



## Board of Directors | Meeting Minutes

June 23, 2020

*Conference Call*

### **Directors Present**

Jenny Ahlen, Environmental Defense Fund; Chad Bloom, Pheasants Forever; Sarah Fox, Nutrien; Keira Franz, National Association of Wheat Growers; Michelle French, ADM; Stefani Grant, Unilever; Margaret Henry, PepsiCo; Diane Herndon, Nestle Purina; Franklin Holley, Keystone Policy Center; Brandon Hunnicutt, National Corn Growers Association; Mark Isbell, USA Rice Federation; Gary O'Neill, USDA NRCS; Jeremy Peters, National Association of Conservation Districts; Megan Weidner, Bunge; Jun Zhu, University of Arkansas

### **Staff and Consultants**

Rod Snyder, Field to Market; Betsy Hickman, Field to Market; Allison Thomson, Field to Market; Jamie Richards, Field to Market; Ray Stewart, Thomson Coburn; Sarah Conroy, CLA

### **Motions**

- *A motion was made by Michelle French and seconded by Megan Weidner to approve the consent agenda. Motion passed unanimously.*
- *A motion was made by Mark Isbell and seconded by Michelle French to approve the nominations to the Technology Advisory Council for a two-year term, ending June 2022. Motion passed unanimously.*
- *A motion was made by Diane Herndon and seconded by Margaret Henry to allow Field to Market staff to work on a formal MOU with OpenTEAM. Motion passed unanimously.*
- *A motion was made by Keira Franz and seconded by Michelle French to adjourn the meeting at 3:59 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.*

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

- *Move all remaining scheduled events in 2020 to virtual/remote format.*
- *Formed a subgroup to review strategies and opportunities to embed racial justice, diversity and inclusion into Field to Market's membership and programming. The subgroup includes Margaret, Franklin, Mark, Megan and Brandon.*
- *Review FY 2020 budget for any additional funds needed to support Fieldprint Platform enhancements through the remainder of the year.*
- *Review feedback from public comment period on the proposed STEP water quality metric and consider final approval. Review recommendations from the Metrics Committee for a potential pest management metric.*
- *Review next steps from HR assessment based on key recommendations from ClitonLarsonAllen and the Executive Committee.*

- *Staff to work on an MOU with OpenTEAM and will have Thompson Coburn review for any intellectual property implications.*

## Proceedings

### Opening

Board Chair, Brandon Hunnicutt called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. Jamie Richards called roll and Ray Stewart read the Antitrust Statement. Rod Snyder reviewed old business from the May Board call.

### Consent Agenda

The consent agenda included review and approval of the meeting minutes from May and a review and approval of new membership applications:

- Mondelez (Brands & Retail, Full)
- CIBO Technologies (Agribusiness, Full)
- Farmobile (Agribusiness, Full)
- Penn State University (Affiliate)
- U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol (Affiliate)
- OpenTEAM (Affiliate)

*A motion was made by Michelle French and seconded by Megan Weidner to approve the consent agenda. Motion passed unanimously.*

### Finance and Operations Update

Rod reviewed the April 2020 financials and reported cash on hand of \$1,273,699 with revenue at \$1,272,214 and expenses of \$880,650.

He gave a brief overview of Field to Market's 2019 Annual Report, to be released electronically on June 24. He noted that only a few hard copies would be printed and distributed this year due to COVID-19 workplace changes. Rod also discussed the survey conducted by Sustainable Ag Summit partners about holding an in-person event in November and asked the Board for feedback regarding Field to Market's scheduled events for the remainder of 2020. The Board decided to move all remaining 2020 events to virtual/remote. Rod asked the Board for feedback on virtual event platforms and the best way to engage growers, possibly also for virtual field tours.

Rod also discussed Field to Market's commitment to racial justice, diversity, and inclusion. He noted the outreach we have been doing over the past two years, as well as potential programming moving forward. A Board subgroup was formed to review strategies and opportunities to embed racial justice, diversity and inclusion into Field to Market's membership and programming. The subgroup includes Margaret, Franklin, Mark, Megan, and Brandon.

### Overview of June Plenary and General Assembly Agenda

Rod reviewed the schedule and logistics for this week's Plenary & General Assembly, breakout sessions hosted by Standing Committees, and Cross-Sector Dialogue on ag finance and crop insurance.

### Nominations to the Technology Advisory Council

Brandon reviewed nominations for the Technology Advisory Council, which includes seven returning members and four new nominees. He noted that there are four additional positions available and asked the Board to continue considering possible nominations.

#### TAC Nominations (expiring June 2022)

- Jack Carlson, Colorado State University
- Emma Fuller, Granular
- Amy Hughes, Environmental Defense Fund
- Kevin Krieg, John Deere
- Matt Waits, Proagrica
- Steven Ward, The Climate Corporation
- Randy Stauffer, Illinois Corn Growers Association
- Aaron Ault, College of Engineering, Purdue University
- Dorn Cox, OpenTEAM
- Seana Day, Better Food Initiatives
- Dave Gustafson, Conservation Technology Information Center

*A motion was made by Mark Isbell and seconded by Michelle French to approve the nominations to the Technology Advisory Council for a two-year term, ending June 2022. Motion passed unanimously.*

#### **Midyear Review of FY 2020 Budget**

Rod walked-through the FY 2019 revenue and expenses and noted challenges due to membership attrition in 2019. He also provided updates and projections for FY 2020, which included the Paycheck Protection Program forgivable loan and Walton Family Foundation grant. Rod acknowledged the potential cost-savings this year from not holding in-person events but asked the Board to consider maintaining a conservative approach to the budget for the rest of 2020. Based on the economic uncertainties from COVID-19 and a spend-down of cash reserves in 2019, he recommended that we take steps to reserve funds heading into next year. However, he also noted that an additional review of the technology budget would be necessary in August to review any potential overages based on necessary enhancements to the Fieldprint Platform. Lastly, the Board discussed membership recruitment and renewals that we might anticipate for the remainder of FY 2020.

