

**Oregon Sweet Cherry Commission**  
2667 Reed Rd., Hood River, OR 97031  
Phone: (541) 386-5761 FAX: (541) 386-3191

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
Chemeketa Center for Business & Industry, Room 103  
626 High St. NE, Salem, OR 97301  
Thursday, April 13, 2016, 11:00 A.M.

### **Call to Order/Introductions**

Dan Crouse, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 11:02 a.m. the following Commissioners consisting of a quorum, including Dan, were present: Jim Markman, Leonard Aubert, Ryan Bond, Kris Brunner, Les Stephens and Steve Sandau. Stacey Cooper and Megan Thompson joined the meeting at 11:30.

Steve Castagnoli, Mid-Columbia Ag Research and Experiment Center (MCAREC) Director, Nik Wiman, Oregon State University (OSU) Orchard Crop Extension Specialist, Sue Root, Oregon Cherry Growers, Kris Anderson, Commodity Commission Program Manager for Oregon Department of Ag, Bill Braunworth, OSU Head of Horticulture Department, Phil Walker, Roger Hildebrandt, Ron Bonnett and Harry Noah, Willamette Valley growers and Dana Branson, OSCC Administrator were also present. Bryce Molesworth National Cherry Growers & Industries Foundation (NCGIF) and Cheryl Kroupa, Marketing Director NCGIF, joined the meeting at 11:40. Tom Kubitz, Seneca Foods joined the meeting at 12:57.

The minutes of the regular meeting held on February 9, 2017 were emailed in advance and available at the meeting. *Ryan Bond moved and Les Stephens seconded to approve the minutes as submitted. The motion carried unanimously.*

The financial statements for February and March were emailed in advance and available at the meeting. There were no questions. *Ryan Bond moved and Leonard Aubert seconded to accept the financial reports for February and March as submitted. The motion carried unanimously.*

### **Administrator's Activity Report**

There are three direct sellers in collections follow up. Kris Anderson said the next step is to contact the Department of Justice to send a letter.

An Administrative Rule change to change the due date for all sweet cherry assessments to October 1 was filed in March and published in the April Bulletin. *Jim Markman moved and Ryan Bond seconded to formally*

*approve the filing. The motion carried unanimously.* There was discussion regarding that due date for brine cherries. Comments have been solicited from handlers and written comments can be submitted to the commission through May 3, 2017. In addition, there is a hearing scheduled for Monday, May 22, 2017 in the OSU Extension meeting room located at MCAREC starting at 10:00 a.m. to give comments. There was discussion regarding the timing when brine handlers determine the drained weight to calculate assessments and to pay growers. Dana will do more checking with handlers.

A letter of support was sent to the Oregon Farm to School and School Garden Network for their Specialty Crop Block Grant proposal.

A letter of appreciation was sent to Dan Arp, Dean of OSU College of Ag Sciences, for appointing Steve Castagnoli as MCAREC Director. The letter also urged the college to search for and hire a replacement for Steve's old job as Extension Agent at MCAREC. This is even more urgent since Lynn Long, Wasco County Extension Agent, announced his retirement effective June 30, 2017.

The 5 State Cherry Meeting is scheduled for May 17, 2017 in Richland, WA. To RSVP contact Kathy Keeth at Washington State Fruit Commission by May 1<sup>st</sup>. Dana has details if you need them.

Geoff Horning, Aglink, is soliciting nominations for two recognition awards presented at the Denim & Diamonds event in November. The deadline is tomorrow and the two awards are for Agriculturist of the Year, which is kind of a life achievement or career honor and Agriculture Connections, which recognizes efforts to make the general public more aware of agriculture.

The 2017-18 budget discussion was postponed till later in the meeting.

### **Chairman's Report and Northwest Horticultural Council (NHC)**

Dan Crouse was the NHC Trustee for OSCC last year. He is willing to serve again. *Megan Thompson moved and Leonard Aubert seconded to nominate Dan for NHC Trustee. The motion carried unanimously.* Dana will notify NHC.

The NHC annual meeting is coming up in May. Dan recently attended a Science Advisory Committee meeting and the retirement send off for Chris Schlect. Mark Powers is now President of NHC. They are currently understaffed because a replacement for Mike Willet has not been found

and recently Laura Grunenfelder resigned also. NHC is very involved with the Food Safety committee.

### **Research Committee Report**

Dan Crouse talked to Mike Willet regarding the powdery mildew project that OSCC declined to participate in funding last meeting. Washington has decided to back away from funding it also by setting up for it to improve the chances of meaningful results. The breeding program is in a holding pattern until a new breeder is hired. A sheet detailing the research funding for the 2017 season by project and researcher was distributed.

### **ODA – Kris Anderson**

Kris went over the commissioners whose terms are expiring as of June 30, 2017. Tim Ramsey, processed handler, will probably not be applying for another 3-year term so candidates for that position are needed. Ryan Bond and Leonard Aubert are eligible for re-appointment and will submit applications. There is still one producer position representing the Columbia Gorge area that's open. It is a partial term expiring June 30, 2018.

