

**PPIC Executive Board meeting, Wednesday April 10<sup>th</sup>, 10:00 am to 11:30 am, FScN 225G**

In attendance: Pam Ismail – UMN

Amy Mathiowetz – UMN

Jason Robinson – AURI

Christina Connelly – Canadian Consulate

Julie Simonson – Schwans, via WebEx and conference call-in

Denis Chereau – IMPROV, via WebEx

Therese Liffrig – UMN

Absent: Greg Cuomo – UMN

Stacy Pyett – Wageningen University and Research

**1. Quick re-cap of previous Executive Board meeting (minutes in *Appendix 1* of meeting agenda)**

- a. Role of executive vs. tech committee
- b. Benefits to members; consensus that benefits are robust and will encourage membership
- c. Current and potential partners
- d. Current budget
- e. Since the last technical committee meeting, the PPIC technical committee meeting has met twice (March 11<sup>th</sup> and April 8<sup>th</sup>); minutes are available in Appendices 2 and 3 of agenda

**2. PPIC partners updates (*document with industry contacts and status has been shared*)**

**A. Current progress in gaining partners**

- a) We have four confirmed partners: Cargill, ADM, Conagra, Hershey's
- b) Kellogg's still in progress
- c) Kraft Heinz (John Topinka): as of now, do not have brands that support innovation in plants proteins space
  - (1) Interesting considering Boca Burger brand; may need additional enticement
  - (2) Julie will follow up with John
- d) Coca Cola approached Pam about high-protein beverage line; signed confidentiality agreement; meeting Friday, April 12<sup>th</sup>
- e) PepsiCo: meeting in May; additionally, met with somebody from breeding program on campus to talk about potentially becoming a member
- f) LOL: meeting set in May
- g) Simplot: Jeffrey Bohlscheid reached out for tour (May 24<sup>th</sup>)
- h) STET (ST Equipment & Technology) (Kyle Flynn, director): dry processing equipment for protein production; have patent on dry processing method for plant proteins
- i) Ecolab: Pam has meeting set up
  - (1) Jason: will be interesting to see their [Ecolab's and STET's] interest in center, think differently about they are able to contribute; Could potentially contribute processing equipment in place of funding (AURI

has space to potentially hold equipment) in turn for advertisement by the PPIC

- j) AGT: conversation dropped, on to-do list
- k) Roquette (Thierry Marcel): Marcel was going to bring up the PPIC to R&D team; need to follow up
- l) DuPont: awaiting response
- m) Ingredient: nutrition team reached out; interested but contingent on finances
- n) Hormel (James Splinter): nothing heard from
- o) Christina:
  - (1) AgroPur is not interested
  - (2) Avena Foods (Canadian, acquired Best Cooking Pulses; not well known but sizeable together): awaiting response
  - (3) Oil Canada: owned by same parent company as Manitoba Harvest who said no due to budget constraints; in holding pattern likely
  - (4) Buhler as equipment company? Sizeable R&D facility; responsive in past
  - (5) BevSource: contract beverage manufacturer; do some work in proteins space; sizeable; starting new beverage lab in city
- p) Jason: reached out to LOL; waiting on response for who is right person to talk to as relates to feed; will follow up for contact
- q) MN Hemp Farms (John Strohfus): has been approached; focused on immediate applications and might not be interested in the PPIC but other hemp organizations could be approached instead
- r) Ideas for enticing other companies to partner
  - (1) Julie: Schwan's shared summary on key trends from Natural Products Expo West; no.1 trend is plant proteins based foods; reference this trend in conversations with companies
  - (2) Can discuss the PPIC at conferences, expos, meetings
  - (3) Christina: there is data that shows this is not just a short-term trend (Food Institute); plant proteins will likely be around in the long term
- s) No small companies involved so far;
  - (1) looking to AURI to help in this space;
  - (2) remind that it is a small membership fee, good visibility and involvement for company
  - (3) Soybean Board not buying in
  - (4) Christina: Proteins Highway Meeting – could connect with other smaller organizations

**B. Discuss further ideas on how to entice industry to join; PPIC pitch slides**

- a) Walked through PPIC Pitch slides
- b) Agreement that the full powerpoint is a lot to take in for an initial presentation . The first 3-4 slides are most relevant and show the justification and concept; the rest of the slides are backup
- c) Consensus that PPIC pitch slides will be share with committee and respective individuals can tailor to their specific needs, use what is relevant for a given presentaiton
- d) Denis suggested also putting document on website

