

**VERMONT AGENCY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND MARKETS (AAFM)  
AGRICULTURAL INNOVATION BOARD (AIB)**

**MEETING MINUTES**

DATE: December 19, 2022

LOCATION: 116 State St. Montpelier, VT / Virtual Microsoft Teams Meeting

<b>Member</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Ayer, Clara		x
Beckford, Roy	x	
Bradshaw, Terry	x	
Chamberlin, Jonathan	x	
Cutler, Clarice	x	
Ransom, Earl	x	
Rebozo, Ryan		x
Schubart, Steven	x	
Vose, Sarah	x	
Harper, Wendy Sue	x	
DiPietro, Laura	x	
Dwinell, Steve	x	
<b>Guests in Attendance</b>		
Stephanie Smith		
David Huber		
Morgan Griffith		
Margaret Laggis (Bio Croplife America)		
Clark Parmelee		
Brooke Decker		
Jonathan Wolff (Bio Croplife America)		
Fred Putnam Jr (VT Beekeepers)		
Bethany Creaser		
Wendy Anderson		
Laura O Johnson (UVM Extension)		
Brad Mitchell (Syngenta)		
Riley Titus (Croplife America)		
Lisa Fantelli		
Patti Casey		
Zach Szczokowski		
Samantha Alger (UVM Extension)		
Justin Johnson		

**Meeting called to order:** 1:00 PM EST

**Meeting adjourned:** 3:20 PM EST

**Next meeting:** January 23, 2023 1pm – 4pm

**Agenda:**

**1:00 PM** – Agenda, previous meeting minutes & action item review

**1:15 PM** – PHARM activities update

**1:45 PM** – Farmer survey finalization and distribution plan

**2:30 PM** – Draft Annual report review

**3:00 PM** – Non-neonicotinoid treated seed discussion

- seed availability
- possible BMPs

**3:45 PM** – Public Comments

**4:00 PM** – Adjourn

**New Action Items**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Complete? (date)</b>
Follow up with Sarah Vose about relevant specific rule proposed language changes addressing mosquito adulticide use	Dave H	
Provide final farmer survey and distribution strategy for AIB members to consider and provide feedback	Stephanie S	
Create <a href="mailto:AGR.AIB@vermont.gov">AGR.AIB@vermont.gov</a> email address	Stephanie S Morgan G	
Ask Kristina Sweet if AAFM has active list of grower and industry associations with contacts	Stephanie S	
Contact largest seed distributor registered in VT to ask about common product active ingredients used as seed treatments? i.e. which insecticide active ingredients? which fungicide active ingredients? Etc.	Stephanie S	
Share information on non-neonicotinoid treated seeds and draft generic BMPs to AIB for consideration	Morgan G	
Share information, resources, and experience with non-neonicotinoid treated seeds to AIB for consideration	All AIB members	
Provide ideas and information for generic treated seed BMPs for January 23 <sup>rd</sup> AIB meeting (i.e. proper disposal)	All AIB members	

**Ongoing Action Items**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Complete? (date)</b>
AIB members let Morgan know if eligible for per diem reimbursement to receive necessary paperwork	All eligible AIB members	

## **Welcome & Introductions, agenda, previous meeting minutes & action item review**

- Members had nothing to add to agenda
- 11/28/22 Minutes accepted without changes

## **PHARM activities update**

- Dave Huber, Deputy Director, AAFM Public Health and Agricultural Resource Management Division
  - Pesticide regulation has had two LCAR meetings since last AIB meeting.
    - AAFM worked with ANR to make amendments to the rule addressing buffers to potable water sources
    - LCAR requested return at later date with open public hearing at LCAR (1/5/2023 10am)
      - Timelines are being extended for both AAFM and LCAR
    - AAFM has participated in robust education and outreach concerning the safe use of pesticides, many people present were opposed to proposed pesticide rule. AIB are encouraged to attend LCAR hearing 1/5/2023, please participate if appropriate.
      - To speak you have to give 48hr notice to be named to list of speakers
    - Pesticide regulations have not been updated since 1991. There are new federal EPA rules that are required to be codified in our rule.
    - Sarah V: Are you getting comments about regulation of mosquito control districts? Not a lot of comments were received about them, Conservation Law Foundation had a few comments about adulticide use, which this amended rule addresses.
      - What bar is set for AAFM to approve adulticide? \*\*Dave H will follow up with Sarah Vose about relevant specific rule proposed language
- Stephanie Smith, Assistant Director, AAFM Public Health and Agricultural Resource Management Division
  - AAFM hired individual to assist in registration and review of Feed, Seed, Fertilizer and pesticide products. This position will prioritize seeking information from the seed program:
    - Review seed distributor database for 2021 and 2022 and contact those companies that have not registered in 2022, and ask them to fill out seed report forms to gather information.
    - Seed distributor is defined as “person who purchases, repackages and sells seeds”
    - We don’t register retail locations that sell seeds, we don’t register specific seed products. We prepare 3 annual reports:
      - Tonnage report
      - GE report (Seed type and traits)
      - Treated seed report (seed type and whether treated or untreated)

