

**Board of Directors | Meeting Summary**

October 11-12, 2017

Oak Spring Garden Foundation  
Upperville, VA

Present

**Directors**

Keira Franz (National Association of Wheat Growers), Suzy Freidman (EDF), Stefani Grant (Unilever), Margaret Henry (PepsiCo), Franklin Holley (WWF), Marty Muenzmaier (Cargill), Debbie Reed (C-AGG), Jennifer Shaw (Syngenta), Bob Young (American Farm Bureau Federation), Jun Zhu (University of Arkansas)

**Staff and Consultants**

Lexi Clark (Field to Market), Gerry De Leon (Raffa), Chisara Ehiemere (Field to Market), Kate Fairman (Field to Market), Brian Fischer (Houston Engineering, by phone), Betsy Hickman (Field to Market), Paul Hishmeh (Field to Market), Janet McDaid (Raffa, by phone), Moira McDonald (Walton Family Foundation), Rod Snyder (Field to Market), Ray Stewart (Thompson Coburn), Allison Thomson (Field to Market), Kelly Young (Field to Market)

Motions:

*Michelle Nutting moves to approve the June minutes. Suzy Friedman seconds the motion. The motion is passed unanimously.*

*Michelle moves to approve Redox Chemical as a member. Bob Young seconds. Motion is approved unanimously.*

*Margaret Henry moves to approve publication of recommended elements of the FTM standard. Debbie Reed seconds. Motion is approved unanimously.*

*Bob moves to approve the 2018 budget with Executive Committee ability to reduce or eliminate certain expenditures depending on strength of fundraising by December 2017. Debbie seconds. Motion is approved unanimously.*

*Franklin moves to authorize Rod to move forward MOU with the U.S. Roundtable for Sustainable Beef and pursue future roundtable discussions between members of both FTM and USRSB, to maximize grower engagement and impact. Suzy seconds. Motion is approved unanimously.*

*Margaret moves to approve Jennifer James as Grower of the Year. Keira seconds. Motion is approved unanimously.*

*Franklin moves to approve Kellogg’s Origins Great Lakes Wheat Fieldprint Project as Collaboration of the Year. Marty seconds. Motion is approved unanimously.*

Next Steps and Action Items

NEXT STEP: Staff to inform the Board of interested members and those under recruitment at future meetings.

NEXT STEPS: Betsy to create a meta document that summarizes all public facing components of Field to Market’s program and standard.

NEXT STEPS: By the February 2018 Board meeting, FTM staff to create a sample page on the FTM website to contain at least a summary of all components of our program and standard.

NEXT STEPS: A review committee of external and internal members will be created to review public facing documents and point out any necessary improvements.

NEXT STEPS: Paul and Rod to figure out the annual maintenance and enhancement cost of Fieldprint Platform Version 3.0.

NEXT STEPS: Create a process for surveying potential data partners on opportunities and barriers to integrating with Fieldprint Platform Version 3.0.

NEXT STEP: Paul will share the project plan created with Houston Engineering with the Board.

NEXT STEPS: Moira to join the committee on transparency of FTM’s standard.

NEXT STEPS: FTM staff to meet with foundation partners on what they need for Fieldprint Platform Version 3.0.

NEXT STEPS: Raffa and FTM staff to edit the budget to include a $5,000 line item for “Dues and Subscriptions” in the 2018 budget.

NEXT STEPS: Raffa and FTM staff to adjust the cash overlay for 2018 regarding the Fieldprint Platform Version 3.0.

NEXT STEPS: FTM staff to provide the Board with a “bare minimum” budget from Houston Engineering at November Board meeting.

NEXT STEPS: Rod to convene discussions with USRSB to include Franklin, Suzy, Jennifer, Marty.

NEXT STEPS: FTM staff to include MOUs with other sustainability programs on the FTM website for purposes of transparency.

NEXT STEPS: Margaret will connect with the SAI Platform Executive Committee to discuss next steps on verification questions.

NEXT STEPS: Board to form subcommittee on revising the 50 million acres goal.

NEXT STEPS: A subcommittee is formed to explore options surrounding Input Data Claims. An update will be presented at the February Board meeting.

Proceedings

**Opening**

Franklin Holley opens the meeting. Rod introduces Marguerite Hardin from Oak Spring Garden Foundation. Marguerite gives a little background on Oak Spring and logistics for the location. The Oak Spring Garden Foundation is endowed by the estate of Bunny and Paul Mellon. The program areas for Oak Spring include gardens and horticulture practice; plants for human well-being; botanical, garden and landscape art; and plant studies. Marguerite asks the Field to Market (FTM) Board for any advice or suggestions for their programming, particularly as it relates to sustainability.

Stefani Grant asks Ray Stewart to read the anti-trust statement to the Board. Stefani asks the Board for any changes or corrections to the August 2017 minutes. None are given.

