

**Wyoming Crop Improvement Association  
Southeast District Meeting  
December 8, 2022  
Pine Bluffs Distilling, 115 Bourbon Street, Pine Bluffs, WY**

In attendance: Albert Kranz, Dale Heggem, Cassidy Mueller, Slade Franklin, Mike Moore

Mike Moore welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order shortly after 8:00 a.m., and reported that both Tim Anderson and Keith Kennedy were sick and would not be joining in person. Keith is available via phone, and we will reach out to him for that part of the agenda. Mike noted that with only Albert in attendance, that no official business could be done as there wasn't a quorum. Albert said that he had read the minutes, and that he had no suggested changes.

**2022 Acreage and Field Inspection Report**

Mike Moore shared the inspection season went well, but it was a challenge with Jolene's departure on June 3<sup>rd</sup>, no experienced seasonal inspectors, and conducting a search for a new office associate. Ken Namuth conducted inspections in SE Wyoming, and his efforts plus a growing season without any significant issues were very much appreciated. As far as the acreage enrolled in the program, individual crop acreages were essentially static, but small increases here and there resulted in acres being up about 1,400 this year compared to last year.

**Proposal to state AOSCA standards will be used if the WSCS doesn't have published standards**

Mike explained that we already utilize AOSCA standards when a certification request is made for a crop that we don't have published standards for. This proposal would just put it in our standards. A handout showed the wording that would be used, as well as a recommended location in the handbook.

**Electronic tag images**

Mike shared that Tim had brought the issue up. Someone he works with had stated that Wyoming was harder to work with than Nebraska because we require a physical tag or bulk sales certificate be submitted with applications for certification. Mike said he polled other states in the west, and our colleagues were unanimous in the acceptance of electronic (photo or scanned) tag images, making Wyoming the lone holdout. Mike said that he may be old school in his opinion, but he sees too many ways this option can be abused, and noted that putting a tag in an envelope and mailing it isn't that much of a burden. Albert, who is admittedly computer-averse, said he was okay with hard copy tags being required. Mike shared that the NW District passed a motion to continue the current policy.

**Weeds missing from the prohibited noxious weed seed list**

Dale Heggem shared that he had reached out to Mike Moore before the meeting in regards to four weeds that were not on the official Wyoming prohibited noxious weed list, but that Mike had shared documents showing they were approved for the list in 2015. Dale said that the only way to get them back on the list was through the normal process of submitting them to the Seed Lab Advisory Group. The Seed Lab Advisory Group could then forward the issue on to the Board of Agriculture, who will meet in February. If the Board of Ag approves putting them on

the list, there would be a 180 day public comment period, so it will be at least 6 months before they would be back on the list. Dale reported that the SLAG met the Tuesday before this meeting, and that the 4 missing weeds were recommended to be restored to the noxious weed seed list. Palmer amaranth was also requested to be considered, but Dale said that the chair had already made the agenda, and that it could not be added for discussion. During the meeting, the SLAG chair asked if the group would like to consider Palmer at that time, but the group was not unanimous in favor of the request, so the issue will be addressed at the next SLAG meeting. Dale then shared that he will wait to start the 180 comment period on the 4 missing weeds until Palmer has been acted on. He said that the LSO puts a lot of work into that process, and that it would be better to wait and do it once rather than twice. Mike Moore asked about the emergency rule process. Dale stated that while approval via that method would put the weeds on the list immediately, justifying it as an emergency would be difficult.

### **Palmer amaranth**

There was no further discussion specific to this topic beyond that in the previous section.

### **Draft of new bulk sales certificate**

The bulk sales certificate that has been used for more than 25 years came into question two years ago when seed produced in another state was sold using the certificate as documentation. The current certificate states that the seed was produced in Wyoming as boilerplate language, and there isn't a proper way to change it. This form addresses that, and keeps all the other functionality. After discussion of the proposed document, it was recommended that the label "Date Tested" be changed to "Germination Date". It was the consensus of the group that this document is a good replacement to the current version, and that having the old version of the BSC to support future discussions would be helpful.

### **Grass seed research**

Mike shared the efforts of Brian Mealor to try and find grassy weed control options for grass seed producers. The work is funded from Grass Seed Research funds. Jim Heitholt had also indicated an interest in working on grass seed production issues, and would be working with others to determine what to work on. He is hoping to get a Western SARE or a NEFA grant that will allow them to hire someone to do the research.

### **GX/GX, Foundation seed of PMC releases**

Mike briefly touched on the issue of pre-variety releases that have unlimited generations, and how growers may not want to sell tagged seed to competitors with that designation. It is now possible to tag them in a way that does not allow for additional certification-eligible production. He then talked about the USDA Plant Materials Center (PMC) system, and how the WSCS is producing Foundation/early generation seed of those releases. He noted that the WSCS is self-supporting, and the way it is being done makes the financial risk minimal.

### **Contracted native grass seed and Timothy seed production**

Mike shared that changes to BLM seed buying practices has resulted in short-notice requests for field inspection reports by seed companies who purchase Wyoming-grown native grass seed. The growers and seed companies have agreed to list the companies as contractors so the inspection reports go to them as they are generated rather than by emergency request. Mike then

shared the orange tag Timothy seed production process, and noted that it appears there is room in that market for more quality seed. Quality is very important to that market, as the seed is used to produce high quality hay in Washington State for export markets.

### **Beans**

Mike Moore shared that the Cooperative Dry Bean Nursery, which is a yield trial conducted in Powell, was lost due to poor stand establishment. It was determined that a Bean commission report wasn't necessary.

### **Wyoming Department of Ag Report**

Dale Heggem reported that staffing changes continue at the WDA. Slade Franklin is the new Director of Technical Services, and they are searching for several positions, including a supervisor and a pesticide compliance officer. It was noted that the latter position may not be located in Powell. The Fremont County position is open, and they are relying on other staff to make the trip there to cover responsibilities for the time being.

### **Other Topics**

Mike shared they Kyle Webber is doing a full redesign of the WSCS website because the software that had been used for the current site is no longer viable. With that in mind, the site is not up to date, but there is no way to update/fix it. We hope to have the new site up and running soon.

Land use planning is a significant topic in Park County, as there has been an influx of people and new construction, often on agricultural ground.

Mike then shared that it is fairly common for fields to have contamination issues that came from fertilizer carts from ag suppliers, or even if the carts are clean, the tender trucks have been found to be contaminated. Albert shared a similar story, in that he had to reject a truckload of fertilizer that was contaminated with wheat.

Mike gave a quick explanation of the weed categories on inspection reports, noting that an infestation of a weed in one crop where it was not a problem would be rated differently than the same level of that weed in a crop that is sensitive to it.

### **WCIA Annual Meeting**

Mike shared that the WCIA annual meeting will be held February 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>, with the venue for both days being the Park County Fairgrounds. This will accommodate the attendance we have enjoyed for the last few years, as well as provide a location for concurrent meetings like the Wyoming Bean Commission and the Seed Lab Advisory Group. The banquet will be held at that location as well. Dale Heggem has been working on lining up the state plane, and will start putting a passenger list together after the first of the year, noting that this plane has a passenger capacity of 8.

The meeting adjourned by consensus at 11:35 p.m.