

 **Board of Directors | Meeting Summary**

November 19, 2019
*Indianapolis, Ind.*

**Directors Present**

Keira Franz, National Association of Wheat Growers; Suzy Friedman, Environmental Defense Fund; Michelle French, ADM; Jonathan Guerts, Keystone; Stefani Grant, Unilever; Margaret Henry, PepsiCo; Diane Herndon, Nestle Purina; Melissa Ho, World Wildlife Fund; Brandon Hunnicutt, National Corn Growers Association; Mark Isbell, USA Rice Federation; Michelle Nutting, Nutrien; Jeremy Peters, National Association of Conservation Districts; Ryan Sirolli, Cargill; Jun Zhu, University of Arkansas

**Staff and Consultants**

Rod Snyder, Field to Market; Betsy Hickman, Field to Market; Allison Thomson, Field to Market; Paul Hishmeh, Field to Market; Kelly Young, Field to Market; Carter Purcell, Field to Market; Jamie Richards, Field to Market; Ray Stewart, Thomson Coburn; Bridgette McAdoo, World Wildlife Fund; Bob Burden, Serecon; Lydia Holmes, USA Rice Federation

Motion

* *A motion was made by Michelle Nutting and seconded by Brandon Hunnicutt to approve the consent agenda. Motion passed unanimously.*

Next Steps and Action Items

* *Next Step: Send members the revised Process-Based Standard in December for a 45-day member comment period.*
* *Next Step: Following introduction of licensing fee and membership dues structure at the sector meetings, compile feedback and review in 2020.*

Proceedings

 **Opening**

Board Chair, Stefani Grant called the meeting to order at 8:05 a.m. and Ray Stewart read the Antitrust Statement. Rod Snyder reviewed old business from the October Board retreat.

**Consent Agenda**

The consent agenda included review and approval of the meeting minutes from October 9-10, 2019; appointment to fill a co-chair vacancy on the Metrics Committee – Amy Jacobs, The Nature Conservancy; and review and approval of one new membership application.

* Proctor & Gamble (Brands & Retail, Full)

*A motion was made by Michelle Nutting and seconded by Brandon Hunnicutt to approve the consent agenda. Motion passed unanimously.*

**Finance and Operations Update**

*Finance* – Rod reviewed the August financials and reported cash on hand of $976,076 with revenue at $2,210,248 and expenses of $2,124,223. He next reviewed the new audit firm approved by the Executive Committee, UHY for the FY 2019 audit.

**Review November Plenary and General Assembly Meeting Agendas**

Rod reviewed agendas for the plenary and general assembly. He also shared a list of invited guests and prospective members with the Board and asked for their assistance in welcoming these guests throughout the meetings. Next, Rod reviewed the sector meeting agendas and business including Board elections, revisions to the goals statements and licensing fee considerations. The Board discussed some key questions to consider in the sector meetings including:

* + Current licensing emphasizes FTM’s role in claims verification; however, staff will have less involvement on verifying claims with more information publicly available in the Project Directory
	+ Other kinds of FTM trainings and services aren’t currently valued in our program (e.g. staff time spent on project creation, data analysis)
	+ QDMP licenses need to clarify onboarding fees vs. annual renewal fees, and if volume of data impacts costs
	+ Non-member participation in projects is currently very limited; request for alternative pricing structure for smaller companies who source volumes of crops from registered projects or companies accessing aggregate data (e.g. per acre)
	+ Risk to future FTM budgets if companies shift to Associate Membership for cost savings; consider motivations for companies to remain full members

The Board discussed the potential to include acreage limits or total project limits for associate members and possible per-acre fees for smaller non-members. Rod reminded the Board that any changes to the dues would require approval by the General Assembly and would change the bylaws.

**Strategic Plan Implementation: Dashboard of Key Measures of Success**

Rod reviewed an update of the strategic plan dashboard and the Board discussed the status of each goal. He noted that the total number of projects and acres in 2019 won’t be fully known until April 30, 2020.

**Update on Revisions to the Draft Process-Based Standard**Betsy reviewed a new Accelerator project checklist as part of the Board’s request for streamlined implementation materials. She noted that these forms have been shared with members currently looking at implementing or transitioning projects and have received positive feedback on the changes. Staff is also revising the project handbook to assist with implementation. The goal of these documents is to make it easy for members to understand and execute projects while still demonstrating to external stakeholders the strength and credibility of Field to Market’s approach.

Betsy requested that the new member comment period be limited to 45 days to allow for time to compile and respond ahead of the Board of Directors meeting in late January. She then reviewed the timeline for the Continuous Improvement Accelerator and Process-Based Standard into 2020 with a discussion for Project Administrators and QDMPs scheduled for February and a public launch in May. The Board asked for the revised Process-Based Standard to be opened for member comment the first week of December and for staff to send reminders and communications throughout the comment period to encourage participation.

*Next Step: Send members the revised Process-Based Standard in December for a 45-day member comment period.*

**Update on Development of New Digital Properties**

Betsy walked through the project directory including search, map, member project and project management features. She also demonstrated a prototype of the Partnership Exchange and asked the Board to submit their information to be included in the Partnership Exchange in time for its launch in December.

**Key Harmonization and Alignment Updates**

*Field to Market Canada*

Stefani introduced Bob Burden of Serecon who has been working on Field to Market Canada*.* The public announcement took place on November 12. FTM Canada will operate as a stand-alone organization; however, during its first year, Field to Market plans to provide support and assistance where needed.

*Sustainable Rice Platform (SRP)*

Lydia Holmes of USA Rice Federation reviewed the Sustainable Rice Platform (SRP) and its current implementation in the U.S. USA Rice is interested in aligning SRP with Field to Market in the U.S. and is seeking approval from the SRP secretariat. They would consider hiring a contractor to finalize the benchmarking process.

*Potato Sustainability Alliance (PSA)*

Rod updated the Board that PSA had hired a new executive director, Laura Scandurra and that the organization is undergoing a strategic refresh including looking at external metrics organizations such as Field to Market rather than continuing to develop their own. PSA may be interested in pursuing an MOU with Field to Market, although the details still need to be defined.

*Sustainable Ag Working Group (SAWG)*

Betsy gave a brief overview of SAWG and noted that representatives from three of the founding organizations (Hancock Natural Resource Group, Manomet and The Conservation Fund) would be speaking during the plenary session. SAWG is developing a standard for sustainable agriculture with a specific focus on farmland investors and are looking for opportunities for synergy with Field to Market.

**Review Upcoming Meetings/Events**

Rod and Stefani reviewed the proposed 2020 meetings calendar and action items from the meeting. Rod thanked Stefani for her leadership during her two-term tenure as Board Chair.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:45 a.m.

***Additional Business***

*On December 9, Field to Market received a membership application for Ajinomoto (Associate). The Board approved the membership via email vote on December 11, 2019. (Unanimous)*