*Michelle Nutting moves to approve the June minutes. Suzy Friedman seconds the motion. The motion is passed unanimously.*

Rod reviews old business from prior Board meetings. Many of the items on the list of old business will be covered in depth during this meeting. One item of old business was asking Ryan Kurtz of Cotton Incorporated to co-chair the Education and Outreach Committee. Ryan accepted. Staff conducted a membership-wide webinar on Fieldprint Platform Version 3.0 on September 28. The final version of the Impact Claims Protocol was emailed out to the full membership in August.

Rod provides a finance and operations update to the group. He asks Keira Franz to give an update about the National Wheat Growers Association (NAWG). Keira will now be the Board member from NAWG, taking over for David Schemm. She will retain her seat on the Verification Committee, and a wheat grower will be appointed to the Awards and Recognition Committee in David’s place.

For finance updates, Rod informs the group that Field to Market has $845,586 cash on hand. Revenue from January to August is at $1,805,911 and expenses at $1,390,081. Rod mentions that both of the FTM accountants, Gerry De Leon and Janet McDaid, will be participating in the 2018 budget discussion later in the day.

For operation update, Rod starts with an update on FTM office space. Currently, the FTM office lease runs through January 2019. The FTM staff has outgrown the current office, and is working with a real estate broker to find a new office space. The Meyer Group, which represents tenants only, has previously represented several other agriculture organizations in DC. Rod has been in constant communication with the brokers and architect from The Meyer Group to plan for future needs. It would be ideal to have a conference space that can host Board and Committee meetings. A question is asked on what the cost increase for a larger space would be; Rod answers that a fifty percent increase in office space budget is included in the proposed budget for FY 2018.

Stefani welcomes Betsy Hickman back from her maternity leave.

**Membership Update**

Kate Fairman presents one membership application for Board consideration. This is for Redox Chemical, an agribusiness company out of Idaho. Redox is applying for Full membership. They are very interested in the research aspects of FTM, and with the possibility of partnering with university members.

*Michelle moves to approve Redox Chemical as a member. Bob Young seconds. Motion is approved unanimously.*

Kate then covers 2017 membership growth for FTM. With the addition of Redox, FTM is up to 134 member organizations. This is a 15% increase from January 2017. Kate explains that there are several large companies that are interested in membership, but they are waiting for progress on Fieldprint Platform Version 3.0 before joining. She expects membership expansion, specifically in the Brands and Retail sector, to increase in 2018.

Kate and Rod present on upcoming outreach and engagement opportunities for FTM staff and Board members. Michelle is thanked for attending Manitoba Agribusiness Council meeting in December in Winnipeg on behalf of FTM staff.

NEXT STEP: Staff to inform the Board of interested members and those under recruitment at future meetings.

**Intellectual Property Discussion**

Rod leads the discussion on intellectual property and transparency within FTM. This discussion will help inform business decisions for FTM. Chisara Ehiemere reminds the group that FTM is a subscriber to ISEAL Alliance, but not yet a member of ISEAL. She reviews the ISEAL Credibility Principles. Chisara urges the Board to consider what aspects of our Standard should be public facing. ISEAL has recommended FTM take steps to increase transparency.

Currently, the ISEAL standards code is in the process of being re-written. Chisara feels it is better to wait to more formally consult with them until that process more formally is complete. She also shares that ISEAL has hired a firm to look at outcomes-based sustainability metrics and standards to determine how they can be implemented within the ISEAL framework. The ISEAL Assurance Code Panel is meeting next week to talk about next steps.

A question is asked on if ISEAL has specified what “continuous improvement” means. Chisara answers that ISEAL is currently allowing FTM and other standards bodies the flexibility to create this definition.

A point is brought up that If you look at ISEAL’s membership, it consists of a lot of certification bodies, as well as programs that utilize practice based standards. A suggestion is made to have a Board to Board conversation with ISEAL rather than just staff to staff. This could help the Board of ISEAL to understand more of the vision that FTM is trying to accomplish in the U.S.

Rod then moves on to the FTM Assets Memo, which was provided to the Board as a pre-read. Chisara recently distilled a longer memo on FTM assets down to a one-page chart. She created an Intellectual Capital Summary, which identifies which items are public facing, what could become public, and what the current access for each item is (members, licensees, public). Chisara walks through the document item by item. A suggestion is made to streamline the FTM Assets Memo to use consistent language (asset/intellectual property) and remove opinions. This document could be rewritten to be public facing.

Stefani asks for any concerns over the proposed documents being made public. A question is asked about whether the entire Fieldprint Project Handbook or just the summary of the Fieldprint Project Handbook would be made public. Rod says that it is the thought of FTM staff that the entire handbook is a benefit of membership, so just a summary would be public. A comment is made that the entire handbook should be public as it helps with transparency. Betsy responds that perhaps methodology and format can be public, but some resources should be reserved as a benefit of membership.

