



ACFA Board Meeting
October 24, 2017 at Harmony Beef, Balzac, AB

MINUTES

Directors in Attendance: James Bekkering, Jake Bueckert, Jason Hagel, Ryan Kasko, Colleen Mackey, Page Stuart, Greg Schmidt, Jeff Smith, and Martin Zuidhof (Chair). **Staff:** Shannon Lyons, Casey Vander Ploeg, and Bryan Walton. **Guests:** Cam Daniels, Brenna Grant, Doug Lacombe, Christopher Vesta, and Rich Vesta. **Regrets:** Craig Paskal, John Schooten, and Keith Ypma.

- 1) *Call to Order and Agenda Check:* Chair Zuidhof welcomed called the meeting to order at 9:43 and asked for any additional agenda items. Board input on ABIC sponsorship, release of the tax report from the School of Public Policy, the 2018 Canadian Beef Industry Conference (CBIC), and re-establishing the NCFCA relationship with John Weekes on trade files were added. Moved/Seconded by Smith/Schmidt that the agenda be approved as amended. Carried.
- 2) *Minutes of Previous Meetings:*
 - a) *Minutes of August 29, 2017:* *The minutes of the August 29, 2017 meeting were presented. Moved/Seconded by Kasko/Bekkering that the minutes be approved as presented. Carried.*
 - b) *Minutes of October 5, 2017:* *The minutes of the October 5, 2017 Board Conference Call were presented. Check-off portions in the proposal should be 5¢ for remitters, \$1.30 for ABP, 40¢ for the Alberta Beef Industry Development Fund (ABIDF), and 25¢ for other beef producer organizations (e.g., ACFA, WSGA). Moved/Seconded by Bueckert/Schmidt that the minutes be approved as amended. Carried.*
- 3) *Business Arising:*
 - a) *Carbon Playbook:* *It was decided by consensus that ACFA would not conduct a project with Carbon Credit Solutions (CCSI). It was suggested that the new ABIDF would be a good place for such work to be funded and carried out in the future.*
 - b) *Fundraising for Prime Minister Harper at ABIC:* *A sheet with potential sponsors was circulated and each Director selected various companies that they could contact to request sponsorship. It was determined that the Chairs of the partnering organizations would sit at the table with PM Harper.*
- 4) *ABP-ACFA Governance and Funding Proposal:* *The ABP zone meeting in Fort MacLeod drew 20 producers and reaction to the latest ACFA-ABP proposal was positive. It was noted that ABP would receive more funds under the proposal, and this was positive. Directors were encourage to attend ABP zone meetings to support the proposal and answer questions. Chair Zuidhof reported on conversations with past ACFA chairs on the proposal. Most were in favour, and liked the aspect of working together and the ABIDF concept. One former chair was concerned that ACFA not be swallowed by ABP. Directors agreed that any agreement must be run through a legal review and that a working committee to oversee the agreement be struck. It was agreed that the ACFA Executive serve as this committee.*
- 5) *Tax Report of the School of Public Policy:* *The report will be released on Thursday, November 2nd. It was decided that Vice-Chair Kasko serve as a local cattle feeder spokesperson on the report, as well as Vice-President C. Vander Ploeg. **ACTION: C. Vander Ploeg to provide R. Kasko with key messages.***
- 6) *Canadian Beef Industry Conference:* *R. Kasko has been asked to be the Vice Chair of the 2018 CIBC and Chair of the 2019 Conference. Although he may also be ACFA Chair at that time, he feels as if he can serve in both capacities. Organizers want cattle feeders to be more involved in the CIBC.*
- 7) *Presentation – Price Discovery:* *Brenna Grant from CanFax reported on work underway since 2014 to improve upon price discovery to enhance production decisions of producers, feed into disaster and price insurance programs, and improve on agriculture policy like business risk management tools. She emphasized that prices have to be transparent if producers are to*

respond to changing demand signals and consumer preferences. This is especially important because of the long production cycle (2-3 years) of beef. In Alberta in 2009, an average of 6,500 head per week were trading on the cash market. In 2017, this had fallen to 1,500 head per week. Enhanced price reporting was launched in September 2014 to improve price transparency and accuracy. Price reports are shared with those producers who are participating, whether they are selling on the cash market, through formula, or on contract. In July 2017, a survey was conducted with producers on how to enhance price discovery. Statistics Canada, under current legislation, can compel the reporting of price data. A Task Force of the CCA supports Statistics Canada conducting a feasibility study on how this might work. The US currently has mandatory price reporting.

