

Welcome Letter: NAPB President – David Bubeck



I'm humbled to have the opportunity to lead NAPB this coming year as the 2020-21 President. I have countless reasons to be thankful to be part of a great organization like NAPB and a colleague of plant breeders in this amazing profession. I'll list just a few of the key reasons this is true for me: 1) Plant breeders have provided the world with a nutritious, diverse, stable and sustainable food source, and are largely unrecognized by consumers who daily enjoy the fruits of the plant breeder's labor. 2) Plant breeders are knowledgeable in multiple disciplines of science and leverage aspects of technology that equip them in selection of the 'best' performing genetics across a broad array of critical selection criteria, ever evolving their breeding methodologies as science and technology changes. Plant breeding is just a fun profession to be at the intersection of many scientific disciplines. 3) Plant breeders are individuals with intensity of focus on improving the plant species of choice, requiring a high work ethic and never-ending optimism that their next selection could be the best one ever.

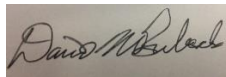
The NAPB is still a relatively young and growing organization with official formation in 2008 from prior work of the Plant Breeding Coordinating Committee (PBCC). As a growing organization, now nearly 500 members and exceeding 450 members for the first time ever in 2020, we want to continue to deliver value to our expanding membership. Through our strategic plan we will continue to focus on our mission to **"strengthen plant breeding to promote food security, quality of life, and a sustainable future."** We will leverage the vision in our strategic plan to deliver a future in which **1) strong public and private sectors work independently and together to deliver varieties and improved germplasm to society; 2) the value and importance of plant breeding to food security, quality of life, and a sustainable future are known and appreciated by the public; and 3) plant breeding is viewed as dynamic, problem solving, and creative. The NAPB intends to become a recognized and valued advocate for plant breeding research and education, helping to guide and implement a cohesive national plant breeding agenda.** These are key excerpts and boldly stated from our NAPB strategic plan.

As we transitioned the NAPB organization through its first ever 'covid-induced' virtual meeting, we were able to maintain our annual meeting with a strong attendance of 257 registrants. Though the University of Nebraska would have loved to host all of us, they did a spectacular effort to adjust the entire meeting to a virtual format. Thanks to all of you who contributed through program planning, presenting great talks, and the multitude of ways for you to participate in this virtual meeting. The graduate students responded with excellent participation, as well as high quality e-posters and rapid presentations. Congratulations to all for making this a highly successful first virtual meeting!

Looking to the next year, I have a few key focus areas for myself and the NAPB Executive Board, as well as the Committee Leadership: 1) Establish growth in our NAPB membership through retaining graduate students that go into professional careers, reconnecting with past members that have allowed their membership to lapse, and significantly expanding the private sector membership. 2) Provide tangible and multiple examples of new public-private sector partnerships. The momentum and opportunity to execute on such partnerships is critical, as we need one another to secure the long-term success of plant breeding. The USDA is driving their "Ag Innovation Initiative" which will have a high need for increased public-private collaborations to be successful. 3) The moment for advocacy for plant breeding and technologies that apply to plant performance improvements is now. The consumers of the world are engaged and desiring to know where their safe, affordable, nutritious and flavorful food comes from and the NAPB has a prime opportunity to provide the facts.

Thanks to each of you for being loyal members of NAPB and always be prepared to tell others about this great profession!

Best regards to each one of you!

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Dave Bubeck", on a light-colored background.

Dave Bubeck