

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

Meeting Minutes- February 6, 2026

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

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

Co-PI Kousik led the meeting and discussed the idea of sharing the multilocation data of watermelon core collection anthracnose screening trial.

Co-PI Meru and Co-PI McGregor also shared similar interests and planned to share the data with Dr. Kousik for initial evaluation of all watermelon core collection breeding lines.

Dr. Kousik will lead the analysis to select the top-20 best performing lines for further anthracnose screening under field conditions and greenhouse evaluations. He mentioned the immediate need is to pull together the data and select the best lines for further field evaluation at a smaller scale in the year 2026.

Co-PI McGregor is planning to conduct a greenhouse evaluation of best performing lines in 2026.

Manuscript Discussion- All Co-PI agreed to publish the watermelon core collection data together. Graduate students and post docs who worked on the anthracnose projects will get acknowledged and first author papers. All Co-PI will revisit the manuscript publication, and other details.

Co-PI Kousik mentioned that cucumber core collection lines are getting ready and he will get in touch with other Co-PIs regarding the shipment.

Navjot will organize a meeting (last week of February) for graduate students and post docs working on breeding aspects of the project for further communication and discussions among them.