

MINUTES
SENATE AGRICULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

DATE: Tuesday, February 27, 2018

TIME: 8:00 A.M.

PLACE: Room WW53

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Rice, Vice Chairman Den Hartog, Senators Patrick, Bayer, Guthrie, Thayn, Harris, Foreman, and Jordan

ABSENT/ EXCUSED: None

NOTE: The sign-in sheet, testimonies and other related materials will be retained with the minutes in the committee's office until the end of the session and will then be located on file with the minutes in the Legislative Services Library.

CONVENED: **Chairman Rice** called the meeting of the Agricultural Affairs Committee (Committee) to order at 8:00 a.m.

MINUTES APPROVAL: **Senator Bayer** moved to approve the Minutes of February 13, 2018. Seconded by **Senator Jordan**. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

PRESENTATION: Idaho Dairy Products Commission (IDPC). Karianne Fallow, Chief Executive Officer Dairy West and Idaho Dairy Products Commission, stated IDPC vision is to create a world where farmers and the dairy industry prosper and together build healthy communities around the world. Their mission is to inspire trust in dairy farming and dairy products and to build demand for dairy products around the world.

The dairy industry is changing rapidly; Idaho has 580,000 milk cows and 490 individual dairy operations. When Ms. Fallow started her position five years ago there were 642 individual dairy operations. Even though the number of dairies has declined, the number of cows and milk production have not decreased. In Idaho, the dairy industry produces 15 billion pounds of milk a year. Idaho is number four in the nation in milk production.

Ms. Fallow indicated she will address the programming Dairy West provides and focus on some of the health and wellness initiatives the company supports, particularly as it relates to youth wellness and the in-school effort. Dairy West believes this is vital from an economic development and a community wellness standpoint.

Dairy West has hired talented individuals in the function of communication and their role is to tell the dairy story. Their farmer relations team can only effectively tell the story of dairy by telling the farmer story. They use communications efforts to build trust in dairy farming and its products. Dairy West's health and wellness team is focused on positioning the dairy community to be influential in health and nutrition related initiatives across the State. They work with many influencers such as the Department of Health and Welfare, school nutrition programs, and school districts. A new functional area in their business called innovation partnerships works throughout the entire supply chain to ensure that companies are being the best sellers and stewards of dairy.

Dairy West's strategic goals are: to create influential advocates for the dairy community through the development of their staff, board, and youth. This flows from a portfolio of services Dairy West provides following the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) dietary guidelines for the classroom curriculum. Dairy West

provides this curriculum to educators throughout the State at no charge. Dairy West provides consulting services to schools and health professions.

Providing physical fitness and nutrition grants for schools and grants to increase consumption on the school meal menu. At this point in the presentation the Committee was shown a video entitled "Fuel Up to Play 60 Program" a cornerstone partnership that the dairy farmers struck with the National Football League several years ago. This program encourages nutrition and physical activity work so that Dairy West can bolster the success of students within the schools. Research correlates good nutrition with academic success in which physical fitness plays an important role.

Ms. Fallow explained why dairy consumption in schools is so important. As dairy consumption increases, dairy farmers stand to gain in terms of their milk checks and the ability to stay in business. Classroom studies show that performance increases when children are well-fed and eat nutritious meals. Dairy West will pursue an increase in school consumption through the school breakfast program. A video of the Burley, Idaho, school breakfast program was shown.

Chairman Rice asked if Dairy West incorporates opportunities to show children where their dairy products are produced. **Ms. Fallow** answered Dairy West is trying to bridge this disconnect as the population becomes more urban. The opportunities for field trips have disappeared from the school calendar. Dairy West is evaluating virtual farm tours and a few other opportunities. Nationally, the dairy check-off program has struck a partnership with the Discovery Channel, an in-classroom network, to push more farm education into the classroom.

Chairman Rice asked if Dairy West had sought input from the Idaho State Department of Agriculture (ISDA) and other segments of the agricultural industry to develop curriculum that could be inserted into one of the school classes to teach students how and where their food is produced. **Ms. Fallow** answered Dairy West works with their peers across the agricultural community. Ag in the Classroom will speak more specifically about their initiatives and how they deploy those resources. **Chairman Rice** stated he is seeing an increasing likelihood that children in larger cities have no exposure to agriculture. He believes these children have disconnected from where their food is produced.

Ms. Fallow concluded that Dairy West has been studying ways to grow demand, consumption, and be more assertive throughout the region, so they can have an impact on farmer's milk checks and their long-term prosperity. Dairy West is a new qualified program, USDA compliant, non profit, functions as a 501(c)(6), Dairy West will still continue to represent the interest of dairy farmers. They maintain partnership agreements with dairy commissions in states throughout the West. They continue to conduct a high-quality, high-impact dairy check-off programming that the farmers have come to expect. Dairy West was created because Idaho's milk is flowing across borders and the industry shares domestic and global markets. The promotion organization cannot stay stagnant and expect to be relevant in the future. Their goals is to include other states in the West so Dairy West has a bigger geographic impact.

