



## Field to Market®

**Board of Directors  
1/21/2016 – 1/22/2016  
American Farm Bureau Federation, Washington, DC  
Meeting Summary**

### **Present**

#### DAY 1

Catherine Campbell (Field to Market), Kate Fairman (Field to Market), Stefani Grant (Unilever), Betsy Hickman (Field to Market), Franklin Holley (WWF), Marty Muenzmaier (Cargill), Keith Newhouse (Land O' Lakes), Kari Niedfeldt-Thomas (Mosaic), Debbie Reed (Coalition for Agricultural Greenhouse Gases), David Schemm (National Association of Wheat Growers), Jennifer Shaw (Syngenta), Rod Snyder (Field to Market), Ray Stewart (Thompson Coburn), Allison Thomson (Field to Market), Bob Young (American Farm Bureau Federation), Jun Zhu (University of Arkansas), Jonathan Geurts (Keystone)

Remotely: Sarah Stokes Alexander (Keystone), Keith Alverson (National Corn Growers Association), Mark Eastham (Walmart), Gary O'Neill (USDA NRCS), Steve Peterson (General Mills), David Primozich (The Freshwater Trust), Stewart Ramsey (Field to Market)

#### DAY 2 – (conference call due to inclement weather)

Keith Alverson (NCGA), Kate Anderson (The Freshwater Trust), Kate Fairman (Field to Market), Stefani Grant (Unilever), Betsy Hickman (Field to Market), Franklin Holley (WWF), Marty Muenzmaier (Cargill), Keith Newhouse (Land O' Lakes), Kari Niedfeldt-Thomas (Mosaic), Debbie Reed (C-AGG), Allison Thomson (Field to Market), Jennifer Shaw (Syngenta), Rod Snyder (Field to Market), Ray Stewart (Thompson Coburn), Bob Young (AFBF), Jonathan Geurts (Keystone)

### **Motions**

- ***Keith Newhouse moved to approve the minutes. Bob seconded. The motion passed unanimously.***
- ***The Board took a secret ballot to vote for the Chair position. Stefani Grant (Unilever) won the election and will serve as Chair for two years.***
- ***Keith Newhouse moved that Franklin Holley (WWF), as the sole nominee, be elected as Vice Chair for two years. Stefani Grant seconded. The motion passed unanimously.***
- ***The Board took a secret ballot to vote for the Secretary and Treasurer positions. Keith Newhouse (Land O' Lakes/Winfield) won the election for Secretary, Bob Young (AFBF) won the election for Treasurer, and both will serve for two years.***
- ***Kari Niedfeldt-Thomas moved to approve the employee manual, pending the changes discussed. Keith Newhouse seconded. The motion passed unanimously.***
- ***Kari Niedfeldt-Thomas moved to delegate the data management discussion to the Executive Committee, for development of a plan and a timeline. Stefani Grant seconded. The motion passed unanimously.***

- ***Keith Newhouse moved to approve all nine of the applicants as members of Field to Market. David Schemm seconded. The motion passed unanimously.***
- ***Bob Young moved to approve the new ICE Work Group co-chairs, Caroline Wade and Karen Scanlon. Franklin seconded. The motion passed unanimously.***
- ***Kari Niedfeldt-Thomas moved to approve the Dispute Resolution Process in concept, pending a final proofread. Debbie seconded. The motion passed unanimously.***
- ***Mary Muenzmaier moved to approve the Claims Review Process. Kari Niedfeldt-Thomas seconded. The motion passed unanimously.***
- ***Bob Young moved to approve the Science Advisory Council as described. Keith Newhouse seconded. The motion passed unanimously.***

## **Action Items and Next Steps**

- At the next opportunity, the bylaws will be revised to reflect the ongoing desire of the Board to have a sector-representative Executive Committee.
- Board members should develop recommendations for the restructuring of the work groups after June to share on the March call.
- Staff will continue to pursue a gap analysis between FTM and the SAI Platform, determining if there are a small number of social questions that might be useful to add to the Fieldprint.
- Rod and FTM staff will alter the member agreement in response to Board feedback, especially softening those portions that come across as legally protective. The new version will not require member signoff.

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

### **Opening**

Rod Snyder opened the meeting and led a round of introductions for the benefit of those participating by phone.

