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BOARD OF PESTICIDES CONTROL
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BOARD OF PESTICIDES CONTROL

January 13, 2016

Augusta Civic Center, 76 Community Drive, Kennebec/Penobscot Room, Augusta, Maine

MINUTES

3:00 – 4:00 PM BOARD MEETING

4:00 – 5:00 PM OPEN FORUM

5:00 – 6:00 PM BOARD MEETING CONTINUED IF NECESSARY

Present: Bohlen, Eckert, Flewelling, Granger, Jemison, Morrill, Stevenson

1. Introductions of Board and Staff
 - The Board and Staff introduced themselves
 - Staff Present: Chamberlain, Connors, Fish, Jennings, Tomlinson
2. Minutes of the November 13, 2015 and December, 18, 2015, Board Meetings

Presentation By: Henry Jennings
Director

Action Needed: Amend and/or Approve

- Jemison and Morrill pointed out a couple of typos in the November minutes.
 - **Flewelling/Jemison: Moved and seconded to accept the November minutes as amended and the December minutes as presented.**
 - **In Favor: Unanimous**

3. Request from Maine Migrant Health Program and Eastern Maine Development Corporation to Help Support a Worker Safety Training Program for Summer 2016

Since 1995, the Board has supported a Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Safety Education program. During 2015, 308 individuals received Worker Protection Standard training, 308 individuals received take-home exposure training, and 310 received heat stress training. The Maine Migrant Health Program and Eastern Maine Development Corporation are proposing to provide training using one health-and-safety outreach worker during the 2016 agricultural season. Funding to support this effort is being requested in the amount of \$3,675, a 5% increase over the amount requested last year. The funding has been accounted for in the Board's FY'16 budget

Presentation By: Chris Huh, Program Manager, Farmworkers Jobs Program,
Eastern Maine Development Corporation

Elizabeth Charles, Enabling Services Coordinator, Maine Migrant Health Program

Action Needed: Discussion and Determination if the Board Wishes to Fund this Request

Elizabeth Charles was present and she explained that Chris Huh had a conflict and was unable to attend. Charles said that 2015 was a very successful year. 308 farmworkers were trained in pesticide safety, an increase of 11%. 308 were also trained in limiting pesticide exposure to families, an increase of 22%. Heat stress training was included for the first time and given to 310 workers. In 2016 tractor training will be added. Hopefully this will allow them to reach growers that have not sought them out in the past. The person who did the job in 2015 is returning in 2016; he did a great job expanding outreach and building relationships.

- Jemison asked whether there has been any effort to correlate number of trainings, number of accidents and incidents. Charles replied that it is not possible to quantify prevention and a lack of accidents. They do an impact evaluation with farmers, using pre-and post-tests, both on the day of training and three to four weeks later. It tests whether they remember the content and whether behavior has changed based on what was taught.
- Eckert asked why they are asking for a slight increase. Charles replied that the tractor training would be included in the same program. Also, mileage rates have increased. The program has been funded at the same level for the last five or six years.
- Morrill asked whether they had been able to reach all the intended audience, or is there a larger audience that would like the services. Charles replied that several staff members were trained so if the principal trainer was busy another staff member could fill in. They have not had to turn anyone down so far.

- **Jemison/Eckert: Moved and seconded to approve a grant to Maine Migrant Health Program and Eastern Maine Development Corporation in the amount of \$3,675**
- **In Favor: Unanimous**

4. Discuss List of Actionable Strategies Developed by Board Staff for Promoting Integrated Pest Management with Homeowners

At the November 13, 2015 meeting, the Board discussed public concerns about homeowner pesticide use and explored ideas for promoting Integrated Pest Management (IPM) to this audience. At the December 18, 2015 meeting, the Board heard from invited recipients of pesticide registration revenues as they discussed their current activities related to homeowner IPM and whether there may be opportunities to expand their roles. The Board further directed the staff to develop actionable work items for implementation in 2016 and beyond. The staff has developed a list of ideas for the Board's consideration.

- Jennings stated that the staff reviewed the discussion at the last meeting to see which areas drew the most interest. One of the comments heard repeatedly is that it's going to require a network in order to be effective. The BPC staff does not have sufficient resources to effectively reach 1.3 million non-licensed potential applicators. There are networks already in place that have collaborated on YardScaping and the Portland Flower Show efforts, both of which promote sustainable land care practices. Participants include Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Cooperative Extension and other non-profit organizations involved in water quality efforts. The staff doesn't need to start from scratch; it simply needs to inject some energy into previous groups and look for other cooperators who are interested. Jennings

suggested the staff set up a meeting this winter and then start to get some ideas on how to promote topics.

