

**PPIC Executive Board meeting, Tuesday, Sep 15<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 am to 10:30 am, Zoom meeting  
Minutes**

1. **Quick re-cap of previous Executive Board** meeting (minutes in *Appendix 1 of agenda*)
2. **Technical committee meeting minutes, FYI** (*Appendix 2 of agenda*)
3. **General Updates**
  - a. Announcing new members
    - i. Total of 19 members as of meeting date
    - ii. 4 new members since last Technical Committee meeting: Pleasant Valley Oil Mills (Partner), IFF (Partner), Kraft Heinz (Partner), and Minn-Dak Growers (Associate Member)
    - iii. 7 new members during quarantine, including Bay State Milling (1 year trial membership at Associate level), EverGrain (Associate Member) and Danone (Partner), as well as those listed above
    - iv. Scoular has now confirmed that they will be joining! Will be 20<sup>th</sup> member!
    - v. Givaudan is also seeking internal approval to join as member (thank you to Julie for advocating for PPIC!)
  - b. Updates on efforts to *recruit* new members: in conversation with several parties including Givaudan (George Krintiras and team will follow up in Sep), Scoular, Buhler, BioTEI, Inc., JUST, CoverCress, Pure Circle, Amazon Regeneration (Exec Board Shared Resources Document” in Google Drive)
    - i. Buhler – months’ long discussion has been around how they can be a part of this organization through in-kind support
      1. In-kind support in the form of lending us time to use their facility for projects or lending equipment –i.e. benchtop extruder
      2. They are in a partnership with Givaudan in Singapore in plant-based foods; developed new R&D center for joint collaboration
      3. Jason has a visit with Buhler at their application center on Sept 25<sup>th</sup>
    - ii. BioTEI, Inc., based out of Manitoba, Canada; research and innovation company with current focus on developing cosmetic & pharmaceutical products from seed oils & leaf powders but looking towards protein extraction for food use; interested in collaborating on project, potentially through membership
    - iii. JUST: representative from JUST reached out in August and had a meeting with PPIC end of August; they were interested in learning more about PPIC and its structure; they have an active R&D team at JUST, but are attracted to the vast capabilities of PPIC
    - iv. CoverCress: high technology company using gene editing to domesticate and commercialize pennycress; approached PPIC about a project and is considering doing so as a member
    - v. Amazon Regeneration: startup based out of San Francisco looking to source ingredients from Amazon and concentrate protein from them to create meal replacement product; budget reconstruction since meeting with PPIC in August will prevent them from collaborating with PPIC through project or membership at this time
    - vi. All conversations are outlined and accessible through “Exec Board Shared Resources Document” in Google Drive, which will be shared with all new members in addition to current members
    - vii. Additional suggestions:
      1. Jason will put us into contact with Plantable Foods – startup based on extracting protein from duckweed exotic species

