

## WORKSHOP SPEAKERS

### Session 1: Navigating the U.S. Regulatory System

Moderator: Dusti Gallagher



#### **Donna Lalli**

*USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS)*

Dr. Donna Lalli was appointed Deputy Administrator of Biotechnology Regulatory Services (BRS) in July 2025. In this role, Dr. Lalli provides leadership and direction to ensure the safe development and introduction (importation, interstate movement, and field testing) of genetically engineered organisms.

Before this appointment, Dr. Lalli served as APHIS' Associate Administrator since 2023. In this role, she worked in partnership with Administrator Mike Watson to carry out the agency's day-to-day operations, represent APHIS on department-level and cross-agency working groups, and oversee the activities of every APHIS program area and support unit on behalf of employees and stakeholders.



#### **Shannon Borges**

*U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)*

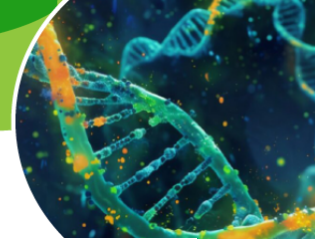
Shannon Borges is the Acting Director of the Biopesticides and Pollution Prevention Division (BPPD) in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Office of Pesticide Programs. Shannon has been with the EPA for over 21 years, spending most of that time in BPPD in both risk assessment and risk management roles. She has held several senior positions in BPPD, including Senior Scientist, Chief of BPPD's Risk Assessment Branch, and Deputy Director. At the division level, Shannon has supported multiple biopesticide regulatory and risk assessment innovation and streamlining efforts.



#### **Jason Dietz**

*U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)*

Jason Dietz is the lead for cross-cutting biotechnology-related activities in FDA's Human Foods Program (HFP). In this role he regularly provides technical and policy input to HFP and its interagency partners on food biotechnology issues related to food safety and regulation, food labeling, genome editing, international trade and media and scientific communication. Jason Dietz has more than 25 years of experience with the regulation of food ingredients, innovative foods, and food biotechnology products.



## Session 2: Review & Discussion of Case Study #1: Canker-resistant Citrus and HLB-resistant Citrus

Moderator: Wayne Parrott



### **Nian Wang** – *University of Florida*

Dr. Nian Wang is the J. R. (Rip) Graves Endowed Chair/Eminent Scholar Chair in the Department of Microbiology and Cell Science at the Citrus Research and Education Center, University of Florida. His research interests include molecular genetics and genomics of citrus HLB and canker diseases and their management and genetic improvement of citrus via CRISPR/Cas genome editing.

He received his Ph.D. degree under the guidance of Dr. Dennis Gross at Texas A&M University, conducted postdoctoral research under the supervision of Dr. Steven E. Lindow at UC, Berkeley.



### **Rebecca Fletcher** – *USDA-APHIS*

Rebecca Fletcher is a senior biological scientist with USDA-APHIS Biotechnology Regulatory Services (BRS). Rebecca received her Ph.D. in Weed Science in 2019 from Virginia Tech. She started with BRS as a biological scientist in 2020 and has been with BRS ever since. In her role as a senior biological scientist, Rebecca conducts science- and risk-based reviews of biotechnology products to ensure organisms developed using genetic engineering do not pose a plant pest risk.



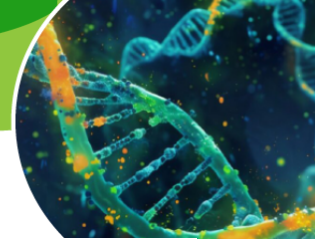
### **Amanda Pierce** – *EPA*

Amanda Pierce is a Senior Advisor in the Emerging Technologies Branch in the Office of Pesticide Programs at EPA where she evaluates and ensures the safety of novel applications of discoveries in genetics and molecular biology to real world pest control problems. At EPA, she focuses on advancing ecological risk assessment and policy initiatives for these biotechnologies within the United States government and internationally. She received her Ph.D. in Population Biology, Ecology and Evolution from Emory University. After a postdoctoral fellowship at the University of North Carolina, Amanda became a AAAS Science & Technology Policy Fellow at EPA.



### **Charles Kanobe** – *FDA*

Charles Kanobe is a Biologist in the Human Foods Program, at FDA, responsible for human food safety assessment of new plant varieties developed through biotechnology. Charles received his Ph.D. in Genetics from Iowa State University, after which he worked with Bayer CropScience as a Study Director in the Regulatory Seeds and Traits Department for 6 years. He then worked with Reynolds American Inc. as a Senior Scientist, Regulatory Submissions, for 4 years before joining the FDA.