- Jennings noted there is a lot of interest in lawn care in connection with this topic. There are graphs that everyone likes to cite related to the increase in use of lawn care products. Maine does not have a turf specialist. We rely on University of Massachusetts, University of Rhode Island and Cornell for turf recommendations. In Maine, Lois Stack has some involvement in turf, but it is not her focus. Maybe we need to consolidate all the information available which is specific to the Northeast, and tailor that information to best suit Maine. The staff could register a URL, a catchy name that would stick in peoples' minds. The staff could focus on aggregating existing information instead of starting from scratch. There is a lot of information available, but it's difficult for homeowners to find and figure out what is most applicable to Maine. Since most people have a limited amount of time to invest, making lawn care information easily accessible might increase adoption of recommendations. The staff could offer free articles about sustainable lawn care, or pay for advertising to promote available resources on the internet.
- Jennings said that there was a lot of discussion at previous meetings about training staff at various retail outlets. That has been done in the past. It is a tough group to deal with, especially the big-box stores; it's a pretty dynamic group. Training staff at retailers might be most successful with garden centers; a more static and interested group.
- Jennings noted that there was also a lot of discussion around the signs required at pesticide retailers and their placement. Often they are hard to find. The Board could look at the rule to require better placement, specify what size it has to be or encourage better placement. The signs are available on the website so generally people print in black and white. A color copy is sent with the license renewals every year but usually people post black and white copies which are not very eye catching.
- Jennings went on to discuss the idea of getting homeowner IPM and sustainable practices in the media. We tend to get a little stuck on what the message should be; there is a diversity of opinion on that. It requires a delicate balancing act and needs to be science-based. Positive messages are more readily accepted than negative messages. The staff will need to work with the Board on messaging and be sure it's something everyone can agree on. For instance, we can probably agree that the more educated people are, the better.
- Jemison noted the 700% increase and asked how much of that was weed'n feed. Fish replied almost 90%. Jemison said that seems to be the low hanging fruit. Provide information about how bad it is. It would be interesting to know how many homeowners mow their own lawns, how many buy their own supplies versus hiring professionals. Try to hone down to what that group is, and then have a message: would you rather be mowing your lawn or doing something else? If you use these products you have to mow at least once a week. If you don't fertilize you can go longer between mowing. Appeal to them about air pollution; lawnmowers are worse than automobiles; it's inefficient; it's a waste of your time. Reduce the desire to have a perfect lawn. Appeal to using less fuel.
- Stephenson agreed, saying it helps to spin your position. People are proud of their lawns; that's why they put so much into it. People are even more proud if they are doing it right; they can eliminate mowing six times this year.
- Referring again to the 700% increase in homeowner pesticide use, Fish clarified that 90% of the products were lawn care products, a lot of it was weed'n feed. It includes commercial applicators as well as homeowners applying pesticides themselves.
- Bohlen remarked that the items on the list have very different staff work requirements; some are getting something set up and let run, others are giving talks over and over for many months. Does the staff have the time to do this?

- Jennings replied that that would depend on the current IT project which is taking up significant amounts of time. It also depends on what level of priority the Board wants to assign this. It will take staff time away from other things, but the Board has a talented staff.
- Bohlen asked how to stack them as potential value vs potential staff time. A lot of people will eventually find our websites, how effective is that? Presentations are very effective but to a small audience and are very time consuming.
- Jennings said that the Board used to write a lot of articles and send them to the media and hope they got coverage. The first two items on the list could be worked on before the growing season starts. The third, content to media, could be planned out and under development before the season begins. Kathy Murray is a great resource. The Maine CDC has data on ticks, vector-borne-diseases, and information on prevention. Other items on the list are not nearly as time consuming. One thing you don't see on the list that people in the audience talked a lot about is measurement. In the past, the staff put a lot of effort into measurement and got nothing useful out of it. The data was not particularly useful. It's very hard to measure. When most of what you're doing is prevention, it's really hard to measure the impact.
- Flewelling asked if the use of chemicals has gone up. Fish replied that the trend is up. Flewelling said that people are making choices, they want nice lawns. So the question is: do we like their choices? The goal should be to not eliminate peoples' choices. Flewelling understands there are ordinances going in down south that eliminate choices. Obviously we want people to use products correctly.
- Morrill agreed that people should have choices, but they should be educated about the choices. Fifteen percent of the national insecticide use is home and garden use. Do homeowners really know what they're using? Maybe some education is our job, maybe some is the manufacturers'.
- Granger stated that it is difficult to reach people in the marketplace. Training sales staff is difficult in any setting. We might want to think about training a single person to handle questions. If we could interest retailers in having one person be trained, a central person to go to with questions, similar to the IPM Coordinator in schools. They don't have to be licensed. It might be a way to get a higher level of education by using designated individuals.
- Eckert said that the message is to use fewer pesticides to protect air and water and people. She was impressed by the number of potential collaborators that came to the last meeting. The BPC staff doesn't have to do everything; other people and groups could be helpful in sharing the message.
- Morrill said that he liked the first suggestion. Look at the messages we have, expand them and direct them toward homeowners. The knee-jerk reaction is to create a new website, but there's so much information already out there, we don't want to reinvent things. Can we consolidate what's already on the website so homeowners can get to it and get the message out so they know it's there?
- Jennings replied that creating a URL is easy and doesn't cost much; it could just go to our existing site. Needs to be a snappy catchphrase that will stick in peoples' minds. The staff could use information that already exists and links to other sites.
- Stevenson suggested that it should be used as a resource for collaborators so that everyone is delivering the same message.
- Jennings noted that the IPM Council might be the logical place to house that. Associating with them might have some value.
- Flewelling asked if there are BMPs for lawns. Jennings replied that there is a set for schools and a set for commercial applicators. Fish remarked that there is homeowner stuff on the YardScaping site.
- Morrill said the staff has already done good work, but nobody knows about it. The question is how to get homeowners engaged in the process so we can educate them on what they're doing on their property. He agrees with Granger that it's hard to train retail staff, but that doesn't

