



Field to Market®

Board of Directors 1/22/2015 Call Summary

Present

Board of Directors: Keith Alverson (NCGA), Michael Doane (Monsanto), Suzy Friedman (EDF), Stefani Grant (Unilever), Marty Matlock (University of Arkansas), Josiah McClellan (United Soybean Board), Kari Niedfeldt-Thomas (Mosaic), Gary O'Neill (USDA NRCS), Steve Peterson (General Mills), David Primozych (The Freshwater Trust), Jennifer Shaw (Syngenta), Rod Snyder (Field to Market), Bob Young (AFBF),

Other Participants: Sarah Alexander (Keystone), Brianna Brumbaugh (Keystone), Catherine Campbell (Marker Campbell Consulting), Kate Fairman (Field to Market), Jonathan Geurts (The Keystone Center), Betsy Hickman (Field to Market), Ray Stewart (Thompson Coburn)

Motions

- Steve Peterson moved to approve the following as Field to Market members, which the Board approved without objection: American Society of Agronomy International Certified Crop Advisor (ICCA), Ingredion, University of Georgia, and Auburn University/Alabama Cooperative Extension System
- Steve Peterson moved to adopt the proposed work group participation guidelines. The motion passed without objection.

Action Items

- Board members should let Rod Snyder know if they have any other recommendations for science and research director candidates.
- Board members should consider making contact with prospective member organizations (listed on PPT, slide 8) with which they have preexisting business relations.
- Board members should let Betsy know if they have any connections to POET Biorefining.
- The Center for Integrated Modeling is meeting with Rod in DC on February 17th. Board members should let Rod know if they know anything about this organization.
- Board members should read the 2014 Communications Update, which is now available.
- Suzy Friedman will take the Board's comments on the evaluation memo back to the Continuous Improvement Work Group.
- Gary O'Neill and Rod Snyder will talk about NRCS dues situation.
- Kate Fairman will send out a Doodle poll for the in-person strategy oriented March Board meeting in Washington, DC.

Proceedings *(statements reflect opinions, not consensus, unless otherwise noted)*

Opening

Steve Peterson opened the call by welcoming Kate Fairman to Field to Market as the new staff administrative assistant.

Ray Stewart prompted those present to review the anti-trust statement and confirmed the understanding of and intent to comply with it of those present.

Rod Snyder welcomed everyone, especially Kari Niedfeldt-Thomas, David Primozich, and Stefani Grant, the newest members of the Board. He introduced Kate Fairman, whose experience includes assisting Sen. Stabenow (MI) on agricultural initiatives.

Rod reviewed the agenda for the call.

Financial Update (PPT, slides 3-5)

Rod presented the financial update.

- Field to Market (FTM) is currently in transition from The Keystone Center's accounting department to a Washington DC-based firm.
- FTM has a \$493,174 in cash on hand and is running about \$50,000 ahead of expenses so far this year.

The 2015 budget was approved by both the Board and the General Assembly.

- Since then, Rod has been adjusting it to account for changes in FTM program emphasis.
- Croplife International has left FTM, due to its domestic focus. Otherwise, no notes of departure have arrived in response to sending out the membership dues invoices.
- Including new members, all but \$67,000 of the \$200,000 in new dues projected in the budget are accounted for. Additionally, the budget plans for a \$78,500 surplus, so FTM is already on track to end the year in the black.

Board members discussed the budget with Rod, coming to the following conclusion.

- Rod anticipates making investment choices for the cash on hand with the advice of the new accounting firm.

Staffing Update (PPT, slides 6, 7)

Rod presented the staffing update. Interviews have been ongoing for the science and research director position for about a month, and the pool of candidates has yet to yield a perfect fit. Board members should let Rod know if they know of any other potential candidates. As filling this position will be critical for program development, he is aiming to hire someone by the end of February. Rod then reviewed FTM's list of contractors.

Board members discussed staffing with Rod, coming to the following conclusion.

- The science and research director will be the final full-time hire for the year. Rod thinks it best initially to develop a business plan through a contractor before deciding on long-term staffing needs related to business development.

Membership Recruitment (PPT, slides 8, 9)

Betsy Hickman updated the Board on membership recruitment, presenting a list of prospective organizations, with those in active conversations highlighted in bold. She asked Board members to consider contacting their counterparts in the organizations listed. Highlights include

- Brandt Consolidated is interested as a smaller agribusiness.
- ConAgra may be interested in rejoining FTM but has been going through a transition to a new procurement officer.
- Betsy would be interested in contacts Board members might have with POET Biorefining.
- Tyson Foods is interested in scoping out FTM at the June plenary.
- Betsy has an upcoming meeting on February 6th with Nestle.
 - o Global cereals mapping is an overlap between General Mills and Nestle and a potential lever to encourage them to join.

A Board member asked if anyone had a feel for how prospective members see FTM membership dues levels. Discussion included the following comments.