- 2. Christina Connelly – Gabe Gusmini left PepsiCo and started new startup called Plant Pathways; also sits on board with AURI – can get his new contact information
- 3. Christina Connelly had conversation with Greater MSP about their MBold (sp?) Initiative – interested in doing large project on camelina and opportunities for this region with Forever Green; make sure we’re in the loop on this
- c. Update on **funded** (\$250,000) GFI project: Title: “Characterizing and Texturizing Proteins from Pulses to Form Fibers with Textures that Mimic Chicken”
  - i. Three interdisciplinary researchers from PPIC cohort (Zata Vickers, Job Ubbink, and Pam Ismail)
  - ii. Two grad students starting this fall
  - iii. More updates will be provided at Research Spotlight Meeting
- d. Update on FFAR proposal submitted to Plant Protein Enhancement Project: “Legumes of the future: Developing methodologies and germplasm to enhance the functionality and nutritional quality of pea protein”
  - i. Five interdisciplinary researchers
  - ii. Funds requested: \$1,167,797
  - iii. Has been recommended for funding: active negotiation on budget
    - 1. Greg will look into whether final approval is held up over legal issues vs. research details
  - iv. Will not be announced until contract is signed
  - v. Anticipated start date: Jan 2021 pending contract signed
- e. Updates on currently funded PPIC projects
  - i. Three new projects were approved for funding in June 2020.
    - 1. Projects (Summarized on our website)
      - a. *Flavor Reactions with Plant Proteins*
      - b. *Enhancing Pennycress Oilseeds as a New Protein Source by Improving Flavor and Protein Extractability*
      - c. *Impact of Pea Storage Protein Fractions and Their Ratio on Functionality and Nutritional Quality*
    - 2. Thank you to the efforts of our Exec Board members in the review and funding process!
    - 3. Starting date delayed until Sep 2020 due to COVID but may be further delayed because of restrictions on how many students we can admit into lab.
    - 4. New projects Q1 reports will be due at each quarter starting in November
  - ii. Currently funded projects
    - 1. Projects (Summarized on our website)
      - a. *Impact of Cold Plasma Treatment on Pea Protein Structural and Functional Characteristics*
      - b. *An Interdisciplinary Strategy for Improving Hemp Protein as a Food Ingredient through Plant Breeding and Processing*
    - 2. Initial timeline was up in Sept. 2020, however due to COVID, we offered no cost extensions for the ongoing projects; may be extended up to 6 months
    - 3. Q1-Q3 reports for the two initial funded projects shared with Tech Committee; shared with new members via Dropbox
    - 4. Q4 reports will be submitted by Sep 30th
  - iii. Make sure we are communicating with our members transparently about the challenges that we are facing with COVID, especially with new members joining recently; balance company expectations with current challenges
- f. Updates on research planning meeting and short course (*Appendix 3 of agenda*):
  - i. Postponed, both will be held in conjunction as a three-day event in Spring 2021 (actively looking at date options). If we can’t hold the event in person, we will hold at least the Research Planning Meeting virtually.

- ii. We would also like to collaborate with Christina on organizing a reverse pitch session
4. Upcoming Research Spotlight meeting (Tuesday, Nov. 17<sup>th</sup>)
- a. Overview of format
    - i. Virtual format
    - ii. \$50 to cover base costs (waived for members, researchers, speakers, and Exec Board)
    - iii. The Research Spotlight Meeting will showcase research that is actively being conducted in the plant proteins space, including the five projects funded by PPIC (overview of projects that have not yet started)
    - iv. The event will feature presentations from several researchers, internal and external to the PPIC researcher cohort (15 min presentations with 5 min Q&A)
      - 1. We took constructive feedback from last year's spotlight meeting to include more external researchers (national and international)
    - v. The event also will include an interactive e-poster session with the opportunity to speak with students and researchers directly and ask questions about their research.
    - vi. The event will be formatted in breakout sessions, giving attendees the option to customize their day based on which presentations and e-poster sessions they would like to attend.
    - vii. There will be a number of networking breakout sessions built into the day to provide ample opportunity to connect with potential collaborators, customers, partners, and fellow plant protein aficionados
    - viii. Will be using Zoom medium
      - ix. Presentations will be pre-recorded with the help of a professional team, but there will be live questions after each presentation
  - b. Announcing speakers:
    - i. Atze Jan Van der Goot (Wageningen University & Research)
    - ii. Laurice Pouvreau (Wageningen University & Research)
    - iii. James House (University of Manitoba)
    - iv. Lingyun Chen (University of Alberta)
    - v. Bingcan Chen (North Dakota State University)
    - vi. Juliana Maria Leite De Moura Bell (Davis)
    - vii. Pam Ismail (University of Minnesota)
    - viii. Zata Vickers (University of Minnesota) – overview of GFI funded work
    - ix. Gary Reineccus (University of Minnesota) – newly funded flavor work through PPIC
    - x. Katie Gallant (University of Minnesota)—new nutrition associate professor at U
    - xi. Robert Stupar (University of Minnesota) – overview of initiation of pea breeding program at University (he is PI on FFAR project)
    - xii. Envisioned that there will be networking breaks interspersed throughout presentations; also considering doing breakout rooms with presentations potentially running at the same time (Recorded for later viewing)
    - xiii. Given until Sept 21<sup>st</sup> to send presentation title, abstract, and presenter bio – will be presented on our website
    - xiv. Potentially work with communications team (Meredith Dwyer and Tim Loesch) to use presentation clips and create a “montage” video for PPIC advertisement; invite Meredith and Tim to the event
5. Discuss other tasks
- a. Diversify the industry members, current members promoting PPIC
    - i. We want to include industry across the entire value chain

