

MINUTES
HOUSE AGRICULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

DATE: Tuesday, March 14, 2017

TIME: 1:30 pm or UPON ADJOURNMENT

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:** Rep. Bell, Kerby

GUESTS: Brandy Kay, IWGA; Mitch Coats, Food Producers
Chairman Boyle called the meeting to order at 2:49 p.m.

MOTION: **Rep. Toone** made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 20, March 2, and March 8, 2017 meetings. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

Dr. Bill Barton, Idaho State Veterinarian, Emergency Support Function Coordinator, presented the Agriculture Emergency Management Update from Winter 2016/2017. After the severe and prolonged weather conditions of the past season, Dr. Barton stated emergency response is the highest priority, while still providing needed services. Some of the agriculture issues that have been and continue to be dealt with are: onion shed collapses in Western Idaho, cattle deaths, road conditions, water contamination and flooding. One of the most valuable resources offered after the onion shed collapses was a one month extension of deadlines to April 15 to allow for proper disposal of onions.

In response to questions from the committee, **Jared Stuart**, Department of Agriculture, Plant Industries Section Manager, stated the impact of the onion sheds should not impact future growth of the large industry. Also in response to questions regarding water and flooding in dairy and beef lots, **Dr. Barton** and Mr. Stuart stated risk assessments are done in conjunction with Department of Environmental Quality, Department of Agriculture and Department of Water Resources to minimize the impact of flooding.

Blaine Jacobsen, Executive Director, Idaho Wheat Commission presented the Idaho Wheat Commission Report. Wheat is grown in 42 of Idaho's 44 counties and is the 2nd largest crop behind potatoes. Director Jacobsen reviewed the commissions budget and where the funds were distributed. The largest budget item is to the University of Idaho for research. He also reviewed the wheat yield, and stated we have a record yield with lower acreage used. Transportation and the Columbia/Snake waterway was also discussed, as the Port of Portland is the 3rd largest grain export in the world. Much of the transportation of grains west of the Missouri River to Portland goes through Idaho.

Director Jacobsen, then moved on to the rules review. Through negotiated rule making, a decision was made to wait until 2018 to bring forth rules that are needed to fulfill their statutory duties in Idaho. These duties include: improve wheat grower education, research issues growing wheat and conduct periodic referendums.

Director Jacobsen explained the upcoming rule would reinstate original provisions from the 1970's to allow the ability to have a wheat grower list. With current practices, Idaho is at a disadvantage with other states. The ability to trace where food is grown is important in today's industry. If the rule was to be approved next year, the commission would be compliant with Idaho Code, they would involve grain handlers from around the state to be part of commission meetings and they would sponsor an annual cereal school in southwest Idaho.

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 3:54 p.m.

Representative Boyle
Chair

Michele Jarvis
Secretary