

2018 Annual INFAS Meeting: Agenda, Discussion Points, Action Items

Chair: Nancy Creamer, *Outgoing Exec. Com. Chair* **Note-taker:** Joanna Friesner, *Coordinator*
Sunday 29 July 2018

Attending: Joanna Friesner, Nancy Creamer, Julie Grossman, Damian Parr, Stacy Philpott, Casey Hoy

ACTION ITEMS

1. IGFP selection/review committee to evaluate applications for the pilot INFAS Graduate Fellows Program (IGFP) - more information [here](#). (Volunteers: Nancy Creamer, Shorlette Ammons, Tom Tomich, Julie Grossman)
2. Joanna: re-send the IFGP outreach email to network so they can disseminate for the 2nd round deadline of submission of 15 August. (*Email sent to INFAS on 3 August*)
3. New INFAS executive committee member nominations and chair, chair-elect (rotating off: Tom Kelly, Nancy Creamer, Shorlette Ammons)
 1. Joanna: solicit nominations from INFAS (*Email sent to INFAS on 6 August; Nominations due to Joanna by 20 August*)
 2. Joanna confirmed with these INFAS nominees their willingness to be considered for service on the executive committee: Julie Grossman, Damian Parr, Michelle Miller
4. Joanna: connect with Christine Porter on her proposal for a process of INFAS sign-on.
5. Follow up with proposers of concept notes (see appendix 1), including follow up with M. Ostrom, L. Gwin, and M. Anderson (and add B. Jablonski) to discuss potential integration of concept notes #1, 2, 4.



INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

1. Applications received by July 20 deadline for [INFAS Graduate Fellows Program](#) (IGFP)
 - a. Three applications received by full consideration deadline of 20 July; second deadline is 15 August. Selection committee will review and announce by 1 September
2. Key recent INFAS-involved outreach and engagement activities:
 - a. APLU Challenge of Change report:
 1. Response by INFAS working group- See "A deeper Challenge of Change: The role of land-grant universities in assessing and ending structural racism in the US Food System" at: <http://asi.ucdavis.edu/networks/infas/our-work/publications-1>

2. Publication/ reporting in Civil Eats- See “Inside the push to bring racial equity to land grant universities” at: <https://civileats.com/2018/05/30/inside-the-push-to-bring-racial-equity-to-land-grant-universities/>
- b. Explainer blog/article on structural racism in the US food system
 1. progress- first draft complete; discussion to commence with editors

DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. There’s a need for an effective INFAS member sign-on mechanism (e.g. for statements)
 1. *Proposed in advance by Christine Porter, INFAS member at University of Wyoming*
 2. Discussion: those present agreed on the value of this and proposed to follow up with CP and ask her if she’d be willing to propose a mechanism for further consideration
2. 2018-2019: possible activities (in addition to the first year: IGFP pilot program)
 1. See proposed concept notes (appendix 1)
 2. Discussion: those present agreed on the value of the proposals. Noted was the potential overlap or integration of several of the concepts, specifically #s 1, 2, and 4. Damian Parr expressed interest in concept #3 in particular, and has been working with the group already. He’s willing to be a liaison with INFAS (along with Christine Porter and others that are currently involved/interested.)

Current: INFAS Executive Committee Membership

- Nancy Creamer, North Carolina State University. Committee term: 2014 - 2018- *Chair, term 2016-2018*
- Tom Kelly, University of New Hampshire. Committee term: 2014 - 2018
- Shorlette Ammons, North Carolina State University, Center for Environmental Farming Systems. Committee term: 2016 - 2018
- Marcy Ostrom, Washington State University. Committee term: 2016 – 2018 (Marcy is willing to serve until 2019)
- Christine Porter, University of Wyoming. Committee term: 2016 - 2019
- Paul Thompson, Michigan State University. Committee term: 2016 - 2019

Ex Officio: Tom Tomich, UC Davis, INFAS host

Inter-institutional Network for Food, Agriculture and Sustainability (INFAS)

RESOURCES/INFORMATION FOR SHARING during the *2018 Sustainable Agriculture Education (SAEA) Conference* at the University of Hawai'i, West Oahu (July 27-29)

INFAS Workshop Title: Restructuring Higher Education: New Models of Learning Exchanges that Prioritize Experiential and Community Knowledge (27 July, 3:40-4:40 pm)

- Presenters: Joanna Friesner (UC Davis), Casey Hoy (Ohio State University), Nancy Creamer (NC State University), Julie Grossman (Univ. of Minnesota)

RECENT RELEVANT NETWORK RESOURCES

1. INFAS paper: *A deeper Challenge of Change: The role of land-grant universities in assessing and ending structural racism in the US food system*. An INFAS supplement to the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities' *The Challenge of Change: Harnessing University Discovery, Engagement, and Learning to Achieve Food and Nutrition Security* report.

