**Field to Market Board of Directors Meeting - Minutes**

**Monday, June 24, 2019**

**8:00 a.m. CDT**

**Directors Present**

Keira Franz, NWGA; Stefani Grant, Unilever; Margaret Henry, PepsiCo; Diane Herndon, Nestlé Purina PetCare; Melissa Ho, World Wildlife Fund; Franklin Holley, Keystone; Mark Isbell, USA Rice Federation; Michelle Nutting, Nutrien; Gary O’Neill, NRCS; Jeremy Peters, NACD; Ryan Sirolli, Cargill;

Jun Zhu, University of Arkansas

**Staff and Consultants**

Rod Snyder, Field to Market; Betsy Hickman, Field to Market; Lexi Clark, Field to Market; Eric Coronel, Field to Market; Chisara Ehiemere, Field to Market; Paul Hishmeh, Field to Market; Jamie Richards, Field to Market; Allison Thomson, Field to Market; Kelly Young, Field to Market; Ray Stewart, Thomson Coburn, Michael Parks, Thompson Coburn; Susan Lawrence, Thompson Coburn

Motions

* *A motion was made by Michelle Nutting and seconded by Margaret Henry to approve the May Board of Director’s Call minutes. Motion passed unanimously.*
* *A motion was made by Margaret Henry and seconded by Mark Isbell to approve of the proposed revisions to the Mission, Vision and Goals statements. Motion passed unanimously.*
* *A motion was made by Michelle Nutting and seconded by Diane Herndon to approve the use of the Contingency Fund for the Digital Properties project. Motion carried unanimously.*
* *A motion was made by Michelle French and seconded by Jeremy Peters to approve of the CFPI licensing agreement with the fee at $1,000 for the first year, and the option to revisit or increase the fee in year two. Motion passed.*
* *A motion was made by Melissa Ho and seconded by Jeremy Peters to adopt the Pest Management Task Force Recommendations with the amendments to reorder them and expand on the education and communications of the information. Motion passed unanimously.*

Next Steps and Action Items

* *Next Step: Run an analysis on breakdown of licensing fees and structure for associate members.*
* *Action Item: Discuss licensing fees especially under the Flexible Project Framework for associate and non-members.*
* *Next Step: Standing Committee and Advisory Council Liaisons - Board Chair will assign liaison positions in the next few weeks, and if Board had any preferences or want to volunteer, they should contact Stefani.*
* *Next Step: Dashboard - add sub-targets within Key Success Measure 3 (3.2 and 3.3) to account for the three different project pathways in the Flexible Project Framework.*
* *Next Step: Monitor the dashboard with the idea of things that are not currently included, especially those things which might be a threat or problem for Field to Market.*
* *Action Item: Add dashboard discussion to August Board of Directors call, to determine if anything needs to be added or if there are any problem areas that should be tracked.*
* *Action Item: Digital Properties - review project progress and costs on August and October calls, reevaluate budgeting for 2020 based on these reviews.*
* *Next Step: Flexible Project Framework - Develop more materials and events for sharing insights and lessons learned from projects.*
* *Action Item: Present the process-based standards document to the Board in August for further refinements prior to the member comment period.*
* *Action Item: Develop Board statement, resolution or Task Force to look at the ways in which Field to Market’s members can help growers overcome today’s unique challenges.*
* *Action Item: Flexible Project Framework - Staff to adjust language on Tech Neutrality guidelines and present to Executive Committee for final approval prior to the opening of project registrations.*
* *Next Step: CFPI - Review examples of project execution with CFPI and what additional steps are needed to ensure full compliance and implementation.*
* *Action Item: Add to the August Board agenda a discussion on all licensing agreements whether they are based on standards or client needs, as well as potential licensing structure for other territories.*
* *Next Step: Pest Management - Add expanded communications, educational materials and a webinar on the full report to the Education and Outreach Standing Committee workplan.*
* *Action Item: SAC Research Database - More fully outline the details of the research database and discuss on August Board of Directors call.*

Proceedings

**Opening**

Board Chair, Stefani Grant called the meeting to order at 8:01 a.m. and asked Ray to read the Antitrust Statement.

**Review of Prior Business**

Stefani reviewed old business and referred the Board to the slide deck for business that will be on the June 24 meeting agenda, including the Canadian Fieldprint agreement.