Ray Stewart read aloud the anti-trust statement.

Rod reviewed the minutes from the previous meeting, emphasizing the significant decision to approve a budget for 2016 that increased revenue and expenses by nearly \$1 million and accelerated the hiring of new staff.

***Keith Newhouse moved to approve the minutes. Bob seconded. The motion passed unanimously.***

### **Officer Elections**

Jennifer Shaw introduced the need to hold officer elections for each of the four positions – Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary – which together with the President comprise the Executive Committee. The terms for each are two years, with the goal of the Vice Chair moving into the chair position after his or her term is up. The Chair presides over meetings, with the Vice Chair assuming this role in his/her absence. The Treasurer has custody of finances, and the Secretary is custodian of the seal. It has become customary but is not required for the four office positions to represent the four voting sectors of Field to Market (FTM).

- It was noted that at the next opportunity, the bylaws should be revised to reflect the ongoing desire of the Board to have a sector-representative Executive Committee.

Rod emphasized that the Executive Committee has been very helpful with the operation and direction of FTM since it began holding calls weekly on Monday mornings. The officers each summarized their positions as follows.

- Franklin Holley noted that as Secretary and as a member of the Executive Committee, she has gotten deep into the structure of FTM. It is a role that requires responsiveness. She added that she would like to be considered for another term as Secretary, or preferably for a term as Vice Chair.
- Jennifer Shaw reported that, after two years as Vice Chair, and two years as Treasurer before that, she would not be putting her name forward for the Chair election. She noted that this should not be seen as a withdrawal by Syngenta, which will remain very involved in FTM.
  - o Executive Committee members thanked Jennifer for her service, particularly her knack for pushing FTM to improve and her vision for future direction.
- Bob Young noted his desire to stay on as Treasurer to assist in negotiating FTM's first audit, also putting his name in for the Chair election.
- Steve Peterson let the Board know he intends to stay on as Chair Emeritus for one year to assist in the leadership transition.

Other Board members made known their intent to run for office, including the following nominations.

- Keith Newhouse noted his desire to run for Secretary or Chair, adding that in reality Land O' Lakes represents multiple sectors even though it is formally recognized as food and retail.
- Stefani Grant let the Board know she would like to be considered for Chair or Secretary. Unilever, in general, is interested in increasing its support of FTM.
- Kari Niedfeldt-Thomas added her name to the pool for Treasurer or Secretary and noted her familiarity with audits. She would like to see either the grower or food/retail sectors represented in the Chair position.

***The Board took a secret ballot to vote for the Chair position. Stefani Grant (Unilever) won the election and will serve as Chair for two years.***

***Keith Newhouse moved that Franklin Holley (WWF), as the sole nominee, be elected as Vice Chair for two years. Stefani Grant seconded. The motion passed unanimously.***

***The Board took a secret ballot to vote for the Secretary and Treasurer positions. Keith Newhouse (Land O' Lakes) won the election for Secretary, Bob Young (AFBF) won the election for Treasurer, and both will serve for two years.***

## **Finance and Operations Update**

### ***Financial Report***

Rod reviewed highlights from the draft financial report for FY 2015, which is not yet fully closed and does not include the Midwest Row Crop Collaborative. Cash on hand at the end of the calendar year amounted to \$693,738. Total contributions amounted to \$1,977,000, and expenses totaled \$1,680,525. Revenue streams included dues (\$1,597,500), foundation funding (\$330,000), and sponsorships (\$49,500).

- A Board member commented that the balance sheet was presented in a confusing way.
  - o Rod will work with the FTM accountants to reclassify expenses and clarify the report.

The Request for Proposals process for auditors is underway, with a six month timeline for completion of the project. Rod will work with Bob Young to decide which proposal to select.

Rod responded to questions about the financial report as follows.

- An audit is potentially twice as expensive as a review or a compilation. What was the thinking in selecting this process?
  - o Foundations and the federal government generally have a requirement or show a strong preference for an audit from those organizations they choose to fund.
  - o The cost is being minimized by limiting the scope of the audit to 2015, which will include only the work of FTM's most recent accountants.

### ***Employee Manual***

Board members considered the 25-page employee manual for approval. Their comments included the following.

