. So, I just put that, that out there. But again,

1 if it's on a certain work group and I'm not in that work
2 group, I'm still happy to listen in.

3 MR. SCHECHTMAN: Well, I will say that since
4 yesterday, NASDA has sent me information about the
5 pollinator work. So I will be able to get you that, at
6 least some information that has come from NASDA about that
7 very shortly. You know, and if we can have information to
8 everyone before the work group starts working on it, so much
9 the better.

10 MR. MCKALIP: And Doug here. Yesterday we
11 discussed release of planting intention or planting data.
12 And I did get a definitive answer back that USDA is
13 prohibited from releasing any of that information that is on
14 an individual farm level. It makes perfect sense, but I
15 just wanted to get a clear answer back on that.

16 With respect to more than one farmer or rancher
17 getting a conservation plan together, by all means. We can
18 get some background from that on the agency. My guess is
19 that there are very few examples of it having happened
20 around the U.S. It would be kind of like, you know, could
21 you see a doctor, two neighbors go and get a physical at the
22 same time. Yes, as long as you have two neighbors who are
23 willing to do such a thing, the doctor is probably willing
24 to, to make that happen. So that just might be an issue.

1 We'll get some examples of where it has happened, how it's
2 worked, and, and get those back to you.

3 MR. REDDING: Okay, thank you. Leon.

4 MR. CORZINE: Leon Corzine. You know, Doug, to
5 your point you might check on like some of the watershed
6 districts. I know in Illinois, there's some things going
7 on, and NRCS might be involved. And that would be where
8 there would be collaboration between growers. So there
9 might be something there.

10 MR. MCKALIP: Yeah. And I know, and I probably
11 did a bad job of explaining it. With respect to certain,
12 targeted objectives, sage-grouse, water management, there is
13 probably many, many, many examples. I was thinking more of
14 the whole farm management piece of it. And maybe there are
15 ones in the water management district area that would be
16 examples. But --

17 MR. CORZINE: Okay.

18 MR. MCKALIP: -- we'll certainly find those and
19 get them to you.

20 MR. CORZINE: Okay. One thing, Mr. Chairman, to
21 our point, what I was really going to bring up was, I'd like
22 to, I, if we can keep our presentations to a minimum at
23 meetings, and you kind of alluded to that, that it just
24 takes a lot of time. And I don't know how much we need, but
25 information, or maybe, I don't know if presentation, but we

1 talk about a lot of things that are, that we've been doing
2 for a long time around the farm that, cleaning out a
3 combine. Those kind of things are pretty easily to
4 understand have been around a while.

5 One thing that hasn't, and when we talk about
6 technology, what the technology piece in this, because not
7 only in seed technology but in equipment technology with
8 what we can do with site-specific things, you know, we're
9 writing prescriptions for fields on nutrients as well as
10 seed placement. So there might be a piece there, whether a
11 contact with some of the tech companies in regards to
12 equipment and how they are a management tool. You know,
13 there is something new that we really could get some new
14 information about and how that might, might have a piece as
15 we look to the future and help our work groups or help us as
16 a whole.

17 MR. REDDING: Good point. Josette, do you have
18 another question, comment?

19 MS. LEWIS: Just in terms of background
20 information that would be useful, in addition to the NRCS
21 examples that might be analogous, I'd be interested in
22 hearing or seeing work by the Risk Management Agency and the
23 Ag Marketing Service, the Minnesota Organic Risk Manual that
24 I referred to earlier was actually funded by the Risk
25 Management Agency grant program. And then I alluded to an

1 AMS program. So I'd just like to understand those two tools
2 that might potentially be exploited further to facilitate
3 these issues.

4 MR. REDDING: Okay. Thanks. Laura.

5 Ms. BATCHA: Oh, no. Sorry.

6 MR. REDDING: Okay. Yeah, the one point we
7 haven't identified clearly I think in our work group plan is
8 around incentives. All right? So if you look at the
9 charge, and we spent some time talking about what those
10 incentives are, whether they're, you know, local, state,
11 whatever, where does that fall in terms of the planned work
12 groups. Does it need some, some special focus, or could one
13 of the work groups identified here address that? Yeah,
14 Alan.

15 MR. KEMPER: I was one --

16 MR. REDDING: Then Doug.

17 MR. KEMPER: I was one subject back, but you kind
18 of missed my sign up, and that's fine. But for Doug, is
19 there any reason why by the charter or anything at USDA or
20 NRCS that prohibits the soil and water conservation
21 districts from holding the meetings that could deal and
22 address coexistence as one of their subjects? Because I
23 know a lot of us attend those. We enjoy them. It's a
24 neutral site, if you will, friendly to agriculture. Is
25 there, could we do that?