#### **Water Quality Metric Revisions**

Allison Thomson provided an update on the process for reviewing the NRCS STEP tool. The Metrics Committee has recommended replacing the Water Quality Index with STEP (Stewardship Tool for Environmental Performance). STEP was developed by USDA NRCS based on a decade of detailed farmer surveys and modeling. She noted that Field to Market opened a public comment period on STEP through July 24, and an update will be provided to the Board during the August call.

Allison also gave an overview of STEP, how it would be implemented in the Fieldprint Platform and the data entry requirements. She noted that most users should not see an overall increase in data entry. Allison also mentioned that STEP uses the WIN-PST tool for assessing pesticide impacts to water quality; however, Field to Market's Pest Management Taskforce recommended an approach that does not require information on active ingredients used to comply with the organization's "technology neutral" principle. The Metrics Committee is currently exploring alternative approaches for a pest management metric and does not recommend including WIN-PST in the Fieldprint Platform.

The Board generally agreed with the recommendation from the Metrics Committee to proceed with approval of STEP for the four nutrient pathways and await the conclusion of the Metrics Committee recommendations for a separate pest management metric. A formal vote on STEP adoption will occur during the August Board meeting.

## **Human Resource Assessment**

Rod introduced Sarah Conroy from CliftonLarsonAllen (CLA) and reviewed the process taken so far with CLA. Sarah reviewed some of the key recommendations as synthesized from the report previously shared with the Board of Directors, which include:

- Create/revise job descriptions to create the foundation for workforce and succession planning.
- Make the organization “flatter” with more teaming, which empowers employees to become stakeholders, and ensure they are in support of strategic goals.
- Create a master calendar for all FTM events; board and committee activities, staff absences and travel as well as project planning milestones to help redefine priorities and ensure all efforts are resourced effectively.
- Assign operational responsibility for HR and payroll to Executive Assistant and Office Manager to free the president’s time for external affairs responsibilities.

The Board discussed the recommendations and options to have CLA assist in the implementation of next steps, which will be overseen by the Executive Committee.

## **Key Harmonization and Alignment Updates**

### OpenTEAM

Rod discussed the work of OpenTEAM and the benefits of establishing an MOU and reciprocal membership between the two organizations, including additional access to the research and technology communities. Allison noted that there is a potential for OpenTEAM to become an API partner at some point in the future. Rod noted that the MOU would be based on a general template but that the final language would be reviewed by Thompson Coburn for any implications for Field to Market’s intellectual property.

*A motion was made by Diane Herndon and seconded by Margaret Henry to allow Field to Market staff to work on a formal MOU with OpenTEAM. Motion passed unanimously.*

### Ecosystem Services Market Consortium

A Board subgroup regarding Ecosystem Services Market Consortium alignment opportunities met on June 4<sup>th</sup> to discuss ongoing conversations between ESMC and Field to Market, including the two pilot projects that Field to Market has been invited to participate in. These projects will provide an opportunity to learn how to best leverage existing data, metrics, and project frameworks to meet ESMC protocols and requirements. The Subgroup also discussed next steps including:

- Coalition letter that could be sent to leadership of both organizations to signal the importance of programmatic alignment amongst members; and
- Request time on an ESMC membership call to address the issue.

### SAI Platform

Betsy Hickman reviewed key outcomes from interviews conducted with six joint members of Field to Market and SAI Platform.

- Many members with a large European presence have committed publicly or internally to using SAI Platform’s FSA.
- Members agreed that SAI Platform should recognize Field to Market’s leadership in North American commodity agriculture, though the mechanisms that should be used for the recognition varied.

- While some members believe that some of the supplemental questions currently asked within the FTM-SAI equivalency module are unnecessary for the realities of US row crop agriculture, there wasn't significant pushback on the questions or the audit process.
- Field to Market should allow Continuous Improvement Accelerator Projects to be listed in the SAI Platform Spotlight Tool at the discretion of the Project Sponsors. There was a general feeling that a level of reciprocity in our tools is appropriate.

She noted that SAI is interested in updating the current MOU with Field to Market, but any updates must be informed by member input. Staff will work on revising the existing MOU and will share with joint members before sending to SAI Platform.

#### U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol

Following approval by the Board, an MOU with U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol was signed on June 17<sup>th</sup> with public announcement planned. Key points of collaboration include:

- Continued publication of Field to Market's National Indicators Report on a five-year basis to track progress against the U.S. cotton industry's established environmental targets through 2025; and
- Use of Field to Market sustainability metrics through the Fieldprint® Platform or Qualified Data Management Partner by farmers enrolling in the U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol; and
- Mutual respect and commitment to each organization's policies, protocols, licensing, and trademark requirements; and
- Participation in each other's meetings and work sessions where appropriate, including providing feedback and expertise as needed.

#### **Other Business/Announcements**

Rod and Brandon introduced Sarah Fox who took over from Dave Stanko as Nutrien's representative on Field to Market's Board of Directors.

*A motion was made by Keira Franz and seconded by Michelle French to adjourn the meeting at 3:59 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.*