

**BOARD OF AGRICULTURE, TRADE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION
MINUTES**

November 16, 2023

The Board of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (Board) met in the DATCP Boardroom, 2811 Agriculture Drive, Madison, WI 53718 and via Zoom on **November 16, 2023**. The meeting was preceded by public notice as required by Wis. Stat. §19.84.

Call to Order

Board Chair Doug Rebout called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Members Present

Paul Bauer, Cindy Brown, Tina Hinchley, Dr. Clare Hintz Paul Palmby, Dan Smith, and Doug Rebout.

Approval of September 21, 2023, Meeting Minutes

Motion

A motion was made by Paul Palmby and seconded by Clare Hintz to approve the September 21, 2023, Board meeting minutes. Motion was approved unanimously.

Wisconsin Leopold Conservation Award

Secretary Randy Romanski and Leopold Conservation Award Program Director Lance Irving presented the 2023 Leopold Conservation Award to Noll's Dairy Farm and Mark Noll.

**Jo-ell Carson, Executive Director, Wisconsin Veterinary Medical Association
and Dr. Darlene Konkel, State Veterinarian**

Jo-ell Carson, Executive Director of the Wisconsin Veterinary Medical Association, presented to the Board about veterinary workforce shortages in Wisconsin. Carson explained that the shortages have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. There are chronic shortages in rural areas as well as for food animal, equine, and academic veterinarians. Income, student debt, and fatigue are all factors contributing to this. There is also a shortage of Certified Veterinary Technicians. Carson explained that large animal veterinarians have the highest job satisfaction rates, despite being stretched thinner and having lower pay than small animal veterinarians.

Class sizes at the University of Wisconsin veterinary school are increasing, and there have been a record number of applications over the past few years. Two-thirds of UW students are from Wisconsin and about half of graduates remain in Wisconsin. WVMA is working to help get veterinarians into rural areas.

State Veterinarian Dr. Darlene Konkel addressed DATCP's role in addressing the veterinarian shortage. She discussed the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture's Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program, which gives veterinarians practicing in shortage areas up to

\$25,000 a year in loan repayment assistance for three years. Wisconsin has seven shortage areas; only Texas and California have more.

Public Appearances

The following made public appearances in front of the Board today:

Anita Martin

Wisconsin Agricultural Statistics Survey Update Greg Bussler

Greg Bussler, State Statistician from the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service, presented a report to the Board on production statistics for corn, soybeans, winter wheat, oats, milk, and chicken and eggs; prices for milk, corn, soybeans, and alfalfa hay; crop harvest progress for corn and soybeans; and topsoil moisture. NASS will soon begin collecting data for the County Agricultural Practices Survey, December Agricultural Survey, and December Hog Survey. The 2022 Census of Agriculture results will be available in February 2024. The 2023 Wisconsin Agricultural Statistics Bulletin is now available online.

Local Foods Purchase Assistance Program

April Yancer, Division of Agricultural Development Agriculture Program Specialist, and Sarah Lloyd Wisconsin Food Hub Cooperative, presented to the Board about the progress of the Local Foods Assistance Program.

LFPA is a cooperative agreement with USDA. DATCP contracted with the Wisconsin Farmers Union, Marbleseed and WFHC to carry out the program. The program's goal is to support socially disadvantaged producers and connect them with underserved areas. As of October 2023, over \$1,000,000 has been paid to farmers for production. Thirty-seven counties and several tribal entities have been served, 198 types of products have been delivered, 125 growers have produced products, and 52 hunger relief sites have received deliveries. All of this involves Wisconsin products going into Wisconsin's communities.

The program has 20 months remaining and is working toward building a durable network to continue past the funding's end. Year two of the program will, in addition to the direct-to-farmer grants from year one, include community-partner grants for purchasing food and providing education and assistance

Ag Export Highlights Division of Agricultural Development

Mark Rhoda-Reis, Director of the Business and Export Development Bureau, presented the quarterly update on Wisconsin's agricultural exports to the Board. Year to date, Wisconsin's

exports total \$2.94 billion, which is eleventh in the United States. Dairy exports totaled \$381 million, meat exports totaled \$591 million, and crop exports totaled \$1.96 billion. USDA is projecting overall exports will be down by the end of 2023.

Meeting Break

The Board took a break from 11:00 a.m. to 11:06 a.m.