1 MR. MCKALIP: Yeah. Soil and water conservation
2 districts are authorized by state law entirely independently
3 of NRCS's authorizing legislation. We work together through
4 cooperative agreements, but there is nothing that would
5 prohibit districts if they're willing and, you know, their
6 county and state leadership were onboard from that
7 happening.

8 MR. KEMPER: Thank you.

9 MR. MCKALIP: Yes, sir.

10 MR. REDDING: Yeah, Laura.

11 MS. BATCHA: On your question around incentives,
12 it could perhaps be a subset of the working group looking at
13 models and options for bringing stakeholders to the table
14 that incentives could be part of that if we didn't want to
15 separate it out into a separate group.

16 MR. REDDING: Doug.

17 MR. GOEHRING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Doug
18 Goehring. Yeah, to that point when you're talking about
19 incentives, where it could be studied or, or talked about,
20 giving the previous conversation, I know it came up that
21 either Group 3 or Group 1 could certainly discuss that. And
22 to the, the point and the comment that you raised about
23 incentives, I think recognizing that, first of all, USDA or
24 the federal government doesn't have the authority to move
25 forward in a place like this, probably, and they certainly

1 don't have the, the appropriation, and most states don't
2 have it either. You know, that's quite frankly probably
3 none of them. And they don't have the authority.

4 I think the biggest challenge we see in all of
5 this is how do we find value for producers to be engaged in
6 this. And that's really going to be about our message.
7 It's really going to be about how we craft this. And maybe
8 it goes back to the question or the comment you had earlier,
9 you know, what is the narrative on this joint coexistence
10 plan? It's going to be part of our document, and that's the
11 part that we're going to have to use. And I guess going
12 back to something I had stated earlier so that all of us can
13 think about this is we need something that captures
14 everybody, gives them a reason to want to participate and be
15 there.

16 They may not be interested in the joint
17 coexistence plan if it's just surrounding the conversation
18 about organic. But if we pull everything else in about
19 mitigating strategies on numerous issues that exist for
20 farmers, it starts to give them a reason to be, to see value
21 in it. And to that degree, I know it was mentioned to me
22 earlier, too, about, it's all about diversity. So what
23 about or agricultural, our animal agricultural producers,
24 because they have biosecurity issues. They have things to
25 consider, the management of, of manure which is so utilized

1 by those in the organic industry but also by other farmers.
2 And what are things that we need to mitigate and be cautious
3 of there, too? Not only about the handling and management.

4 I know it sounds complex, but it's just
5 comprehensive. And I believe it can be captured to show
6 value to all of agriculture to want to participate, or at
7 least show up, listen when the conversation starts. Thank
8 you.

9 MR. REDDING: Missy.

10 MS. HUGHES: Missy Hughes. Doug, I just, I want
11 to respond to that. You have spoken a fair amount to this
12 concept of soil and pathogens and including them in this
13 conversation. And for the most part, I agree. It makes
14 sense. If you're going to get farmers to the table, let's
15 have them, you know, everything is on, on the table. But I
16 just want to articulate a concern I have, which is that you,
17 you get into the situation of two people sitting down and,
18 you know, I think, I think typically this conversation is
19 going to start with the organic farmer concerned or the IP
20 farmer concerned about drift and concerned about this
21 question of AP devaluing their crop.

22 And I would imagine, as humanity proceeds in these
23 conversations, the other side of the table is going to be
24 like, well you're doing this to me. And, and you get this
25 kind of a, a tit-for-tat situation that I'm just, I'm, it

1 just makes me nervous that we're going to create more
2 division than what we're actually trying to solve and heal.

3 And I'm just, I'm wondering if as we go forward
4 with this trial of, of making these conversations happen,
5 keeping it to a narrower scope will lend to the success of
6 it, and then hopefully maybe, you know, year after year,
7 you're talking to your neighbor on a yearly basis may
8 naturally broaden the scope of it rather than us saying, you
9 know, everything is on the table. Duke it out, and, you
10 know, we'll see how it works out.

11 I, I mean, I hear what you're saying. I just want
12 to say that there's a little piece of me that kind of goes,
13 oh, how's that going to work. So, I just wanted to say
14 that.

