

MPGA Board Meetings

Summary of Minutes

Board Meeting – February 5, 2003

Bean Breeder Position Update

The hiring process is underway for a Bean Breeder at the AAFC Morden Station. MPGA will participate in the hiring process and it is hoped the position will be filled by mid-April.

Alberta Pulse Growers Annual Meeting

Don Sissons and Steve Hicks attended the AGM of Alberta Pulse held in conjunction with their provincial Farm Tech show. At this meeting, producers passed a resolution that the Alberta Pulse Growers Board initiate the process of increasing the check-off levy on pulses from 0.5% to 1% of sales. If this resolution is ratified both Alberta and Saskatchewan will have 1% levies. While attending this meeting Steve and Don met with the Western Pulse Growers to discuss issues of producers security, crop insurance and challenges of maintaining an accurate producer database.

Pulse Canada Research

Committee chair Steve Hicks attended the Pulse Canada Research meeting held in Saskatoon. Pulse Canada has put together a 3-year plan that combines marketing, policy, and research. Pulse Canada is the only organization that has used the five pillars of the APF in development of their strategic plan. This committee worked together to identify gaps in Pulse research to avoid duplication and ensure a coordinated approach to research. This research plan will be forwarded to Ottawa for funding approval.

Annual Meeting – February 6, 2003

The Annual Meeting was held in Morden in conjunction with the Manitoba Bean Symposium. Elected to the board for a 3-year term were Tom Kieper, Jack Froese and Murray Froebe. Dallas Watt retired from the board after serving a 6-year term. The board was very appreciative of the expertise and dedication Dallas contributed to the association over the years. There were no resolutions submitted for consideration.

Re-organization Meeting – February 7, 2003

Elected to the 2003 executive were Don Sissons as President and Steve Hicks as Vice President. Danny Penner will remain as Past President and Jack Froese was appointed as advisor to the executive. The 2003 Committees were struck and approved by motion for the up coming year.

Policy Advisor Position

MPGA is becoming increasingly involved in policy issues that pertain to the pulse industry. As the industry grows so do the issues. The board has recognized the need for additional staff requirement and has therefore passed a motion to identify a candidate and set a budget needed to fill the position of policy analyst.

Board Meeting Minutes – March 24, 2003

Policy Analyst

Linda MacNair has been hired on a contract basis to fill the position of policy analyst. Her duties will be to provide relevant background information on policy issues as determined by the board.

By-Laws

MPGA executive will revise the by-laws of the association and present them to the board for review. Any changes will be presented at the 2004 Annual Meeting for approval.

Canadian Special Crops Association Annual Meeting

Don Sissons and Danny Penner attended the AGM of CSCA along with 169 other delegates and 21 Mexican buyers and trade members. They both reported that MPGA is making an impression on the industry. They received numerous comments of praise regarding our involvement in harmonization issues and the assertive proactive approach MPGA has taken on a number of pulse issues. They were able to meet and have

open discussions with the trade. Meetings with the Mexican delegates identified that the Mexican buyer is looking for a whiter background pinto bean and a shinier black bean. We need to relay this information to the research community for incorporation into new varieties.

Mexican Trade Mission

Jack Froese and Lincoln Wolfe participated in a 13-day trade mission to Mexico along with 10 other Manitoba business representatives. Minister Wowchuk and members of her senior management team were also part of the mission. Once again the Mexican buyer was requesting a bright background pinto bean and a shiny coat black bean. Jack and Lincoln traveled through Monterrey, Guadalajara, Mexico City and Durango. They visited everything from farmer cooperatives to government agencies.

Northarvest Report

Steve Hicks reported on the meeting he and Mark Goodwin of Pulse Canada attended with Northarvest Bean Growers Association. This meeting was to discuss pesticide harmonization issues between Canada, U.S. and Mexico.

Bean Breeder Position

Applications have been received and the selection process is underway. MPGA will participate in the selection process.

Environmental Farm Planning meeting

Manitoba Rural Adaptation Council has funded a study to develop a made in Manitoba template for Environmental Farm Plans and Don Sissons and Tom Kieper each attended one of the focus meetings. MPGA is concerned that the cost and liability associated with such a plan will be borne by the producer with no hope of an offsetting improvement in returns from the marketplace. The board's position is that if the federal government requires each farm to develop an Environmental Farm Plan, then the government must be responsible on an ongoing basis for the costs of time, additional paperwork, structural changes and liability that farmers will incur in participating in such a program. A letter will be sent to Minister VanClief expressing the views of the board.

Shrinkage

Effective August 1, 2003, 0% shrink will be assessed against dried peas, lentils, chickpeas, canary seed and beans. MPGA supports the Canadian Grain Commission's decision to reduce the shrink level to 0%. We believe this will encourage efficiency at the processing level and encourage and reward producers who deliver a clean, high quality product to the processor.

Provincial Minor Use Coordinator

MPGA will continue to lobby the Provincial government to provide a full time Provincial Minor Use Coordinator that will work on behalf of all commodity groups. In 2002, AAFC announced \$54 Million would be made available over the next six years to the Pest Management Review Agency (PMRA) to give Canadian producers better access to minor-use and reduced-risk pesticides. This funding would provide Canadian farmers with better access to a broader range of minor use pesticides, in particular, those with reduced risks to health and the environment. All other provinces have at least a half time if not full-time Minor Use Coordinator. Significant staff time needs to be dedicated to this position in order to receive input from grower groups and to communicate that information back to the grower groups. The PMUC needs to deal with trade irritants, harmonization issues under NAFTA and facilitate opportunities related to market access.

Domestic Promotion

A motion was passed to develop a *bean soup mix and recipe package* for directors to hand out to restaurants, grocery stores, institutions etc., to increase consumer awareness and consumption of Manitoba pulses.