Betsy is going to create a systems document provide an overview of these resources for the public. A suggestion is made to create some sort of architecture to have all documents updated at once. If one thing is changed in the Fieldprint Project Handbook, it would trigger changes elsewhere. A point is made that the only people who will really need to access the handbook are new members. Having handbook as a member resource could be attractive to a new member. Another point is made that it would be difficult to create a Fieldprint Project with just the handbook, as you would need other resources, like reporting that is on the member portal.

A suggestion is made to create tip sheets to increase/protect the member value, while still allowing transparency for those outside FTM. Rod suggestions that perhaps FTM should compile everything public facing, excluding the handbook, and see what it amount to. He suggests that FTM staff work with web developers to mock up a public/transparency page on the website to show the Board.

A council of external and internal reviews will be formed to look at the public facing documents and see if there are any holes. Betsy volunteers Franklin to assist with this process.

Rod asks if ISEAL would be willing to review the public facing documents. Betsy says that they would be willing to, for a fee.

NEXT STEPS: Betsy to create a meta document that summarizes all public facing components of Field to Market’s program and standard.

NEXT STEPS: By the February 2018 Board meeting, FTM staff to create a sample page on the FTM website to contain at least a summary of all components of our program and standard.

NEXT STEPS: A review committee of external and internal members will be created to review public facing documents and point out any necessary improvements.

*Margaret Henry moves to approve publication of recommended elements of the FTM standard. Debbie Reed seconds. Motion is approved unanimously.*

The discussion moves to the topic of open source technology. At first, the conversation focuses on how open source will affect the FTM business model. Rod tries to define open and/or shared source development options and how it will affect or help members. A question is asked about how Paul Hishmeh is able to tap into expertise and feedback from FTM members. For example, Allison Thomson has access to the Metrics Committee and the Science Advisory Council. Rod says that perhaps, down the line, it would make sense for a Technology Committee to be formed. He says that FTM needs to get over the initial hurdles of Fieldprint Platform Version 3.0 first. Perhaps governance processes that mirror metrics development could be put in place.

Concern is raised on how FTM’s current business model is based on revenue from membership, and that that may not be dependable for future funding. Rod says that he and Paul should work with the new Fieldprint Platform vendor, Houston Engineering, to determine the annual maintenance and enhancement costs of the Fieldprint Platform. A point is raised that dues cannot cover the cost of the enhancements to the Fieldprint Platform now; other revenue streams must be considered. Perhaps FTM can work with member organizations to figure out appropriate licensing costs as well.

NEXT STEPS: Paul and Rod to figure out the annual maintenance and enhancement cost of Fieldprint Platform Version 3.0.

**Fieldprint Platform 3.0 Updates**

Paul kicks off an update on Fieldprint Platform Version 3.0. FTM is now working with the new vendor, Houston Engineering. Brian Fischer is the project lead and manager for Houston Engineering. Brian introduces some of the Houston Engineering staff that FTM can expect to work with. Houston Engineering is also bringing on Keith Newhouse, retired FTM Board member, as a project advisor. Houston Engineering is based in Maple Grove, Minnesota.

Paul goes over some developments for the Fieldprint Platform. FTM’s former vendor, Zedx, has been acquired by BASF. The current agreement with Zedx/BASF carries through Dec 31, 2017. The transition will require migrating Fieldprint Platform version 2.5 over to a 3rd party hosting provider, like Amazon Web Services. Rod asks if that changeover can happen during a low traffic time, like Christmas. Paul would like to do it before then, so there is more time to work out problems, if needed, before the contract runs out. Paul and Brian are working with Amazon Web Services to price out the change. The Board had allocated money for this at a prior meeting.

Paul shares a tentative version 2.5 migration timeline to the group. FTM and Houston Engineering are working on a project plan, which will be shared at a later meeting. Paul was able to attend all of the September Committee meetings, where he was given feedback for what is needed in the Fieldprint Platform. One such suggestion was to create a surrogate program for those entering data on behalf of the grower. Paul is planning on having a meeting with stakeholders on November 13, prior to the FTM General Assembly to gain more feedback.

A question was asked on the sensitivity analysis done by Zedx a couple years ago, and if that would be useful moving forward. Rod answers that the analysis done by Zedx was significantly flawed. It would need to be redone when Fieldprint Platform Version 3.0 is created.

Paul goes over the outcomes from the Technology Advisory Council (TAC) on October 10. Discussions at this meeting centered on an overview of the entire Version 3.0 project, a preview of the NRCS Rotation Builder Standard, and a discussion of open source.

A question is asked if it’s the role of the TAC to alert Paul on new technologies. Paul says that it is his hope that the members of the TAC do keep an eye out for it.