15 MR. GOEHRING: If I could expand on that, Mr.
16 Chairman?

17 MR. REDDING: Sure.

18 MR. GOEHRING: We're all guilty as farmers. Every
19 one of us have done something that has probably impacted our
20 neighbor. So it's not about pointing fingers. It's about
21 recognizing, oh, yeah, I guess if I had considered this. It
22 gets them to the table. And although there might be some
23 concern that the issue about an organic farmer and a
24 conventional farmer side-by-side isn't going to be the
25 highlight of the topic, but that subtle approach to having

1 the conversation, because we're talking about mitigating
2 strategies throughout agriculture, at least it's inserted
3 and it's talked about because, chances are, most farmers
4 aren't going to show up if it's just about being next to an
5 organic farmer.

6 This gives you an opportunity in that venue to
7 insert that, have that conversation. And all of a sudden,
8 the light goes on. I end up doing this almost, I don't want
9 to say on a daily basis, but so frequently because of the
10 broad constituency that I end up visiting with, whether it's
11 the public, researchers, the universities, the farmers, the
12 applicators, getting them all in the room and start talking
13 about certain issues. All you have to do is subtly bring up
14 other things that they can relate to, connect to, and even
15 things they've never considered because it's, it's out of
16 their realm, they start to become more informed, more
17 enlightened, and you start to change behavior, and you start
18 to change approaches.

19 What I was thinking here is, I don't want to set
20 up a venue where it's finger-pointing. This actually starts
21 to diffuse that, disarms them a bit because we're all
22 guilty. I mean, none of us have walked without sin. So
23 quite frankly, they're in a better situation to identify
24 with the fact that, you know, these are mitigating
25 strategies on this issue, but in those presentations, the

1 other conversation comes up. That's also about being
2 mindful of the seed producer, the identity preserved
3 producer, and the organic producer that's in your community,
4 in your township, or in your county. And it's just, I
5 believe that would be a good way of approaching this and
6 moving the ball forward.

7 MR. REDDING: We may be able to get at that, Doug,
8 through the narrative part. Right? It's, I'm a little bit
9 with Missy and just, it could be overwhelming, right,
10 because you end up in, in, getting into a conversation that
11 is, is certainly, could be beyond the scope of the charge to
12 the committee and what we do. Right? Not in any way saying
13 it's not important, because you're going to, you're trying
14 to get that comprehensive approach where there's going to be
15 coexistence, a need for coexistence conversations. The
16 question is whether they are related to, you know, our work
17 on the committee around sort of the, the interface of, of
18 technology, biotech, and, and organic and IP and production
19 systems related. So that would be my only point. But maybe
20 there's a way in the, in the narrative we can get there.

21 Mary-Howell, and then Alan.

22 MS. MARTENS: I agree with you. I agree with you,
23 Russell. We're not charged to deal with soil or water or
24 pathogen issues. Our charge here in this committee has to

1 do with biotech issues. But I do think it should show up in
2 the narrative. It should show up in the guidance document.

3 The big thing that I think which will get us away
4 from some of the tit-for-tat is to be able to get enough
5 detail and enough specifics in our guidance document to
6 prevent neighbors, an organic neighbor or an IP neighbor
7 blaming their conventional neighbor for all of the
8 contamination. And that's one of the reasons why I, I keep
9 trying to not talk about pollen. Because from what I have
10 read and what I've seen, pollen drift is one way of, of AP
11 showing up. But in, in many cases, it's not the primary
12 one.

13 The primary one is the seed that the farmer
14 chooses to start with, and the degree of cleanout of the
15 equipment, including trucks. If you knew what I saw, what
16 came into our feed mill, and it's not that I'm looking at
17 genetic issues. I'm looking at quality issues. The, the
18 alerting farmers to producing quality is a huge job. And
19 the more information we can give them, the more specifics we
20 can give them about what they need to do, I think that
21 empowers people to make choices based on good sense rather
22 than on emotion. It's very easy when something goes wrong
23 to find somebody else to blame and not take responsibility
24 for yourself.

1 So, it's, it's a good idea to get people sitting
2 down together, but it's an even better idea to get a third
3 party mediator or trainer or agency to make sure that
4 everybody is getting the right information about where the
5 issue is beginning.

6 MR. REDDING: Thank you. Alan.

7 MR. KEMPER: Thanks. One thing, Mr. Chairman,
8 that makes this group so good is we can, everybody has an
9 opinion, and we can listen to it and not necessarily agree
10 with the opinion but they're entitled to that opinion.

11 As I looked at it today, and as I looked at our
12 new charter or new mission statement from the Secretary, you
13 know what it does not say? It doesn't have a word about
14 biotechnology in it. And the Secretary talked to us today
15 about diversity in agriculture. And he talked about animal
16 diversity. He talked about plant diversity. He talked
17 about organic, conventional.