- Washington, DC, is considering a 16-week paid parental leave requirement, and the FMLA (Family and Medical Leave Act) already requires 12 weeks for organizations over 20 employees.
- The manual should explicitly encourage staff to come forward with specific leave and accommodations requests to be addressed on a case-by-case basis.
- This document could use a whistleblower protection process, particularly who to report to if the staff member's direct supervisor is the subject of the complaint.
  - o The section specifying "Immediate supervisor or management" could be altered to specify the Chair of the Board as an alternate authority.
- FTM could specify that it covers the full premium for health insurance.
  - o FTM may not always be able to do this and should not unnecessarily limit itself.
- Could exempt company-sponsored events from the alcohol at work prohibition.
- The vacation language could be improved to specify its intended use in the promotion of employee health.

Rod noted that Thompson Coburn will produce another draft and also that the document if approved will require review three years from today.

***Kari Niedfeldt-Thomas moved to approve the employee manual, pending the changes discussed. Keith Newhouse seconded. The motion passed unanimously.***

### ***Hiring***

Rod reported a desire to extend the timeline for hiring FTM's Data & Technology Program Manager. The announcement may need to be floated in more tech-specific forums. FTM may also need to consider hiring a more senior applicant or one from out of state. He proposed lengthening the open application period by two weeks.

Allison Thomson is looking to fill the science and research intern position with a candidate who has both a quantitative and agronomic or soil science background.

The business director position will best be filled by a more senior level candidate who is prepared to think in terms of value streams and will engage with program design, including with third party verifiers. Rod intends to circulate a draft position description, which is being developed alongside the business plan, a week after this meeting.

- Jennifer Shaw and Keith Newhouse noted that they are interested in reviewing the position description.

Betsy Hickman is looking for a communications intern with graduate level education.

### **FTM Work Plan**

Rod reviewed the 2016 work plan, which is structured around four primary goals, for which different staff and work groups are assigned tasks. These address the following broad categories of work.

- Membership, governance, and program development
- Metrics and tool development
- Program implementation, partnerships, and scaling
- Communication, outreach, and alignment

Though the goals have remained much the same from 2015, the objectives have nearly all changed to reflect the evolving needs of FTM. At the FTM plenary in Arkansas in June 2014, it was decided to sunset the current workgroups in June 2016. At present, it looks as if some of the work groups may change in the following ways.

- The Metrics Work Group will likely become a standing committee.
- Verification will shift from developing the program to managing it.
- The Goals Work Group may phase out altogether.
- Technology may need to be restructured to separate the functions of technical expertise from sector-balanced decision making.

Board members discussed the work plan including the following comments.

- The bylaws will need to be consulted for direction on standing committees.
- Board members should develop recommendations for the restructuring of the work groups to share on the March call.
- This plan could benefit from an overarching aspirational goal, for example “continuous improvement of environmental outcomes,” under which the four numbered goals would be labeled as strategic goals.
- The four primary goals should be altered in tone and made more specific to generate more motivation and accountability. Such goals might sound like the following (example language):
  - o *Membership, governance and program development*: Establish a viable business model to direct the organization’s overall program strategy, direction and implementation including SOPs. Governance to serve the needs of the membership in establishing claims is important. Work plan goals, timelines, and deliverables will be well managed and transparent. The role and potential value of additional licensing and other mechanisms to secure resources should be evaluated.
  - o *Metrics and platform*: Leverage existing technology to continue to develop the Fieldprint Platform to improve the member experience in Fieldprint Projects. Timely completion and enhancement of metrics and documentation to achieve continuous improvement against key outcomes are the goal.
- It may help in considering the scope of FTM’s goals to re-center on the roles specified in the business model framework that came out of the Context work.
  - o The next step in business plan development will need to come from a group who are specifically assembled to draft it and will own the outcome.
- It would be helpful to add a weighting system for tasks to assist staff in prioritizing outcomes.

### **Data Management Update**

Catherine Campbell presented four options for data management and storage, which had been defined by the Technology Work Group for the Board to decide between. At present, the online Calculator and the version hard-coded into the Syngenta Land-db platform are the only two entry points into the

Fieldprint Platform. Next, Heartland Science (Illinois Corn) and Agrium are the first organizations that want to connect to the Platform via the API.

