

**BC Milk Marketing Board - Powers and Duties Review
Milk Industry Advisory Committee Engagement Session
April 7, 2014, Abbotsford
“As it was Heard” Report**

Participants:

Milk Industry Advisory Committee Members

- Tony Seguss, Chair
- Ben Brandsema
- Tony Driessen
- Linda Pendray
- Catherine Tokarz
- Phil Vanderpol
- Len Bouwman
- Tom Droppo, Ministry of Agriculture
- Bob Honeyman
- Wally Tenbrinke
- Mike Dick
- Jeff Zonneveld
- Dan Wong

BC Milk Marketing Board

- Garth Green
- Zahra Abdalla-Shamji
- Bob Ingratta
- Woody Siemens

Purpose of the Session:

- To engage industry stakeholders in the Review with the intent of securing comments and views on the continued appropriateness and adequacy of the current powers and duties of the BC Milk Marketing Board (Milk Board) and what if any additional powers were required to realize the strategic vision of the BC dairy industry.

Format of the Session:

- The Session started with a description of the scope and objectives of Powers and Duties Review, providing background context on past reviews and indicating that this was the “first dedicated review”.
- A summary of the Industry Engagement strategy being employed in the Review.
- An outline of the source of the Milk Board’s powers and duties.
- A summary of the existing strategic vision for the dairy industry was presented to provide a point of reference for the Review. Participants were advised that this relationship was important from a BC Farm Industry Review Board (FIRB) governance perspective as well as taking into account the SAFETI principles.
- The evolution of the promotion and marketing duties was provided.
- Participants were asked to
 - Consider the strategic vision, mission and pillars in their assessment of the current powers and duties of the Milk Board.
 - Share their views on the appropriateness of continued “delegation” of the promotion and marketing duties of the Board.
 - Consider any additional powers or duties needed by the Milk Board to realize the strategic vision of the industry.

Summary of Participant Views and Comments:

General Overall Assessment

- General view was that the Milk Board was doing a good job.
- There needs to be greater clarity of roles of the Milk Board and the BC Dairy Association (BCDA).

Communications/Transparency

- Some raised concerns with no explanation being provided by the Milk Board when recommendations of the Committee were not accepted. An explanation of the other considerations factored into the decision by the Milk Board should be provided.
- There was a general feeling that the Committee was a “rubber stamp”. Given that BC is part of the Western Milk Pool, the Committee is presented “the prices” of milk and were really in no position to challenge or debate.
- The Committee provides a good vehicle for communication between the Milk Board and industry.
- The general view was that the Milk Board provided adequate information to the industry.

Strategic Role/Policy Direction

- It was not clear to the Committee that the Milk Board built the current strategic plan with industry input.
- There was a feeling that there was a gap in communicating the implementation of the plan and a suggestion that periodic formal updates on the Plan would be of value.
- Milk quality and food safety were recognized as being important to the industry, however there is confusion as to who has what role, in particular, the roles and responsibilities of the Milk Board in this area need to be reconciled with those of the Ministry.
- BCDA leads the implementation of proAction, it is not the Milk Board’s lead.
- Some were of the view that the Milk Board is supporting small farms over large farms.

Innovation

- Some members felt that things were working well.
- Policies are supportive of innovation, with a focus on facilitating producers working with processors to develop and implement new products.

Marketing and Promotion

- There was a strong feeling from producers that the Milk Board should stay out of promotion and marketing and leave things as is with the BCDA.
- The view of the Committee was that the Milk Board was a regulator, not a marketer or promoter. Some felt that “marketing” did not fit with the Milk Board’s role as regulator.

- A question was raised as to what the definition of marketing as it relates to the Milk Board was. What does “in any or all respects mean”? Clarification of this provision should be provided. Concern was raised as to whether or not the Milk Board could, if a part of the market was deemed as not being served, actually take action and market product.
- If the Milk Board has not been and should not be involved in marketing and promotion, consideration should be given to the option to delete these as powers and duties in the future which in turn will provide greater clarity of roles and responsibilities.
- There was a view expressed that the promotional levy was producer and not public funds and the only accountability required was to the producers.
- Members were comfortable with the current role that the Board played with respect to education and nutrition, however marketing and promotion should be left with the BCDA.
- It was felt that the marketing role needed to be better defined.

Prepared by:

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