18 I think folks were missing the boat if we don't
19 recognize that in our coexistence talks and thoughts. And
20 before you can get to a one-on-one discussion with your
21 neighbor, you really have to have workshops and forms that
22 kind of brings everybody to the same level. And that was
23 kind of my thoughts with the soil and water conservation
24 districts or something. To have those type of forums, or to
25 have those type of broad-based, it gets everybody, Mary,

1 like you're talking on the equal talking plane before we go
2 into the one-on-one coexistence.

3 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

4 MR. REDDING: Thank you. Angela, and then Laura.

5 MS. OLSEN: Angela Olsen. I also was going to
6 bring up, you know, looking at our, our charge with, with a
7 fresh, a fresh view, this doesn't appear to be just about
8 biotechnology, it's about agriculture in general and the
9 diversity of agriculture.

10 I think there's a lot of value, to David's point
11 earlier, about thinking about agriculture. There is a lot
12 of different aspects that will bring people to the table.
13 And Doug was just bringing up that point as well. Points
14 that are going to interest them, but also, given that there
15 are a lot of models out there, there may be additional
16 models in other areas of agriculture that could come to
17 these, you know, if we decide that holding stakeholder
18 meetings is the way to go, for example on a local level,
19 that could bring some interesting approaches on coexistence.

20 So I just want to make sure that we're all looking
21 at the charge and thinking about this broadly. I don't
22 think this is just about biotechnology. It's about all
23 forms of agriculture. And I think that's a healthy charge.
24 And I think there's going to be a lot of good thinking that

1 goes into that. So we're really not siloed in just the, the
2 biotechnology area.

3 MR. REDDING: Yeah, it sort of, it goes back to
4 Latresia's point this morning. You asked about the
5 definition, right, or, in our sort of table of contents as
6 we referred to it at that time, talking about the, being
7 clear about what is coexistence. Right? And we're going to
8 borrow the definition we have in our existing document,
9 right, which lays out that, you know, that it's multiple
10 production practices, right? It's not, not a single piece.

11 Good, thank you. Laura. I always want to call
12 you Marty. I mean, you did move into his --

13 MS. BATCHA: Laura Batcha, not Marty Matlock. I
14 like Alan's suggestion about thinking about staging this in
15 terms of bringing everyone up to the same level with the
16 conversations with workshops and, and forums, Alan, so I
17 think that's really great. And I would encourage the
18 working group that looks at bringing stakeholders to the
19 table to be thinking about that inoculation to, to get
20 things started. So I like that a lot.

21 You know, I don't want to get too distracted by
22 this discussion that we're having, but I think, for me, I
23 look at the full name of our committee. And we could read
24 that. And I look at the definition of coexistence that
25 we're operating from, and we could read that. And that

1 might be helpful for the group to do so. But while it's
2 referencing all forms of agriculture, it's about the
3 coexistence of biotechnology with, with different forms.
4 For me it's inherently rooted in our charge. And I think,
5 I'm concerned about the distraction of I think what you
6 called yesterday, Angela, boiling the ocean for, if we're,
7 if we're trying to think that we're expanding beyond that.
8 I think we're missing our opportunity to be helpful on the
9 specific topic that we've been asked to ponder.

10 MR. REDDING: Doug, and then Alan.

11 MR. KEMPER: Oh, I'm sorry. I'm off.

12 MR. REDDING: You're off. Okay.

13 MR. GOEHRING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Doug
14 Goehring. To me, this is simple. It seems simplistic what
15 we're proposing to do. Take it from the approach of what a
16 journalist would do. A good journalist would ask who, what,
17 when, and where. So, with that, if we talk about the who,
18 we have two there. Who are, who is your stakeholders, which
19 would probably be the farmers. That's how I'd define it.
20 Who would deliver, which would be another part of that.
21 What, what are we talking about? Best management practices,
22 mitigating strategies. And where would this all take place?

23 I mean, we've had this extensive conversation
24 about it at the local level, state and local level. And
25 those best management practices, those mitigating strategies

1 just ask questions that's considerations of what things
2 should I be looking at, and let that conversation take place
3 as to how they get there at that local level. That's my
4 whole point. By raising the issue about what certain things
5 are going to probably trigger a thought, and people want to
6 then know a little bit more about it, that's where I was
7 going with all this. I'm not going to die on the sword for
8 it.

