



## Field to Market®

**General Assembly  
4/17/2015  
Meeting Summary  
Atlanta, GA**

### **Present**

Approximately 55 Field to Market member representatives, staff, and contractors were in attendance.

### **Motions**

No motions were raised or voted on.

### **Action Items and Next Steps**

- FTM members should let Betsy know if they mention FTM in communication materials, to allow her to make note of it.
- FTM members should consider the proposed membership model with the goal of voting on it at the General Assembly meeting in June, 2015.
- FTM members should be prepared to respond quickly to requests from Context, which is working on a very tight timeline to develop FTM's business plan.
- FTM members should contact Mark Holland (Context) with groups to look into as part of a landscape analysis of similar efforts.
- Interested members should contact Sarah Alexander about the Keystone Policy Center awards dinner, which will take place the evening of June 10th, in advance of the FTM June plenary meeting.

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

#### **Opening**

Steve Peterson presented opening remarks. He noted that business is changing for Field to Market (FTM), which will require more work both in and between sectors to accomplish.

Rod Snyder recognized the Executive Committee members for their time spent in strategic planning with FTM staff. He also thanked The Coca-Cola Company for their donation of space and food, American Farm Bureau Federation for the reception, and The Fertilizer Institute for the shuttle buses.

Rod requested that those present review the anti-trust statement.

#### **Organizational Updates (PowerPoint (PPT) slides 5-7)**

Rod Snyder reviewed the financial report and budget. The membership of FTM grew by 40% in 2014 and is on track for similar growth in 2015.

He reviewed the latest additions to FTM staff, including Kate Fairman as administrative assistant and Allison Thomson as director of science and research.

#### **Communication Update (PPT, slides 8-14)**

Betsy Hickman presented on FTM's media engagement, highlighting an upcoming tweet chat in early May on corporate sustainability reporting. At the Commodity Classic, FTM members representing the full supply chain presented on a panel.

- FTM members should let Betsy know if they mention FTM in communication materials, to allow her to make note of it.

#### **Proposed Membership Model (PPT, slides 15-24)**

Betsy introduced the proposed membership model for FTM. The corporate dues tiers are geared to entice small to medium sized companies to join, to introduce more parity between sectors, and to drive deeper engagement with FTM. The civil society and national grower association tiers are likewise dependent on the fiscal size of the organizations. An associate membership level would permit organizations to use individual FTM tools without becoming involved as full members. An affiliate membership, based on in-kind donations, would replace the current in-kind designation and be available for government and academic partners.

Under the new membership model, six members would have a reduction in dues, while nineteen organizations would experience an increase. The list of prospective members includes thirteen that are interested at the associate level and some that would come in at currently unavailable intermediate tiers.

Sector representatives reported out on discussions held within their sectors regarding the proposed membership model.

- Those present in the agribusiness sector agreed to support the intent of the model. The sector agreed to give trade associations the same membership rights as other dues paying members due to their history offering expertise to and introducing new members to FTM. The sector discussed entering trade associations into the corporate dues tier, but this is not a definite decision. Finally, the sector agreed that contracts and licensing should be the mechanism for sharing tools and services with members rather than partially granting member rights.
- Those present in the grower sector agreed to include state grower organizations in the same membership category as national grower organizations, especially given that the primary grower engagement will happen at the state level.
- Those present in the food and retail sector wanted to know if the corporate membership tiers would be based on domestic or global revenues.

#### **Business Plan Development (PPT slides 25-31)**

Rod reviewed the business plan progress. FTM hired Context to consult on the plan's design, with the goal to generate the revenue necessary to sustain FTM's programs. Context is based in Des Moines, IA, and has a strong background in information property and agriculture. The team has eight weeks to generate sufficient specifics for FTM to vote on a path forward.

Mark Holland, with Context, presented his team's perspective on the state of FTM and the challenges and opportunities ahead. He remarked on the exceptional level of member involvement in FTM, which will serve as an asset in getting the plan written within the short timeline. During the service period, Context will consider FTM's options for building, buying, or partnering with capacity to build a program

that accomplishes FTM's goals. The team will also work with FTM members to build a products list and a licensing structure that pays for the program. After the contract has expired, Context aims to stay on as an ex officio member of FTM and is therefore motivated to see it succeed.

- FTM members should contact Mark with groups to look into as part of a landscape analysis of similar efforts.

Rod put the business plan in context, remarking that FTM began as a collaborative dialogue convened by Keystone. Now it is reaching an inflection point at which it needs to figure out how to implement and scale the effort.

