



## **Board of Directors | Call Summary**

### **August 9, 2016**

## **Present**

### **Directors**

Keith Alverson (National Corn Growers Association), Mark Eastham (Walmart), Suzy Friedman (EDF), Stefani Grant (Unilever), Franklin Holley (WWF), Monica McBride – for Debbie Reed (Coalition on Agricultural Greenhouse Gases), Marty Muenzmaier (Cargill), Gary O’ Neill (USDA NRCS), Michelle Nutting (Agrium), David Schemm (National Association of Wheat Growers), Michele Schulz – for Jennifer Shaw (Syngenta), Bob Young (American Farm Bureau Federation), Jun Zhu (University of Arkansas)

### **Staff and Consultants**

Sara Baker (Squire, Lemkin & Co.), Kate Fairman (Field to Market), Alison Gibson (Field to Market), Betsy Hickman (Field to Market), Paul Hishmeh (Field to Market), Nancy Johnson (Squire, Lemkin & Co.), Stewart Ramsey (IHS), Rod Snyder (Field to Market), Ray Stewart (Thompson Coburn), Allison Thomson (Field to Market), Grant Wick (Field to Market), Jonathan Geurts (Keystone)

## **Motions**

***Keith Alverson moved to approve the Board minutes from June. Suzy Friedman seconded. The motion passed unanimously.***

***A vote to approve the audit report was taken via email after the call. The audit was approved unanimously as recorded by board secretary Keith Newhouse.***

***David Schemm moved to 1) approve Dairy Farmers of America (DFA) as a commercial entity, giving it the choice of joining the agribusiness or food/retail sectors, 2) approve the National Association of State Conservation Districts (NASCA) and the Nebraska Corn Growers Association as members, and 3) consider GMO Renewable Resources in subcommittee. Bob Young seconded. The motion passed unanimously.***

***Michelle Nutting moved to approve the proposed Committee co-chairs. Marty Muenzmaier seconded. The motion passed unanimously.***

***Keith Alverson moved to approve the request for funding to hire a consultant to draft verification materials. Mark Eastham seconded. The motion passed unanimously.***

***Suzy Friedman moved to approve the first eight identified members of the Technology Advisory Council. Michelle Nutting seconded. The motion passed unanimously.***

## Next Steps and Action Items

- A subcommittee on membership for financial institutions and agricultural technology providers will convene, to be comprised of Stefani Grant, Jennifer Shaw, Marty Muenzmaier, Suzy Friedman.
- A subcommittee on received claims requests will convene, to be comprised of Franklin Holley, Suzy Friedman, Jennifer Shaw, Mark Eastham, Allison Thomson, and Jonathan Geurts.
- Board members should invite potentially interested participants to the Sustainable Agriculture Summit in November.
- The Board will address data management licensing at the October Board meeting.
- The Board may address the ongoing relationship between FTM and SISC at the October Board meeting.

## Proceedings

### Opening

Stefani Grant opened the meeting.

Ray Stewart read aloud the anti-trust statement.

***Keith Alverson moved to approve the Board minutes from June. Suzy Friedman seconded. The motion passed unanimously.***

### Finances

Rod Snyder reviewed Field to Market's (FTM) financial status. Through June, revenue was \$1,347,891 and expenses were \$1,066,101. Cash on hand was \$1,379,102. At the time of this call, about \$700,000 in dues (about 40% of total) were outstanding for 2016, which matches up with previous fiscal years.

Sara Baker and Nancy Johnson presented the dashboard of the results of FTM's first audit, which had been distributed alongside a report and a required letter that highlights significant findings. Overall, FTM's records were clean, with some confusion on whether dues were measured only once received or partially in anticipation, which is being clarified in future years. The net reserve – the result of total assets less accounts payable – represents a healthy reserve for an organization of this size. They reviewed graphs of program allocations and functional allocations. One unusual component is the relatively small share being spent on staff salary and benefits, which will likely increase to about half the total as FTM adds staff. Overall, FTM's situation is very good for its first audit.

***A vote to approve the audit report was taken via email after the call. The audit was approved unanimously as recorded by board secretary Keith Newhouse.***

### Operations

Rod thanked FTM's first interns, who were leaving the week of this call. Grant Wick has helped with the National Indicators Report, and Alison Gibson helped with the annual report and website content. FTM is in final rounds of interviews for its business director, deciding between three final candidates from an initial pool of eight.

### New Members

Betsy Hickman reviewed the new members up for approval, which include the following.

