

# Executive Committee Conference Call Minutes

October 2, 2001

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Present: Carolyn Brickey, Eric Sideman, Willie Lockeretz, Steven Harper, Kim Burton, Jim Riddle (minutes). NOP: Arthur Neal  
Absent: Owusu Bandele

## 1. Carolyn Brickey - -Chair NOSB

- Convene -- 11:30 EDT
- Reviewed and approved agenda
- Announcements – Next ExCom conference call tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, November 6, 11:30 am EDT. To be confirmed during October Board meeting.
- Minutes of 9/5/01 ExCom call approved. **Action:** To be posted on NOP website.
- June draft NOSB minutes circulated to NOSB. Tentatively approved as amended by JR and CB. **Action:** June draft minutes to be posted. To be approved at October meeting.

## 2. Willie Lockeretz – Chair Accreditation (WL needs to leave call early.)

- Principles of Organic Production and Handling recommendation to be voted on. **Action:** Accreditation Committee members still voting on final text. WL to bring copies to October meeting – not in packet.
- Small farmer exemption – no comments received – no changes. To be presented for vote. **Action:** WL to bring copies to October meeting – not in packet.
- "Permeability" of containers. 5 comments received – all opposed. **Action:** AC to vote. WL to bring copies to October meeting, unless proposal rejected by AC. WL to seek clarification on current rule language from Rick Mathews and give report at October meeting.
- Certifier outreach – **Action:** WL to poll certifiers prior to October mtg.
- NOP FAQ web page - **Action:** WL asks that all Board member review FAQs.
- Technical corrections – JR reports that all 11 technical corrections recommended by NOSB in June supported by NOP. AN reports that NOP made no additions, but they were informed by OGC that they must also make technical corrections to the preamble (will delay publishing of technical corrections docket). **Action:** NOP to review preamble for technical inaccuracies.

## 3. Arthur Neal – NOP update

- Conflict of Interest – NOP met with OGC and Ken Clayton. NOP presented position paper with various options. OGC response was not favorable, since the options were contrary to the rule. **Action:** NOP to develop new options within context of the rule. There may be a policy directive from the NOP on the issue, but not before October 21, 2001. Certifiers are encouraged to submit accreditation applications showing how they will bring their program structures into compliance with the rule as written prior to the April 21, 2002, announcement date. Desk audits will review all certifier noncompliance issues. (Not just COI.)
- Trade issues – AN has nothing new to report. **Action:** Board members should email specific trade issues to CB prior to the October meeting so the FAS can address them.
- Other issues – NOP intends to have about 50-60 more FAQs posted before the October meeting. Bob Pooler working to get all TAP reviews out to NOSB. NOP paying for

Saturday night lodging for Processing Committee, since they have a committee meeting on Sunday.

- NOSB Appointments – Not many environmentalist or scientist applications received. Most are from handlers and producers. Still need a letter setting NOSB priorities for new appointees. **Action:** CB to draft a letter from NOSB to Secretary Veneman stating priority areas of expertise can be finalized at the October meeting. SH asks how quickly new NOSB are likely to be appointed. AN has no firm idea. Existing NOSB members to continue to serve on committees at least until January or until the next Board meeting.

#### 4. Planning for October Meeting

- Finalized Agenda posted and distributed.
- Meeting Logistics

A. Meeting to be held in back of cafeteria in USDA South Building.

B. Secretary Veneman and Bill Hawk have been invited, but not confirmed. CB has invited Dale Moore, Ann Veneman's chief of staff. **Action:** CB to invite A.J. Yates, new AMS Administrator.

C. Board members will stay at Radisson Barcelo, Dupont Circle.

D. Board members have been notified about travel arrangements.

5. **Reports from Committee chairs** about their roles in October meeting including each action item for the agenda.

- Eric Sideman – Chair Livestock – Items to consider at October meeting;

A. Access to pasture – to be voted as recommendation.

B. Antibiotics in Vaccines and semen – to be voted as recommendation.

C. Apiculture – to be voted as recommendation. Final report from Apiculture Task Force was submitted to NOSB and NOP on Sept. 15. Posted on website.

D. Aquatic Species – Task Force report to be voted as recommendation.

- Kim Burton – Chair Materials – Copper sulfate and sodium phosphate reviews have been distributed. Not all FOIAs on boiler chemicals have been received by OMRI (DEAE is missing.)

A. New petitions – 5 new petitions have gone to OMRI, and 5 additional new petitions have been received by the NOP.

B. New TAP reviewers – OMRI will still be doing TAP reviews in 2002. Two new contractors – UC Davis (Shawn Sweenie) and Virginia Tech or Georgetown University (Lester Crawford) will be doing some reviews. Will be simultaneous reviews of different materials by all three bodies.

C. FOIA request – As stated, answers to FOIA on boiler chemicals not yet sent to OMRI. **Action:** Processing Committee still needs to review and summarize the 800- page FOIA document. Full document will be available to all NOSB members upon request. **Action:** SH and KB to submit to full Board an evaluation of the usefulness of the FOIA process.

- Steve Harper – Chair Processing;

A. Reviews of sodium phosphate, cellulose, and glycerol posted on OMRI and NOP websites. **Action:** Committee will have recommendations completed on materials reviewed prior to October meeting.

B. **Action:** Will have draft recommendations on boiler chemicals completed. SH will have some questions for OMRI resulting from the TAP reviews. (This is true for all NOSB members.) How can the questions be answered prior to the October meeting? The question is unresolved.

C. Rick Mathews and AN to meet with Robert Post, FSIS, on draft MOU between NOP and FSIS. SH to contact RM about whether Post will appear at October meeting. **Action:** PC to review and finalize questions for FSIS submitted by George Siemon to be presented to Post prior to October meeting.

- ES for Owusu Bandele – Chair Crops;

A. Compost and heated pathogen-free manure recommendations to be presented for discussion. Will suggest formation of Compost Task Force. No language yet on compost tea or vermiculture.

B. Update regarding greenhouse and mushroom recommendations to be voted on in October. Crops Committee still waiting on draft from OB. **Action:** OB to draft changes to greenhouse and mushroom recommendations, CC to vote, and present drafts during October meeting.

C. Labeling of transitional products – JR submitted draft language to Crops Committee. OB directed JR to submit to NOP for posting. **Action:** AN to post on website for discussion purposes.

## 6. Other issues:

KB brought up fax received from Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance (NODPA) requesting blanket approval of existing allowed livestock materials by establishing an "under review" category. **Action:** KB to draft letter of reply from Materials Committee, to be distributed to full Board. AN mentions that Katherine Benham at NOP is now the clearinghouse for NOSB communications. JR informs members that Rick Mathews has requested that the NOSB consider postponing the February meeting, due to negative impacts on the existing workload of the NOP to accredit certifiers and implement the program. **Action:** NOSB to discuss possibility of postponing next meeting. KB reports that the Food Institute is selling a guide for NOP compliance.

## 7. Legislative Update:

CB reports that Farm Bill is up in House on Thursday as the schedule stands now. Amendment from Rep. Ron Kind includes organic provisions, sent to board. Nothing new to report on NOP appropriations.

8. **Next Executive meeting** – to be determined at October meeting by new Executive.

Adjourned at 12:30 pm EDT.

Respectfully submitted,

J. Riddle