

Appendix 03

ARKANSAS CORN & GRAIN SORGHUM PROMOTION BOARD MEETING

Zoom Option: Day 2 of 2
Minutes

February 3, 2026
9:00 a.m.

Members Present In-Person: Kenny Falwell, Tommy Young, Trent Dabbs, Patrick Matt Smith, Matt Gammill, William Perry Galloway

Members Present via Zoom: Jason Felton

Members Absent: None

CALL TO RECONVENE

Chairman Dabbs welcomed all members and guests. With all members present, a quorum was established and confirmed by the Arkansas Department of Agriculture (Department).

RESEARCH PROJECT FUNDING PRESENTATIONS

Zach Reynolds and Jason Krutz with Chicot Insights LLC provided presentations on the following *initial funding requests* for the following research projects:

- “Developing Overhead Irrigation Recommendations for Arkansas Corn Production” for \$41,020, Year 1/3. **ATTACHMENT 3, PROJECT 40 & ATTACHMENT 11**
- “Structural Irrigation Strategies that Improve Corn Productivity, Profitability, and Aquifer Stability” for \$70,020, Year 1/3. **ATTACHMENT 3, PROJECT 37 & ATTACHMENT 11**
- “Utilization of Precision Agricultural Technology Along with Machine Learning to Optimize Fertility Applications While Improving Corn Productivity and Profitability at the Field Scale” for \$38,320.60, Year 1/3. **ATTACHMENT 3, PROJECT 41 & ATTACHMENT 11**
- “Automated Irrigation Technologies that Improve Corn Productivity, Profitability, and Aquifer Stability” for \$60,992, Year 1/3. **ATTACHMENT 3, PROJECT 38 & ATTACHMENT 11**

Member Young asked how the group’s findings would be shared. The presenter said they would be communicated through formal reports to the board and through peer-reviewed publications.

Dr. Della Lunga with the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture (UADA) requested \$10,476 as an *initial funding request* for Year 1/1 for “Cover crop and biochar impact on nutrient uptake in corn production systems.” **ATTACHMENT 3, PROJECT 4 & ATTACHMENT 12**

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Member Falwell asked about the current availability of biochar currently in the state. The presenter answered that they have a facility in Monticello that can provide biochar.

Dr. John Carlin (UADA) requested \$42,491 as an *initial funding request* for Year 1/1 for “Arkansas Corn and grain sorghum performance test.” **ATTACHMENT 3, PROJECT 5 & ATTACHMENT 12**

Members asked several questions prompting discussion.

Mike Daniels (UADA) requested \$33,526 as a *recompete/new cycle funding request* for Year 1/3 for “Arkansas Discovery Farm Program.” **ATTACHMENT 3, PROJECT 7 & ATTACHMENT 12**

Helene Amorium (UADA) requested \$42,086 as an *initial funding request* for Year 1/3 for “Soil health and corn yield responses to animal waste amendments.” **ATTACHMENT 3, PROJECT 8 & ATTACHMENT 12**

Dr. Elvis Elli (UADA) requested \$51,576 as an *initial funding request* for Year 1/3 for “Agronomic comparison of fixed, flex, semi-flex, and short-stature corn hybrids across plant densities.” **ATTACHMENT 3, PROJECT 9 & ATTACHMENT 12**

Dr. Elvis Elli (UADA) requested \$32,537 as a *continuous funding request* for Year 2/2 for “Refining recommendations of corn hybrid relative maturity and planting dates in Arkansas.” **ATTACHMENT 3, PROJECT 19 & ATTACHMENT 12**

Sungil Ferreira (UADA) requested \$48,868 as an *initial funding request* for Year 1/3 for “Adding value beyond the kernel – (myco)protein and bioproducts from corn and grain residues.” **ATTACHMENT 3, PROJECT 10 & ATTACHMENT 12**

Dr. Jason Kelley (UADA) requested \$51,000 as an *initial funding request* for Year 1/3 for “Comparison of Low, Medium, and High Intensity Corn Management Production Systems.” **ATTACHMENT 3, PROJECT 11 & ATTACHMENT 12**

Board took a break for five minutes. Meeting resumed.