- In recent discussions Brandt, for example, expressed hesitation to join due to its status as a smaller agribusiness.
- It requires a very solid case to prove the value proposition of joining FTM to downstream food companies.
- The leaders in this space are thinking actively about engaging up the supply chain, but for others FTM is several steps ahead. It has generally taken 3-4 conversations per new member to help them figure out their own strategies.

Several new applicants for FTM membership were offered for approval.

- American Society of Agronomy International Certified Crop Adviser (ICCA) Program – Agribusiness
 - o Certified Crop Advisors will come into the agribusiness sector with NGO dues. Kari Niedfeldt-Thomas assisted with this one.
- Ingredion – Food/Retail
- University of Georgia – Ex Officio
- Auburn University/Alabama Cooperative Extension System – Ex Officio
 - o Laurie Duncan with University of Tennessee Extension has brought in both the University of Georgia and Auburn University.

Steve Peterson moved to approve the new members. The motion passed without objection.

Work Group Participation Guidelines (PPT, slide 10)

Rod presented a draft of new work group participation guidelines. In response to increased interest in work group participation, the maximum number of participants would be raised to 4 representatives per sector per group. Additionally, no member would be able to occupy more than two work groups, unless the whole sector had explicitly allowed it. Finally, the current work groups as they stand would be up for termination or renewal in June 2016, coincident with the start of Program Phase 2.

A Board member asked how these guidelines apply to subgroups, such as those for specific metrics.

- Subgroups would be managed under the discretion of the co-chairs of their corresponding work group.

Steve Peterson moved to adopt the work group participation guidelines. The motion passed without objection.

Business Plan and Membership Restructuring (PPT, slide 11)

Rod presented a timeline for developing a business plan and rolling out the new membership structure. The plan includes hiring a business plan consultant by the end of February in time for him/her to attend a noon-to-noon Board strategizing meeting in March. Board members should let Rod know of any potential applicants, who would be able to provide substantial recommendations rather than just engage in listening and reflection.

A Board member expressed reservations about the plan to hire a consultant, to which others responded.

- From experience, consultants tend to provide variable quality of service for the expense. It may be more worthwhile to focus efforts on getting members gradually on board with a new business strategy.
- At this point, the budget does not seem to have another full time position in it. The approach of hiring a consultant was an attempt to thread this needle.
- The RFP put out by Field to Market for this consultant needs to be very detailed, and the process needs to be very focused on getting the right person for the job. A referral would be much more helpful than an outside pick.

Review of 2014 (PPT, slide 12)

Rod presented the major achievements of the past year, including the adoption of the continuous improvement framework, the hiring of staff, the program goals approved in November, and a significant uptick in media impressions.

A Board member mentioned that the 2014 review document had been designed as a self-evaluation for Rod's performance during his first year in office, which has been outstanding.

- Rod thanked the dedication of the officers and Board members through a year with a number of changes.

Goals and Objectives for 2015 (PPT, slide 13)

Rod reviewed the major work streams for the coming year. These include the following.

- Membership & Governance
- Metrics Revisions
- Technology Advancement & Integration
- Leveraging Partnerships for Continuous Improvement
- Verification & Claims Enablement
- Communications & Outreach

The comprehensive 2015 work plan is still in development and will benefit from further development at an upcoming staff retreat the day before Commodity Classic (February 25th).

Work Group Updates

Goals & Regional Mapping Work Group (PPT, slide 14)

Rod reviewed updates on this work group, mentioning that it will likely not be as active in 2015 as 2014 due to the completion of its primary objective in the composition of the goals statement. Later this year there may be an opportunity for members of this work group to work with the Metrics Work Group as they aim to respond to the aspirational components of the goals statement.

Metrics Work Group (PPT, slides 15, 16)

Sarah Alexander reviewed updates on this work group. The active co-chairs of this group have worked with her to put together work plans for each of the five metric-specific subgroups. The subgroups address components in each of the current metrics, with the exception of the Habitat Potential Index (HPI). The HPI, it was thought, still needs more in-field testing before attempts are made to change it.

Continuous Improvement Work Group (PPT, slides 22-24)

Rod reviewed the goals and objectives for this work group, which include developing materials and a curriculum for grower advisors, providing access to resources for Fieldprint projects, and creating materials that standardize best practices. A discussion requiring decision has emerged regarding the compilation and selection of resources.

Suzy Friedman, co-chair of the group, presented a memo on evaluation protocols for grower resources. If FTM wants to have a program that influences continuous improvement (CI), it needs to establish criteria to determine which resources make it into the program. Otherwise any product, program, or tool would be able to use the Field to Market name and logo, regardless of its effectiveness in forwarding the goals of FTM. The memo presents four options for a credible CI program.

1. FTM could continue only to measure change and not directly influence CI.
2. FTM could develop criteria for evaluating resources and a program protocol for use by project administrators but not enforce its use.
3. FTM could compile resources with an entirely neutral stance, offering them to projects free of judgment or advice.
4. FTM could develop evaluation protocol and actively use them to determine quality tools, products, and services.

Board members tended to disagree with the idea of developing a limited list of resources, with access determined by a FTM-governed evaluation process. Such a system would endanger FTM's key principle of technology neutrality and its explicit focus on outcomes rather than inputs.