NEXT STEPS: Create a process for surveying potential data partners on opportunities and barriers to integrating with Fieldprint Platform Version 3.0.

NEXT STEP: Paul will share the project plan created with Houston Engineering with the Board.

**Role in Philanthropy in Field to Market / Discussion with the Walton Family Foundation**

Rod leads off the conversation on the history of grants within FTM. Currently, grants account for 22% of FTM’s annual budget. The current grants include: the Walton Family Foundation, the Environmental Defense Fund, USDA-NRCS, the Turner Foundation, and the McKnight Foundation. FTM also recently completed a grant from the Pisces Foundation. FTM will continue discussions with the Pisces Foundation to see if they would be interested in working with the organization on any projects in 2018.

Rod introduces Moira McDonald from the Walton Family Foundation. WFF has been an integral supporter of FTM over the past few years, and Moira has facilitated introductions to many of the other grants FTM has received. Moira works in the environmental program at the Walton Family Foundation. The environmental program covers both saltwater and freshwater strategies. The current five-year goal of the freshwater program is to improve water by transitioning marginal land out of row crops, adopting practices to reduce nutrient runoff, and trap and treat nutrient runoff. They are currently in year two of their five-year goal.

Moira explains the strategy for supply chain. They are focused on strong metrics to measure performance, make claims, and translate to environmental outcomes. They are also focused on capacity to put projects on the ground and demonstrate demand for sustainability.

A question is asked on how the Walton Family Foundation demonstrates demand for sustainability. Moira answers that this is informed in a way by their work in fisheries. The demand for sustainable fishing came from suppliers rather than consumers.

A question is asked to Moira on what FTM is doing well and what things we should consider changing. She thinks that FTM is grappling with the big questions in sustainability and is doing it right. She thinks that it would bring in more foundation money if FTM had more transparency around the program. For foundations or people not engaged in ag sustainability, it can be hard to approach. FTM should spend time figuring out how to communicate what transparency is in the ag space. Rod asks Moira to serve on the committee for transparency for FTM assets.

NEXT STEPS: Moira to join the committee on transparency of FTM’s standard.

NEXT STEPS: FTM staff to meet with foundation partners on what they need for Fieldprint Platform Version 3.0.

**2018 Budget**

Gerry De Leon and Janet McDaid, FTM’s accountants from Raffa, join the group for a discussion on the 2018 budget. Raffa has worked with FTM for over two years. Rod reminds the Board that due to the changes to the by-laws, the Board is able to approve the budget without the full vote of the General Assembly.

The Board fundraising subcommittee met on August 24th and agreed upon Fieldprint Platform version 3.0 funding strategies.

Gerry walks the Board through the proposed 2018 budget. He provides an explanation of the depreciation of the Fieldprint Platform line item. The cash outlay for Fieldprint Platform Version 3.0 needs to be adjusted by Raffa.

The 2018 budget has a slight increase of $100,000 in dues contribution. This is fairly conservative due to concerns about revenue loss as a result of mergers in the agribusiness sector. The $100,000 in additional dues is equivalent to two new large corporate members. A question is asked about whether the complete funding for Fieldprint Platform 3.0 would need to be in hand by the end of 2017 for work to stay on track. Rod clarifies that we do not need 100% by December 31; however, delays in work could occur if we don’t stay ahead of our burn rate with Houston Engineering.

Rod explains that sponsorship line item was lowered for 2018 because any sponsorships for the Sustainable Agriculture Summit are booked through the Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy. Licensing revenue was increased from $25,000 in 2017 t0 $35,000 in 2018 due to the anticipated addition of more qualified data management partners. The “other funding sources” line item includes potential interest from MRCC in supporting the SPARC project. Government revenue line item was removed for 2018 because the USDA-NRCS grant will expire.

Rod then goes through the expense portion of the budget. FTM is considering hiring a full time Research Associate, and cutting IHS budget by 50% to accommodate for that. Steward Ramsey is FTM’s current contractor with IHS, and he would stay on in a more limited capacity. Fieldprint Platform 3.0 Development and Tech/Calculator are two different line items as the former relates to all new development and the latter is ongoing hosting and maintenance. Travel and meetings budgets will stay the same as 2017. Legal fees will be at the same level as 2017. Professional fees, which includes contractors, was scaled back for 2018 as consultant roles are transitioned to fulltime employees. The accounting line item was increased for 2018, partly because of increased tracking and reporting for foundations requires more hours. Smaller items like office supplies and telephone are the same as 2017.

A new item for the 2018 budget includes professional development for staff at $2,000 per staffer. FTM will maintain a $50,000 contingency for 2018. A concern is brought up on the on the amount in the miscellaneous line item. It is suggested that a line item called “dues and subscriptions” is created and $5,000 put into it to cover things like Mailchimp or DC Agribusiness Club dues for staff.