Capturing Historic Revisions (CHR) is an important step in generating accurate impact claims. However it is done, whether by aggregating historic inputs to process through updated algorithms or passing historic outputs through adjustment factors, it is necessary to generate consistent trend lines for projects to report and claim on. In some cases where metrics have changed fundamentally, before-and-after statements may need to be made to bridge the gap.

In data retention, both storage and access need to be considered. Storage would involve FTM being responsible for data on its own servers, while access would also include data stored on other servers, with access stipulated in license agreements. Data retention can include the following categories of information, in order of broadening scope.

1. FTM retention of data or 3<sup>rd</sup> party verification of data needed to support the standard.
2. FTM retention of aggregated Fieldprint outputs
3. FTM retention of aggregated input and output data
4. FTM retention of field level input and output data

Board members raised the following points relevant to data management and retention.

- Aggregation runs into the problem of overlapping project or claims boundaries, where double counting potentially becomes an issue.
  - o This issue is something that can be learned by practicing it first, broadening its value and function in subsequent versions.
- This four choices diagram structures the conversation well. The Executive Committee should make a first attempt at selecting an option.

***Kari Niedfeldt-Thomas moved to delegate the data management discussion to the Executive Committee, for development of a plan and a timeline. Stefani Grant seconded. The motion passed unanimously.***

#### **Communications and Membership Update**

Betsy Hickman introduced five applicants for full membership and four for associate level membership, representing together \$115,000/annum in prospective revenue.

##### ***Applicants for Full Membership (sector)***

- o American Peanut Council (grower)
- o Bioplastic Feedstock Alliance (association)
- o CF Industries (agribusiness)
- o LifeLine Foods (agribusiness)
- o National Farmers Union

##### ***Applicants for Associate Membership (sector)***

- o Agren (agribusiness)
- o Agrian (agribusiness)
- o Ardent Mills (agribusiness)
- o Western Sugar Cooperative (agribusiness)

***Keith Newhouse moved to approve all nine of the applicants as members of Field to Market. David Schemm seconded. The motion passed unanimously.***

### ***ICE (Information, Communication, and Education) Work Group***

Rod noted that the leadership has changed in the ICE Work Group, as Suzy Friedman has moved to the Goals Work Group and Maree Deventer has been pulled into other work internally at ADM. Caroline Wade and Karen Scanlon are being proposed as new co-chairs.

***Bob Young moved to approve the new ICE Work Group co-chairs, Caroline Wade and Karen Scanlon. Franklin seconded. The motion passed unanimously.***

### ***SAI Platform***

Rod reviewed ongoing efforts to align with SAI, a European organization with a practice-based platform. SAI also focuses on social metrics. FTM is working to establish a relationship that would seek collaboration with SAI rather than viewing it as a potential competing platform in the U.S. As a first step, Allison Thomson has been conducting a gap analysis between the platforms.

- A Board member pointed out that SAI has only been engaging the food and retail sectors and therefore is not as diverse in its membership as FTM.
- Rod observed that the SAI methodology is simpler than FTM's, more of a checkbox survey. He is getting feedback from FTM members that they would like more of SAI's topical scope, especially its social components.

Allison reviewed the progress of her gap analysis, and noted her intent to continue the conversation with SAI representatives. She observed that it will take some work to develop a FTM method for addressing social issues. Board members discussed how to incorporate these needs into the overall story of U.S. commodity cropping, including the following comments.

- Many of the social questions would essentially be asking domestic growers if they are breaking the law and are therefore could be perceived as insulting or irrelevant.
- The U.S. already has a legal environment with stiffer requirements than many developing countries. FTM needs to help the domestic grower tell the story of how their compliance with U.S. statutes provides a strong competitive advantage when evaluating sustainability outcomes.

The Board authorized the staff to continue to pursue a gap analysis, determining if there are a small number of social questions that might be useful to add to the Fieldprint.

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

Rod introduced SISC and Alison Edwards, its Executive Director, who then called in to present to the FTM Board. SISC has one set of metrics for use with all of the crops rather than adapting its metrics to fit individual crops as with the Fieldprint. All SISC revenue is from voluntary member contributions, paired with some USDA grant funding, which allows them to hire one half-time executive director as staff. Much of this funding expires at the end of 2016. The Sustainability Consortium has identified SISC as its standard of choice for specialty crops. Some FTM growers use specialty crops, such as tomatoes, as a rotational crop between commodities.