- Dairy Farmers of America (Full – Grower) – A milk marketing cooperative, DFA has applied for full membership as a grower organization. However, they produce branded products, which could place

them in the food/retail sector rather than grower. FTM staff recommends that if there is a budgetary reason for applying as a grower, they could apply as an associate member. Otherwise, they should join as a food/retail member at the rate of \$50,000/year.

- GMO Renewable Resources (Full – Agribusiness) – Having watched FTM for a while, they feel strongly that financial institutions should be able to join as full members. A board subcommittee may need to be formed to consider this membership policy question.
- National Association of State Conservation Agencies (Affiliate) – NASCA is interested in becoming involved in Fieldprint projects.
- Nebraska Corn Growers Association (Full – Grower) – Nebraska Corn is interested in using the Fieldprint to demonstrate their growers' improvement.

Stefani called for volunteers for a subcommittee on membership for financial institutions and agricultural technology providers. The following Board members volunteered.

- Stefani Grant
- Jennifer Shaw – in absentia
- Marty Muenzmaier
- Suzy Friedman

Stefani called for a motion to 1) approve DFA as a commercial entity, giving it the choice of joining the agribusiness or food/retail sectors, 2) approve NASCA and Nebraska Corn as members, and 3) consider GMO Renewable Resources in subcommittee.

***David Schemm so moved. Bob Young seconded. The motion passed unanimously.***

### **Standing Committees**

Rod presented a list of recommended committee co-chairs composed by the Executive Committee and staff. Each of the recommended co-chairs has expressed willingness to participate.

#### ***Awards & Recognition***

David Schemm, National Association of Wheat Growers (Grower)  
Diane Herndon, Nestle Purina (Food/Retail)

#### ***Education & Outreach***

Caroline Wade, Illinois Corn Growers Association (Grower)  
Luther Smith, American Society of Agronomy (Agribusiness)

#### ***Metrics***

Lara Moody, The Fertilizer Institute (Agribusiness)  
Dave DeGeus, The Nature Conservancy (Conservation)

#### ***Verification***

Franklin Holley, World Wildlife Fund (Conservation)  
Keith Newhouse, Land O' Lakes (Food/Retail)

***Michelle Nutting moved to approve the co-chairs as listed. Marty Muenzmaier seconded. The motion passed unanimously.***

## **Verification Materials**

Jonathan Geurts communicated a request from the Verification Committee for funding to develop verification materials to define an accounting system for claims and draft a standard operating protocol and third party verification procedures for Fieldprint projects. A proposal from the Executive Committee is to set aside the \$50,000 worth of contingency funding to pay for a consultant to carry out this drafting.

Rod added that the Committees and staff have developed a short list of those contractors who are most likely to be familiar with the nature of FTM's request.

***Keith Alverson moved to approve the request for funding to hire a consultant to draft verification materials. Mark Eastham seconded. The motion passed unanimously.***

## **Claims Requests**

Betsy introduced claims requests that have been received from commercial or research projects, including the following.

- Using aggregated, publicly available data and FTM metrics to characterize improvements at a regional level.
- Using aggregated, publicly available data and FTM metrics to characterize differences between two management systems (e.g. input products)
- Using field data and FTM metrics to compare two management systems (e.g. input products)

These requests require a Board recommendation, as FTM has no precedent around such claims and also maintains a technology neutral policy.

Board members discussed the requests, adding the following comments.

- The verification process is very complicated for these requests. The results depend greatly on the data collection process. Comparisons between such datasets may not be valid.
- As FTM aspires to be a measurement framework, it needs to figure out how to support these kinds of claims.
- The nature of these requests will likely require the rigor of impact claims.

Stefani called for volunteers to participate in a claims request subcommittee that will be staffed by Allison Thomson, Stewart Ramsey, and Jonathan Geurts. The following Board members volunteered

- Franklin Holley
- Suzy Friedman
- Jennifer Shaw – in absentia
- Mark Eastham

## **Technology Advisory Council**

Paul Hishmeh introduced eight of the fifteen total members of the Council that he has so far identified. These include the following.

- Brandon Sharp (Syngenta (AgConnections)) - Sr. Software Developer
- Jeff Peters (Agrible) - Director of Sustainability & Partnerships at Agrible, Inc.
- Ananth Krishnan (Winfield (LOL)) – Sr. Manager Business Architecture
- Kevin Krieg (John Deere) - Software Business Segment Manager
- Robert Parkhurst (Environmental Defense Fund) - Director, Agriculture Greenhouse Gas Markets

- Randy Stauffer (Illinois Corn Growers Association/Heartland Science) - Sustainable Agriculture Consultant
- Jack Carlson (Colorado State University) - Director, Object Modeling System Laboratory at CSU
- Aaron Hunt (Agrian) - Vice President of Product Management for Precision

The Council will advise modeling and software architecture in the run-up to the next version of the Fieldprint Platform. New members were selected for their particular individual expertise and for representation of their company's expertise. Additional identified members are awaiting confirmation.

