



## Science Policy Committee (SPC) American Society of Plant Biologists

Committee Meeting, January 23, 2024, 11:00 AM EST

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://lewis-burke.zoom.us/j/82098703458?pwd=azBZUlniNW5UZmtnKzJNQjBxcUZDQT09>

### Invited Participants:

*SPC Chair:* Tessa Burch-Smith

*SPC Members in attendance:* Crispin Taylor, Robert Stanley, Victoria Swiler, Miguel Vega-Sanchez, Georg Jander, Simon Gilroy, and Dawn Nagel

*ASPB President (invited):* Leeann Thornton

*Lewis-Burke Associates LLC:* Elizabeth Stulberg, Bridget Krieger, Eve Granatosky, Joanna Ratigan, Dominique Foster

### Agenda

1. Welcome from Tessa
2. Welcome to new LBA member and SPC members and discussion of meeting scheduling
  - Libo Shan cannot attend at this time, but Charlie Anderson and Pradeep Kachroo may be able to attend moving forward.
3. DC update
  - Bridget gave an FY 2024 appropriations update. We will likely have appropriations bills for FY 2024, but funding will most likely be flat across the board.
  - Farm Bill will likely not be passed this year and will most likely be passed next year, with a new congress.
  - Bridget gave an FY 2025 appropriations update. The President's Budget Request is expected to be announced in March either before or soon after the State of the Union. However, this is also dependent upon FY 2024 appropriations.
4. [Mary Clutter Leadership in Science Public Service Award](#) discussion
  - Tessa requests SPC identify people that would be worthy of the award and asked the members to help find and nominate people that would be a good fit. Tessa would like the selection process to be quick, so nominations can be discussed in February at the next monthly meeting.
  - **\*\*Action Item: Please send nomination ideas to Tessa and Crispin.**
  - The person awarded will be invited to give a talk at the annual meeting that is being held in Honolulu, HI, June 2024.
5. Congressional [NCFAR Lunch n'Learn](#) briefing submission discussion

- Elizabeth briefed the SPC on this upcoming opportunity to invite engaging speakers to the Hill to present their scientific research. The goal is to share and educate the staff on the hill and policy stakeholders about the importance of funding food and agriculture research.
    - **\*\*Action Item: The LBA team is asking for SPC members to recommend either speakers or topics – see [Google spreadsheet](#). Self-nominations are also welcome.**
6. [NSF CASA Bio](#) townhall discussion
- NSF is leading federal efforts to implement Bioeconomy research through its program, Catalyzing Across Sectors to Advance the Bioeconomy (CASA-Bio)
  - NSF is hosting four Townhall Discussions to hear from stakeholders. Registration is on the CASA-Bio home page:
    - Monday February 12 – 7 pm ET
    - Thursday February 15 – 9 am ET
    - Wednesday February 21 – 12 pm ET
    - Thursday February 22 – 5 pm ET
  - **\*\*Action Item: Please register to speak and/or submit comments to NSF through these townhalls. Sign up for townhall you plan to attend [on this Google doc](#).**
    - LBA will distribute talking points based on previously submitted ASPB comments.
    - NSF will be deciding funding priorities for this program, so it is important that ASPB is actively reminding NSF to keep plant biology part of the bioeconomy conversation and that plant biology is something worth funding.
7. Update on gene editing regulations
- EPA PIP rule is not in line with USDAs, FDAs
    - ASPB is in an Ag Biotech Alliance coalition, and ASTA is leading the effort to try changing this rule through Congressional appropriations report language and proposed Farm Bill text.
    - We have contributed to a Dear Colleague Letter from Reps. Panetta and Beard that was sent to the Senate and House Agriculture Committees with 19 bipartisan signatures asking for the Farm Bill to course correct EPA.
  - APHIS proposal to extend exemption categories.
    - Big shout-out to Georg Jander and Wayne Parrott for their help writing ASPB's submitted comments.
    - ASPB also signed onto a coalition letter to APHIS along with 60 other organizations.
8. Discussion of how to better publicize the SPC's activities.
- Tessa shared that sending out an announcement a few weeks after SPC engaged in an activity may not bring enough attention to their successes and priorities. Tessa gave the suggestion of sending out "Red Alerts." Even if it gets only 2 percent more engagement, it could be a way to share the SPC's work among even those who choose not to engage.
    - Simon, Victoria, Rob, and Gustavo will form a subcommittee to produce ideas.
9. Discussion of inviting an NIH representative to Plant Bio 2024

10. Next meeting: February 27

11. Adjournment