Dr. Jonathan Kubesch (UADA) requested \$31,889 as an *initial funding request* for Year 1/3 for “Corn as a conversion crop within integrated crop-livestock systems.” **ATTACHMENT 3, PROJECT 12 & ATTACHMENT 12**

Dr. T. Tsai (UADA) requested \$76,000 as an *initial funding request* for Year 1/3 for “Evaluating the influence of high-fiber grain coproducts on slowing the growth of gilts during the

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development period: impacts on iron status, microbiome, and reproductive efficiency.”
ATTACHMENT 3, PROJECT 13 & ATTACHMENT 12

Dr. Nathan Slaton (UADA) explained that the \$76,000 request may be shared with other checkoff commodity boards, which have not met yet. The presenter noted that the project would require the support of at least two boards before moving forward.

Dr. Kaushik Luthra (UADA) requested \$59,703 as an *initial funding request* for Year 1/3 for “Field-To-Storage Strategies for improving corn grain quality and storage safety in Arkansas.” **ATTACHMENT 3, PROJECT 14 & ATTACHMENT 12**

Dr. Mark McDonald (UADA) requested \$46,962 as an *initial funding request* for Year 1/3 for “Evaluating the relationship between corn productivity and the soil microbiome.” **ATTACHMENT 3, PROJECT 15 & ATTACHMENT 12**

Members asked several questions prompting discussion.

Dr. Mahfuzur Rahman (UADA) requested \$61,405 as an *initial funding request* for Year 1/3 for “Exploring plasma technology for enhanced biocontrol of aflatoxins and diseases in corn plants.” **ATTACHMENT 3, PROJECT 16 & ATTACHMENT 12**

Dr. Mahfuzur Rahman (UADA) requested \$55,900 as a *continuous funding request* for Year 2/2 for “Innovative application of Arkansas Corn: Replacement of Forever chemicals in food packaging with corn gluten meal.” **ATTACHMENT 3, PROJECT 23 & ATTACHMENT 12**

Dr. Jason Kelley (UADA) requested \$60,856 as a *continuous funding request* for Year 2/3 for “Evaluate Management Options for Corn Nematodes in Arkansas.” **ATTACHMENT 3, PROJECT 20 & ATTACHMENT 12**

Dr. Jason Kelley (UADA) requested \$138,500 as a *continuous funding request* for Year 3/3 for “Corn and grain sorghum research verification program.” **ATTACHMENT 3, PROJECT 21 & ATTACHMENT 12**

Chairman Dabbs called for a lunch break at 11:40AM. Meeting reconvened at 12:15PM.

Dr. Jason Kelley (UADA) requested \$4,800 as a *continuous funding request* for Year 3/3 for “Arkansas Corn & Grain Sorghum Research study series publication.” **ATTACHMENT 3, PROJECT 22 & ATTACHMENT 12**

Dr. Burt Bluhm (UADA) requested \$23,948 as a *continuous funding request* for Year 2/3 for “Development, Evaluation and production of agricultural biologicals for Arkansas corn crop production.” **ATTACHMENT 3, PROJECT 17 & ATTACHMENT 12**

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Dr. Trent Roberts (UADA) requested \$82,078 as a *continuous funding request* for Year 3/3 for “Improving nitrogen management for Arkansas corn production.” **ATTACHMENT 3, PROJECT 24 & ATTACHMENT 12**

Dr. Trent Roberts (UADA) requested \$77,437 as a *continuous funding request* for Year 2/3 for “Fine-tuning potassium recommendations and investigating intensive tissue analysis for sustainable corn production.” **ATTACHMENT 3, PROJECT 25 & ATTACHMENT 12**

Member Falwell asked whether Dr. Roberts and his team conduct economic analyses to determine the feasibility of their research. Dr. Roberts replied that this would be the next step and would help determine what recommendations to make and at what rates. He noted that the data set would be provided to another researcher to help identify when the practice is optimal and when it is not.

