



NATIONAL FORUM ON SEED Meeting Report



Winnipeg – July 27, 2005

Upcoming National Forum on Seed activities:

**Variety Registration Working Group III
October 25, 2005**

**Innovation Working Group I
October 26-27, 2005**

**National Forum on Seed Meeting
December 07, 2005
March 06-07, 2006**

Call to Order: Welcome & Introductions

M. Doyle introduced new members at the table: Glenn Young (CFA), Terry Boehm (NFU), Jacques Dion (RSE), Daniel Lanoie (UPA), Art Enns (GGC), Patti Miller (AAFC), Bill Witbeck (P. Gov't West)

Attendance:

Forum Representatives	Observers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art Enns (GGC) • Barry Riesner (CSGA) • Bill Witbeck (Provincial Government West) • Bryan Harvey (Plant Breeder - University Of Saskatchewan) • Daniel Lanoie (UPA) • Dave Sippell (Plant Breeder – Private) • Denise Dewar (CropLife) • Doug Brown (Plant Breeder – Public) • Glenn Young (representing CFA from Keystone Agricultural Producers) • Graham Worden(CWB) • Jacques Dion (Registered Seed Establishments) • Terry Boehm (NFU) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joanne Buth (Canola Council Of Canada) • Randy Preater (CSGA) • Richard Delaney (Consultant to CFIA) • Sher Bushell (CFIA) • Stephen Fox (AAFC) • Art Macklin (CWB) • Brenda Trask (CSTA) • Eric Klassen (PRRCG) • Erin Armstrong (BMBRI)
<p>***(Missing representative from CSTA and P. Gov't East)</p> <p>Ex Officio</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bill Leask (CSTA) • Brian Marchylo (CGC) • Carolyn Koekman (AAFC) • Dale Adolphe (CSGA) • Ernie Doerksen (GGC) • Glyn Chancey (CFIA) • Laura Anderson (CGC) • Patti Miller (AAFC) 	<p>Secretariat - National Forum on Seed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monty Doyle • Niels Hansen-Trip • Charlene Mader

Review of the Report of the Inaugural Meeting of the National Forum on Seed, April 6-7, 2005

There were no changes proposed.

Review of the Forum Newsletter - May 2005

One of the Forum members expressed concern with the statement in the May Newsletter that the work of the National Forum on Seed doesn't replace government consultation. His view was that this minimizes our aim. If we perform our role appropriately, with continued open and consistent dialogue, this process will become a recognized form of consultation.

Other Forum members emphasized that the goal of this Forum is to become a 1st focal point of broad-based consultation to the Government. This is consistent with the aim as stated in the new Forum Governance document (subject to approval), to create an "...on-going forum to facilitate effective engagement between the seed sector and government on matters of regulatory change, and through this, to improve the efficiency of the process and the confidence in its outcomes." Based on this discussion, the version of the Forum newsletter on the website will be modified.

Innovation and the Seed Sector

Dr. Bill Leask had been requested to present an initial presentation on Innovation in order to launch the discussion. A copy of Dr. Leask's presentation is available on the website: www.nationalforumonseed.com.

Shaping an Innovation Working Group

The discussion of innovation identified several issues related to innovation:

- The subject is vast and current initiatives across the agriculture sector are many. It will be important to focus on possible topic areas that are of interest



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to the seed sector and its customers, are related to the regulatory framework of the seed sector, and that there is a value added opportunity to utilize the unique convening and consultation processes of the National Forum on Seed.

- A discussion of innovation quickly introduces a number of systemic tensions that are always present, and which create a need for a mindful balance to the work of the Forum. These tensions include varying views on the relative roles of the public and private sectors in research and innovation; differing views or requirements for intellectual property protection; the private ownership of innovation and the distribution of related costs, risks, and benefits; and the need to ensure adequate checks and balances are in place to mitigate the unintended and unexpected negative outcomes connected with some innovation.
- The important role of the Universities and AAFC in innovation was emphasized, as was the need for means to maintain public expenditure and expertise, and to plan and coordinate publicly-funded research.

In summary, the broad-view of Forum members was that Innovation is central to the progress of the sector, to the competitiveness of the primary producers, and to the improvement of financial returns to all members of the value chain.

A second conclusion was that the innovation is not restricted to breeding of new varieties. Innovation can be broadened out to include various elements of the regulatory and production systems.