The conversation shifts to what FTM will do if funds come up short month-to-month with the Fieldprint Platform Version 3.0. One person suggested that the logical place to pull money if needed is in staff salaries and benefits. The group discussed whether FTM should wait to hire a Research Associate until all the funding is secured for Fieldprint Platform Version 3.0. Another suggestion is to hire a Research Associate on a one-year contract rather than create a permanent position.

A concern is brought up that FTM is in danger of not having the money for Fieldprint Platform Version 3.0 at the right time. The final quarter of 2017 is not ideal to be asking for money for 2018.

A question is asked on what the expected carryover from 2017 to 2018 would be. Gerry will look into it.

NEXT STEPS: Raffa and FTM staff to edit the budget to include a $5,000 line item for “Dues and Subscriptions” in the 2018 budget.

NEXT STEPS: Raffa and FTM staff to adjust the cash overlay for 2018 regarding the Fieldprint Platform Version 3.0.

*Bob moves to approve the 2018 budget with Executive Committee ability to reduce or eliminate certain expenditures depending on strength of fundraising by December 2017. Debbie seconds. Motion is approved unanimously.*

A question is asked about whether certain Fieldprint 3.0 funds have already committed, such as the Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy. If those funds are already committed, the crops that they are funding will need to be pushed to the forefront of the development timeline. A suggestion is made that Board members should be prepared to engage in short notice for budget discussions.

NEXT STEPS: FTM staff to provide the Board with a “bare minimum” budget from Houston Engineering at November Board meeting.

**Harmonization and Alignment Updates**

Rod provides an update to the Board about a proposed MOU with the U.S. Roundtable for Sustainable Beef (USRSB). USRSB has publicly signaled support for FTM’s metrics for feed production although a formal agreement is not in place. There is a call scheduled next week with cattle feeder companies and association in USRSB to discuss next steps. Rod is proposing to create an MOU with USRSB similar to the MOU signed with the Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy in 2015. It is suggested that the MOU specifically points out that USRSB has endorsed FTM metrics for feed production. The timeline for the MOU is November 2017.

*Franklin moves to authorize Rod to move forward MOU with the U.S. Roundtable for Sustainable Beef and pursue future roundtable discussions between members of both FTM and USRSB, to maximize grower engagement and impact. Suzy seconds. Motion is approved unanimously.*

NEXT STEPS: Rod to convene discussions with USRSB to include Franklin, Suzy, Jennifer, Marty.

NEXT STEPS: FTM staff to include MOUs with other sustainability programs on the FTM website for purposes of transparency.

Rod reports on a joint Executive Committee meeting between FTM and Stewardship Index for Specialty Crops (SISC) Steering Committee, held on September 18in San Francisco. Action items from this meeting include SISC to observe FTM Metrics Committee and FTM staff to observe the SISC Metrics Committee. SISC will explore the cost and feasibility of building a specialty crop calculator as an extension of the Fieldprint Platform. FTM continues to have questions about the amount of supply chain demand for SISC’s metrics. A comment is made that given FTM’s budget constraints in FY 2018, we should not commit any of our organization’s general revenue to advancing this alignment. SISC will need to begin developing its own business case. A question is raised if taking on specialty crops would make FTM more attractive to foundation partners.

Campbell’s Soup, who participated in the joint meeting, will try to run a tomato project through the Field to Market Supply Chain Sustainability Program with the intention to understand the gaps. They will use FTM’s project registration, reporting, and verification protocols to test this. They have several years of data on hand.

SISC is working to develop budget estimates as a proposal for considering cost/revenue implications for a full merger. A board member brings up that SISC has a new affiliate program, where they ask technology partners to help them grow the program by giving them the metrics.

The group moves on to harmonization with SAI Platform. There was a joint meeting between FTM and SAI in Washington DC on September 29. A concern is raised that the SAI Platform has not historically included growers in the governance of their program. Allison provides a clarification that the equivalence is only one way – FTM users can use the Fieldprint Platform as equivalency to meet SAI Platform requirements in the U.S.

The action items that came out of the September 29 meetings include conducting a risk assessment on the supplemental FSA questionnaire needed to achieve equivalency for silver or gold; creating additional documentation for implementing FSA through Fieldprint Projects, which will include better guidance on verification; building in the FSA questions as an option in Fieldprint Platform Version 3.0 (requiring additional funding); evaluating potential sourcing regions for joint FTM-SAI projects; sharing ideas for amplification of grower success stories. A question is asked on what the risk assessment would inform. It’s clarified the risk assessment would be done together with SAI Platform. FTM will need to be careful that on-farm visits are not associated with the FTM program.

NEXT STEPS: Margaret will connect with the SAI Platform Executive Committee to discuss next steps on verification questions.