mean we shouldn't do it. The staff could provide educational opportunities at garden centers; similar to tick talks, open to the general public.

- Bohlen noted that retail outlets that provide do-it-yourself workshops might work with the Board, such as Lowes, Skillins and Longfellows, etc.
- Fish said that we could train someone at each of those places so they could do the talks.
- Jennings noted that getting involved in municipal ordinances is tricky. The staff doesn't want to get caught up in situation where we have to say this is or isn't a good ordinance. Even if we want to give a presentation on what already exists in pesticide law, we still have to be careful. If the staff answers questions it could be portrayed that the Board endorses their ordinance.
- Eckert stated that it seems like you have to get involved early, when they're thinking about writing it, not when they've already written it and have advocates and detractors. She suggested sending information to all municipalities saying that we have a talk about pesticide laws.
- Jennings replied that it is a balancing act in terms of message. At a minimum we will put up a web page specific to municipalities. We have tried working with the Maine Municipal Association, but pesticides are not a priority topic for them. Unless a town is in the middle of writing an ordinance, they generally aren't interested in pesticide law.
- Bohlen opined that the interest in ordinances is directly related to why we want to get information out to homeowners. There is increased usage and people are scared by that. By the time the municipality is paying attention, there is already an advocacy group. These issues are very closely tied together. This is a marketing opportunity for the Board about what it is doing to address these issues and to make that information available to people. Here are ways to minimize pesticide use and here's what we're doing. It's more evidence that people aren't finding the website.
- Morrill noted that when we talk about soil samples and calibration of spreaders—things like that—we talk at a high level and take it for granted that people will comprehend the information. But we all had to learn the basic science at some point.
- Jennings reiterated that we have the resources to work on the list of educational effort or work on measurement, but we can't do both. The Board would need at least one full-time person to try to quantify use.
- Katy Green said she understands the hesitation to commit to measurement, but how will you know if you've moved the dial at all with your efforts?
- Morrill replied that this is a topic that isn't going to go away.
- Jennings said the easiest thing to measure is hits to a website.
- Morrill said we should measure participation. Do more presentations, reach more homeowners, which are all measurable.
- Eckert asked if we could measure the amount of weed 'n feed sold. Fish replied that you can continue to see a trend, but you can't consider them absolute numbers because of how it's reported. It's calculated based on what's shipped into the state, not what sold, and sometimes there's double reporting.

The meeting suspended during the Public Forum, during which time some suggestions around the current topic were given by audience members.

- **Consensus was reached to revisit the topic at the next meeting and the staff should be prepared to give an update.**

5. Other Old or New Business

- a. Email from Cynthia Ladderbush

- Eckert noted that the Board is not who gets to decide how farming is done in the state. If they want something done they need to go to the Legislature.

b. Other

- Eckert said that she had been asked about GMO labeling and wondered if there is a new GMO labeling bill in the Legislature. Jim Dill replied that there are currently two bills in front of the ACF Committee. The one that passed two years ago required contiguous states to pass similar laws; if Maine went alone, many companies wouldn't bother. Vermont was sued and has spent a million dollars defending their GMO law. There was a federal bill; we waited to see how that would fare before considering ours. The federal bill, if passed, would have prevented states from requiring labeling. The new bill basically says if there are any GMO ingredients, it must be labeled, no exemptions. The committee hasn't taken it up yet.

6. Schedule of Future Meetings

February 19, March 25, and May 6, 2016 are tentative Board meeting dates. The Board will decide whether to change and/or add dates.

Adjustments and/or Additional Dates?

- No future dates were added

7. Adjourn

- **Jemison/Stevenson: Moved and seconded to adjourn at 4:28 pm**
- **In Favor: Unanimous**