SAM: Sustainable Anthracnose Management for Watermelon and Cucumber Growers in the Eastern U.S.

Meeting Minutes- March 25, 2025

Objective 2v: Evaluate host response in varietal selections and core PI collection of watermelon and cucumber lines.

Personnel attended – Dr. Bhabesh Dutta, Navjot Kaur, Dr. Cecilia Mcgregor, Dr. Geoffrey M. Meru, Dr. Chandrasekhar Kousik, and Simarnjot Kaur.

Co-PI Meru and Co-PI Mcgregor mentioned that they have received the seeds of cucumber and watermelon lines.

PD Dutta and **Co-PI Kousik** suggested the use of one aggressive local isolate for inoculations in breeding trials and that isolate should be included in genome sequencing and race typing project.

Inoculation protocols and experimental setup – The group agreed to use 3 replicates with 2 rows plants (6 plants per row). One plant in the center will be inoculated with one isolate (Isolate that is isolated from specific host should be used, for example, *Colletotrichum* spp. isolated from watermelon host should be used for screening the watermelon core collection and a separate isolate, isolated from cucumber should be used to inoculate cucumber germplasm lines). The protocol for inoculum preparation and standardization was shared separately.

PD Dutta suggested to spray for downy mildew when needed but mentioned to avoid sprays recommended for anthracnose management.

Navjot confirmed the GA isolates that were previously used in irrigation and varietal trials, these isolates are included in genome sequencing and race-typing projects.

PD Dutta requested all the SCRI-SAM team members to take pictures of the trials and share it with Pooja for the project web page.