Chisara informs the Board that General Mills has asked FTM to submit a grant request to support alignment efforts with the Canadian Field Print Initiative (CFPI). The proposed grant is for $50,000. A survey went out to the Brands and Retail sector to gauge interest in developing more formal Fieldprint Projects in Canada. Results will be shared with the Board. There is a Board subcommittee considering key requirements for franchising the Field to Market program. The subcommittee is currently drafting principles for the Board to review.

Similar to SISC, CFPI is working on their business plan, which will provide greater context and direction for any next steps. General Mills has indicated that alignment between the two countries’ programs is a key priority. Michelle provides some of her perspectives on CFPI since she is with a Canadian company. CPFI started in 2009, but didn’t have a calculator until 2013. CFPI’s initial round of government funding is coming to an end. CFPI has done a lot of benchmarking comparison against other standards. Canada exports a lot of grain, so growers have several different global standards to meet. A question is asked if existing companies involved in CFPI would be willing to pay dues to help cover costs. A question is asked if there is a way to license the overall Field to Market program to Canada to run themselves; this would provide a financial benefit and not us too much of FTM’s staff time. A point is made that using different metrics between the different countries could lead to metrics disparities, which would be most pronounced for growers who operate near or on both sides of the U.S.-Canadian border.

Rod provides an overview of The Sustainability Consortium meeting on September 26 in Washington, DC. The meeting included FTM, Cool Farm, SAI, SISC, and the Potato Sustainability Index. One of the key outcomes is that all of the groups will follow FTM’s lead in creating KPI calculation guides to support aggregation and reporting from ag metric schemes into TSC. Groups will compare data input requirements to better understand opportunities to streamline data collection. TSC is also working with the Walton Family Foundation on a project to map ag data flows. Rod would like FTM staff to be highly involved in this work.

Regarding ongoing alignment efforts with the Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy, Rod shares that $40,000 has been committed to FTM to support ongoing work on the integration of alfalfa and corn silage metrics into the FTM program. The three steps for this include: benchmark development, integration into Fieldprint Platform Version 3.0, and then piloting the new crop modules with growers.

Finally, Rod gives an update on harmonization with the Cool Farm Alliance. There have been preliminary discussions of a potential MOU or at least a set of common talking points between the two organizations. Staff is comparing data privacy and data management policies to help drive best practices. Some companies have expressed an interest in the ability to rolling CFT and Fieldprint Platform data together from different regions of the world to produce aggregate calculations. The proposed TSC KPI calculation guides could be a good first step in achieving this outcome.

***Day 2***

**Fieldprint Projects Update**

Lexi Clark provides an update on Fieldprint Projects. The current goal for FTM is to have 50 million acres in the Fieldprint Platform by 2020. Currently, there are an estimated 2,2767,428 enrolled in the Fieldprint Platform. The estimated acres remaining are 47,232,571. Rod reminds the group that when this goal was set, it was intended that growth would happen because of the API with farm management systems. Rod says that the current goal of 50 million acres by 2020 is not realistic. He suggests that the acreage goal should perhaps remain the same but the timeline might need to be extended. The Board does not need to make a decision on this immediately but will need to begin socializing the challenge with the larger membership. As the goal was initially set by the General Assembly, Rod explains that a change to the goal would also need to go before the General Assembly.

A point is raised that acreage for food products doesn’t represent that many of the overall acres of commodity crops grown in the U.S. Perhaps talking to partners like the Innovation Center for US Dairy, and creating an acreage goal with them for feed, would be a good way to go about it. Another suggestion is made that perhaps this should be brought up in the MOU with USRSB.

A question is asked on timeline for discussing the goal with the broader membership of FTM. It is suggested that the challenges should be brought up before the membership in November 2017 for the sake of transparency.

Lexi then gives an update on the Fieldprint Project Handbook. The handbook has recently been revised by FTM staff, reducing it by 19 pages and removing duplication as needed. The updated handbook incorporates verification protocols. Additional reference documents will be prepared as needed.

Lexi has piloted the handbook with Fieldprint projects that are undergoing design. Ideally, she would like to unveil the handbook to the membership at the November General Assembly meeting. It is suggested that the Board has a one-week review period for any comments or feedback on the Handbook. Several of the FTM Standing Committees have already had or will have time to review it as well. Rod wants to Fieldprint Project Handbook to go to a designer for layout. A request is made that in the future, ifany of the information or additional resources are changed, that an email is sent to the full membership to note the change.