9 If you don't want to go that route, hey, go
10 forward. Knock yourselves out. But I'll tell you what. I
11 know one thing about what farmers are interested in. And
12 being a farmer myself, if you raise the issue and keep it
13 very focused and very narrow about mitigating adventitious
14 presence or pollen, no one is going to show up. You're
15 going to have a limited amount of stakeholders there
16 participating.

17 But I'm willing to work on this and help out to
18 the best degree possible. And I think having work groups
19 have this conversation will certainly help, because it will
20 vet it. It will bring it out. And I've put four of these
21 together. It's basic. Who's your stakeholders, what are
22 you trying to accomplish, who is going to help facilitate
23 that to that point that came out earlier, and where is it
24 going to happen at? But, it's about best management
25 practices. Thank you.

1 MR. REDDING: Yeah. And I guess, you know, the
2 thinking is that the, those, those best management practices
3 would be identified, I mean, they could show up in the model
4 discussion. Right? They could show up in the guidance
5 document, will show up there in some form. The question is
6 just the scope on those BMPs, right? And I think that's
7 where, if there's any, if you're sensing any sort of
8 hesitation or pause, it's around, I could see this
9 conversation, I'll just take Pennsylvania. I mean if I, if
10 I have it too broad, then I'm into conversations that are
11 well beyond the scope of what the committee I think is
12 charged to do, not in any way saying that they aren't
13 important to, you know, coexistence with a, with a small c,
14 but just trying to, to figure out where do I draw the line.

15 I mean, I've got an issue with Pennsylvania around
16 odor as the issue, right? And then all of a sudden, I'm
17 into a completely different conversation that I don't have
18 any, any jurisdiction on around, around for the USDA
19 purpose, right? So what I would ask, Doug, is let us sort
20 of frame that in the front side around the narrative, and,
21 and, you know, I think we can, we can certainly have a
22 document that, that points to the multiple issues that are
23 important to coexistence. And the, the charge here is, say,
24 specifically around this one of multiple production

1 practices. Here's, here's what we're looking at in terms of
2 models and guidance. Okay? Does that work?

3 MR. GOEHRING: It works. I, I just point out
4 that --

5 MR. REDDING: Yeah.

6 MR. GOEHRING: -- there are things that are good
7 conversation pieces such as the equipment issue, because I
8 can give you the other scenario to that, just under the
9 Noxious Weed Law. Getting people to think about before they
10 move a piece of tillage equipment to another field, go clean
11 it off. Bind wheat is a great example. Bind wheat hangs up
12 on there, you just transferred material to another field
13 that you've got another issue with.

14 So it's a valid point to talk about equipment.
15 You can talk about different things resulting from product
16 being transferred to another field. Or seeds being left in
17 a truck or in a combine and it needs to be cleaned up. See,
18 those are just great examples of people all of sudden, oh
19 yeah, I need to be a little more mindful about that. Just a
20 component to it.

21 MR. REDDING: Right. But, you know, it does raise
22 a good point about sort of the stakeholders and who we would
23 expect or potentially could be helpful in, in disseminating
24 the message. I mean, so you may well have, you know, crop
25 advisors, any number, equipment manufacturers, whatever that

1 could help facilitate that conversation and connect them
2 appropriately. I mean I, I think, yeah, it's just the, the
3 question here in, in the content side is making sure that
4 we're clear about the problem we're trying to solve. Right?
5 And then if you can connect that to, for dissemination and
6 education, we certainly ought to do that, you know.

7 MR. KEMPER: Mr. Chairman -- oh, go ahead.

8 MS. HUGHES: No, if you're going to follow-on that
9 point --

10 MR. KEMPER: I was going to follow-on this quick
11 point.

12 MR. REDDING: Yes.

13 MR. KEMPER: Just, because you're, you're having
14 this little trouble with livestock, and you're having a
15 little bit of trouble with diversity, that if --

16 MR. REDDING: I'm not.

17 MR. KEMPER: -- a livestock producer brings in
18 through his manure --

19 MR. REDDING: Yeah.

20 MR. KEMPER: And the cotton seed feed through,
21 then through the manure brings in a bunch of marestail,
22 palmer amaranth, pigweed, now I've got a face with my
23 biotech events that we're going to have a discussion real
24 seriously about coexistence. So there, this all, there's a
25 lot of pieces in this puzzle. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

1 MR. REDDING: Yeah. Thank you. Missy.

2 MS. HUGHES: I just want to hear Alan say manure
3 all day long.

4 MR. CORZINE: It changes every time.

5 MS. HUGHES: Amaranth, the amaranth pigweed, I
6 don't know what that was, but okay. Something that Doug
7 said, I just, you know, maybe for the next meeting, Doug,
8 you said, you know, if we do this, if we only focus on
9 pollen, nobody is going to come to the meeting. What that
10 made me think was this is, is probably going to be an
11 evolving process, and learning what's working and what's not
12 working. And as I look at the charge, you know, I see two,
13 I see USDA and then the question, if so, how might the
14 federal government assist in that process. Like, that's,
15 that's kind of a big organization.