The question is whether or not and if so how much FTM should seek to relate with SISC. Tough conversations have already been had around dues, governance, and membership in the event of a merger, which seems necessary given the overlapping nature of the metrics. Whereas FTM's partnership with Dairy has a clean jurisdictional line drawn between livestock and feed production, the SISC and Fieldprint metrics would need to go into the same tool to provide a clean experience to the grower who grows both kinds of crops.

Alison introduced the harmonization talks, noting that the SISC steering committee and coordinating council have both agreed to pursue some kind of merger and are prepared to think creatively about how to structure it. Both metric gap analysis and governance conversations are ongoing between the organizations. She pointed out that SISC's location on the west coast would add geographical diversity to FTM's presence.

Rod presented a diagram of a full alignment option, in which SISC members would fold into FTM's membership sectors. A specialty crops caucus would be added to the General Assembly, as well as additional representatives to the Board and Executive Committee. Two additional staff, a specialty crop program manager and an additional science staffer would also need to be hired.

Alison noted outstanding issues, which include the current free state of SISC's open source metrics and the voluntary nature of membership donations. The SISC steering committee is willing to consider releasing the open source method and adopting some kind of membership fee structure as a part of a merger, though the fee structure of FTM seems steep to SISC members. SISC has also not had agricultural input companies in its membership but is willing to accept the change.

Board members asked clarifying questions, arriving at the following answers.

- Agricultural input providers were excluded from SISC at the point at which the issue of a pesticide metric became too contentious.
- The fee structure is an issue because SISC is at a similar point in demonstrating its value to its members as FTM was four years ago. The key is to retain those members of SISC that offer substantial value while also encouraging them to recognize the value of linking to a better-established national organization like FTM.
- SISC is outcomes based and does not have a stance against any specific technologies.

Alison left the conversation, and the Board discussed the implications of the new information, offering the following comments.

- It may be difficult to incorporate some of the SISC metrics until the Fieldprint takes into account full farming operations. Other qualities of their metrics also set them far apart from the Fieldprint such as measuring N and P efficiency.
- These partnership talks should be seen as a discrete opportunity for FTM to gain assistance in entering the specialty crop sector – especially enabled by SISC's acceptance by TSC.

## **DAY 2**

### **Verification Work Group Update**

#### ***Dispute Resolution Process***

Jonathan Geurts reviewed the Dispute Resolution Process drafted by the Verification Work Group and altered in response to review by Thompson Coburn. The process was designed to address claims disputes but could be expanded in scope to include all manner of disputes related to Field to Market. It represents an invitation to participate in a process potentially less costly and contentious than a legal challenge. The Process encourages disputant parties to negotiate a settlement on their own initially, after which a sector-representative subcommittee would be appointed to mediate the dispute. Finally, in the continued absence of a resolution, a professional arbitrator would be hired to issue a legally binding decision.

Board members briefly discussed and recommended corrections to the document.



***Kari Niedfeldt-Thomas moved to approve the Dispute Resolution Process in concept, pending a final proofread. Debbie seconded. The motion passed unanimously.***

### ***Claims Review Process***

Jonathan reviewed the Claims Review Process, which is designed to accompany the claims guidance packet and is meant to answer the question “What should I expect after submitting a claims request?” It is a brief set of actions with a timeline commitment.

A Board member questioned if the timeline was too ambitious for the current staff capacity to realize, to which Rod responded that members had expressed a desire to have a clear and reasonable timeframe to allow them to plan communications schedules around claims. He recommended the timeline be approved as is and changed later if necessary.

***Marty Muenzmaier moved to approve the Claims Review Process. Kari Niedfeldt-Thomas seconded. The motion passed unanimously.***

### **Membership Agreement**

Rod introduced the new membership agreement, which requires members to renew and sign it annually in reference to member policies. It also requires a participation commitment. Ray Stewart emphasized that it was designed not to overwhelm members but also cover the bases of membership requirements. Betsy noted that it should remind members of the FTM vision, goals, and principles and assist new members to get on board with FTM’s collaborative spirit. Board members commented on the agreement, coming to the following conclusions.