**Review and Approval of May Minutes**

Stefani asked for any revisions to the minutes from the May 12, 2019 call.

*A motion was made by Michelle Nutting and seconded by Margaret Henry to approve the May minutes. Motion passed unanimously.*

**Finance and Operations Update**

Rod noted that the Board received updated financial reports covering May in addition to the April report included in the original Board pre-reads. For May, cash on hand was at $1,398,285, revenue at $1,881,951 and expenses at $1,144,381. The revenue includes the Walton Family Foundation grant which will cover a 24-month period.

Rod next gave an update on membership, noting that 14 members have dropped since November and that other mergers and acquisitions had a large financial impact, creating a baseline loss of $185,000. He also noted that in 2019 there has been a gain of $90,000 in new membership revenue but that it still leaves a large gap against the 2019 budget. The Board discussed membership prospects and how they can assist in recruitment and retention.

Rod reviewed the 2018 Annual Report and thanked Carter for her work on it. Rod noted the 2018 program spend was down to 67% from 73% in FY17 and attributed this to three factors: (1) staff time spent on the strategic plan in 2018 was allocated to Management and General rather than a program area, (2) plenary meetings had traditionally been allocated to Management and General but will now be allocated to Stakeholder Convenings (although Board meetings and governance events will remain under Management and General), and (3) the Fieldprint Platform had previously been allocated across all programs including Management and Membership Development. Moving forward the Fieldprint Platform will be depreciated against the Technology Program directly. Rod also noted that these changes will be reflected in the 2019 accounting and following that, the accountants can look at the 2018 numbers with the modifications.

The Board discussed membership revenue and the need to reevaluate the licensing fee structure for associate members.

*Next Step: Run an analysis on breakdown of licensing fees and structure for associate members.*

*Action Item: Discuss licensing fees especially under the Flexible Project Framework for associate and non-members.*

Next, Ray Stewart introduced colleagues from Thompson Coburn’s Chicago office; Michael Parks who covers intellectual property issues and Susan Lawrence who covers labor and employment issues. Both have actively worked on Field to Market agreements and the employee handbook.

**Board Liaison Roles to Standing Committees and Advisory Councils**

Stefani referred the Board to the prior discussions on this and noted the goal was to offer more engagement opportunities for members to serve on committees and councils. Stefani also reviewed the roles and responsibilities of the liaisons and noted that liaisons would not have voting bower but would rather communicate to the committee and the board on each body’s work. Each term for liaisons would be one year with no term limits.

It was noted that the current Board members serving on the Awards and Recognition Committee could serve out the remainder of the summer in order to complete the awards process for 2019.

The Board discussed how this would affect the sector elections on the following day, and if liaison assignments would be completed by then. It was determined that Board members should relinquish current seats in order to allow sectors to elect representatives to fill the positions. In the event that a prior board member’s seat would otherwise go unfilled, then a board member may be elected, as a member, to the committee.

*Next Step: The Board Chair will assign liaison positions in the next few weeks, and if Board members had any preferences or want to volunteer, they should contact Stefani.*

**Strategic Plan Dashboard Review**

Rod reviewed the new Strategic Plan Dashboard and asked Board members for feedback on the presentation, format and substance. 2017 was used as the baseline year to track progress as that is the most recent year with available data.

1. Convene Diverse Stakeholders

1.1) Five percent annual membership growth with a focus on underrepresented sectors. *(2017 Baseline: 134 members)*

•2019 Target – 140 members

•2020 Target – 147 members

•2021 Target – 154 members

* Field to Market has welcomed 9 new members in 2019, bringing total membership to 144 and exceeding our 2019 membership target identified in the Strategic Plan. New members in underrepresented sectors include the Renewable Fuels Association representing the ethanol industry, and Panera as a downstream food service retailer.

1.2) Increase member engagement opportunities, including establishment of new cross-sector convenings to address systemic barriers and opportunities to scaling sustainable agriculture. *(2017 Baseline: 59%)*

•2019 Target – 70%

•2020 Target – 80%

•2021 Target – 90%

* Field to Market introduced new member engagement opportunities such as the first Cross-Sector Dialogue on responsible pest management, which convened more than 50 members to explore solutions to define, measure and advance responsible pest management with agricultural supply chains. As of June 2019, more than 65% of Field to Market members are actively engaged in our programmatic offerings.

