

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

Participants:

Specialty Production Advisory Committee Members

- Tony Seguss, Chair
- Ted DeJong
- Catherine Tokarz
- Johnathon Van Keulen
- Jack McLeod
- Gaye Hahn
- Russ Rimmer
- Mike Dick
- Ken Vandeburgt
- Ben Brandsema
- David Janssens

BC Milk Marketing Board

- Garth Green
- 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:

Communications/Transparency

- An issue was raised about the role and responsibility of the Milk Board with respect to quality issues, in particular a case relating to antibiotic detection in organic milk. Producers and processors were of one mind in presenting a solution involving them working together.
- It was not apparent to the Committee that the Milk Board gave due consideration to recommendations of the Committee and felt that the Milk Board could do a better job of explaining the rationale for its decisions, particularly when decisions seem contrary to the recommendations provided by the Committee.
- The Milk Board seems to be held accountable for the integrity/quality of organic milk but it is not clear that it has the full set of powers to enforce compliance.
- There was an expressed need for the Milk Board to improve transparency for organic milk quality and certification with an increased involvement of the Milk Board in certification and notification of non-compliance.
- Some expressed that the communication between the Milk Board and producers was working well; the regional meetings were useful forums.

Strategic Role/Policy Direction

- It was not clear to the Committee as to whether or not the Milk Board has any authority with respect to policy development relating to the milk industry in BC.
- Is the Milk Board's role simply to implement policy direction provided by others, i.e. FIRB and government, or does it have the ability to recommend policy direction in the best interests of the industry.
- There was a suggestion that program development and implementation needed to be decoupled, leaving program development to industry associations and implementation to the Milk Board.
- Some were of the view that having a single entity for dairy like the case in other provinces as opposed to having both the Milk Board and the BC Dairy Association (BCDA) would enable better focus for program development and delivery, and result in a single voice for dairy in BC.
- On the subject of animal care and environment, some members felt it was the association's role to develop the policies and standards and the Milk Board's responsibility to "enforce" the standards using fines and penalty provisions.
- Need to look ahead 5 years, where will the industry be with respect to organic production/products.
- Milk Board is a regulatory body; it too is constrained by FIRB authority and control.

Innovation

- Members of the Committee felt that future innovation and growth for the dairy industry in BC rests with dairy components, not fluid milk sales.
- Members are concerned that BC has limited authority to innovate in this area as the Canadian Dairy Commission has ultimate control and authority.

Marketing and Promotion

- The Committee does not talk about consumers and consumer demand. Where does the Milk Board fit relative to the role of the processors and BCDA?
- Members were comfortable with the current role that the Milk 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.
- Some felt that the Milk Board's role was simply regulatory and that "marketing" did not fit. The Milk Board does not have the expertise in marketing nor should they be obtaining it.

Prepared by:

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April 23, 2014