



United States Department of Agriculture

Research, Education and Economics  
Agricultural Research Service

August 15, 2007

**Subject:** Minutes of the Environmental Management System Committee Meeting  
on August 2, 2007

**To:** Location EMS Committee Members  
Research Leaders

**From:** Tamara Snipes, Chemist/EMS Coordinator

The EMS Committee met on August 2, 2007 at 8:00 AM in the CPMRU Conference Room. T. Snipes, K. Marchant, J. Merriman, T. Strickland, T. Hendricks, T. Maze, and R. Hornbuckle were the committee members in attendance. Earl Griffin and Beth Anderson from the Area Office were also in attendance.

Beth Anderson made her first site visit to Tifton since becoming the Environmental Protection Specialist for the SAA. We held an informal meeting for Beth to meet the EMS Committee and discuss any questions we had with EMS. Beth and Earl toured our facilities and some field sites in order to get an overview of what we do here. By understanding our daily operations, she will be more helpful with the environmental issues that we face in Tifton.

Also discussed was the 2006 Metrics Scorecard that was submitted last December. Each location was scored by the Office of Management and Budget using a red, yellow, green scoring marker. Our location scored a yellow which means we could improve in some areas. It was determined by going over the questions that there was an interpretation problem in answering some of the questions. We should have received a green, which indicates doing well, based on the work done here. By going over the questions, we were able to determine where the discrepancies were so that we and other locations fully understand the intent of the questions. We will be required to submit another Metrics Scorecard for 2007.

We determined by going over the Metrics Scorecard that there are some communication issues here between Management and the EMS Committee. The committee was unaware that there are some projects being done that have a positive environmental impact. These should be reported as EMS accomplishments to show our continual improvement at the location. We will work to improve this problem so our positive efforts don't go unreported.

Each year we also submit a Self-Declaration Checklist to the Area Office. Beth requested that we submit a draft in July to make sure everyone was doing well and could answer positively by the December reporting deadline. We were able to answer yes to all questions or would be able to answer yes by the deadline. She indicated that there were some problems with that document also and by going over it with each location she could get a feel for what changes should be proposed.

The next meeting of the Location EMS Committee will be scheduled tentatively for early October 2007.



South Atlantic Area, Crop Protection and Management Research Unit  
P.O. Box 748, Tifton, GA 31793-0748  
Voice: 229-387-2344 ☐ Fax: 229-387-2321 ☐ E-mail: tamara@tifton.usda.gov  
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