Find the paper in html format with embedded links for easy viewing, and as downloadable PDF at: <http://asi.ucdavis.edu/networks/infas/our-work/publications-1>

2. CIVIL EATS publication about INFAS Challenge of Change paper:
<https://civileats.com/2018/05/30/inside-the-push-to-bring-racial-equity-to-land-grant-universities/>
3. INFAS commentary: *Labor in the Food System: A View from INFAS (Open Access)* Find the paper at: <https://doi.org/10.5304/jafscd.2016.062.023>
4. INFAS Editorial: *Labor in the Food System, from Farm to Table (Open Access)* Find the paper at: DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5304/jafscd.2016.062.022>
5. INFAS Statement on Equity in the Food System: find the statement at:
<http://asi.ucdavis.edu/networks/infas/about/infas-statement-on-equity-in-the-food-system-1>
 - a. INFAS preamble to Statement: find it at:
<http://asi.ucdavis.edu/networks/infas/publications/infas-preamble-sep1-2015.pdf>
6. INFAS webpage: <http://asi.ucdavis.edu/networks/infas>
 - a. Learn how you and your institution can join the INFAS network:
<http://asi.ucdavis.edu/networks/infas/join-infas>
 - b. Meet some of our members- member profiles at:
 - i. <http://asi.ucdavis.edu/networks/infas/about/who-we-are-meet-infas-members>
7. An Annotated Bibliography on Structural Racism Present in the U.S. Food System;
 - a. https://www.canr.msu.edu/resources/structural_racism_in_us_food_system
 - b. also linked to INFAS site: <http://asi.ucdavis.edu/networks/infas/our-work/publications-1>

Appendix 1: Draft concept notes for INFAS Discussion: 2018 Annual Meeting

Overview

1. INFAS members with Centers or other similar initiatives/efforts: models for sustaining themselves financially and with succession planning (Lauren Gwin, Oregon State Univ.)
2. Taking the pulse of Social Justice Initiatives within Agricultural Extension Systems at Land Grant Universities (Marcy Ostrom, WA State Univ.)
3. Form a food justice activist-scholar society (Christine Porter, Univ. Wyoming)
4. INFAS step up politically- advocate for more attention to race/equity in required curricula; agroecological research; systems research (Molly Anderson, Middlebury College)

More Details

1. Lauren Gwin, Oregon State University.
 - a. INFAS members with Centers or other similar initiatives/efforts:
 - i. How do members at each Center do what they're doing (financially, staff or not, working through colleges and/or extension, etc.)
 1. *See Footnoted list of INFAS Members and their Centers and/or Institutes*¹
 - ii. How do they (if they do) work with the state? Funding? Oversight? Relationships.
 - iii. How do they build and maintain external partnerships (NGOs, networks, coalitions) for long-term relevance/viability/political support?
 - iv. How are they doing succession planning, to ensure center work continues?
 1. Leadership development
 2. Center priorities v. university/college priorities
 3. Strategic support from INFAS for Centers that are threatened by conservative state legislators (*M. Anderson*)
 - v. Sustainability of programs
 - vi. Endowment funding at a network level - for a next big, collective lift - e.g., to support initiatives like those described in topics #2 and #3 below.

¹ Lauren [Gwin](#): [Center for Small Farms & Community Food Systems](#); Oregon State University
Tom [Tomich](#): [ASI/Agricultural Sustainability Institute](#); University of California, Davis
Nancy [Creamer](#) and Kathleen [Liang](#): [CEFS/Center for Environmental Farming Systems](#); partnership of North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, and North Carolina State University
Casey [Hoy](#): [AMP/Agroecosystems Management Program](#); InFACT/[Initiative for Food and AgriCultural Transformation](#); Ohio State University
Tom [Kelly](#): [SI/Sustainability Institute](#); University of New Hampshire
Hunter [Francis](#): [CAFES/Center for Sustainability, College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences](#), Cal Poly-SLO
Rich [Pirog](#): [CRC/Center for Regional Food Systems](#); Michigan State University
Helene [Murray](#): [MISA/Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture](#); University of Minnesota
Damian [Parr](#) and Stacy [Philpott](#): [CASFS/Center for Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems](#), University of California, Santa Cruz
Linda [Berlin](#): [Center for Sustainable Agriculture](#); University of Vermont
L. Ann [Thrupp](#): [BFI/Berkeley Food Institute](#); University of California, Berkeley
Michael [Bell](#) and Michelle [Miller](#): [CIAS/Center for Integrated Agricultural Systems](#); University of Wisconsin, Madison
Robin [Reid](#): [CCC/Center for Collaborative Conservation](#), Colorado State University
Mark [Rasmussen](#): [Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture](#), Iowa State University
Kerri [Ebert](#): [Center for Sustainable Agriculture and Alternative Crops](#); Kansas State University