ATCP 21, 29, 35—Plant Inspection Pesticide Use and Agricultural Cleanup Program— Removal of Obsolete Language—Germane Modification

DATCP General Counsel Fratney Miller informed the Board of germane modifications submitted for ATCP 21, 29, and 35.

ATCP 94—Minimum Product Grade Specifications of Petroleum and Other Liquid Fuels—Germane Modification

DATCP General Counsel Fratney Miller informed the Board of germane modifications submitted for ATCP 94.

ATCP 52—Nitrogen Optimization Pilot Program—Emergency Rule Update

Kelly Martinson, Division of Agricultural Resource Management Policy and Program Analyst, presented an update on the emergency rule for the Nitrogen Optimization Pilot Program. The rule was published on November 13, 2023.

Motion

A motion was made by Paul Palmby and seconded by Tina Hinchley to approve the rule. Motion approved unanimously.

ATCP 52—Crop Insurance Premium Rebates for Planting Cover Crops— Emergency Rule Update

Kelly Martinson, Division of Agricultural Resource Management Policy and Program Analyst, presented an update on the emergency rule for the Crop Insurance Premium Rebate for Planting Cover Crops Program. The rule was published on November 13, 2023.

Motion

A motion was made by Paul Palmby and seconded by Cindy Brown to approve the rule. Motion approved unanimously.

Christmas Tree Program Overview—Division of Agricultural Resource Management

Brooke Sanneh, Forest Pests Regulatory Program Coordinator, gave an overview of the Christmas Tree Program. Wisconsin ranks fourth among states in Christmas tree production. Licensing of growers began in 2001. Growers must be licensed if annual sales exceed \$250.

There are 374 licensed growers in 2022 and 2023. The licensing fee is a sliding scale between \$20-\$900/year.

The Program's field inspections of farms begin in September so shipping can begin in October. Inspections are for regulated pests, focusing on Spongy Moth and European Pine Shoot Moth and for tree health. The Program also inspects Christmas tree lots. It looks for pests, unlicensed growers from Wisconsin, and checks USDA certificates from out-of-state growers.

Worker Protection Standard Program Overview— Division of Agricultural Resource Management

Alyssa Foss, Worker Protection Standards Program Manager, gave an overview of the Worker Protection Standards Program. The Program's purpose is to protect agricultural workers and pesticide handlers from injury and illness caused by pesticides. Program staff inspect facilities for compliance with program requirements, which include safety notifications, pesticide application record retention, and providing safety sheets for pesticides. The Program also provides training for workers and pesticide handlers, reviews and inspects personal protective equipment, and engages in outreach with associations to ensure compliance.

Office of the Secretary Report

Secretary Randy Romanski presented the Office of the Secretary update to the Board on:

- His recent trip to Kenya for an emerging markets trade mission with the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture.
- Governor Evers's sending a letter to Wisconsin's congressional delegation that identifies priorities for the Farm Bill and emphasizes the importance of keeping the Farm Bill's programs unified.
- His recent attendance at the World Dairy Summit in Chicago. The summit emphasized the nutrition of dairy products and the industry's commitment to sustainability. Summit attendees also took bus tours of Wisconsin.
- His visiting three Wisconsin cranberry marshes in October, organized by the Wisconsin Cranberry Growers Association.
- His recent visit to Northwest Wisconsin. Secretary Romanski visited Sailer's Food Market and Meat Processing, which received a grant from DATCP. He also stopped by UW-River Falls, which recently broke ground on a new science and technology innovation center.
- His October visit to Crawford County for Celebrate Diversity of Agriculture Day.
- His attending the November meeting of the Agriculture Education Workforce Development Council, which included a tour of Vincent High School in Milwaukee.

- His November attendance at the Dairy Innovation Hub meeting in Platteville.

Board Member Updates

The following DATCP Board members commented on industry, business, training, and personal agricultural issues that arose since the last Board meeting: Paul Bauer, Cindy Brown, Tina Hinchley, Dr. Clare Hintz, Paul Palmby, and Dan Smith.

Board Meeting Planning

The Board agreed to cancel the Board's meeting scheduled for December.

Adjournment

Motion

A motion to adjourn was made by Paul Palmby and seconded by Tina Hinchley. Motion approved unanimously. The Board adjourned at 12:12 p.m.