



HGCA BOARD MEETING

31 October 2012 at Pittodrie House Hotel, nr Inverurie, Aberdeenshire
SUMMARY MINUTES

MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 July 2012 were agreed as a true record.

MATTERS ARISING

Meetings were on-going with FERA and stakeholders regarding the National Lists. Mapping of data flows of the NL against the RL was underway to see if they could be harmonised.

An electronic version of the Corn Returns form was being tested and once this was operationally successful an electronic version of the levy form may be developed.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman asked the Board for their experiences of harvest 2012. It was reported that there were significant issues with quality and yield was generally down. Some Board members said that growers in their areas had experienced their worst harvest in many years. It was reported that millers were trying to use as much as possible of this year's UK crop but it was proving difficult; expectations for imports during the year were going up as a consequence. MAGB had collected quality information and a summary would be published and released after their AGM in November. A poor harvest in other parts of the world had softened the blow for the UK, however it was generally felt that it would be at least 2014 before a normal harvest could be achieved again.

An application for funding of specific weight research which would use samples from this year's harvest would go to the R&KT Committee for consideration.

The MI team would be asked to undertake some work on understanding price and value in grain markets.

SECTOR DIRECTOR REPORT

The Green Food Project had been discussed with Defra at a recent meeting and news was awaited on the future of the project.

HGCA were working with the Potato Council on soils research and were hoping for a linked project on soils and rotations.

Positive feedback had been received on this year's Grain Market Outlook conference.

It was reported that non-GM soya was now trading at a £80/tonne premium over GM soya.

FINANCE AND STRATEGY

The HGCA P6 Management accounts highlighted that the levy income revision agreed by the Finance Committee last week would be included in the P7 management accounts, direct expenditure had been re-forecast in September and British Cereal Exports had revised down expenditure for the year.

A new levy return form was designed and sent out earlier in the summer to cover both cereals and oilseeds.

THE BOARD APPROVED A RECOMMENDATION MADE BY THE FINANCE COMMITTEE TO ADJUST THE LEVY INCOME FORECAST DOWN.

It was also agreed that HGCA should return to using 5-year yield averages to produce forecast figures.

The draft budget envelope for 2013/14 included a proposal for additional spend over the life of the corporate plan. In light of the revised levy income figure this had been reviewed and it was proposed that the figure be reduced accordingly.

There would be another opportunity to re-look at the Corporate Plan once it had gone out to consultation.

REGIONAL TEAM

An update was given on the progress to recruit and implement a regional team to deliver business improvement for HGCA.

To date, 2 pilot farms had been set up in North East England; Scottish Monitor Farms had been reviewed, as had the network of arable business groups (ABGs). 4 new ABGs had been established and plans were in place to attend all winter meetings. Version 5 of CropBench had been produced.

ELECTRONIC GRAIN PASSPORT PROJECT

An update was given on plans for a pilot scheme to introduce an electronic grain passport. Areas covered included learning's from consultation, proposed technical solutions, cost and benefits and recommendations from the Cereals Liaison Group (CLG).

It was agreed that there were further questions to be answered and the Chairman asked Board members to go back to their respective organisations to get wider feedback. This item would be discussed at length at the January 2013 Board meeting.

APPROVAL OF COMMITTEE EXPENDITURE

The Board approved expenditure for the following projects:

- Brassicas – further development of 'in field' tests for resting spores of clubroot and the development of clubroot control
- Fusarium mycotoxins in UK Oat varieties
- A review of non-NPKS nutrient requirements of UK cereals and oilseed rape
- IMPROMALT: Improving winter malting barley quality and developing and understanding of the interactions of introgressions with genetic background
- Review of pest management research needs in cereals and oilseeds in the UK
- Control of insecticide-resistant grain aphids, Sitobion Avenae, and BYDV in winter cereals
- HGCA Regional Cropping Systems pilot
- Provision of a weather station network for HGCA Recommended List variety trial field sites

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business for discussion.

The next meeting of the HGCA Board would be held on 15 January 2013 at De Vere Belton Woods Hotel, nr Grantham, Lincolnshire to coincide with LAMMA.