16 And so I think for the next, for the next go-
17 around I'd be interested in the USDA's thinking on, on who
18 is going to be waking up in the morning and thinking about
19 this effort on a, on a staffing side, who, you know, who,
20 where is this going to live as far as, you know, this effort
21 to create these joint coexistence programs, and who is going
22 to be -- and you know, ultimately maybe if it lands in NRCS,
23 but it feels like there's, there's an individual or an
24 office that's going to be focused on this. And you don't
25 have to answer. And maybe that's just something we put on

1 our, our thinking caps about. But I'd be, you know,
2 thinking about that.

3 MR. MCKALIP: Yeah. I think even just in this
4 conversation, I've heard NRCS mentioned, RMA, AMS, Extension
5 came up a lot yesterday. You know, they're going to be
6 really a healthy part of this process is to help really
7 identify. Certainly our agency will have some ideas about
8 that.

9 MR. SCHECHTMAN: Would you say it's also a
10 possibility?

11 MR. MCKALIP: Yeah, possible.

12 MR. REDDING: Okay. I think all of that was under
13 the title of work groups. I think.

14 MS. LEWIS: I don't want to be on that one. Too
15 much work.

16 MR. REDDING: Right, yeah, you want to be on that
17 one.

18 MS. LEWIS: There's too much work in that one.

19 MR. REDDING: So we had, we had the three work
20 groups. And we were, I think discuss sort of next, other
21 individuals, organizations that we would want to have access
22 to one form or another for future meetings and/or
23 discussions, right? And what was the, oh, additional
24 information that was needed from the USDA. All right. We
25 talked about that. I'm getting this funny look from Leon.

1 All right. Because we had mentioned if there is information
2 that was referenced that we wanted to make sure we had
3 access to, and the speakers, oh, and then the schedule,
4 right?

5 MR. SCHECHTMAN: Speakers we didn't quite finish
6 up.

7 MR. REDDING: Okay. So we were in the speakers?
8 Are there, are there speakers you want? I mean, a couple of
9 these things go in different columns. I mean, depending on
10 what you do with the Minnesota Organic Manual, whatever it's
11 called, all right, what, what you do with that. I mean,
12 there may be somebody in industry, Lynn, right, on the
13 incentives side that I can certainly see that being, maybe
14 from the seed trade. But if, if there are, I guess just
15 asking the question, but let's try to identify them as soon
16 as possible.

17 MR. SCHECHTMAN: If I could just add. One speaker
18 that, that I see importantly through this is really to have
19 NASDA come and talk here about, about how they can support
20 this process and how they think they could be involved in
21 this effort, because they have the outreach to, of all of
22 the states. Do people think that that is a --

23 MS. LEWIS: Yes.

1 MR. REDDING: Okay. Are there any other sort of
2 non-schedule related issues or questions around the charge,
3 the structure, the plan forward here? Doug?

4 MR. GOEHRING: Unh-uh.

5 MR. REDDING: No. I thought you were, you had a
6 question. All right.

7 MR. SCHECHTMAN: Schedule?

8 MR. REDDING: Yes, let's talk about schedule.

9 MR. SCHECHTMAN: Okay. So, so in terms of, in
10 terms of schedule, my sense is that given how much you've
11 set out for work groups to do, we need to be planning for
12 three meetings. I'm cognizant of the fact that beyond
13 September, we will get in, beyond probably early-September,
14 we will get into harvest season, and heavily into political
15 season. And it would be nice to be able to complete our
16 three meetings by, by the first half of September if
17 possible.

18 It is difficult to schedule, to have work groups
19 meet to do all of the notice required for the public for
20 meetings to get previous meeting agendas out, much under
21 three months between meetings. That brings us to a rough
22 calendar of from December, January, February March, April,
23 May, June, July, August, September is sort of the
24 approximate, what I would see as the sort of preferred
25 windows for having our meetings.

1 I need to look at everyone's calendars and my own.
2 I know I have some, some work travel that I need to do, but
3 I, what I will be looking at in the, in the first instance
4 is to see what the possibilities are with preferences for
5 the March, June, September windows. And I know it's not
6 perfectly convenient for everyone. Go ahead, Leon.