Dr. Jason Kelley (UADA) requested \$25,000 as a *continuous funding request* for Year 3/3 for “Determining disease resistance and susceptibility of corn and grain sorghum hybrids.” **ATTACHMENT 3, PROJECT 26 & ATTACHMENT 12**

Dr. Glenn Studebaker (UADA) requested \$39,989 as a *continuous funding request* for Year 2/3 for “Developing effective insect pest management strategies for Arkansas corn and grain sorghum.” **ATTACHMENT 3, PROJECT 27 & ATTACHMENT 12**

Dr. Ali Ubeyitogullari (UADA) requested \$43,267 as a *continuous funding request* for Year 3/3 for “Generating a high-value wax material from sorghum bran using an innovative green approach.” **ATTACHMENT 3, PROJECT 28 & ATTACHMENT 12**

Dr. Jason Kelley (UADA) requested \$83,840 as an *initial funding request* for Year 1/3 for “Weed control evaluation and herbicide program comparison with short-stature corn hybrids.” **ATTACHMENT 3, PROJECT 29 & ATTACHMENT 12**

Dr. Burt Bluhm (UADA) requested \$43,000 as an *initial funding request* for Year 1/3 for “Improving and optimizing biological control of aflatoxin in corn.” **ATTACHMENT 3, PROJECT 30 & ATTACHMENT 12**

Member Falwell asked how long it would take for the product to become commercially available. The presenter explained that the project is still in early stages, but if the biology cooperates and the compound can be identified, commercialization could begin in roughly five to six years.

Dr. Chris Henry (UADA) requested \$198,834 as a *recompete/new cycle funding request* for Year 1/3 for “Improving irrigation technology for corn production in Arkansas.” **ATTACHMENT 3, PROJECT 31 & ATTACHMENT 12**

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Dr. Brittni Littlejohn (UADA) requested \$90,000 as a *recompete/new cycle funding request* for Year 1/3 for "Use of gossypol to inhibit reproduction as a model for feral swine control."

ATTACHMENT 3, PROJECT 32 & ATTACHMENT 12

Member Falwell noted that it appears they are starting their research over and asked what they accomplished in their first three years. The presenter stated that they proved their proof of concept, that the model works, but now they need to develop the additives and suitable source of alternative oil. Members asked several questions prompting some discussion.

The presenter noted that the \$90,000 amount is intended to be split between three commodity checkoff boards.

Dr. Trent Roberts (UADA) requested \$54,005 as an *initial funding request* for Year 1/3 for "Cover crops and soil health in Arkansas corn production." **ATTACHMENT 3, PROJECT 33 & ATTACHMENT 12**

Breana Watkins (UADA) requested \$10,000 as a *recompete/new cycle funding request* for Year 1/3 for "Corn and grain sorghum enterprise budgets and production economic analysis." **ATTACHMENT 3, PROJECT 34 & ATTACHMENT 12**

Dr. Jason Kelley (UADA) requested \$18,288 as an *initial funding request* for Year 1/3 for "Establishing a long-term rotational study." **ATTACHMENT 3, PROJECT 6 & ATTACHMENT 12**

Dr. Jason Davis (UADA) requested \$19,674 as a *continuous funding request* for Year 3/3 for "Development and verification of a stand counting application using drone imagery for research and production decision support." **ATTACHMENT 3, PROJECT 18 & ATTACHMENT 12**

This concluded the research project presentations. A short break was called.
Meeting resumed.

PROMOTION PROPOSALS FUNDING DECISIONS

The board reviewed each promotion proposal and chose to either pass, fund, or table it. Tabled proposals were then revisited and were decided to 'pass' or 'fund'. Discussion ensued.

Motion to fund the following promotion projects for \$195,182.00 total:

- "Investment in the Future of Arkansas Agriculture – Agricultural Education, Career Success, and FFA" from Arkansas FFA for \$25,000;
- "Base Funding" from the NCGA for \$14,500;
- "Action Team Funding: Production & Sustainability" from the NCGA for \$15,000;

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- **“USMEF Membership: A U.S. Red Meat Promotion Partnership” from the U.S. Meat Export Federation for \$8,600;**
- **“Ag Learning Center Educational Program” from the Ag Learning Center and Four States Fair & Rodeo for \$10,000;**
- **“The Time is Now: FY2026 Request for Funding” from the US Grains & Bioproducts Council for \$77,082;**
- **“Export Exchange” from the US Grains & Bioproducts Council for \$15,000;**
- **“The Arkansas Yield Irrigation Contest” from the UADA for \$10,000;**
- **“Arkansas Future Ag Leaders Tour” from the UADA for \$5,000; and**
- **“2027 Commodity Classic for Arkansas 4-H Foundation and Arkansas FFA Foundation” for \$15,000.**

Moved by Tommy Young, seconded by Patrick Matt Smith. Motion carried.

