

Montana Organic Commodity Advisory Council Meeting

December 16, 2017

Great Falls, Montana

MOCAC Members present: Alison Harmon, Catherine Odden, Mark Smith, Sam Schmidt, Matt Johnson, Ty O'Connor

MOCAC Members not present: Karl Sutton

Staff Members: Ben Thomas, Georgana Webster, Ed Tyanich

Guests: Sonja Johnson, Sarina O'Connor

The conference began at 6:00 PM.

Introductions were made, and the meeting was called to order by Ben Thomas. Ben announced that Mark Nechodom had been hired as the new ASD Administrator.

Georgana Webster went over the major areas of the 2016 MOCAC minutes:

There were no corrections or comments to the previous minutes.

Catherine Odden motioned to accept the minutes, Mark Smith seconded, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

Program Summary

A summary sheet of the program summary was provided by Georgana Webster.

There were a few questions regarding increases work load do to the increase in numbers.

Georgana gave a summation on the Cost Share program. \$16,756.84 of Cost Share applications are on a wait list for additional funding.

Crop Insurance was discussed both as the challenges it creates for the Organic Program as well as problems producers face.

The effects of the drought were discussed and the potential for the Organic Program seeing a decrease in assessment fees as a result.

Georgana Webster explained that the MTDA Organic Program reaccreditation audit was rescheduled for the first week of June 2018.

Open Discussion:

Topics discussed were the importance of a stable grass-fed beef market, the possibility of two new slaughter/packing facilities being built in Montana and the importance of organic integrity in the import markets.

Also discussed was the focus on native prairie and wildlife and the possibility of a handling facility to utilize chicken from the egg handling facility.

8:00 Adjourn:

Motion to adjourn was made by Alison Harmon, Mark Smith seconded the motion and adjournment was approved unanimously.

Minutes prepared by Ed Tyanich