

Meeting Summary: Sixth Meeting of NAPDC Data Governance Workgroup

Date: October 23, 2025

Attendees

Victor E Cabrera, Ziwen Yu, Amy Charkowski, Ben Craker, Dan TerAvest, Scout Calvert, Yefab Nian, Yaguang Zhang, Samuel Abebrese, Val Kovalsky, Nasima Subedi, Pei-Ying Chen, Dan Lussier.

Facilitators NPCC

Sofia Castellanos, Kristen Wright, and Prabhas Pokharel

Executive Summary

The sixth meeting of the NAPDC Data Governance Workgroup centered on reviewing and aiming to finalize the NAPDC Ag Data Principles and begin to translate them into practical tools and templates. The group refined language around agreements, participation and co-design, education, and trust, emphasizing the importance of realistic implementation and clear communication with farmers and companies. Members reached consensus on the phrasing for most of the key principles.

Discussion also began on operational tools such as template agreements, checklists, and educational materials to support consistent application of these principles. The group agreed that the template agreement should be prioritized for development. Members will work to develop tools between meetings and reconvene to review progress ahead of the December 11 meeting, with opportunities for farmer feedback.

Opening Check-In

Sofia reviewed the purpose and structure of the session and the group's progress in the three-step model:

1. Identify issues/challenges – *completed*
2. Translate into principles – *current stage*
3. Map principles to tools and resources – *next phase*

The session goal was to approve final wording for the Ag Data Principles and brainstorm tools to support their implementation.

Workgroup Conversation

Refinement of Principles

The group reviewed the proposed principles and worked to refine and build agreement for each. Group discussion points were as follows:

Intent and Purpose:

There is a need to clarify the intent of data collection and use, academic versus commercial, while Victor noted that such details appear later in documentation.

Scope and Practicality:

Some cautioned against making principles overly aspirational, recommending focus on agricultural data use rather than broad research contexts. The group discussed co-design with farmers and agreed it may not always be possible and that it should remain aspirational given real-world constraints in research participation.

Ownership and Trust:

Some mentioned that trust is essential for farmer participation in data co-ops, and discussed the technical and legal challenges of ensuring data ownership. The issue was reframed as one of choice, emphasizing farmer autonomy in how data is used.

After discussion, the group agreed on the principle wording:

“Acknowledge and respect the ownership interests of farmers and other data contributors.”

Farmer Education and Extension Partnerships

The importance of identifying target audiences was highlighted, particularly data-collecting companies, when implementing principles. Strategies for farmer and researcher education were discussed with a recommendation made for keeping principles concise, focusing on commitments to training and resources without over-specifying implementation.

Tools and Templates Discussion

Sofia facilitated brainstorming on potential tools to operationalize the Ag Data Principles. She provided the group with some example tools to inspire their thinking, including:

- Agreements: Standard clauses, consent language, deletion/exit terms
- Checklists/Workflows: Intake and purpose-match forms

- Templates/Training Materials: For consistent implementation

Key Tools and Ideas Proposed by the Group:

- A web portal on the NAPDC site offering role-based access to tools and resources.
- A participation badge system, similar to Ag Data Transparency logos, for partners adopting the principles.
- Focus on immediate, practical tools usable in universities this year.
- A template agreement that reflected the principles the group had identified.
- An audit template to assess adherence to principles.

Sofia: Asked the group to also consider whether farmer literacy and accessible materials would be important to include. The group agreed to focus on developing the template agreement as the key tool.

Next Steps

- Sofia will email a volunteer call for those willing to work on building tools before the December 11 meeting.
- Yaguang will share the refined principles with collaborating farmers for feedback, with full group approval.

The meeting adjourned at 10:34 am.