

**Summary Minutes
Seed Program Advisory Committee
Marabeau Park Hotel
Monday, November 17, 2008**

IN ATTENDANCE:

Seed Program Advisory Committee Members:

Ken Eastwell, Washington State University
Rich Gilbert, Rainier Seeds, Inc.
Jerry Robinson, Washington State Crop Improvement
Alan Yirak, Co-Ag Seed

Washington State Department of Agriculture Staff

Dennis Hannapel, Assistant Director, Commodity Inspection
Fawad Shah, Seed Program Manager
Victor Shaul, Operations Manger
Larry Krueger, Seed Inspection Supervisor
Joyce Little, Office Support Supervisor

Guests

Larry Gady, Gady Farm
David Johnson, Jacklin Seed/Simplot
Ron Whittum, WSCIA Foundation Seed Service
Paul Hedgpeth, Columbia River Seed
Jory Iverson, Columbia River Seed.
Ken Fuchs, Co-Ag Seed
Graydon Robinson, Agri-Quality Testing

MINUTES:

Operational Review

Fawad Shah opened the meeting by requesting a moment of silence in memory of former board member and good friend, Myron Lightbody. Fawad started the agenda by briefly explaining the financial report. He stated that the fund balance is at \$482,785.78 as of September 30, 2008. Fawad compared this balance with some of the previous month's balances and explained that this comparison can be seen on the comparison report included in the packet. This report shows a month by month comparison of fund balances starting in January 2007. Fawad explained that his intention has always been to wisely reinvest some of the fund back into the program to better serve our clientele. He mentioned items such as buying a new 4 X 4 vehicle each year for the past three years as well as purchasing a used pickup with approximately 30,000 miles on it this past season for the seed inspectors. He explained that this past season \$26,000.00 was spent on five new ergonomic microscopes for the lab. Fawad explained that it was necessary to upgrade our tag printing system this past year due to the difficulty in finding parts and increased maintenance costs in keeping an 18 year old system running. He explained that we now pay 3 cents for each tag and this grants us the use of the new more efficient printers at no additional cost. Investing in training for staff, keeping updated equipment for staff use and sending staff members to meetings and conferences were other examples

of investing back into the program to increase the services we can provide. Fawad related that two of our laboratory staff attended the Federal Seed School in Gastonia, NC this past year and five of our inspectors along with Victor Shaul attended Federal seed samplers training workshop and now quality to sample seed for ISTA. Fawad explained that Nancy Jones and Victor also attending training for Canadian seed Grader school at OSU. This training will save our stakeholders money by eliminating the need to have samples tested twice for shipment into Canada. Other areas of training mentioned was the corn disease symposium and vegetable seed disease training.

Fawad then gave a progress report on accreditation and explained that an ISO consultant has been hired to help us achieve this goal due to the limited time the staff can devote to working on the project. Fawad explained deadlines have been set for projects to be completed and for the audit and the target is to be fully accredited by December of 2009 or sooner.

Fawad then gave some commodity acreage comparisons as well as sample numbers and comparisons and an update on additions and changes in the Seed Program staff. This report shows total producing acres certified by the seed program up in 2008 to 95,260 acres with an additional 30,672 acres inspected for phyto purposes. Grass was the largest commodity certified at 40,325 acres followed by alfalfa/red clover at 13,110 acres. Fawad also gave an update on the number of samples being tested in comparison to last year stating that this year we have received 7,315 samples compared to 6,550 last season. Fawad then gave an update on progress made by lab personnel and explained that four of our lab staff recently became certified purity and germination analysts and also became RST's. This brings our total RST's to six which is more than any other lab in the country. Fawad then discussed how the training goals are progressing with our lab personnel.

Certification Issues:

The next item of discussion was the quality timothy seed program. Victor gave some background on how the program came about explaining that he was contacted about a year ago by the Kittitas County Seed Growers Association about the need to establish such a program which would become a mechanism for timothy seed growers and distributors to identify higher quality timothy seed lots. He explained that this program was modeled after the sod quality program for grass. Victor explained that the new rule for quality timothy takes effect December 15, 2008. Under this program timothy seed lots will be subjected to a 50 gram examination where all contaminating seed will be identified. Lots that are free from crop and weed seeds detrimental to timothy hay production will be declared Quality Timothy Seed and eligible to be tagged with an orange Quality Timothy seed tag.

Victor explained the progress that has been made on the pre-variety germplasm or source ID program. He explained that currently Washington State does not have any standards to cover this program. Victor stated that last June a meeting was held to start developing field and seed standards for this seed with the goal to assure that standards will guarantee that what is on the certification tag represents what is in the bag. Victor explained that this program will probably take up to three years to complete.

Fawad then discussed BLM samples, their impact on the program, and some of the problems we encounter such as multiple testing of the same lot, and the inability to get the information needed to complete the testing and reporting process.

Larry Krueger then talked about the plots that are being established at the Prosser Experiment Station to better help identify pre-variety germplasm as well as other range grass material. New varieties are planted and grown out in plots. This gives the inspectors a means of having a comparison of what the varieties should look like compared to what they are seeing in the field. Jerry Robinson inquired as to how other states handle the situation. Discussion followed on some of the questions and problems that developing standards will eliminate such as limiting generations, multiple name changes on the same material, variety descriptions and other areas of concern.

Victor reported that the acreage report is now on our website. He reported that the seedling acreage would also be posted there sometime in January.

Assistant Director's Report:

Dennis Hannapel then gave an update on issues from Olympia. He explained that 60% of the Department of Agriculture's programs are self-funding and will have less impact from the budget cuts. He mentioned that the Seed Program is 100% self funded. He talked a little about the Director of Agriculture position now being held on an interim basis by Bob Gore until a permanent appointment is made by the Governor. He talked about the WA Association of Wheat Growers convention that he recently attended specifically about the research project summaries. He briefly talked about the problem encountered this year with exporting soft white wheat due to the protein content being too high and talked about other agricultural commodities. Dennis recognized Fawad's excellent job of managing the seed program and commended the seed program staff for their hard work and dedication.

Other Business:

Fawad mentioned some new challenges coming up for the program such as the increase in corn acreage and the relocation of the Syngenta plant into the Pasco area. He stated that WA would meet with OR certification and Department of Agriculture staff to determine who would handle corn acreage planted in Oregon.

Fawad thanked everyone for attending. Meeting was adjourned.