RESEARCH PROPOSALS FUNDING DECISIONS

The board indicated that they would like to support all the renewing research projects.

The board reviewed each new research proposal and chose to either pass, fund, or table it. Tabled proposals were then revisited and were decided to either ‘pass’ or ‘fund’. Discussion ensued.

Motion to fund the following continuous or ongoing research projects for \$832,820 total:

- **“Development, Evaluation and Production of Agricultural Biologicals for Arkansas corn production” from UADA for \$23,948;**
- **“Development and verification of a stand counting application using drone imagery for research and production decision support” from UADA for \$19,674;**
- **“Refining recommendations of corn hybrid relative maturity and planting dates in Arkansas” from UADA for \$32,537;**
- **“Evaluate management options for corn nematodes in Arkansas” from UADA for \$60,856;**
- **“Corn and Grain Sorghum Research Verification Program” from UADA for \$138,500;**
- **“Arkansas Corn & Grain Sorghum Research Studies Series Publication Program” from UADA for \$4,800;**
- **“Innovative application of Arkansas corn: replacement of forever chemicals in food packaging with corn gluten meal” from UADA for \$45,900;**
- **“Improving nitrogen management for Arkansas corn production” from UADA for \$82,078;**
- **“Fine-tuning potassium recommendations and investigating intensive tissue analysis for sustainable corn production” from UADA for \$77,437;**
- **“Determining disease resistance and susceptibility of corn and grain sorghum hybrids” from UADA for \$25,000;**

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- **“Developing effective insect pest management strategies for Arkansas corn and grain sorghum” from UADA for \$39,989;**
- **“Generating a high-value wax material from sorghum bran using an innovative green approach” from UADA for \$43,267;**
- **“Improving irrigation technology for corn production in Arkansas” from UADA for \$198,834;**
- **“Use of gossypol to inhibit reproduction as a model for feral swine control” from UADA for \$30,000; and**
- **“Corn and Grain Sorghum enterprise budgets and production economic analysis” from UADA for \$10,000.**

Moved by Patrick Matt Smith, seconded by Tommy Young. Motion carried.

Motion to fund the following new research proposals for \$253,857 total:

- **“Arkansas Corn and Grain Sorghum Performance Test” from UADA for \$42,491;**
- **“Arkansas Discovery Farm Program” from UADA for \$33,526;**
- **“Comparison of Low, Medium, and High Intensity Corn Management Production Systems” from UADA for \$51,000;**
- **“Weed control evaluation and herbicide program comparison with short-stature corn hybrids” from UADA for \$83,840; and**
- **“Improving and Optimizing Biological Control of Aflatoxin in Corn” from UADA for \$43,000.**

Moved by Tommy Young, seconded by William Perry Galloway. Motion carried.

OTHER BUSINESS

Member Young noted the importance of engaging Arkansas Department of Agriculture staff with national industry organizations. He stated that the board should authorize a Department of Agriculture representative, designated by the department, to attend national meetings alongside the board, with expenses paid by the board. He then moved that the board formally approve this practice.

Motion to authorize a representative designated by the Arkansas Department of Agriculture to attend national industry checkoff meetings or conferences on behalf of the board; moved by Tommy Young, seconded by William Perry Galloway. Motion carried.

Member Young asked whether the board could write a letter to federal senators regarding specific policy efforts. Several members agreed that writing such a letter would likely fall under lobbying restrictions. Member Young mentioned that Member Galloway should take the policy effort message through the NCGA.

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Dr. Slaton with the UADA mentioned that board members and staff participated in a program review with the Technology Commercialization Office, including discussion of the Green Seeker project and related MOUs. An external review team is preparing a report, which will be shared with the board once received.

Dr. Slaton mentioned that approximately eight projects will provide completed update reports to the board at the next summer meeting.

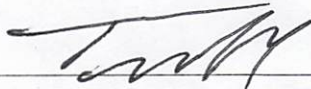
It was mentioned that the next board meeting would be Wednesday, July 8, 2026.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn the meeting; moved by Kenny Falwell, seconded by Tommy Young.

Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 3:49pm.



Trent Dabbs, Chairman



**SIGN
HERE**