7 MR. CORZINE: Michael, if I may, it's not just a
8 matter of convenience. It's a matter of livelihood. And if
9 you want to have, and we've talked about this, United States
10 Department of Agriculture ought to know what's going on when
11 September hits in the Midwest. You know, this is our
12 livelihood. And you aren't going to get the farmer
13 involvement unless you pick out a rainy day.

14 MR. SCHECHTMAN: Yeah. I mean, what I was talking
15 about was the preference of the end of August, very early-
16 September. You know, we'll try to see what everyone's, what
17 everyone's calendars are, and we'll get everyone else's
18 schedules as well. We'll try to accommodate as, as best we
19 can.

20 MR. CORZINE: Okay. Just so, you know, it's not
21 convenience, it's necessity as far as all we have going on.

22 MR. SCHECHTMAN: We understand. We'll --

23 MR. CORZINE: Okay.

24 MR. SCHECHTMAN: We will, we will try to take all
25 of that into account.

1 MR. REDDING: All right. So they would be in-
2 person meetings, right?

3 MR. SCHECHTMAN: Yes.

4 MR. REDDING: And then there will be work group --

5 MR. SCHECHTMAN: Yes.

6 MR. REDDING: -- activity in between.

7 MR. SCHECHTMAN: Yes. And work group meetings
8 would again be via conference calls. And since all of the
9 products of the work groups will come back to the full
10 committee, those will be just, just committee members
11 involved in those conversations. And they may have tasks to
12 work group members to gather up information and bring to the
13 phone calls. And we'll, we'll work on planning some of that
14 soon so that we can get information out to work group
15 members about things to think about before the first call.
16 Is that okay with everyone?

17 MR. REDDING: Okay. So, we've got, we've got a
18 plan. Right? We've got work groups. Some, some additional
19 definition, yeah, which we'll have to work on around sort of
20 the scope of the work groups, all right, just so we're clear
21 about what is sort of parked in each of those three. But we
22 know what they are. We know the time line that we're
23 working with. We've identified at least initially, you
24 know, some of the additional information that's required
25 from the USDA. We've identified, and we will continue to,

1 to identify the sort of speakers we want to have engaged in
2 one of the future meetings. Right?

3 So we'll just ask as, as you leave here to be
4 thinking about and reflecting on the work that we've done.
5 But think about, you know, the models. Think about your
6 stakeholders. Look particularly as you go back home to look
7 local. All right? Look in your state, both, both county
8 and, and state organizations that would be important to have
9 in the stakeholder conversation. And think of them in a
10 future role around the facilitation of this coexistence
11 conversation and the work of the guidance document.

12 We'd also ask you to think about the incentives.
13 And we heard some, certainly there are, it's not a new fund,
14 you know, to do that. But we did touch on some of the
15 incentives that are in the marketplace incentives that Lynn
16 has mentioned. There are incentives in terms of just, you
17 know, the, the secretary mentioned today of just being able
18 to, to grow and, and change and reflect the times and
19 opportunities. That is an incentive. It's a little more
20 intangible, but it nonetheless is an incentive.

21 But think about those incentives and, and where,
22 where they are, how do we identify them, because I think
23 ultimately they've got to be also part of the narrative, all
24 right? There's got to be part of the call to action is

1 around the narrative. So please be, be thinking about,
2 about that as well.

3 And then, what's the final point I was going to
4 make about -- oh, the other thought, just around the
5 technology piece. And again, I don't know where, maybe this
6 is a, it will evolve as we move into the work group
7 discussions and the role of technology, right, in both the
8 deployment of information but the facilitation of
9 coexistence and what role does that have. Where do you,
10 what can you do with it? Right?

11 We see it every day. It's changed, transformed
12 agriculture actually. But how do we use it for this purpose
13 and this mission here to, to both engage but also inform and
14 educate and raise the awareness. I think there's a question
15 around technology. Maybe that's a model question. Right?
16 So maybe it ends up coming out of there. But I just want to
17 make sure that we don't lose sight of it as we go forward
18 here with our work. Okay?

19 Are there other comments, final thoughts? No?
20 Okay.

21 MR. MCKALIP: Just, just to think.

22 MR. REDDING: Doug, do you want to --

23 MR. MCKALIP: Count to three and have everybody
24 say agriculture. No, no.

25 MS. MARTENS: What day is today?

1 MR. MCKALIP: Today is the 15th. Right? And
2 everybody, you signed it incorrectly that I saw. Yeah.
3 Thanks a lot. This was my first AC21 rodeo. And I wasn't
4 surprised by the level of conversation, the level of content
5 and commitment, but very impressed with the people. Just,
6 you are really a great group of folks. And, and so I
7 certainly look forward to working with this group over the
8 course of the next year and beyond.

