

ASB Provincial Committee
Meeting with DM Corbould, Agriculture and Forestry
Room 305, J.G. O'Donoghue Building
August 20, 2018

Attendance:

Corey Beck
Steve Upham
Merrill Harris
Wayne Nixon
Sebastien Dutrisac
Elden Kozak
Maureen Vadnais-Sloan
Andre Corbould
Jamie Curran
Jake Kotowich
Marcia Hewitt-Fischer

The meeting was called to order and introductions were made around the room.

Glyphosate Resistant Wheat Discovery

Corey thanked Agriculture and Forestry (AF) for including ASBs on the conference call regarding the glyphosate resistant wheat discovery. DM Corbould replied that CFIA was resistant to it but that AF felt it was necessary and that it worked well.

Role of ASBs

Corey informed the DM about ASBs and discussed the role of ASBs as being advisory to the Minister. He told the DM about the resolution process as being the primary way ASBs inform the Minister about their concerns and request change. Corey asked for help in breaking down the “silos” that exist across Ministries and highlighted how many agriculture issues need to be worked on collaboratively in order to be resolved effectively. DM Corbould stated that we need to work together and asked the Committee how problems could be solved together.

Agricultural Pests Act and *Fusarium graminearum* Discussion

Corey started a discussion on *Fusarium* and the current Agricultural Pests Act. He informed the DM that the Committee feels that the current Act provides adequate flexibility to manage *Fusarium graminearum* (Fg) without removing it from the Act. The Committee fears that removing Fg as a pest from the Act will remove ASBs from being able to help control the pest and limit its' spread. The currently legislation gives ASBs the ability to manage and there are things the government can do to assist groups, such as seed growers, to allow for research and new varieties to come into Alberta. Sebastien reviewed relevant sections of the Act and how ASBs interpret it. There was discussion about active measures and how it is a municipal responsibility to enforce the Act. DM Corbould replied that they feel that they are reading and interpreting the Act correctly. ADM Curran added that AF is currently looking at the Act from a wholistic perspective and that it is currently under legal review. Jake

Kotowich added that the next Fg Roundtable will be in October and that the goal is to move beyond understanding the current situation and move forward to look at options of how to manage Fg. He added that protocols for enforcement need to be more consistent across the province and that deregulation was one of the options being considered. ASGA tells government that the current Regulation is not flexible and is impeding their industry. ADM Curran added that Alberta is currently the only province that regulates Fg. Wayne highlighted that Alberta also has less Fg than its' neighbouring provinces. Elden added that the Act and Management Plan have kept Fg from becoming endemic province wide like it has in Saskatchewan and Manitoba. ASBs are afraid of Fg becoming endemic province wide and want to keep it regulated. The Committee met with ASGA and is encouraging them to work with government to get exemptions to allow Fg infected seed for research and other purposes because government does have the ability to allow for those exemptions. DM Corbould replied that there is a need to do a jurisdictional scan and for common sense regulation. Wayne reinforced that it is the ASBs' responsibility to protect agricultural production. Corey added that if it affects agricultural production then it still needs to be considered a pest and that there is a need to review and evolve management as a pest evolves. Corey asked when the review of the Act would proceed and DM Corbould replied that it would not be this year. ADM Curran added that AF is currently starting to take a more wholistic approach to invasive species and looking at an invasive species policy approach that looks at aquatic and terrestrial species. DM Corbould added that need to be able to show a return on investment. Corey asked if the Fg Management Plan would be updated and Jake answered that it will. Corey asked about an education plan and Jake replied that there is currently work happening. The re-organization put together the appropriate technical, extension and policy people and work is starting on an education plan. Corey reminded AF that ASBs can be a conduit for getting information out to producers.

Strychnine Consultation

Corey informed AF that PMRA is currently reviewing strychnine and that there is an open consultation currently ongoing. Corey asked AF for support to maintain the current registration. Merrill added that the Committee is recommending to PMRA to use the Farmer Pesticide Certificate program with a rodenticide endorsement to be able to access strychnine as part of comments the Committee is sending to PMRA. Corey added that producers need another tool that is as effective as strychnine before it can be taken away. ADM Curran said that this has been an ongoing discussion for ten years and that he felt that PMRA will take strychnine away at some point.

Resolution 2-18: Appeals to the Minister

Corey informed the DM that this was a resolution passed at the 2018 Provincial Conference and asked if any progress had been made on this resolution. Jake replied that they had started looking at the processes involved when an appeal to the Minister had been made and they were determining if there were ways to simplify the process. DM Corbould said that come back in two months after AF has had time to do more review and determine how this process could be fixed.

ASB Program Review

Corey asked about the status of the review for the ASB Program and when it would start. Marcia indicated that the Steering Committee would be set up and starting work in September, face to face meetings would start in November and be completed by February. The focus of this review would be service delivery and not funding. Maureen was asked to provide details of the funding in previous years and outlined what the funding had looked like from a historical perspective. Corey requested that

funding for the Executive Assistant position be included as part of the overall program review. ADM Curran said that they would be taking a wholistic approach to the review and that everything would be looked at. Jake added that an increase in funding would be unlikely but the focus would be on how to empower ASBs and look at capacity within AF to better support ASBs. Elden added that there is lots of optimism for agriculture and it's becoming the new economic driver for the province. DM Corbould added that there is other rural pressure and need to work with Rural Municipalities Association to advocate on issues and make sure that agriculture doesn't get forgotten. Corey said that ASBs need more support and that additional support from government may be better than a minimal increase in budget. Jake said that they are looking at extension tools that are more relevant and putting together extension materials. Sebastien said that they are seeing better collaboration between the province and municipalities.

Assistance to Meet with DM of Environment

Corey requested help to meet with DM of Environment and how this is a new strategy for the Committee since we have been unsuccessful with being able to meet with the Minister of Environment. Corey highlighted that we are trying to create relationships and increase collaboration between groups so that work isn't being done in isolation. DM Corbould asked for a list of what needed to be discussed and will help us to meet with Environment. DM Corbould requested that the Committee talk to him when they need things and to keep moving forward. ADM Curran said that this is a critical partnership for AF.

The meeting adjourned at 3:40 pm.