Lexi presents on the survey of Fieldprint Project Administrators Network participants from April-May 2017. Several needs were identified by this survey. One of the areas identified in the survey is articulating value of FTM to growers. The Awards and Recognition Committee is working on white papers on how to include value-added opportunities within Fieldprint Projects. Another area is to create a Fieldprint Platform training PPT deck to farmer audiences on how to use the Fieldprint Platform. Finally, the survey results showed the need for quick reference documents within the Fieldprint Project Handbook. A concern is raised on the term “data cleansing”, and suggested that perhaps “data quality assurance” “data quality control” or “data validation” may be better. “Data quality control” has the most favor from the Board. “Data cleansing” can come across as cherry picking data, which is not what FTM does.

NEXT STEPS: Board to form subcommittee on revising the 50 million acres goal.

**Verification Committee Update**

Chisara gives the update from the Verification Committee. FTM has had 11 measurement claims filed to date; 10 were filed correctly, and an additional claim was incorrectly filed. The ten claims were for numbers of acres and growers, no metrics-based claims.

Chisara then moves on to third-party verifier training modules. FTM is in the process of creating the training program for verifiers. This involves looking at how other initiatives have done their training, as well as expertise from Verification Committee members. The approach to training includes classroom learning, with presentations and worksheets on FTM, focused on metric review and account system review. It will also include field training and verifying a sample claim along with a trainer. A test will also be administered. A clarification is made that it is individuals becoming certified to verify, not an entire organization. FTM is not at a point where an entire organization can be trained.

For administering the third-party training, Chisara presents several points. This includes training on the new Fieldprint Platform Version 3.0, with training lasting for 2-3 days. There will be a cost associated with the training, depending on the training length. The training will initially be offered as needed, and eventually move to annual training sessions.

Chisara shifts focus to input data claims. FTM membership has shown interest in a claim that is between a measurement claim and impact claims. There has been discussion over what other types of claims could be made during the course of a Fieldprint Project. The Verification Committee is recommending that Input Data Claims should be enabled through FTM as long as it involves data that can be pulled from the Fieldprint Platform. This type of claim would provide additional contextual information for organizations wanting to make claims.

Chisara gives several examples of project-based Input Data Claims. Rod notes that this type of claim needs to be critically examined because of the implications of it for FTM. This would be the first time FTM would allow certain practices to be associated with certain results. Allowing for this type of claim would require a lot of thought on what can be verified. A concern was raised that this could quickly shift into a practice based approach to sustainability, which is not what FTM was formed to do.

Questions are raised about whether FTM metrics will cover enough of the best practices to allow for Input Data Claims. A concern arises that FTM’s metrics may not reflect enough for certain practices, like cover crops. Paul informs the group that it is the intention of Fieldprint Platform Version 3.0 to have a custom crop rotation to capture things like this.

A point is made regarding companies wanting to make statements about best practices that their participating growers are adopting as part of their Continuous Improvement Plan. Perhaps this wouldn’t be characterized as a claim, just a description and report on strategies within their CIP.

A question is made if this type of claim would fit better as a type of measurement claim. Another opinion is given that it is really more of a step between a Measurement and Impact Claim. A point is made that this will disproportionately affect certain crops; for instance, winter wheat is a continuous cover crop, so projects based on this crop would not be able to make a cover crop Input Data Claim.

A comment is made that we should focus on what can directly be pulled from the Fieldprint Platform, and easily verified, and easily tied to our metrics. This will help FTM keep control of how the information is used. Rod reminds the group that could be a slippery slope to FTM becoming a practice verifier or tantamount to a check-the-box exercise around a narrow set of practices. The decision on Input Data Claims will have a major impact on FTM.

A question is asked on how critical this is to the Board right now. Chisara answers that some members find it very important, but it is a small segment of the membership.

Stefani suggests that a subcommittee is formed to explore options, and then come back with solutions in February. Amy Braun of Kelloggs should be included. Franklin, Jennifer, and Keira will join from the Board.

A suggestion is made that perhaps the Communications Toolkit could set strong parameters on what kinds of statements could be made from a Continuous Improvement Plan, rather than creating Input Data Claims.

NEXT STEPS: A subcommittee is formed to explore options surrounding Input Data Claims. An update will be presented at the February Board meeting.

Chisara lets the Board know that there is still discussion within the Verification Committee on group/regional claims. A group/regional claim is a claim that is made based on a representative sample of the growers within that group or region. Margaret will share learnings from her experience with group claims. Rod suggests that co-ops may be a good place to start work around this type of claim. Another suggestion is looking at the 4R certification program in Ohio would be a good place to start as they already have so many acres tracked. Chisara reviews additional details around what would be needed to enable a group/regional claim.

Margaret makes a request from the Brand and Retail sector surrounding greenhouse gas emissions. The Sector wants to know if there is, for example, 100 ton reduction via Fieldprint Project, what each company can claim as their reduction. Rod says that FTM needs to be careful about double counting. There needs to be better guidance on how the project can make claims across multiple partners, which should ideally be well defined at the onset of a Fieldprint Project.