9 And, Secretary Redding, thank you for all you do,
10 for continuing to volunteer to lead this effort. And the
11 Department really, really appreciates your, your efforts.
12 And just thanks everybody to come all this way and give up
13 your time. I know you have to plow through 300 emails
14 tonight probably and make up work to get back to where you
15 were. So thank you for that very much.

16 MR. REDDING: Yeah, Doug, thanks. I think, you
17 know, just a note of thanks generally to the USDA. And I
18 mentioned it with the Secretary here and a couple of times
19 throughout, but I was really impressed yesterday when you
20 had the agencies here and saw, you know, the work that, that
21 we put in for a couple of years to deliver what I think was
22 a really substantive, meaningful report. Right? And it
23 took us a lot of work to get to the point of getting that
24 framed in a constructive way, knowing where those
25 conversations started some years ago. And to see a report

1 that we could point to and I think really did advance the
2 conversation around coexistence and build on the previous
3 work.

4 And I'm always reminded when I look back at the
5 history of the AC21 that it is a 15-year run. Right? And
6 some of you have been around this conversation a long time.
7 You think where technology was when AC21 was first created
8 and where it is today and, and what has happened. Right?
9 And what we have now, an appropriate question around this
10 coexistence and the interface of that. So our charge when
11 we started, you know, we were a little concerned about what
12 that would look like. And not in terms of understanding the
13 task. The question is whether we could really advance,
14 advance that conversation, right, and really add some, both
15 definition to it and, and then to hear yesterday from the
16 USDA that, of what they're doing. And I, I was impressed
17 with that.

18 It is never quick enough. Let's just admit that.
19 All right? It is never quick enough. But when you look at
20 the magnitude of these issues, and you look at them over the
21 course of 15 years and what was and what even in the course
22 of time that, that, of our initial work in the three years
23 since, I think we can all be very proud of, of the work
24 that's been done. And to do that and still have the
25 relationships of this committee in place, all right, we can

1 disagree on things, and, and that's fine. And that's
2 exactly how it's built. But to know that that work is being
3 done by the USDA, which, which has this incredible challenge
4 of trying to satisfy all of these diverse opinions and
5 balance all of that, both internationally and domestically
6 at multiple points. And the secretary has done that
7 incredibly well. But knowing that we've contributed to
8 that, I think we can, we can be proud of that point.

9 The work of the next year, it will be a hustle,
10 just knowing the calendars, knowing the seasons, knowing our
11 other obligations. But I feel like I can leave here today
12 understanding what, what the charge is and, and now having
13 some definition around that that, as we chair and USDA sort
14 of work through, we need to process all of this and make
15 some sense of it. And I think that is not an easy task, all
16 right, because our challenge is to really try to listen to
17 each of you and to say is that, is that what we heard, does
18 that really resonate, does that make sense. I mean, how do
19 we represent that to you and, and work back, right, and work
20 plan. So, but we'll work hard at that.

21 We appreciate the engagement, the constructive
22 thought that has gone into this and will continue to. So,
23 as you, you know, move from, you know, 2015 to '16, I want
24 to say thank you, you know, for staying involved and being,
25 you know, willing to share ideas and thoughts and help us

1 work through this. But I would ask you, given the shortened
2 time line that we will be on, that we're going to need a
3 fairly quick response to things, right, so dates and those
4 kind of turnarounds, I'd just ask you to please be mindful
5 too.

6 So final word, just to say thank you on behalf of
7 the Chair. And I want to say thanks to, to Michael and Doug
8 and Denise and others who really make this, this work so
9 well. Thank you.

10 MR. SCHECHTMAN: And I'll just, just add my, my
11 words of thanks as well. We surprised you with a charge,
12 and I think you folks have jumped right into it and jumped
13 into it with a, with a spirit of cooperation. And I think
14 that really bodes well for the success of what we're going
15 to see in the next year. So I thank you, USDA, the
16 Secretary. Thank you very much. And we just wish you safe
17 travels and Happy Holidays. Thanks.

18 (Whereupon, at 3:01 p.m., the meeting was
19 adjourned.)
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16 Digitally signed by Mary Rettig

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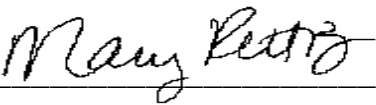
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By:



Mary Rettig, Transcriber