- Some thought the most appropriate use of FTM's authority would be to issue a set of SOPs that would specify how to use tools within the context of the continuous improvement program, rather than identifying which tools would be best to use. In the end, the real test of a project's worth would be the generation of improvement.
- Important safeguards to prevent gaming the system might include a FTM policy of measuring and reporting on the full Fieldprint and a FTM practice of involving multiple sectors on each project.

Suzy agreed to take the Board's comments back to the CI Work Group.

- The Board agreed to revisit the discussion at its strategy-focused meeting in March.

Technology Work Group (PPT, slides 17-21)

Catherine Campbell reviewed updates for this work group. Key points include the following.

- The API (Application Programming Interface) is still in development. It was originally designed for a pass-through of all the information required by FTM algorithms. As no other tool collects all of the same information, though, ZedX is currently working on a partial pass-through that will allow other systems to partially populate the Calculator. Then the grower would only need to fill in the remaining components to receive a Fieldprint.

- The work group is working with AdaptN, a non-member technology company, on the API. A non-disclosure and licensing agreements are being developed. Both FTM and AdaptN stand to learn from each other in the process.
 - o The Board may need to address partnerships with non-members later, in a more formal discussion.
- The work group could use a full-day in-person meeting to plan the RFP for Fieldprint Calculator 3.0. The day before the April General Assembly meeting seems to work. Catherine has been talking with technology providers to make sure the new version will not be already outdated when it is released.
- NRCS's RUSLE2 model is being upgraded this month, which has put a hold on switching FTM's connection to LMOD. The change-over to the new platform will happen soon after the upgrade is complete.
- The Fieldprint spidergram has been altered visually to replace the benchmark polygons with reference points. This reduces visual confusion and clarifies the difference between a nonexistent benchmark and a 0-value benchmark.
- The double cropping methodology is nearing completion.
- The modifications to rice methodology are nearing completion, with two cycles of review remaining before it is released. It should be ready in time for use with the Ducks Unlimited projects funded as part of the NRCS RCPP (Regional Conservation Partnership Program).
- NAFA (National Alfalfa and Forage Alliance) is ready for alfalfa to run in beta form, and WWF wants to start an alfalfa project using it.

Verification Work Group (PPT, slides 25, 26)

Jonathan Geurts reviewed updates for this work group. The group has adopted a work plan that aims to deliver two products to the Board meeting in April: 1. A concept paper describing a proposed FTM verification system, and 2. Guidebars for making measurement claims.

To draft the first product, the group has begun to work through ISEAL's Assurance Code requirements, using the continuous improvement program process as FTM's standard for ISEAL's purposes. Ongoing tasks include developing the following.

- Risk assessment and management plan
- Assessment methodology for projects
- Conflicts of interest policy
- Transparency and knowledge sharing guidelines

Additionally, the group has drafted a glossary of terms for reference when describing the FTM program and is working with the University of Arkansas and NASS (National Agricultural Statistics Service) to answer five key questions for program development, which require statistical expertise.

Alignment with Other Initiatives (PPT, slide 27)

Rod presented on the status of FTM's partnering efforts. Key points include the following.

- TSC (The Sustainability Consortium) and FTM are setting up monthly calls.
- SAI (Sustainable Agriculture Initiative) has made statements about the sustainable rice initiative, mentioning FTM. This interaction is on the list for FTM's new science and research director.
- DMI (Dairy Management Inc.) has had a lot of turn-over within the organization. FTM needs to reopen conversation and figure out where they are.
- The Center for Integrated Modeling is meeting with Rod in DC on February 17th. Board members should let Rod know if they know anything about this organization.

- Olam has expressed interest in joining FTM if tomatoes are included in the Fieldprint Calculator. This may be a good opportunity to coordinate with SISC (Stewardship Index for Specialty Crops).
- Sarah attended the US Sustainable Beef Coalition conference in Denver in January. The Coalition has initiated a domestic program that is well aligned with FTM, including lifecycle analysis, of which feed grains are a large component. It is looking for founding members by February 13th.
 - o FTM could join, but USSBC may not be able to join FTM.
 - o Certain animal ag companies may not appreciate having to join both organizations, as well as international efforts for the same. This might be cause to develop a reciprocal agreement to limit the effects of membership fatigue.

Communications Update (PPT, slides 28-32)

Betsy Hickman pointed Board members to her 2014 communications overview. Then she reviewed two big recent announcements.

- FTM may be able to contribute a monthly column to the GreenBiz website. The readers would especially like to read pieces authored by FTM member representatives and Board members. GreenBiz is also planning their VERGE conference, which may involve our participation.
- Betsy will send out more information about CGI's (Clinton Global Initiative) upcoming Commitment to Action annual meeting.

2015 Meeting Dates (PPT, slide 33)

Rod presented the anticipated schedule of meetings for 2015.

- Kate Fairman will send out a Doodle poll for the in-person strategy oriented March Board meeting in Washington, DC.