

MINUTES  
**HOUSE AGRICULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** Monday, January 20, 2020

**TIME:** 1:30 P.M.

**PLACE:** Room EW42

**MEMBERS:** Chairman Boyle, Vice Chairman Troy, Representatives Kerby, Stevenson, Zito, Andrus, Giddings, Goesling, Marshall, Nichols, Raymond, Kiska, Toone, Abernathy, McCrostie

**ABSENT/  
EXCUSED:** None

**GUESTS:** Brent Olmstead, U of I CALS; Barbara Petty, U of I CALS; Mark Mcquire, U of I CALS; Cathy Roheim, U of I CALS

**Chairman Boyle** called the meeting to order at 1:29 p.m.

**MOTION:** **Rep. Kiska** made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 16, 2020 meeting. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

**Brent Olstead**, University of Idaho CALS, introduced the speakers for the meeting, **Dean Michael Parrella, Dr. Juliet Marshal, and Dr. Garth Taylor.**

**Dean Michael Parrella**, College of Agricultural and Life Science, explained the University of Idaho is a land grant from the State of Idaho. He said their mission is to expand opportunities for the working class to obtain a higher education. He said of the 225 faculty members, over half of them are located off campus in research, extension centers and UI extension offices. He stressed the importance of preparing ag teachers as 95 out of 113 districts have ag programs with 90% of the ag teachers receiving their degrees from CALS. Dean Parrella said the Nancy M. Cummings Research and Extension and Education Center was completed in December of last year. He said it will benefit the entire community as it serves the livestock industry. He explained future goals to build and operate the largest integrated research facility focused on dairy and allied industry in the United States. He stated the project will include research dairy, agronomics field plots, a discovery center and a food processing/workforce training facility. He said the CAFE will be a unique facility, with a 2,000 cow dairy similar in size to dairies in the Magic Valley and will afford opportunity for several surrounding states to combine information and benefit from the research done there. He explained renovations to the Parma Research Center continue, including equipment and infrastructure to support research and extension efforts.

**Dr. Juliet Marshal**, Research Professor, Aberdeen Research Center, explained she works out of the Aberdeen R & E Center where there are about 20 scientists including UI faculty working together with ARS (Agriculture Research Service) and NRCS (Natural Resources Conservation Services). She said it includes about 400 acres of which most is irrigated land. Dr. Marshal said considerable research is done in variety development of wheat, barley, potatoes and other crops, helping the growers have sustainable crops and economical production. She explained diseases threatening a variety of crops and the importance of controlling the disease to allow the grower greater profitability. She said the spore trap is a sampling network that enables them to predict what is going on in the field by extracting daily samples. Dr. Marshall said the ability of gene editing as a tool to make crops less susceptible or disease resistant is a large part of their research.

**Chairman Boyle** turned the gavel over to **Vice Chairman Troy.**

In response to a committee question, **Ms. Marshal** said they work hand in hand with Washington State as it is a very interrogated research society.

In response to a committee question, **Ms. Marshal** said with the new tools available in gene editing, there is not any impact on the flavor or health of a plant.

**Dr. Garth Taylor**, U of I Agricultural Economist, stated Idaho is the 5th largest ag state in the nation in percentage of GDP of the state's total GDP. He explained exports or new dollars drive the economy and one out of every five dollars in sales in the State of Idaho is either directly or indirectly created by Agriculture business. He said one out of every eight jobs in Idaho is either directly or indirectly created by Agri business as well. Dr. Taylor said since 1997, the US has grown 20% in real cash receipts whereas Idaho in the same period of time has grown 70% which is mostly due to milk having increased 200% in cash receipts. He stated Idaho hit a new record high in exports with about 20% of the total export products being agriculture. He said our main export markets are Canada and Mexico. He said farm income is up 50% to a new record high. He stated US net farm income grew 10% from 1997 to 2019 whereas Idaho's net farm income grew 150% in the same time period. He said this is a growing industry in our state.

**Vice Chairman Troy** turned the gavel over to **Rep. Zito**.

**Dr. Taylor** stated the future of farming is very bright with land prices and dairy herds increasing, beef prices are steady, forage prices follow beef prices and milk exports are up.

In response to a committee question about who is buying the milk produced, **Dr. Taylor** said the growth will come mostly in exports of dry milk. He said we now have access to the Canadian market and that is going to be a large part of the increase in exports.

**ADJOURN:** There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 3:31 p.m.

---

Representative Boyle  
Chair

---

Joan Majors  
Secretary