

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

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, August 13, 2013, 10:00 A.M.

Call to Order/Introductions

Megan Thompson, Chairwoman, called the meeting to order at 10:15 a.m. The following Commissioners consisting of a quorum, including Megan, were present: Mike Halliday, Jim Markman, Dan Crouse, Stacey Cooper, Tom Brateng, Steve Sandau, and Andrea Galloway.

Kris Anderson, Commodity Commission Program Manager; Brian Tuck, MCAREC; Geoff Horning, Executive Director, Agri-Business Council; Sue Root, Oregon Cherry Growers; and Dana Branson and LeRoy Nickerson, OSCC Administrators were also present.

The minutes of the regular meeting and budget hearing held on June 7, 2013 were emailed in advance and available at the meeting. *Andrea Galloway moved and Mike Halliday seconded to approve the minutes as submitted. The motion carried unanimously.*

The minutes of the special meeting held by conference call on July 29, 2013 to discuss the Administrative Rule Change that proposed to lower the assessment rates were emailed in advance and available at the meeting. *Tom Brateng moved and Stacey Cooper seconded to approve the minutes as submitted. The motion carried unanimously.*

The financial statements for June and July were emailed in advance and available at the meeting. Dana explained the credit entry under "Other Payments" in July was a refund of the overpayment of Fresh promotions made before the closing of last fiscal year. There were no questions. *Stacey moved and Andrea Galloway seconded to accept the financial reports for June and July as submitted. The motion carried unanimously.*

Les Stephens, Commissioner, and Dennis Hannepel, ODA Trade Policy Specialist joined the meeting.

ODA Report

Kris Anderson said that Katy Coba has appointed all the open positions on the Sweet Cherry Commission and the oaths of office have been received. She mentioned other Commissions with positions that are

still open. She reported that Dana had sent in the year-end financial reports by the requested date and she is currently reviewing the Operations Plan the OSCC approved at the June meeting. KATU's AM NW morning show featured stone fruit including cherries in their Whole Foods Markets and 'Celebrate Oregon Agriculture' segment so cherries got some free local publicity.

Dennis Hannapel talked about the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) meetings held yesterday in Ontario and being held tomorrow in Yakima, WA. The foam sometimes used in the bottom of picking buckets to cushion the drop and also used to cover the tops of bins during transportation is an item that the FDA objects to because of the potential for bacteria growth. His impression is that the FDA isn't going to insist on a one size fits all policy on food safety and that they will work with the different circumstances crop by crop. He also handed out a list of under-utilized federal grant programs along with websites for more information on each one. Dana will talk with B.J. to see if there are any opportunities.

Agri-Business Council

Geoff Horning joined the meeting today to talk about the Agri-Business Council's Adopt a Farmer program. It focuses on middle school age science classes and allows for field trips to a farm as well as class visits by the farmer to get a better understanding of a real life agricultural situations. It was launched in the Beaverton area in 2011 and has been popular so they're expanding it. Teachers are partnered with a farmer and a lesson plan is developed. Teachers, students and farmers have been pleased with the results and the learning. The ABC is looking for farmers who live within an hour of the school districts they are working with, which include Portland and Eugene.

Administrator's Activity Report

Dana reminded everyone about the Cherry Research Review dates, November 12 and 13 in Wenatchee, WA this year.

A crop and cash estimate was handed out. It included input from all the largest handlers. The discussion about assessments lead to questions of when handlers are considering fruit purchased as "salvage" or "culls" and therefore not subject to assessments in Oregon. There were also questions about how Washington distributes the assessments they collect on delivered pounds. Dana will go back to WSFC to try again to get a better understanding to bring to the next meeting.

The annual Agri-Business Council (ABC) membership is up for renewal. Geoff explained earlier some of the programs run by ABC and the OSCC joined at the \$275 level for the past several years. Commissioners made comments about the value of the organization. *Tom Brateng moved and Mike Halliday seconded to renew membership at the \$500 level this year. The motion carried unanimously.*

Tim Ramsey asked for a review of the OSCC Policy and Procedure Manual at the last meeting. Dana emailed a current copy of it to all the commissioners and brought several paper copies. Most had not had time to look it over and since Tim was not able to attend *Andrea Galloway moved and Stacey Cooper seconded to table the discussion until the next meeting. The motion carried unanimously.*

Dana received a request for a contribution to support the Summer Ag Institute put on by OSU. She forwarded the email note from Jana Dick, program coordinator prior to the meeting. This is a continuing education program for teachers that gives them insight and knowledge about farming and agriculture that they can pass on to their young students. Les Stephens had asked Dana to inquire if other commodity commissions contributed. She received the response that 10 out of the 23 commissions do contribute to this program. The OSCC has not contributed funds before, but Dana has sent informational material when it was available. Andrea Galloway commented that she had some experience with the program in Eastern Oregon and felt it was worthwhile in educating the public. *Andrea moved and Jim Markman seconded to contribute \$375. Les Stephens proposed that we ask the program coordinator to designate the donation as a scholarship from OSCC. The motion carried unanimously.*