### 3. Overview of past two technical committee meetings (minutes in *Appendix 2 & 3*)

#### A. Objective: Share main action items:

- a. Developed a lit review excel document with current research in the plant protein space (*work in progress; word summary in Appendix 4 in agenda*);
  - 1) Jason: consider making lit review available on website to continue to entice people with literature all in one place
  - 2) Protein Highway and Good Food Institute also working on document summarizing research that is going on right now; will follow up with Christina to collaborate to create a more complete document
- b. Discussed research priorities and reorganized top 6 priorities;
- c. Discussed call for proposal;
- d. Discussed FFAR proposal;
  - 1) FFAR: one of their priority areas is next generation crops; fits well with mission of center; has spoken with program manager of that particular topic, encouraged submission of preproposal
- e. Planned a workshop in the summer (Early September, focus on Basic Proteins short course) (*Appendix 5 in agenda; and excel sheet with current short courses and workshops*)
  - 1) Workshop will be hands-on
  - 2) Committee favored short course similar to that offered by IFT, basic protein short course: will attract a broader audience to help bring in revenue
  - 3) Jason: may need to expand curriculum (trends analysis, marketplace opportunities) if we want to attract some non-technical people
  - 4) Early September the preferred time period of technical committee as it falls between several conferences in May/June and Sept/Oct
    - (i) Jason: Food Ag Ideas Week is in early October; could move closer to this date to attract international folks

### 4. Current/future funds and research projects

- A. Provide an overview of current funds (\$333,912 over three years)
  - a. Coming from partner fees after deduction of 15% from college
- B. Sharing other sources of funding (FFAR call for preproposals April 19th and MDA call for proposals Oct 2019)
  - a. Met with Emily Jerve (MDA Marketing Supervisor) and Michael Green (MDA Crop Research Grant Manager) on March 1<sup>st</sup>; the PPIC aligns well with mission of MDA so long as it benefits MN farming
  - b. Jason: MDA interested in specifics; keep in mind for proposal
- C. Provide justification for potential use of \$100,000 to fund two one-year projects (*Appendix 6 in agenda*) (RFP going out in May, submission deadline in June, funds released mid-August)
  - a. Short-term projects will allow us to show productivity
  - b. 1/3 of current available funds are allocated for these two 1-year projects
  - c. The call for proposal is based on top 6 priorities as modified by technical committee meeting on April 8th
  - d. Pulses, ancient grains, oats, and hemp protein research encouraged

- e. Will only go out to researchers (13) that are part of the PPIC
  - f. Timeline for call for proposals
    - i. RFP will go out in May
    - ii. Researchers will submit proposals in ~July
    - iii. Review proposals in July and August
    - iv. Release funding in mid-August to September to allow for funding of graduate student, etc.
- D. Provide justification for potential use of \$180,000, AURI in kind plus one of Schwan's fellowships as FFAR matching funds (justification and draft in *Appendix 7 & 8 of agenda*)
- a. Interdisciplinary research that will focus on research that has already started in the region (i.e. camelina and pennycress)
  - b. Discussed key personnel and their respective fields
  - c. Reviewed justification for camelina and pennycress
    - i. None of these crops are a source of competition
    - ii. Basic information will be obtained that can further entice industry to pursue development of these crops; future patents may evolve
    - iii. Knowledge acquired can be applied to different proteins and co-products
  - d. Jason: the one thing that might be missing is someone with commercialization expertise; pennycress traditionally a weed; how do we convince a farmer that this is now a cash crop and how do we harvest it?
    - i. Call it "phase 1" this is the beginning to very long project; the commercialization aspect can be included in future projects
    - ii. Julie: first need to show need and application, then later on figure out how to make it attractive to farmers
  - e. Denis: should we also be looking at existing crops (i.e. canola, corn, sunflower)
    - i. Call for proposals is so focused and targeted, looking at novel rather than existing crops
  - f. Christina: are these two crops that might be enticing to industry right now?
    - i. Julie: not on radar for companies right now but we can think ahead and show what benefits are/sustainability that could entice companies further down the line

## 5. Next steps

- A. Introduce the plan for research spotlight meeting (fall meeting?)
  - a. More focused meeting on research in the plants protein space
  - b. Keynote speakers and researchers from center to present on research
  - c. Ag Innovation Showcase is sept 9-11 in Minneapolis; could draw some of the same people; keep in mind for scheduling
  - d. Consensus that spotlight meeting is a great idea
    - i. Creates excitement that work is happening
    - ii. Continues to generate interest, visibility
    - iii. Could webcast summary of research
- B. Determine topic of next board meeting (e.g. review of PPIC goals and activities, new collaborations, strengthening current collaboration)
  - a. Update in a couple months on partner progress

- b. Keep conversations going about the PPIC

**6. Post-Meeting Action Items**

- A. Committee members will continue to follow up with potential partners and update shared Excel document accordingly
  - a. Pam: Kellogg's, Coca-Cola, PepsiCo, LOL, Simplot, Ecolab, AGT, Roquette, Dupont, Ingredion
  - b. Julie: Kraft (John Topinka)
  - c. Jason (AURI): STET?, smaller organizations, hemp organizations?
  - d. Christina: Avena Foods, Buhler, BevSource
- B. Amy will share PPIC pitch slides via email and on PPIC website
- C. Amy will make literature review available online via the PPIC website
- D. Amy will connect with Christina to collaborate with the Protein Highway and the Good Food Institute, who are also working on literature reviews of recent plant protein research, to create a more comprehensive review