## Session 3: Review and Discussion of Case Study #2: Insect Resistant and Herbicide Tolerant DP23211 Maize

Moderator: Chris Dardick



### **Jamie Staley** – *Corteva*

Jamie Staley is an experienced regulatory affairs leader with over two decades of professional experience supporting the registration and regulatory stewardship of biotech traits in the United States and internationally. He currently serves as U.S. Seeds Regulatory Affairs Leader at Corteva Agriscience, where he is responsible for the strategic oversight, submission, and lifecycle management of biotech trait registrations under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

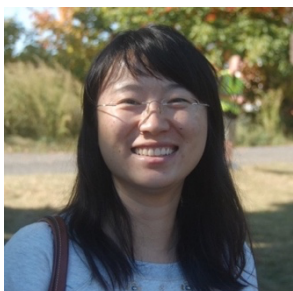
In this role, Jamie leads regulatory strategy development, coordinates cross-functional regulatory activities, and serves as the primary interface with U.S. regulatory authorities to ensure compliance with applicable statutes and science-based regulatory requirements. In addition to his registration responsibilities, Jamie also represents Corteva in government and industry forums related to biotechnology policy.

Earlier in his career, he served as European Regulatory Affairs Manager at Fort Dodge Animal Health, acting as the registration lead for bovine and equine vaccines across multiple European jurisdictions and is a graduate of Iowa State University.



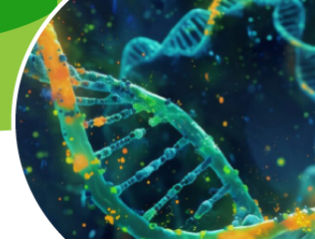
### **Alex Blumenfeld** – *EPA*

Alex Blumenfeld is a biologist at Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), where he evaluates the environmental risk(s) associated with genetically modified crops and organisms.



### **Jing Ning** – *FDA*

Jing Ning is a scientific reviewer specialized in molecular biology. In FDA CVM, she is responsible for premarket review of animal food developed from new plant varieties and genetically engineered microorganisms. She received her Ph.D. in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology in China. She served as a Postdoctoral Research Scientist at Michigan State University 2010 to 2015. Before joining FDA CVM, she worked at QIAGEN as a RD scientist.



## Session 3 (continued)



**Katharine Swoboda Bhattarai** – *USDA-APHIS*

Katharine Swoboda Bhattarai is a biological scientist with USDA-APHIS Biotechnology Regulatory Services (BRS). Katharine received her Ph.D. in Entomology in 2017 from North Carolina State University. She joined BRS in 2020 and conducts science- and risk-based reviews of biotechnology products to ensure organisms developed using genetic engineering do not pose a plant pest risk.



## Session 4: Beyond the Trait: Field trials and Marketing Strategies

Moderator: Wayne Parrott



### **Chris Dardick** – USDA-ARS

Chris Dardick has served as a Molecular Biologist with the USDA Agricultural Research Service in Kearneysville, WV for the past 20 years where he currently serves as Lead Scientist for the Genetic Improvement of Fruit Crops research unit. Dr. Dardick's research focuses on the genetic mechanisms of tree growth, dormancy, flowering, and fruit quality. His program encompasses both conventional breeding and biotechnology strategies to develop new varieties of peaches, plums, cherries, and other tree fruits.

Chris has pioneered the use of biotechnology to accelerate breeding as well as redesigning trees for high density production systems. His work is on display at Walt Disney Epcot's 'Living With the Land' exhibit where Chris manages their biotechnology laboratory and helps to educate Disney guests about plant biotechnology. His goals are to create more sustainable fruit production systems that require less land, labor, and chemical inputs, promote healthy diets, and improve consumer access to affordable, nutritious, and high-quality fresh foods.



### **Sarah Evanega** – Okanagan Specialty Fruits

Sarah Evanega is vice president of business development at Okanagan Specialty Fruits (OSF), the company that developed the Arctic® Apple and that continues to lead in fruit tree biotechnology.

Sarah received her PhD in Plant Biology from Cornell University where she continued on as a faculty member until 2022. Today she maintains an adjunct faculty appointment in the School of Integrative Plant Science at Cornell. Sarah was the founding executive director of the Cornell Alliance for Science, a global communications and advocacy platform working to ensure access to agricultural technologies. She is a passionate communicator about agricultural biotechnology and delivered a TedX talk in 2023 on the role of CRISPR in food and agriculture. She lives in the Finger Lakes with her three kids.



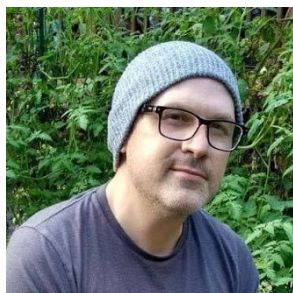
## Session 5: Review & Discussion of Case Study #3: Gene-edited S4A Strawberry

Moderator: Wayne Parrott



### **Muffy Koch** – J.R. Simplot

Muffy Koch is a senior regulatory manager at the J.R. Simplot Company and has 36 years of experience in the regulation and safety assessment of genetically modified organisms. She was educated and trained in South Africa, as a botanist and microbiologist. She worked for 8 years as a microbial and plant genetic engineer, for 10 years as a South African regulator, for 15 years training regulators internationally in the safety assessment of GMOs, and for the last 11 years in Boise, Idaho, helping to confirm the safety of new potato and strawberry varieties.



