

MINUTES
HOUSE AGRICULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

DATE: Thursday, February 16, 2017

TIME: 1:30 P.M.

PLACE: Room EW42

MEMBERS: Chairman Boyle, Vice Chairman Dayley, Representatives Bell, Miller, VanOrden, Burtenshaw, Kerby, Troy, Stevenson, Amador, Armstrong, Hanks, Zito, Erpelding, Toone

**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** None

GUESTS: Rick Naerebout, Idaho Dairymen's Association; Brent Olmstead, CALS; Benjamin Kelly, Food Producers of Idaho; Wyatt Prescott, ICA; Bob Naerebout, Idaho Dairymen's Association; Brandy Kay, IWGA; Teri Murrison, ISWCC; Mitch Coates, Food Producers of Idaho; Norm Samanko, Idaho Water Users Association; Tyler Mursoitio, IWUA; Elizabeth Criner, NWFPA

Chairman Boyle called the meeting to order at 1:32 p.m.

Teri Murrison, Administrator ISWCC, explained Idahoans love the land, clean air, water and well-managed landscapes. Good Stewardship is voluntary and locally led action helps address mandated federal water quality and other environmental goals. Since 1939 they have been caring for and improving natural resources for future generations by working with local people who know the land. She said they have no regulatory authority and in fact try to help Idaho avoid regulations. She said the Legislature and the Governor's office have increased their level of support in the last five years and some sister state agencies do compensate them for some of the services they provide. Ms. Murrison reported the Performance Measures Report of district satisfaction has increased over the past four years from 60% to 91% in 2016. She explained this year the Legislature appropriated \$100,000 as a one time pilot project to fund the North Central Wildfire Restoration Group led by Nez Perce, Latah, Idaho, Clearwater, and Lewis Soil and Water Conservation Districts. She said the project helped local, state and federal governments to identify and prioritize the restoration of private and municipal lands damaged by the 2015 wildfires.

In response to a committee question, **Ms. Murrison** said plans are reanalyzed and reviewed as to their effectiveness every five years by the DEQ.

Pamela Juker, Chief of Staff, Department of Agriculture, explained The Produce Rule focuses on, on-farm activities. She said producers have never been regulated in this manner prior to FSMA. She explained the rule does not cover produce that is further processed or not generally consumed raw. She said the general compliance dates for the largest producers begin in 2018, small producers in 2019 and the very small producers in 2020. Ms. Juker said the Food Safety Modernization Act is the first major overhaul of our nation's food safety practices since 1938. This is intended to be an integrated food safety system that aims to ensure the U.S. food supply is safe by shifting the focus from responding to contamination to preventing it. FDA authority to promulgate rules applies domestically as well as internationally when foreign suppliers are importing food ingredients into the U.S. and will affect everyone from farmers to packers, processors and transporters. She then explained the 7 rules that will apply to the Food Safety Modernization Act. She said in Idaho these rules will affect 239 farms, 565 food processors and 100 animal food manufactures and nearly 3,800 transporters of human and animal food. She stated some of the concerns are that the regulations place a great financial

burden on smaller facilities, also the fear that foreign importers would not be held to the same standards as U.S. food producers creating a competitive advantage for foreign suppliers. She said they have consistently heard from the industry if there is a change in regulation, they do not want federal presence on their farms and facilities but prefer a state presence.

Rick Naerebout, Idaho Dairymen's Association, stated the Association's mission is to protect Idaho's dairy industry through environmental, legal and legislative leadership which they have been doing since 1924. He said the total number of dairy operation in Idaho is 496 which includes 577,516 milk cows. The area of small herds of less than 200 cows declined from 135 to 121 in just one year. He stated because of the harsh winter they expect to see a decline in calves this year but won't know numbers until later in the year. He said there has been a steady increase over the last 20 years of milk production as it has more than doubled. There has been a steady increase of 2-3% every year due mostly to the ability to get more milk per cow.

Mr. Naerebout said OSHA has announced it is developing a Local Emphasized Program (LEP) for all Idaho agriculture. Because there have been 13 fatalities on Idaho farms over the past couple of years, OSHA will do unannounced inspections on agriculture with 10 or more employees. He explained some of the situations have occurred because of the unprecedented run-on from adjacent property owners and how the association is encouraging dairymen to self report discharge off property.

Bob Naerebout, Executive Director, Idaho Dairymen's Association, said there are 8,100 people employed on Idaho dairies. He said about 85% to 90% of these jobs are filled by foreign born laborers. He explained there are another 3,700 jobs in processing and 27,600 jobs in supporting businesses all supported by the dairy industry. None of these jobs would exist without foreign born labor.

ADJOURN:

There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 3:03 p.m.

Representative Boyle
Chair

Joan Majors
Secretary