

For the MCCC Annual Conference and Board Meeting

SCCC Partner Update Feb 20, 2019

Presented by Sarah Seehaver Eagen, Program Manager of the SCCC

*Introduction:* Our Council was born as an idea in 2016 at a SARE Southern Cover Crop Conference in North Carolina. Since then leaders have met in GA, TX, and AL to make the framework for the SCCC. The first Board formed in 2017 - comprised of a community of the willing from all the southern states in the region from Oklahoma to Puerto Rico and The US Virgin Islands. As of 2019 the Board consists of 40 people from 15 states including 5 farmers, 22 researchers from Land Grant Universities and the USDA Agricultural Research Service, extension specialists, 3 Natural Resource Conservation personnel, and 5 industry representatives and non-governmental organizations.

- Our Board held annual elections, for both the board and executive committee this past November, and elected new Incoming Chair Mark Reiter of Virginia Tech. In addition, the 2019 Executive Committee consists of:
- Current Chair, Jake Mower of Texas A & M
- Past Chair, Chris Reberg-Horton, NC State University
- Secretary, Erin Harramoto, University of Kentucky
- Treasurer, Mark Reiter, Virginia Tech
- Grower, Jimmy Emmons farmer in Dewey Co Oklahoma
- Member at Large, Alayna Jacobs of University of Kentucky

*Reports of active committees activities 2018-2019:*

**Membership and Finance Committees:** Last July the Board voted in favor of collecting annual membership dues for Friends of SCCC. All educational resources and any products of SCCC are still free, but a membership will give discounts to SCCC events and conferences. In addition we have a corporate membership for industry members who want to advertise on our website and materials and receive exhibit space at events. We currently collect annual membership dues - \$40 for professional members, \$20 students, \$10 growers - by using the Virginia Tech Extension payment system where current Treasurer, Mark Reiter, resides. We realize this system of conducting financial transactions for the SCCC is temporary and are currently brainstorming alternatives.

**Communication and Outreach Committee:** The Communication and Outreach Committee, Chaired by Danielle Treadwell of University of Florida, is collecting photos and content for Facebook and Twitter accounts and also writing a template of how to do social media outreach for future chairs or members who want to participate. Sarah is managing the email list serve, up to 150 members strong on Mail Chimp and continues seeking cover crop content to distribute. We expect listserv subscriptions and content to explode after the SCCC website officially goes "live".

**Website Subcommittee:** The SCCC website, headed by Julia Gaskin of UGA, continues making progress thanks to SARE funding to get it off the ground and cover crop information sheets completed. The cover crop resource guide includes information for row crops, vegetable crops,

and grazing. Users navigate to guides for their region by clicking on a map. We are continuing to update cover crop facts sheets for each physiographic region. Website is currently evaluating grower feedback for the Row Crop cover crop guides. We are still collecting information to populate the Veg Crops and Grazing info sheets. The SCCC website also includes an Events page, linked to a Calendar for all Board Members to add events in their region. Ideally we will distribute events in a weekly or monthly listserv digest after the SCCC physiographic region cover crop fact sheets are completed and the website goes officially live.

Conference Committee: The SCCC has decided to hold non-annual conferences, every other or every three years as needed. There will be a Conference in 2019 hosted by Audrey Gamble of Auburn University and Kip Balkcom of USDA – ARS, on July 16 and 17 in Auburn, Alabama. Day 1 consists of indoor workshops on topics including – Nutrient Cycling, weed management, grazing, vegetable systems, soil properties, federal and state policies and cover crops, and more. Day 2 is outside demos in morning, and Board business meeting in the afternoon. Registration is live this week. It will cost: \$150. **Producers will receive free registration** and we have a limited number of scholarships to provide hotel rooms for producers. We are accepting abstracts for posters and there will be a poster competition for undergraduates and grad students working in cover crops. There are corporate sponsorships still available and some limited exhibition space. Southern SARE has already offered to send agents from some regions as excitement grows.

Awards Committee: At the conference we will present awards for life time achievements in Cover Cropping and an awards committee is circulating nomination information.

Research Committee: The research committee, Chaired by Carlene Chase of University of Florida, submitted a Hatch proposal in December. A group of dedicated board members runs a coordinated field trial based on research questions of interest. We are currently in the second year of a multi-state (FL, AL, GA, NC) winter grain seed rate trial. Data analyzed reveals promising information about low cover crop seed rates.

Program Manager: My role is to support the needs of the executive committee, the committee chairs, and the Board. This mainly involves updating website, scheduling meetings, and maintaining communications between the regional councils, and assisting where needed. The SCCC is honored to be invited to the MCCC Board meeting to give a partner report and is grateful for the guidance and support provided by your council. We are looking forward to a productive partnership ahead.