## **Farmer survey finalization and distribution plan**

- Survey comments
  - Should county location question be able to choose multiple counties?
    - Earl Ransom operation is split between 2 counties
    - Group consensus to allow multiple counties in answer
  - Asking for identifying information so we can gather data over time from participants but will be reported in aggregate without any identifying information.
  - Social marketing should this be included?
    - Is this the same as “value added”
    - Consensus to be termed as “market differentiation” instead
  - neonicotinoid will be spelled out throughout the survey
  - Are there other insecticides on seeds other than neonic?
    - Clark has seen chlorpyrifos treated seeds (treated to address storage)
    - “I don’t know” choice added to seed treatment question
  - Fungicide only treated seed question reword
    - Would you purchase treated seeds without neonicotinoids, if available?
  - Do we want to ask about interest in custom pesticide seed treatment?
    - Yes, even though there is low probability of this option being available to VT farmers, it would be good information for the AIB to gather
  - Do we want an untreated seed question?
  - #12 change to multichoice question
    - Effective scouting methods
  - Included early question (#9) that asks what type of operation do you have? if certified organic, skip over treated seed questions and custom go right to #13. If no, will go through all questions. If split operation, will go through all questions. If non-certified organic, will go through all questions.
  - If we can make plastics question in another section, would be nice
    - Included: weed tarping, coverall barn/structure, polycarbonate panels
  - Leave “recycle with market options” as an option and if selected we will follow up with respondent to ask for details about this potential opportunity
  - Tires will not be included within this survey
  - Include OMRI approved biodegradable plastic
  - Is it worth including original #5 question that provides options to persuade reduce use of pesticides
    - \*\* Stephanie will send survey out again for final comments
  - Included heavy metals and Cornell soil health test as options in soil test question
  - Is it appropriate to include question about working with an extension agent?
    - Is it mandated to ask about extension, ask what agricultural technical service provider do you use? include as multiple choice: extension specialists, private consultant, industry sales consultant, conservation district, farm viability program, NOFA VT, Natural Resource Conservation Service, industry associations (e.g VVBGA, VTFGA, VGFA)
- Distribution plan
  - Option to create [AGR.AIB@vermont.gov](mailto:AGR.AIB@vermont.gov) email address to share information on behalf of the AIB members
    - AIB members agree this approach is appropriate to use for distribution

- Staff can prepare introductory email for members to share with their networks
  - Include disclaimer to please excuse duplicates
  - Is OK to do both options, but need to maintain master list of who sent to
- Disseminate to Orchard, dairy, veg/berry, beef, goats, sheep, horse industry, farmer coalition, watershed groups
  - Send inductor
    - VTFGA – Terry B
    - VVBGA – Vern Grubinger
    - NOFA – VT – outreach person
    - Maple
    - Vermont Grain Growers Assoc
    - \*\* ask Kristina Sweet if she has active list of associations
    - Center for Sustainable Agriculture – Josh Faulkner
- \*\*AAFM provide members with distribution strategy for board to consider

### **Draft Annual report review**

- Made a few grammatic corrections and reworded sentence about assessing the extent to which chemicals travel off-target
- No further comments and AIB members unanimously approved report to send to legislature.

### **Non-neonicotinoid treated seed discussion**

- There have been no enforcement cases to date concerning non-neonicotinoid treated seeds.
- \*\*Send information and draft BMPs for AIB to consider
- \*\*contact largest seed distributor registered in VT to ask about common product active ingredients used as seed treatments? i.e. which insecticide active ingredients? which fungicide active ingredients? Etc.
  - Assess these seed treatment active ingredients for risk to environment and/or humans?
- \*\*AIB members can contact us with information regarding treated seeds

### **Public Comments**

- Margaret Laggis – it is not possible to have treated seed enter into commercial grain supply because of colorful dye and separate supply chains.
- Laura Johnson – is neonicotinoid in the context of this meeting encompassing all types of neonics? Including both Cyanoamidine and nitroguanidine classes of neonics, which have different toxicities to pollinators? I have only seen nitroguanidine neonics as seed treatments.
  - The Neonicotinoid specific legislation lists specific active ingredients

\*\* - indicates action item