### **Matthew Fabian** – FDA

Matthew Fabian, Ph.D is a Biologist with FDA, where he performs safety reviews of agricultural biotech products entering the U.S. marketplace and food supply. Before pursuing a career in plant science, Matthew had a career in business analytics and geographic information systems. After completing his Ph.D. studies, Matthew entered into an ORISE postdoctoral research program at the USDA Agricultural Research Service (USDA-ARS) in Beltsville, MD, where his research focused on plant-pathogen interactions in Solanaceae crops, including potato and tomato. Additionally, while having transitioned into a permanent role at FDA in 2023, Matthew continues to perform part-time postdoctoral research at USDA-ARS, centered in transcriptomics and genomics of potato and potato pathogens.



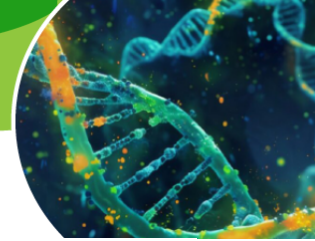
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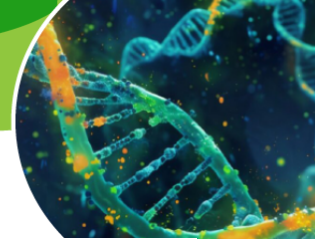
## Session 6: An International Regulatory Perspective

Moderator: *Dusti Gallagher*



### **Jordan Bean** – *Health Canada*

Jordan Bean completed his Bachelor's degree in microbiology and immunology at the University of Western Ontario in 2006, and his Master's degree in microbiology at the University of Guelph in 2009. He began his career with Health Canada in 2009 as a scientific evaluator in the Novel Foods Section of the Food and Nutrition Directorate. Today, he continues his work in this section as a senior evaluator. His primary duties are performing pre-market safety assessments as well as developing guidance and policy related to the safety of novel food products (including those derived from genetically modified plants) for use in Canada.



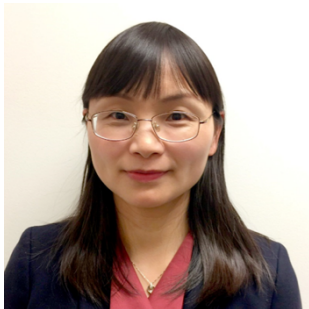
## Session 7: Dissecting the U.S. Regulatory System



### **Jennifer Rowland – USDA**

Jen Rowland serves as the Biotechnology Coordinator for USDA, facilitating cross-departmental and interagency engagement, and serving as a point of contact for stakeholders. Previously, Dr. Rowland was a science advisor in Foreign Agricultural Service New Technologies and Production Methods division, working to maintain and expand global market access for products of agricultural biotechnology.

Dr. Rowland earned a PhD in microbiology in 2014 from the University of Alabama at Birmingham and pursued postdoctoral research at the University of British Columbia. After many years at the lab bench Dr. Rowland turned to a career in science policy through the AAAS Science and Technology Policy Fellowship at USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. Jen is excited to share the power of biotechnology in agricultural production, and looks forward to seeing new products like non-browning fruits and nutrient-dense vegetables come to market.



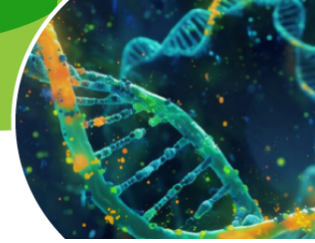
### **Jianmei (Jamie) Zhu – FDA**

Jamie Zhu is a Regulatory Review Scientist at FDA Office of Food Chemical Safety, Dietary Supplements & Innovation, Human Foods Program. She manages the review of safety assessments of foods from new plant varieties and serves as the FDA's liaison to industry stakeholders. Jamie received her Ph.D. in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology from Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health in 2012. She worked on risk assessment of food allergens at FDA before joining the biotechnology team in 2015.



### **Jason Dietz – FDA**

Jason Dietz is the lead for cross-cutting biotechnology-related activities in FDA's Human Foods Program (HFP). In this role he regularly provides technical and policy input to HFP and its interagency partners on food biotechnology issues related to food safety and regulation, food labeling, genome editing, international trade and media and scientific communication. Jason Dietz has more than 25 years of experience with the regulation of food ingredients, innovative foods, and food biotechnology products.



## Session 7 (continued)



### **Subray Hegde** – *USDA-APHIS*

Subray Hegde is the Director of Biotechnology Risk Analysis Programs, part of Biotechnology Regulatory Services (BRS) within the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) at the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). His program authorizes permits for interstate movement, importation, and field testing of genetically engineered organisms, and approves petitions for deregulation. Subray Hegde is also engaged in international capacity-building activities related to biotechnology regulations. He holds a BSc in Agriculture and a PhD in Plant Breeding and Genetics from the University of Agricultural Sciences, Bangalore, India.



### **Mike Mendelsohn** – *EPA*

Mike Mendelsohn is chief of the United States Environmental Protection Agency's Emerging Technologies Branch in the Biopesticides and Pollution Prevention Division of the Office of Pesticide Programs and manages plant-incorporated protectants such as Bt corn, RNAi, genetically engineered microorganisms, genetically engineered mosquitoes, and other pesticide emerging technologies such as Wolbachia infected mosquitoes. Mike has been with EPA for over 30 years and worked in the risk assessment and risk management of biopesticides, as well as conventional and antimicrobial/biocide pesticides.