- In the event this agreement comes back with legal redline, FTM is prepared to remain firm on the original wording. It would be a nightmare to negotiate this document with every member.
- Maybe this document should not take the form of a legal agreement, rather something that outlines expectations more along the lines of Bonsucro’s Code of Conduct.
- It should also include what members stand to gain from FTM, for example
  - o Credible, Verified Metrics, Indicators, Algorithms & Services
  - o Published Standards in the form final version controlled documents and protocols for FPP, APIs, Claims, Verification and Communications
  - o Confidentiality of member technical and financial information

Rod voiced the impression that the Board might prefer to see some of the more protective legal portions taken out of the document. He and staff will aim to alter the document and finalize it with the Board via email.

### **Science Advisory Council**

Allison Thomson presented on the development of the Science Advisory Council. She has reached out to candidates to advise FTM on metrics, benchmarking, the National Indicators Report, claims guidance, the use of FTM data in research, and other workgroup activities. In assembling the group, it is important to have expertise in a range of disciplines. At present, it seems as if the group will need to meet once or twice annually. While it may cost a significant amount to host (including travel compensation for some academic and federal members), this Council may continue to be a good candidate for foundation funding. The 2016 meeting is already in the scope of work for this year’s Walton Family Foundation grant. Board members offered the following comments.

- Members should be asked what they think about 3-year terms before settling on anything less.

- These meetings should be scheduled separately from the plenaries to allow for good thinking space.

***Bob Young moved to approve the Science Advisory Council as described. Keith Newhouse seconded. The motion passed unanimously.***

### **National Indicators Report**

Allison introduced the plans for the upcoming National Indicators Report, which will be framed in terms of the 2014 goals statement. It will include three parts: 1) Environmental Indicators, 2) National Trends in Land Use and Management, and 3) Socioeconomic Indicators. Several new crops will be added, including barley, sugar beets, alfalfa, silage corn, and maybe peanuts. The yield data should be updated through 2015, while the Natural Resource Inventory data will be from 2012. When the Science Advisory Committee comes together, they will be asked to advise and review the Report.

Rod updated the Board on the ongoing discussion of national level claims. Most of FTM's work over the past year has been targeted at meeting supply chain needs. Grower associations also want to be able to talk about their crops at the national level. While the National Indicators Report has always been public and citable, it is important to keep track of how FTM is being referenced and if it is consistent with FTM's intentions regarding continuous improvement. Conservation groups and grower associations will meet next month to begin to work through these questions.

### **Metrics Work Group Update**

Allison updated the Board on the progress of the Metrics Work Group. The RFP for development of a new water quality metric is in progress. The irrigated water use metric will be updated with input from a focus group of Fieldprint Platform users. The soil health white paper is out for review and is anticipated for release in February. Each of these three metrics subgroups should deliver improvement recommendations at the Spring General Assembly.

#### ***Water Quality RFP***

So far, FTM has received eight responses to the water quality RFP, of which Allison thinks two would not be a good fit. A review panel of half FTM members and half external experts will score the proposals with a standard rubric. This review panel is a new process for FTM.

### **2016 Meeting Dates**

Rod reviewed the list of anticipated FTM 2016 meeting dates. The upcoming Board call on March 23<sup>rd</sup> will be two hours in duration, and all Board calls will likely be scheduled in the afternoon on the East Coast to facilitate participation in the West. Spring Plenary might be held at McDonald's in Chicago, and the October Board meeting might be held in Iowa to coincide with the World Food Prize. The November Plenary will again be held with the Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy, and may take place in Kansas City, Denver, or Nashville.

#### ***Full List of Meeting Dates***

- Board of Directors call: March 23
- Workgroup meetings: March 30 - April 8 (Washington, DC)
- Board of Directors call: May 24
- Sector calls: Week of June 6
- Spring plenary: June 21-23 (Location TBD)
- Board of Directors call: Week of August 8

- Workgroup meetings: September 7-16 (Washington, DC)
- Board of Directors meeting: October 12-13 (Des Moines, IA – World Food Prize)
- Sector calls: Week of October 31
- Fall plenary & Sustainable Ag Summit: Week of November 14 (Location TBD)

**Adjourn**