



Genetically Engineered Algae Public Engagement Strategies

October 27, 2016

12:30 – 5:00 PM

Old Main at Arizona State University

400 East Tyler Mall

Tempe, AZ 85287

MEETING PURPOSE and OBJECTIVES

This meeting convenes a diverse group of stakeholder leaders for a discussion of how to best engage broader public audiences in the development of EPA's forthcoming guidance for genetically engineered algae and other future governance on genetically engineered (GE) algae. The meeting will:

- Reflect upon past experiences and lessons learned regarding effective public engagement
- Identify critical audiences, questions, and data/information needs for engagement on the EPA's Algae Guidance and other future governance on GE algae
- Identify preferred engagement methods and desired approaches for integrating public input into decision making
- Bring together stakeholders from industry, academia, civil society organizations, and federal agencies

BACKGROUND

The meeting is convened and hosted by the [Expert and Citizen Assessment of Science and Technology \(ECAST\)](#) network, a network of researchers and practitioners dedicated to exploring hybrid strategies for engaging diverse audiences in science policy and technology assessment. The US EPA is currently developing guidelines on genetically engineered algae under the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA). The draft [Algae Guidance](#) describes EPA's data needs to support risk assessments of genetically engineered algae and cyanobacteria that are manufactured, imported, or processed, and are subject to regulations under section 5 of TSCA.

There are a variety of potential applications of genetically engineered algae – including for energy, agriculture, natural resources, and medicine. Particularly given the widespread implications of the Algae Guidance and breadth of potential innovations with genetically engineered algae, ECAST recognizes that formal, agency-organized public meetings are insufficient to integrate public values into this highly technical decision making process. By providing funding to support this ECAST workshop, the EPA has demonstrated interest in hearing stakeholder feedback on how to expand public engagement on these topics.

MEETING SCHEDULE

- 12:30 pm **Lunch**
- Informal discussion: Why would the public be interested in GE Algae?
- 1:00 pm **Welcome and Introductions**
- Convener and participant introductions
 - Overview of purpose, objectives, agenda, expected outputs/outcomes and guiding assumptions/ground rules
 - EPA overview of timeline and decision process for EPA guidance on GE algae as well as the evolving discussion around revision of the Coordinate Framework and related activities (*Carolina Penalva-Arana, EPA*)
- 1:20 pm **Effective Public Engagement**
- Convener presentation on why engagement matters, examples of effective (and ineffective) models, lessons learned, and critical questions for engagement (*Jason Delborne, North Carolina State University; Mahmud Farooque, Arizona State University; Julie Shapiro, Keystone Policy Center*)
- 1:45 pm **Participant Experiences with Public Engagement**
- Discussion of past experiences – what has worked and what has not
- 2:05 pm **GE Algae Public Engagement: Critical Questions**
- Rapid-fire, small group discussions of key considerations for engagement
 - a. What potential GE algae technologies and applications will be of most interest to public audiences?
 - b. Who should be engaged (i.e., how should the public be constructed)?
 - c. What do citizens (non-experts) need to know to effectively engage regarding GE algae?
 - d. What questions should we ask to make engagement useful?
 - e. When and how can the outputs of engagement integrate into the decision-making process?
- 3:30 pm **Break with Coffee**
- 3:45 pm **GE Algae Public Engagement: Designing for Specific Scenarios**
- In small groups, participants build out engagement strategy concepts for specific GE algae technologies/scenarios, answering questions b-e (above) in further detail
- 4:30 pm **Reflections**
- Share concepts developed above and reflect on overall discussions and cross-cutting themes
 - Discuss possible next steps
 - Review commitments of organizers
- 5:00 pm **Adjourn**