Chairman's Report

OSCC received a reply from the Risk Management Agency (RMA) on our letter questioning the calculation of the transitional revenue for Oregon. The letter explained where RMA got the information and said they are exploring the use of actual revenue and yield under the Federal crop insurance program. However, they are willing to send representatives to a meeting with OSCC for more discussion. Jim Markman brought this issue to the attention of the OSCC and he stated that even though NW Farm Credit Service (FCS) does sell crop insurance, which may mean he has to declare a conflict of interest under Oregon ethics law, he is not pursuing the line of questioning in order to sell more insurance or benefit his agency. He would like to help more growers benefit from buying crop insurance and the way it is currently the cost is too high for most people to justify. Jim would

like to work with Drew Kiilian, also with FCS, and Dave Paul with the RMA to investigate what the discrepancies might be affecting the calculation of yields in Oregon versus Washington. Jim will follow up with Dana to put this on the agenda when he has more information.

The Administrative Rule change proposed at the June 7 meeting was not approved by a majority of Commissioners on the July 29 conference call, but it was agreed that assessment rates would be discussed further. There were questions earlier in the meeting about what fruit assessments are paid on and the need for more clarification. It was also suggested that the budget process start earlier, perhaps at the February meeting, and to find avenues for looking outside the universities for private organizations to work on defined research projects.

Each Commissioner and grower representative gave an overview of the 2013 cherry season they experienced during the Roundtable discussion. It's no surprise that the weather played the biggest role. Eastern Oregon had 25-30% of a crop due to freezes, but then experienced extreme hot temperatures like everyone else later. Rain affected Bings and then the hot temperatures so soon afterward just destroyed them in The Dalles. Parkdale was still early in development so the rain didn't hurt them. Skeenas and Lapins were good quality there although the Lapins were light. Willamette Valley growers had problems with soft fruit and stem retention. The consensus was it was another tough year with many variations variety-to-variety, grower-to-grower.

The meeting recessed at 11:55 for lunch and reconvened at 12:25.

Research Committee Report

Dana sent out by email the Oregon and Washington results of the cherry priority worksheet. The top four broad categories of concern matched up pretty well between the two states. They are SWD, powdery mildew, post-harvest fruit quality and the cherry breeding program. The Washington Research Committee Chair will get with the Oregon co-Chairs to work out the priorities to be put on the Research RFP. The Oregon priority list will be shared with all OSU researchers. There was discussion about SWD control this season and a question about how do you know when to start spraying for them. Dana will add that to the comment list along with a request for more suggested sprays for SWD that have a one-day pre-harvest interval.

Megan Thompson, Stacey Cooper, Dan Crouse and Eric Shrum went to Prosser on August 5 for a progress report meeting with Nnadozie Orgauzie on the breeding program. There is no change at this time in the selection process for crosses. Eric thought the test plots looked better enough to forgo writing a letter to WSU that was suggested at the June meeting. Test trees are being eliminated and pulled out, which was not being done earlier. Oraguzie is projecting 10-15 years for results, which is longer than we originally thought was possible with the genetic marker advancements. The objectives of the program were to look for 30% new varieties in the early season, 30% in late season and the balance somewhere in between. Stacey thought there were several crosses showing promise in the mid-season range. There is a cross ready for on-farm planting and trial this spring with Chelan timing. Oregon needs to find a suitable location and volunteer to plant 100 of the trees with 10-15 Chelans as the control. They estimate it would require about a quarter acre and it should be either fumigated or new ground. If you have suggestions or know someone who's interested please have them contact Eric Shrum, Dan Crouse or Megan Thompson.

OSU Research & Extension Report

Brian Tuck reported that the 100th anniversary celebration of MCAREC was a success with over 270 in attendance, a display of the milestones over the years, OSU dignitaries and good food. He's looking forward to the next 100 years. The cherry harvest at the station was similar to everyone else's with soft fruit. They have already finished the Bartlett harvest.

They have three or four good prospects for the Farm Manager position and hope to have the new person in place in about two months. Brian was asked about the Open Campus position that was just advertised. It's in conjunction with the OSU Extension Service and the focus of the program is to bring the OSU Campus to the local communities in the state. The new coordinator will be working with the k-12 schools, the community college and the university to address educational needs in the communities and ways to improve opportunities for area residents to access further educational opportunities.

Old Business and New Business

There was none.

Next Meeting

The next regular meeting will be Tuesday, October 8, 2013 in Hood River in the Extension meeting room located at the Mid Columbia Agriculture Research and Experiment Center beginning at 10:00 a.m.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 12:55 p.m.