Kris went over some trade missions coming up – one sponsored by WUSATA to meet one-on-one with buyers from California. There is a \$30 fee. She mentioned several other inbound and outbound, predominately Asian, trade missions.

### **OSU Research & Extension Report**

Steve Castagnoli went over the personnel update at MCAREC. The search for a post doctorate to work on Entomology is progressing. He hopes to have someone in place by mid-May. There will probably be an SWD control project proposal to the OSCC for the new person in the range of \$10-15,000.

Nik Wiman, orchard specialist, North Willamette Research and Extension Center, went over his position and some of his responsibilities. His work is dominated by hazelnuts because there are 65,000 acres of them planted in the Valley. He also updates seven Pest Management Guides, including sweet cherry, plums, peaches, hazelnuts to name a few. He would like feedback on who is using them. Sue Root said Oregon Cherry Growers prints them out and sends them to their growers. There was discussion of possibly referring Willamette Valley growers to the Mid-Columbia Pest Guide.

Bill Braunworth, OSU Department Head for the College of Agriculture, discussed some of the funding challenges facing the college and their

desire to meet the needs of growers. The Oregon legislature is meeting now and he suggested contacting your representatives to voice your opinion for program funding.

### **Maraschino Promotions Report-Cheryl Kroupa, NCGIF**

Cheryl Kroupa, National Cherry Growers & Industries Foundation (NCGIF) Marketing Director, described some of the campaigns partially funded by OSCC over the last few years. NCGIF contracts with Washington, Michigan and Oregon to handle generic promotion of maraschino cherries. The total promotion dollars spent has averaged \$233,600 for each of the last four years. Oregon's contribution to NCGIF for the same four years has averaged 24% of the total provided by all three states.

Nightclub and bar shows used to be an opportunity to be in front of 40-50,000 people who were bartenders, press, food service companies, drink mix companies and liquor companies. Good contacts and partnerships were developed here over the years – especially Jim Beam, Jack Daniels and Finest Call. Promotions were developed for both food service and retail through these contacts. And the shows have evolved into smaller events, such as bourbon trail tours with mixologists.

Partnership with Patrick Henry Creative Promotions puts maraschinos in the mix with chain restaurant customers at the National Restaurant Show in Chicago.

For the past several years we've had a contract with UPP Entertainment Marketing. They have been able to place maraschino cherries in several TV shows and movies. Cheryl showed some clips and the measurements of impressions for from March 9, 2016 through March 7, 2017 were 87.89 million.

There was a great partnership for several years with Gluten Free Magazine. Gluten free foods became such a hot topic and maraschinos qualify as a gluten free food. Unfortunately, Whole Foods perceived maraschinos to be an unhealthy product and our partnership was scrubbed. However, Martha Stewart has started using the natural maraschinos in her recipes.

Another source of coverage is in small town newspapers and publications that pick up recipes and pictures using maraschino cherries. Marketing data indicates that more mature residents in rural and small towns do more baking than their metropolitan counterparts so this is a good target audience. The recipes are viewed in 55 states and territories with subscriptions of over 3.7 million.

A new website was commissioned in 2016 with an improved recipe database. Stories and pictures of family farms are always welcome for posting on the site – these are the most popular draws. A marketing study was also done in 2016 to measure attitudes, preference and interest in maraschino cherries. The results were positive with consumers saying they were willing to pay more for example, a milkshake that included a cherry on top.

Like all products, the maraschino market is constantly evolving. It is a mature product. With the current focus on healthy eating it's a challenge. Harry Noah asked what the cherry industry can do to increase the market. Unfortunately, there was no easy answer to that question.

### **2017-18 Draft Budget**

A draft of the 2017-18 OSCC budget was emailed in advance of the meeting. Dana went through some of the assumptions she used. Kris Anderson said that the estimate used for the ODA fee is probably too high because costs for support will be lower this year. Dana will make the adjustment before publishing the draft agenda in the Spring newsletter.

### **Old Business**

At the last meeting, Harry Noah brought a proposal for a technical audit of the research and promotion programs to attempt to evaluate their effectiveness. He suggested reducing the scope to the effectiveness of the maraschino promotions program only. *Les Stephens moved and Jim Markman seconded to get an estimate of the cost for the audit suggested by Harry of the maraschino promotions. The motion carried with Stacey Cooper abstaining.* The motion is tabled until a resource for this kind of evaluation can be found.

### **New Business**

The nominations for OSCC officers for next fiscal year are Dan Crouse, Chairman, Stacey Cooper, Vice-Chairwoman, Leonard Aubert, Secretary/Treasurer. *Megan Thompson moved and Stacey Cooper seconded to approve the nominations. The motion carried unanimously.*

### **Next Meeting**

The next regular meeting and the Budget Hearing for 2017-18 will be June 1, 2017 in Room 1.162, Building 1 (the Boardroom) on the Columbia Gorge Community College campus, in The Dalles, OR starting at 2:00 P.M. following the pre-harvest tour.

### **Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 1:55 p.m.