1. Provide Science-Based Leadership

2.1) By 2021, all eight of Field to Market’s sustainability metrics will have undergone the required triennial review to ensure best available science is incorporated, the process is transparent to external stakeholders, and any research needs identified have been clearly communicated to the scientific community.

* The Metrics Committee has completed review of the Water Quality metric so far in 2019 with Land Use scheduled for the latter half of the year.

*Please note that an additional two metrics, Irrigation and Soil Conservation, were completed in late 2018.*

2.2) By 2021, enable farmers to have greater choice in accessing Field to Market’s sustainability metrics by scaling integration with more software providers, thereby expanding acreage influenced.

*(2017 Baseline: approx. 25M*

*acres through four partners)*

•2019 Target – 30M acres

•2020 Target – 50M acres

•2021 Target – 65M acres

* With the current group of five qualified data management partners, 31.6M acres have access to sustainability measurement through the integration of metrics from the Fieldprint Platform.

1. Scale Impact Through Partnerships

3.1) One-third of Field to Market member organizations participate in online partnership portal by submitting needs/interests and/or capacity/expertise available.

•2019 Target – 30 members

•2020 Target – 41 members

•2021 Target – 52 members

* With input from key Field to Market standing committees and advisory councils, Field to Market has published a request for proposal to develop a Partnership Exchange as part of an overall refresh of our digital properties. The selected firm, Taoti Creative will be announced on June 25th at the General Assembly Meeting.

3.2) Quadruple the number of active member-driven projects. *(2017 Baseline: 51 projects)*

•2019 Target – 85 projects

•2020 Target – 145 projects

•2021 Target – 204 projects

* + Currently we have 50 active projects collecting data through Fieldprint® Platform and 45 legacy projects that have completed data collection. With registration opening for the three project pathways this summer, we anticipate that we are on track to reach our FY19 target through the project growth enabled by our new flexible project framework.

3.3) 500 percent increase in acres enrolled in member-driven projects. *(2017 Baseline – 1.5M acres)*

•2019 Target – 3.75M acres

•2020 Target – 5.25M acres

•2021 Target – 7.65M acres

* + Based on annual reporting from the 2018 crop year, we have 1.8M acres enrolled through active projects. An additional 100,000 acres of data has been analyzed by farmers not participating in projects (1.9M acres in total). We anticipate expanded integration with more QDMPs and forthcoming registration of new projects under the flexible project framework will contribute to additional growth.

1. Enable Credible Communications

4.1) By 2021, reach formal alignment with at least three additional sustainability programs or standards.

* Field to Market is currently working with the Cotton Trust Protocol to determine how best to align our programs to enable measurable improvement in environmental outcomes in US cotton.

4.2) Seventy-five percent increase in the number of impressions referencing Field to Market in public communications resulting from Claims, Sustainability Leadership Awards, Annual Impact Report and/or National Indicators Report. *(2017 Baseline – 212 million media impressions)*

•2019 Target – 250M impressions

•2020 Target – 300M impressions

•2021 Target – 375M impressions

* Between January-June 2019, Field to Market achieved a total of 210M media impressions. As a result, we will likely exceed the FY19 target.

The Board discussed the dashboard format as well as the goals and progress against them. The Board agreed that as the dashboard is new there may be revisions to goals, as well as what items are being measured/tracked to really evaluate impact and progress.

*Next Step: Add subtargets within Key Success Measure 3 (3.2 and 3.3) to account for the three different project pathways in the Flexible Project Framework.*

*Next Step: Monitor the dashboard with the idea of things that are not currently included, especially those things which might be a threat or problem for Field to Market.*

*Action Item: Add dashboard discussion to August Board of Directors call, to determine if anything needs to be added or if there are any problem areas that should be tracked.*

**Proposed Revision to Mission, Vision and Goals Statements**

Stefani reviewed the proposed changes and thanked the Board subgroup for their work on the revisions. Each sector discussed the proposed changes during their pre-plenary calls, however there may be additional discussion during the sector meetings. The Board discussed the goal statements and the option to strengthen some of the language under Land Use and Biodiversity. Any additional revisions or changes should be submitted electronically prior to the General Assembly.