Debbie points out the difference between double counting and double claiming. Chisara says within the context of the Fieldprint Project, the Committee would not dictate how to divide it out so long as there is not double claiming.

**Metrics Committee Update**

Allison covers updates on the Rice Methane and Energy Use metrics. Both metrics are under revision after peer review and member review. Allison says that no major concerns have been brought up.

Additionally, Allison covers an update on the Water Quality metric. The Metric Committee is awaiting STEP documentation from NRCS to consider. A question is asked on why STEP is a better system; Allison answers that it is much more precise that WQI. STEP has a lot of data inputs, but these questions would theoretically be covered in the rotation builder in Fieldprint Platform Version 3.0.

Allison talks about how she would like to find a Fieldprint Project to identify a location for a pilot project of a quantitative Water Quality metric. This is effort is tied to the funding from the McKnight Foundation.

The committee is working with Charles Shapiro at University of Nebraska on implementation of the nitrous oxide revisions within the Greenhouse Gas metric.

Updates to the Irrigation metric are also underway via research at the University of Georgia for an irrigation efficiency tool to supplement the existing indicator.

**Awards and Recognition Committee Update**

Lexi informs the Board that the Awards and Recognition Committee is recommending Jennifer James of Arkansas as Farmer of the Year, and gives some background.

*Margaret moves to approve Jennifer James as Farmer of the Year. Keira seconds. Motion is approved unanimously.*

The Awards and Recognition Committee recommends the Kellogg’s Origins Great Lakes Wheat Fieldprint Project as the Collaboration of the Year winner, and gives some background. A question is asked on if the runner up should be acknowledged. Lexi says that this has been discussed within the Committee. Rod suggests only recognizing the winner during the awards ceremony, and then recognize the runner ups at a separate time.

*Franklin moves to approve Kellogg’s Origins Great Lakes Wheat Fieldprint Project as Collaboration of the Year. Marty seconds. Motion is approved unanimously.*

The committee is also researching value-added opportunities for farmers and is creating a series of white papers to address this. The focus of the white papers includes: financial incentives, technical assistance, recognition, market access, policy, and payments for ecosystem services (PES). The papers are being drafted now, and the set will be available as an appendix to the Fieldprint Project Handbook.

A question is asked on if winners of the awards should remain private until the awards ceremony. Lexi answers that yes, information about the winners should remain confidential until the evening of November 14.

**Education and Outreach Committee Update**

Kelly Young gives an update on the Education and Outreach Committee. The Committee has been working on tornado charts to help communicate relative impact of agronomic practices on Fieldprint outcomes. This will help provide better guidance to growers and their advisers of options for improvements. A question is asked on if FTM knows what scenarios will be run for the tornado charts. Kelly and Rod respond that FTM is still working on this. A suggestion is made to simplify how the information is presented. Kelly asks for more suggestions on how to visualize the information.

Economic case studies, produced by Larry Elworth from RESOLVE, will be developed in 2017 and 2018. Each study will include perspectives from supply chain partners, farmers, and their advisors, as well as content experts including scientists and NRCS staff. A question is asked on what the output is going to look like. Kelly says they will be 3-4 page documents to be used by Fieldprint Projects and more broadly. It is asked that FTM staff share the statement of work for Larry.

Kelly discusses the ongoing project to create Sustainability Programming for Ag Retailers and Crop Consultants (SPARC). The goals of SPARC is the increase interest of ag retailers in sustainability, clarify the value proposition to farmers, increase capacity of ag retailers to deliver sustainability services, build reputation of ag retailers as leading partners in supply chain sustainability, promote ag retailers to farmers, and connect ag retailers to nationwide resources. FTM is working with key stakeholders and funding partners to develop publicly available resources for ag retailers and crop consultants. The SPARC program is nested within the Education and Outreach Committee to make sure it’s aligned with FTM’s broader mission and goals around continuous improvement.

A question is asked on timeline for the SPARC project; Kelly answers that they intend to have the Sustainability 101 curriculum ready by the end of the year. A question is asked if a feedback option is going to be built in for initial users; Kelly says that it will be set up that way. A question is raised on who the audience for the materials is; Rod and Kelly answer that this will be a public resource and not limited to FTM members. A suggestion is made to include NRCS in the list of those who the materials are distributed to; they have their own internal webinar system for employees.

**Upcoming Meeting Schedule**

Rod covers upcoming meetings for 2017. This includes the Science Advisory Council in-person meeting, Sector calls to prepare for the General Assembly meeting, and then the November 14 General Assembly meeting. Rod reminds the group that there will be Board elections during the Sector meetings on November 14.

Rod covers some proposed changes for the 2018 meeting schedule. This will include two fewer calls of the Board. Staff would like to announce all 2018 meeting dates at the November plenary.

**Adjourn**