PRESENTATION: Farm to School Programs in Idaho. **Leah Clark**, Agriculture Trade Specialist, ISDA, commenced her presentation by explaining the Farm to School program. The program procures local foods for schools and helps schools learn what is grown locally, who grows it, and how they can procure the food for their cafeterias. The program increases the relevance and the understanding of the relationship between food and farms. Finally, it provides a unique opportunity for curriculum content that is creative and engaging for students.

Farm to School is important for increasing fruit and vegetable consumption in school cafeterias increasing participation in the school meal program. When students are involved in Farm to School program where they grow the product or learn where the product is grown they are more willing to try new foods. The program increases their awareness of food in agriculture, as well as nutrition. Farm to School has always been a great collaboration between farmers and teachers. The University of Idaho (UI) brings the gardening knowledge and the Department of Education manages the USDA child nutrition program.

In conjunction with the Department of Education, Farm to School created a series of posters, "Incredible Edible Idaho." These posters represent many of the food crops in Idaho showing how the crop looks when it is growing, what it looks like in the store, where it is grown in Idaho, and how it fits on the USDA My Plate.

About 45 percent of schools in Idaho have a Farm to School program in place; this translates to 55 of Idaho's school districts; 247 schools; and 100,000 students. The schools spend over \$4 million on Idaho products. This only represents 10 percent of their total investment in food. The Farm to School program objective is to increase this dollar amount for Idaho's farmers.

Rick Waitley, State Director for Ag in the Classroom Program, said the main purpose of Ag in the Classroom is to train teachers. The program assists teachers as to how to teach students where their food and fiber is produced. Over 186 different commodities are raised in Idaho. Only the states of California, Florida, and Oregon outnumber the commodities grown in Idaho. Ag in the Classroom has 31 years of experience in opening doors of classrooms and has developed many partnerships. One of the primary goals of Ag in the Classroom is to develop and distribute quality curriculum materials to individuals and classrooms.

Mr. Waitley explained they conduct workshops for teachers to earn credits. The teachers tour an area of Idaho agriculture firsthand and up close. One of the favorite tours is "Snake River Smiles" which starts in Boise and proceeds to Idaho Falls. This traveling workshop affords teachers the experience of being with people affiliated with agriculture. Ag in the Classroom accomplishments include:

- Expose the teachers to experience of Idaho ag in the classroom;
- Respect for history of agriculture;
- Meet the people in agriculture to learn the lifestyle of agriculture;
- See the challenges that farmers and ranchers face;
- Understand the investment;
- Appreciate Idaho agriculture

Chairman Rice asked what age level the materials are designed for. He wondered if Ag in the Classroom has audio/visual materials available. **Mr. Waitley** answered that they are a part of the national Ag in the Classroom program. There is an ag literacy center at the University of Utah. When teachers in a school ask for materials for this program, Ag in the Classroom provides any materials needed.

Ariel Agenbroad, UI, Area Extension Educator, Food Systems and Small Farms, said there are three areas that UI Extensions support in the Farm to School programs in Idaho: 1) school gardens; 2) teacher education; and 3) engaging UI students involvement in this work. Research indicates that garden based education increases academic achievement in the natural sciences, results in higher test scores, increases social skills among students, and reduces classroom discipline problems.

Students are afforded the opportunity to go out and work in a real life laboratory, solve problems, use of cooperation in order to grow a garden, and there are significant nutritional benefits. When children are involved in growing, observing, and selecting/harvesting fresh fruits and vegetables they are much more likely to try "the fruits of their labors."

Ms. Agenbroad believed UI is well suited to be in this role because of their expertise along with a volunteer network through 4H and Idaho extension master gardener volunteers. UI has a proven track record of making a difference in some of the sustainability and success of school gardens. One group of master gardeners took their expertise and built the Pat Anderson School Garden at the Southwest Idaho Detention Center in Caldwell, Idaho. The youth in this center have to earn the right to work in the garden and overtime this program has become a beautiful flourishing garden behind razor wire.

UI has seen such an impact in the various projects where these master gardeners have made a difference. UI has now formalized the program, through examples from other states, to create a school garden mentor program. UI collaborated with the State Department of Education on funding for these projects in their schools. Then proceeded to pair the master gardeners with the schools all over the State which are receiving garden grants. UI tracks the progress of these grant projects to see if this program is having an impact in helping the gardens be successfully established.

UI recruits undergraduate student interns from the Moscow, Idaho, campus where their expertise is used in such areas as summer school, after school, gardening and agricultural literacy programs, fairs, and other public events. **Ms. Agenbroad** closed her presentation with their pilot program which was envisioned and brought into actuality last summer by Ms. Clark. Ag in the Classroom funded two interns and recruited four schools in four different counties in the Treasure Valley. Each school received help and assistance in procuring an all Idaho lunch for one day during their summer feeding program, which was paired with an educational program delivered by the interns. The educational portion of this Idaho lunch spoke to all these food products educating the students on where the food on their plate came from and who grows the products. This program reached 1,000 children.

ADJOURNED: There being no further business, **Chairman Rice** adjourned the meeting at 8:56 a.m.

Senator Rice
Chair

Carol Deis
Secretary