The Board had no specific revisions to propose.

*A motion was made by Margaret Henry and seconded by Mark Isbell to approve of the proposed revisions to the Mission, Vision and Goals statements. Motion passed unanimously.*

**Digital Properties Update: Project Directory, Partnership Exchange and Member Portal**

Lexi Clark gave an overview of the project and reviewed the proposed timeline of work. Taoti Creative, a Washington D.C.-based company was selected after a thorough RFP process to lead the project and came with a referral from the Farm Credit Council and American Bakers Association. The project will begin in July and should have a public launch of the partnership exchange and project directory in November.

Rod reviewed the cost for the overall project and the current allocated funding in Field to Market’s budget, including funding from the Walton grant. He asked the Board to allow use of the $50,000 contingency fund as a bridge to cover costs in 2019 that may not have been released by the Walton Grant in FY19. The Board asked about tracking these costs in FY19 and FY20 as well as ongoing maintenance costs.

*A motion was made by Michelle Nutting and seconded by Diane Herndon to approve the use of the Contingency Fund for the Digital Properties project. Motion carried unanimously.*

*Action Item: Review project progress and costs on August and October calls, reevaluate budgeting for 2020 based on these reviews.*

**Implementation of Flexible Project Framework and Process-based Standard**

Betsy Hickman gave an update on the Framework and reviewed the timeline for developing process-based standards. She noted that project registrations will be accepted while the digital registration process is being built.

The Board discussed current projects and how those will be transitioned into the new Framework. Staff will work with those project administrators to assign them to the category that best fits their work. The Board also discussed sharing lessons learned from projects as part of the Framework’s educational materials including documents, webinars and trainings.

*Next Step: Develop more materials and events for sharing insights and lessons learned from projects.*

*Action Item: Present the process-based standards document to the Board in August for further refinements prior to the member comment period.*

The Board next discussed the challenges facing growers and the impacts these challenges are having on growers’ well-being and economic stability.

*Action Item: Develop Board statement, resolution or Task Force to look at the ways in which Field to Market’s members can help growers overcome today’s unique challenges.*

**Approval of Tech Neutrality Guidance for New Project Pathways**

Chisara Ehiemere gave the Board some background on the issue; for Incubation projects there could be a conflict of interest with Field to Market’s technology neutral stance if branded technologies are mentioned in Incubation Projects specifically. She next presented the Verification Committee’s recommendations:

Technologies may be referenced in Incubation Projects if the following criteria are met:

* The technology product category must be widely recognized in the science and agronomy community as being effective in driving improvement in a sustainability outcome relevant to Field to Market –independent, unbiased peer-reviewed research must be presented
* Technology product category can be referenced publicly, but specific branded product name cannot be referenced (e.g. “Nitrogen Stabilizers” but not “Acme Brand Nitrogen Stabilizer”). The rationale is to ensure that there is no perceived endorsement by Field to Market of a specific manufacturer and/or product

The Board discussed the recommendations and asked for revisions to the language surrounding this in the project registration. Suggestions included removing the word ‘Incubation’ to broaden the technology guidelines to all project pathways, to reference the Mission, Vision and Goals statement, to possible rebrand this as ‘Brand Neutrality’ rather than Tech Neutrality, to enhance the opening description of the guidelines in order to engage and manage expectations. The Board agreed to allow staff to present the changes to the Executive Committee for final approval.

*Action Item: Staff to adjust language on Tech Neutrality guidelines and present to Executive Committee for final approval prior to the opening of project registrations.*

**Approval of License Agreement for Canadian Field Print Initiative**

Rod gave some background information on the Canadian Field Print Initiative’s (CFPI) formation and work. He also reported that he met with David Weber of Sarecon earlier in June and that they and CFPI are excited to come into alignment and are fully prepared to adopt all Field to Market policies. The Board discussed the license agreement with CFPI including the option for other countries to do something similar, the potential conflict of Canadian commodities to be rated better because their standards are different, licensing fee structure of the agreement, and project reporting measurements – if the acres included in CFPI would count towards Field to Market’s key measures of success.