### **Work Group Updates**

Representatives from each of FTM's five active work groups reported out on their discussions the previous day.

#### *Goals and Regional Mapping (PPT slide 41)*

The Goals and Regional Mapping Work Group is working with the Metrics Work Group on greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs), including the likely impact of accounting for carbon sequestration. One end goal is to determine the feasible region of improvement for GHGs. The group will also work with the conservation sector to define landscape quality and determine the gaps in the current metrics to measuring it. Finally, the group will draft a whitepaper on the current state of science and modeling on soil health.

#### *Metrics (PPT slides 32-40)*

Since last September, the Metrics Work Group (MWG) has been focused on Fieldprint Calculator (FPC) 3.0, dividing potential updates into doable, maybe, and likely not for this timeline. Subgroups of the MWG now include land use, water quality, irrigated water use, soil health, greenhouse gas emissions, rice methane, and carbon sequestration. A standard operating procedure for metrics development is forthcoming from Allison Thomson, who is coordinating the metrics effort.

Assembly members commented on the MWG update. Discussion reached the following conclusions.

- The APEX model of water quality is being exchanged for the NRCS STEP model, which simplifies the APEX model with the help of CEAP data to develop localized assumptions.
- State nutrient management plans are being developed and completed throughout the Mississippi River basin. FTM should make an effort to align with their conclusions.

#### *Technology (PPT slides 42-43)*

Overall, the Technology Work Group (TWG) has been working towards the FPC 3.0 deadline, to coincide with program phase two in June, 2016. Intermediate tasks include the following.

- The FPC will update to the NRCS LMOD platform. This change will change some outcomes, which will be addressed in a sensitivity analysis beforehand.
- Rice and alfalfa integration into the FPC is currently in beta testing. Rice will be ready for use in May, and alfalfa will be ready in June.
- The group is waiting on the business plan and metrics decisions before grower data warehousing, privacy, and usage can be fully addressed.
- A more detailed version of the algorithms document will be available in July, along with benchmark updates.
- A meeting is set this summer with the NRCS office in Colorado to go over incorrect or missing values from NRCS algorithms.

- The TWG is also looking into a number of software platforms that might help to coordinate efforts within the group.

#### *Continuous Improvement (PPT slides 44-48)*

After a series of discussions, it was decided that the primary focus of and best role for the Continuous Improvement Work Group is to establish standards for grower engagement and to grow partnerships. Therefore, the new name for the group is the Information, Communication, and Engagement Work Group (ICEWG). The group then established three subgroups that will focus on the following three work streams.

- Developing an internal information hub for FTM
- Establishing and growing external partnerships
- Connecting members with projects and supporting and recognizing ongoing efforts

#### *Verification (PPT slides 49-66; extra material: slides 67-73)*

The Verification Work Group (VWG) has identified three tiers of assured claims available to members, which address participation, measurement, and impact. Participation claims guidance is already a part of the Communications Toolkit compiled and maintained by Betsy Hickman. Now the VWG would like member feedback to help define the scope of measurement and impact claims, particularly with statistical questions related to sampling and reporting protocol. The VWG is also working to develop and prioritize a list of risks inherent to FTM's program, with the goal of drafting mitigation measures and distributing them to the most relevant groups within FTM.

Assembly members discussed issues brought up by the VWG update, coming to the following conclusions.

- It is a FTM principle not to compare regions against one another, so authorized claims will need to avoid doing so.
- The risks in the risk list aim to be holistic in scope, including all aspects of the FTM program.
- The assurance or verification process is as yet undefined, and a number of models are being considered. After developing the risk mitigation measures, the VWG will have a better idea of what will be required to make different levels of claims. For example, a key operating principle is to protect grower privacy. To do so, VWG needs to determine the minimum number of fields that can be aggregated and reported publicly.

#### **Upcoming Meeting Dates (PPT slide 74)**

Rod reviewed the upcoming meeting dates

#### *Other Events*

- Luther Smith (American Society of Agronomy International Certified Crop Advisor Program) presented on the tri-societies meeting that will be co-located with the FTM November plenary meeting. FTM members are welcome to attend this meeting, which will take place in the days beforehand.
- Sarah Alexander presented on the Keystone Policy Center awards dinner, which will take place the evening of June 10<sup>th</sup>, in advance of the FTM June plenary meeting. Please let Sarah know if you are interested in attending.

#### **Adjourn**