In this connection, the Forum members made the following decisions:

- To create a national Working Group on Innovation that would meet one to two times and report to the Forum by March 2006.
- The mandate of the Working Group is to undertake a more in depth discussion of the technical and regulatory aspects of innovation and to make recommendations for priorities for the further work of the National Forum on Seed. In undertaking this

discussion, the Working Group should be guided by the following questions:

What do the seed sector and its value chain need in order to facilitate the introduction of higher value traits, e.g. related to:

- Infrastructure
- Programs
- Processes
- Regulation, Certification

What are the barriers/opportunities to innovation? These might include: regulation, technical, policy, social values, public attributes, economic, ethical etc.?

Are current checks and balances adequate? Are others required?

Regarding PNTs:

- Is the current system a barrier to innovation? Is the current definition of novelty and its application the most appropriate or can it be refined for clarity?
- Can international review be harmonized or synchronized?
- Is tiered risk assessment a desired option?

Priorities for action:

Following on the discussion of the above questions, identifying priorities for action, and identifying categories for action by the National Forum on Seed.

- 1-2 years – short term
- 2-4 years – medium term
- 4-6 years – long term

The result of this work may lead the NFS to create other Working Groups to address specific priorities or issues.

Variety Registration Working Group Report

This topic included three presentations related to Variety Registration.

Dale Adolphe presented an update on the status of the work of the Working Group on Variety Registration. This working group held a second meeting on June 20-21, 2005 to continue the consensus development on outstanding questions. Chief amongst the recommendations from this meeting was the creation of Commodity Specific Working



Groups (CSWGs) which would be representative across the entire value chain of the crop type. Such CSWGs may already exist in the form of value chain round tables, industry associations, or crop specific recommending committees. These CSWGs would act as consultation fora for regulatory questions related to specific crop kinds.

For Variety Registration, these questions could include:

- initial placement of crops into schedules
- pre- and post- registration performance data requirements
- changes to schedule placement

These CSWGs are seen as an excellent line of accountability for the value chain. The remaining question is the qualities and criteria of a CSWG and its members. Related to this, a clear statement of responsibility and accountability must be developed.

The other major recommendation of the June meeting was the integration of schedules A and B into a single schedule which together with a schedule "C" (simple listing) and exempt category would create the overall structure. While several questions remain, the Working Group has taken this discussion as far as it can in terms of input to CFIA. Please see the National Forum on Seed website (www.nationalforumonseed.com) for the full Report of the Variety Registration Working Group II.

The second presentation by Laura Anderson of the Canadian Grain Commission presented the results of the Technical Committee on Contract Registration. This examined a risk assessment model for possible contract registration candidates (The presentation is available on the National Forum on Seed website).

The third presentation by Glyn Chancey, CFIA, presented the current status of CFIA's work on Variety Registration. In brief, CFIA expects to prepare a paper on the elements of variety registration regulatory elements later this fall en route to regulatory changes in the fall of 2006. This initiative is being managed as a SMART regulation pilot project. This is an important pilot to gain experience and to shape the practices of CFIA in its other regulatory fields.

In summary, both the Working Group members and CFIA anticipate the probability of a 3rd Variety Registration Working Group later this fall. The purpose would be to provide CFIA on feedback on their paper. A possible 4th

meeting could occur in 2006 when the actual regulations are available for review.

As an immediate next step, Forum members are invited to send their views on the VRWG II Report to the Secretariat. These will be communicated to Forum members, Variety Registration Working Group participants, and CFIA.

Review of Governance Document

The July 2005 Governance Document was tabled. It will be discussed at the next Forum meeting. The election of a chair will also be scheduled for that meeting.

Other Business

CFIA had hired a consultant, Richard Delaney, to examine certain aspects of consultation. He would like to meet with 4-6 members of the Forum in September. Niels Hansen-Trip will follow-up with Mr. Delaney.

Summary of Action Items

Innovation

- Secretariat to coordinate the preparation of draft Terms of Reference for the Working Group with some Forum members.
- Forum members to advise as to which organizations should be invited to participate in the Working Group
- Secretariat to organize Innovation Working Group I

Variety Registration

- Forum members to provide comments to the Secretariat
- CFIA to prepare a paper on the elements of a revised variety registration scheme
- Secretariat to organize VRWG III

Governance

- To be discussed at the next forum meeting

1st Forum Newsletter

- Secretariat to correct the website version.

CFIA Consultation

- Secretariat to arrange a meeting of 4-6 Forum members with Richard Delaney
- Secretariat to post all meeting documents on the website.**