

California Walnut Board

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CALIFORNIA WALNUT COMMISSION

INTRA INDUSTRY COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES Tuesday – December 15, 2009

The California Walnut Commission Intra Industry Communications Committee met on Tuesday, December 15, 2009 at the CWB/CWC offices in Folsom, CA. The meeting was called to order at 10:20am by Chairperson Bert Crane. Ms. McConico called the roll and the following committee members were present:

Bert Crane
David Keyawa
Mat Conant
Jonathon Graves (via teleconference)
Jim Hudson
Nacho Martin
Fred Spanfelner

Ms. McConico informed Chairperson Crane that a quorum was present. Committee member Ray Perez was absent. CWC staff members Dennis A. Balint, Jennifer Getz and Anne McConico were also in attendance.

The first order of business was the approval of the minutes for the meeting held on December 4, 2008.

Chairperson Crane asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the December 4, 2008 Intra Industry Communications Committee meeting. Mr. Mat Conant so moved. Mr. Jim Hudson seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Chairperson Crane asked Ms. Jennifer Getz to proceed with the next agenda item, Discuss Spring 2010 Grower Presentation Objectives. Ms. Getz welcomed the new members. She explained to everyone that the objective of the Intra Industry Communications Committee is to provide the growers with as much useful information as possible and to explain how their money is used for the betterment of the industry.

Ms. Getz stated that last year, due to the economic conditions, a considerable amount of time was spent during the presentation covering the European markets. She suggested a few key points to cover in next year's presentation might be food safety and the issue of Turkey buying walnuts directly from the hullers as these topics were discussed during the Strategic Planning Meeting the week prior.

During the review of last year's presentation all agreed the presentation should include the state of the economy as well as the dangers in bypassing the industry's system when exporting into the Turkish market. It was also suggested that the presentation include information on the transition

from Manex to Manco. Mr. Balint proposed making a comment about Manex towards the end of the meeting as opposed to making it part of the presentation.

The Committee further discussed the buyers from Turkey bypassing the industry's system to purchase walnuts. Mr. Balint emphasized this practice presents food safety risks and distorts the reporting of crop and shipment figures. In violation of federal law, growers are acting as handlers and could be fined \$1100 per incident or per day, whichever is greater.

They talked about food safety and how to distribute information at the employee level. Mr. Keyawa suggested a tailgate session showing a video about food safety. Ms. Getz suggested that the growers visit the walnuts.org website and download the latest information or handouts. All agreed this would not be a part of the presentation.

Mr. Balint further explained that the walnut industry only has an outbound inspection therefore, the only inspection coming out of the field would be from the handler. Mr. Graves cautioned that the whole food industry may have to demonstrate traceability in the food safety area at some point in time. Mr. Keyawa suggested mentioning the considerable amount of money that could be spent should there be an outbreak which would take funds away from research and health studies. Mr. Balint suggested a slide depicting the fact that we are only as strong as our weakest link. It was agreed the presentation would include a slide addressing this point.

There was some discussion about health studies and their publication. Mr. Balint mentioned that the online publication of health studies can be difficult because they are often published without warning, which means we have to go in after the fact to promote the study. He suggested that any health studies which have published since the last grower session be included in the presentation. Mr. Balint stated he would like to include a slide outlining the Symposium taking place in New York in June of this year. Dr. Mehmet Oz, Dr. Michael Roizen, Dr. David Katz and Mollie Katzen will be speakers at the public session and/or health professional session. Dietitians will earn continuing education credits for their attendance. He pointed out this is a domestic activity and is a culmination of years of effort.

The Committee agreed the presentation would include a discussion about shipments and bearing acreage for the past year, the economic situation, food safety, Turkey buyers, domestic and international markets, regulatory information, food safety, and health research.

Ms. Getz proceeded with the next agenda item, Other Methods of Communication. The Committee agreed the newsletter should be continued and there were no suggestions or changes to this item. Mr. Balint asked the Committee to let staff know if there were any publications we should send press releases to on a regular basis.

Ms. Getz discussed the walnuts.org website which launched in September. She pointed out that the website has a lot of functionality. It has a section for the consumer, health professional and industry members. An electronic consumer newsletter goes out as does a separate newsletter for health professionals. The site also includes links to federal, state and cooperative extensions. Brochures, scientific summaries, upcoming meeting notices, meeting minutes, agricultural news from industry publications, ag alerts, regulatory information, marketing order documents, and information about the California Walnut Board/Commission can also be found on the website.

Ms. Getz proceeded with other business and asked for suggestions on a giveaway to be available for those attending the grower meetings. Suggestions mentioned were car window decals, California walnut license frames, or bumper stickers. All agreed it should be something that motivates people to eat walnuts for health and drives them to the website.

Mr. Mat Conant made a motion to create a bumper sticker as a giveaway. Mr. Keyawa seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

The time and place of the next meeting will be determined at a later date. The meeting was adjourned by Chairperson Crane at 12:02pm.