- 8) *Presentation – ACFA Communications:* Doug Lacombe of Communicatto reported on ACFA communications and social media efforts. The target audience is “politicos” and one of the main purposes is to “humanize” the feedlot sector. The purpose behind social media is to drive people to the ACFA website where we tell our story and try to influence perceptions. Attention to the ACFA website and social media channels experience “spikes” when something important is happening in the industry, and that provides an opportunity to touch a lot of people with our key messages. The “spikes” skew growth in ACFA viewers, but the more “spikes” we see the more people we are likely influencing.
- 9) *Lunch Presentation and Tour – Harmony Beef:* Rich Vesta, Christopher Vesta, and Cam Daniels joined the Board for lunch and gave an overview of Harmony Beef. Following the presentation, a tour of the plant was held.
- 10) *MLA Dinner Key Messages:* Key messages for the November 29th MLA Dinner were discussed. A statement on Ag Safe Alberta and some basic statistics on the importance of cattle feeding to the provincial economy should be added. Another message is how production technologies reduces the environmental footprint. **ACTION: Key messages to be redrafted as noted above.**
- 11) *Taxation of Farmland:* ACFA has pitched the idea of reforming the property taxation of farmland. We are hearing that the GOA is supportive, but they will only move to modernize if the agricultural community comes together on it first. ABP is very supportive, but other livestock organizations are less so. It has been a struggle at the ILWG. Ron Axelson is meeting with the crop groups to generate additional support. This is a natural fit for them as crops are likely over-taxed relative to livestock, but they want to see some options first. Production of a possible “Black Paper” is still on the table, although it is unclear whether that will proceed out of ILWG.
- 12) *ACFA Position Statements:* Possible changes to existing Position Statements have been prepared to keep them timely and relevant. Directors were encourage to review the changes. Amending the Position Statements was tabled to the next meeting.
- 13) *Governance:* Keith Ypma has given notification of his intent to step down from the Board. Names of possible new Directors were discussed including Megan Kolk, TJ Larson, Keith Gregory, Tom Gregory, Jason Calhoun, Darren DeBoer, Jason DeBoer, Matt Slingerland, and Joe Groenenboom and his sons Aaron, Tim, and Joel. One current Director has expressed interest in the Vice-Chair role, and R. Kasko is interested in the Chair role. **ACTION: A self-evaluation survey of Directors should be completed by the end of October and sent to the CEO who will aggregate the information for later discussion by the Board.**
- 14) *Request for Decision – Competitiveness Report:* Conducting a new analysis of the competitiveness of cattle feeding was discussed. While the Board felt it was important, other partners should be approached prior to a final decision. **ACTION: Funding for a potential Competitiveness Report project to be placed in the 2017-18 Budget as a marker and a decision will be made at budget time.**
- 15) *Re-Establishing NCFCA Relationship with John Weekes:* The Saskatchewan Cattlemens’ Association has provided NCFCA with \$25,000 in funding to secure the services of John Weekes on our trade files. ACFA is preparing an application for GOA support and SCA will be approaching their province as well. ALMA provided \$50,000 for the last contract, and ACFA support would bring the funding up to that level. Moved/Seconded by Kasko/Bueckert that ACFA provide NCFCA with \$25,000 to renew the contract with John Weekes. Carried.
- 16) *ABIC Dates:* A brief discussion was held on whether the dates for upcoming ABIC conferences could be changed. A contract with the Sheraton Hotel is currently locked in. When the contract expires, new dates could be explored.
- 17) *Next Meeting:* An Executive meeting will be held on November 14th for budget preparation and the next Board meeting will be on November 29th in Edmonton prior to the MLA Dinner.
- 18) *Adjournment:* Moved/Seconded by Bekkering/Smith that the meeting be adjourned.