The Board agreed to leave the CFPI license agreement to a fee of $1,000 for the first year and revisit the fee in the second year of implementation, with the option to terminate.

*Next Step: Review examples of project execution with CFPI and what additional steps are needed to ensure full compliance and implementation.*

*Action Item: Add to the August Board agenda a discussion all licensing agreements whether they are based on standards or client needs, as well as potential licensing structure for other territories*.

*A motion was made by Michelle French and seconded by Jeremy Peters to approve of the CFPI licensing agreement with the fee at $1,000 for the first year, and the option to revisit or increase the fee in year two. Motion passed.*

**Pest Management Task Force Recommendations**

Chisara refreshed the Board on the background work and processes of the Pest Management Task Force as well as the results of the Cross-Sector Dialogue covering Pest Management and outlined the Task Force’s recommendations:

* The Field to Market Metrics Committee should explore an IPM-focused metric that can be used to show measurable improvement over time.
* The Taskforce does not recommend including active ingredients and toxicity due to Field to Market’s technology neutral position.
* Work would be included in the 2020 work plan.
* Field to Market staff should catalogue communications information on product registration, labeling and enforcement for use by companies to further their understanding of existing regulation in the U.S. and keep this updated.
* Field to Market staff should catalogue existing consumer research that may assist with communication efforts, including communications to help growers understand consumer concerns.
* Field to Market should encourage members to establish supply chain pilot projects specifically focused on increased adoption of IPM and improved outcomes (e.g. drift reduction, water quality, increased pollinator habitat) with learnings shared across FTM membership

She noted that the Board had already accepted the recommendation to create a pesticide-focused report for U.S. row crop agriculture modeled after the National Indicators Report and that this work had already begun, with a target to release the report in December 2019.

The Board discussed the possible creation of a Pest Management metric and the potential repercussions and impact it could have on members and projects. The Board asked for expanded education and communication around the other recommendations besides a metric. The Board also asked that the recommendations be reordered to reflect what will be done sequentially.

*A motion was made by Melissa Ho and seconded by Jeremy Peters to adopt the Pest Management Task Force Recommendations with the amendments to reorder them and expand on the education and communications of the information. Motion passed unanimously.*

Chisara next outlined the ongoing work related to the approved recommendations including the guidelines for projects to address pest management in the new Flexible Project Framework.

*Next Step: Add expanded communications, educational materials and a webinar on the full report to the Education and Outreach Standing Committee workplan.*

**Science Advisory Council Recommendation for Research Database**

Allison Thomson reviewed the draft SOP for the governance of a research database and explained it as a way to share the information gathered from the projects in the Flexible Project Framework. She detailed that the database would be a way to give back to the scientific community and that growers could opt-in, without sharing any identifying information. Allison noted that for the scientific community, nothing else currently exists like this proposed database and that researchers could be more specific about impacts if they had consistent rather than aggregate data.

The Board asked about potential risks to Field to Market for a research database and expressed concerns about issues with QDMPs. It was noted that the potential risk is around fair and honest use of the data, which is why a verification step and a proposal review process are included in order to allow access to the data. Field to Market would also have to look at the privacy agreements with QDMPs to see what would be allowable into a database. The Board also discussed the incentives and benefits for access to the data and asked for preferential treatment for Field to Market members, while general researchers would need to pay for the right to access the database.

*Action Item: More fully outline the details of the research database and discuss on August Board of Directors call.*

**Review calendar of upcoming meetings and events**

Rod reviewed upcoming events and important dates with the Board:

* Board of Directors’ Call on August 6 at 1pm EDT
* Standing Committee Meetings September 11-12 in Washington, D.C.
* 3rd Cross-Sector Dialogue on Climate September 12 in Washington D.C.
* Senior Executive Forum, October 8 in New York City following the Wall Street Journal Global Food Forum
* Board retreat, October 9-10 in Oak Spring, Va.
* Pre-Plenary Sector calls the week of November 4
* Field to Market Plenary November 19, Indianapolis, Ind.
* Sustainable Agriculture Summit, November 20-21, Indianapolis, Ind.

Rod also reviewed the Plenary schedule, including timing for the new member orientation and the Cross-Sector Dialogue followed by the dinner and keynote address on Tuesday, June 25.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.