***Suzy Friedman moved to approve the first eight identified members of the Technology Advisory Council. Michelle Nutting seconded. The motion passed unanimously.***

### **Data Management License Agreement**

Rod updated the Board that a near-final draft of the license agreement has been completed. A supplemental API integration toolkit is being developed, with details on usage and branding. Two API users are currently piloting the system on a beta server, awaiting the legal agreement to connect to a production-ready server.

Board members discussed the agreement with staff.

- In spring, a sensitivity analysis was discussed to relieve data burden. What progress has been made on this topic and also on generating partial Fieldprint results?
  - o These requests will both need to be considered as part of the next version of the Fieldprint Platform. The RFP for version 3.0 will likely include a request to create an "express version" of the Calculator that relies on default values to decrease data requirements where possible. There needs to be a continued discussion about whether users should be able to isolate individual metrics rather than running a full Fieldprint assessment.
- The decision on generating partial Fieldprint reports should be discussed to resolution by the Board.
  - o An upcoming meeting at Colorado State University will address data interoperability and compatibility between platforms. This meeting will also seek a better understanding of the elements of sensitivity analysis, which might better inform this conversation.

Rod noted that this topic would be raised again at the October meeting.

### **Benchmark Database**

Allison Thomson noted that the benchmark database is in development in collaboration with a statistics and data analysis group called Knoema. It consists of a web tool that permits selection and viewing of benchmarks. These are the same benchmarks that are included in the Fieldprint Platform, though it does include crops not currently in the Platform. To access the database, users request an account, need to be approved by FTM staff in accordance with the membership requirements, and accept a user agreement. The database will be launched in coordination with the release of FTM's new website.

A Board member asked if the database results would be able to be used in claims, to which Rod replied that there will be significant limitations around the use of the benchmark data in claims since it only reflects publicly available data from USDA and not any specific supply chain engagement. All claims requests will continue to be reviewed by FTM staff.

### **SAI Platform Alignment**

Rod remarked that the staff has spent a lot of time defining how FTM's program relates to other similar programs. This is a critical step to ensuring long-term relevancy in the U.S. With the SAI Platform, FTM's goal is to achieve levels of equivalency between the programs. SAI's own Farm Sustainability Assessment tool requires responses to 112 questions to complete.

Allison reported more detail on the status of alignment with SAI Platform. Two benchmarking had occurred, including 1) matching SAI Platform questions to the FTM metrics, and 2) seeing which questions are covered by U.S. state and national laws. Initial results indicate that 89 of the 112 SAI Platform questions may be addressed in these two ways, yielding a bronze level with no additional questions. Just one or two additional question may be required for silver level, and eight for gold out of the 12 total questions needed to achieve equivalency with the full 112. Allison and others still working with SAI Platform to finalize these numbers and match their wording to both U.S. and FTM contexts. A memorandum of understanding is being written between the two organizations, and an announcement is being planned for September, to be followed by technical implementation.

Rod clarified that the additional questions required to achieve SAI Platform equivalency would not be required by FTM but would be an optional add-on for those organizations that wish to seek equivalency between Fieldprint projects and existing SAI Platform efforts in other countries.

A Board member asked if this alignment would apply to rice. Rod responded that it will apply to rice as it is now covered by SAI Platform. It would not yet apply to the Sustainable Rice Protocol, though alignment with this standard could be pursued in the future.

### **SISC (Stewardship Index for Specialty Crops) Alignment**

Rod noted that FTM and SISC have been through five gap analysis calls to compare their metrics, the results of which are available. There are both significant similarities and significant differences, and there is no further update on SISC's future and its potential relationship with FTM. This conversation may need to be revisited in October.

### **Upcoming Meetings**

Rod reviewed the upcoming meeting schedule. He reviewed the ordering of committee meetings in Washington, DC, and noted that the next Board meeting will coincide with the World Food Prize in Des Moines, IA. The Board meeting at the Sustainable Agriculture Summit in Atlanta, GA, in November will take place the morning of the 15<sup>th</sup>, and the General Assembly meeting will take place on the 17<sup>th</sup>.

Betsy added that registration is now open for the Sustainable Agriculture Summit, and Board members should reach out to potential guests. Proposals are also being accepted for breakout session content.

### **Adjourn**