2. Marcy Ostrom, WA State University.

Taking the Pulse of Social Justice Initiatives within Agricultural Extension Systems at Land Grant Universities

Several recent activities have set the stage for collecting actual data on the status of social justice and racial equity efforts related to the food and agriculture systems by land-grant university Extension programs:

- A recent national survey of Extension Educators by the eXtension Community, Local, and Regional Food Systems (CLRFS) Community of Practice describing limited institutional capacity for Urban Agriculture work
- The recent Challenge of Change Report, INFAS response, and Civil Eats Article
- The keynote address by Ricardo Salvador at the June 2018 Agriculture and Human Values Society (AFHVS) meeting detailing the winners and losers in the current construction of public agricultural science
- Upcoming national Extension “train-the-trainer” workshop led by Southern Rural Development Center: Coming Together for Racial Understanding: Civil dialogue to promote racial healing

It seems that all of the above efforts could benefit from some actual data on the current status of social justice and racial equity initiatives within land-grant agricultural Extension systems; including an assessment of the well-being of and the work by university centers with a mission of sustainable agriculture, sustainable food systems development, agroecology, or serving small, minority, immigrant or beginning farmers, etc.

My impression is that many extension systems are being scaled back right now due to financial challenges and may perceive their audiences in increasingly narrow ways as they become more reliant on grants and contracts. There is also increasing pressure for agricultural extension educators to “specialize” in order to better serve specific commodity groups. Additionally, community food systems development and social justice work often requires participatory approaches to research and extension which are typically not rewarded in year-end performance evaluations based on logic models and the metrics demanded by research university ranking systems.

Could INFAS put together some type of **small research project where we survey Extension directors about the current directions/structure/audiences/funding base of their agricultural extension systems?** It may be that there is also some publicly available data on the nature of extension spending, extension personnel, extension audiences and extension reporting that we could gather as well to try to assess current trends and who the current beneficiaries of Extension programs are likely to be.

(In this proposal, I’m particularly thinking of formal university Extension systems rather than research at this point, although I think there is a lot of overlap in the way the Centers are constructed. It would also be interesting to learn about out how many Centers are actually formally connected to Extension systems (or vice versa) as I think this is also telling. I wrote this more narrowly as I was trying to find a short project that was “feasible,” but could have high value. Focusing on Land-Grant Cooperative Extension Systems seemed narrow enough to actually accomplish.)

3. Christine Porter, University of Wyoming. [*not confirmed* collaborators: Gail Myers, Anim Steel, Antonio Roman-Alcala, ARC (Agroecology Research-Action Collaborative²):
 - a. Form a food justice activist-scholar society- level of formality and structure tbd.
 - i. Overall purpose: to link the two networks (INFAS and ARC) together so that they can be mutually supportive, and work together when synergies arise.
 - ii. Some examples of specifics:
 1. Perhaps instead of having its own conference, “adopts” one existing food system conference in collaboration each year
 2. Could create an affiliation with JAFSCD for annual special issue on food justice.
 3. Contribute to “science shop” that ARC is planning
 4. Help to educate academics about working well with non-academic partners, and how to do this (i.e. how to work with scholar-activities as better partners)
 5. Ongoing partnership between the networks; INFAS members as mentors (e.g with successful grant-writing)
 6. INFAS members can move food justice in from margins in academia
 - b. Comments on this activity: INFAS members:
 - i. *M. Anderson: Note that ARC was set up as a scholar/activist community --- but focused on agroecology rather than food justice.*
 - ii. *L. Gwin: We (OSU Center) are hoping to do that with the Oregon Community Food Systems Network by being a shareholder. How can our activist partners publish in a way that fits their goals?*
4. Molly Anderson, Middlebury University.
 - a. Explore how to effectively encourage changes in curricula and funding streams
 - b. INFAS step up politically to advocate for:
 - i. more attention to race and equity in food systems curricula (e.g. the extent to which racial equity exists in in food studies/systems programs as a required competency, and what such a competency needs to cover)
 - ii. more funding for agroecological research
 - iii. more funding for genuine systems research

²ARC mission: We are a group of scholars working on issues of farm justice, food justice, food sovereignty, and agroecology in the North American context. As engaged scholars, we commit to working within and alongside the social movements of farmers, workers, organizers, and advocates who are transforming our food and political systems towards justice and ecological health. To become valuable contributors to these movements, we commit to organizing our scholarly community, with the aim to become evermore thoughtful, accountable, and effective partners in how we pursue knowledge production, and in how we share and mobilize this knowledge. Our plan is to leverage our institutional and personal resources to prioritize movement-relevant and partnership-based research, elevate the scientific validity and worth of knowledge created outside the academy, provide asked-for social movement support, and pursue advocacy to affect positive change.