- ii. We are looking to get more companies that manufacture equipment
- iii. Our current members are actively recruiting people and suggesting contacts and potential new collaborations
  - 1. Nutrition-focused companies: Abbott Nutrition, Nestle Health Sciences, Mead Johnson
  - 2. Extractis – recommended by Wajira from Ingredion; work closely with Improve
    - a. Extractis is an association that performs service work, work more with cosmetic and food supplement industry
    - b. They have large equipment (i.e. large spray dryer) that Improve uses for plant-based protein applications
    - c. Denis can reach out to advocate for PPIC
  - 3. Pat Wemet?: replaced Gabe Gusmini at University representing PepsiCo; would be good to reach out to see where their interests lie
  - 4. Plant Based Foods Association: industry group representing multiple companies; good connection in terms of potential membership opportunities; Jason can make connection
  - 5. Protein Industries Canada: general meeting on Sept. 24<sup>th</sup>; free this year; could be a good source of potential contacts
- b. Focus on satisfying our current members (access to resources, consulting/advise, research results, networking/connecting, training programs, literature reviews, joint projects)
  - i. Trying to strike a balance between growing and satisfying current members
  - ii. Answer impromptu questions
  - iii. Connections to potential suppliers and/or customers
  - iv. Networking via our events
  - v. Initiate training programs for a couple of employees for each member company
  - vi. Literature review services (whether as welcome package or otherwise)
  - vii. Joint projects between members either at pre-competitive or competitive level
  - viii. Welcome packages
  - ix. Regular office hours for PPIC members? Informal discussions with members
  - x. “Baseline research” for members outside of formalized project – similar to AURI’s “Rapid Response Program”
  - xi. On-demand training: i.e. recorded lectures, 30 min virtual discussions
- c. Welcome packages: several are underway, some are being discussed, others not initiated yet
  - i. Partners and Associate members
  - ii. Equivalent time and resources in the amount of \$8,000
  - iii. 1 welcome package per 3-year membership agreement
  - iv. Re-emphasizes our need for staff to support this great effort (Pam has sufficient funding for 5 positions right now); Pam is actively hiring several researchers, but is facing challenges with the college getting approval during the hiring freeze despite these positions being funded entirely by external grants – Greg will follow up on this
  - v. Can we make use of other academic partners as a resource?
- d. Staying relevant as a Center
  - i. Making sure PPIC is represented at other conferences, whether by holding booths or speaking on panels, asking PPIC researchers to add their association to PPIC in talks they give, etc.
  - ii. Continuing to share what’s going on in the world of research and highlight the research of the Center (i.e. at Research Spotlight Meeting)
  - iii. Creating additional manpower to be able to deliver on our promises to members
- e. How to facilitate interactions among current members to initiate collaborative projects
  - i. Talk to companies 1:1 under NDA; Pam will find commonalities and suggest collaborative projects to companies with similar research interests
- f. Fund 2-3 or more projects in Spring 2021. Ideally hold Research Planning Meeting prior to the RFP call
  - i. Hold it virtually if not in person

- ii. Revisit research priorities before putting out next RFP
- iii. Start with a survey out to members to identify themes to better streamline discussion
- g. Sharing knowledge and current trends (through website and events)
  - i. Actively working on literature review with Christina and getting database up on website; Christina had someone working on this from Scientific Societies and will follow-up
- h. PPIC initiatives
  - i. Initiate new programs such as exchange students and international project collaboration (e.g. initiatives with Wageningen University and Research, Improve, Nizo, other?)
    - 1. Denis also has good connections with engineering school in Paris that is used to exchange student programs and will reach out
    - 2. Christina is willing to help coordinate exchange programs with Canadian Universities (Pam does currently have this relationship with University of Manitoba)
    - 3. Potentially coordinating student work with outside equipment companies like Buhler similar to an exchange program
  - ii. Seek new funding sources
  - iii. Outreach programs
    - 1. Educational research for consumers
    - 2. Consider partnering with GFI to do consumer outreach
- i. Membership goals
  - i. Increase our membership pool
    - 1. Target: ~\$1 million consistently per year (in next 2-3 years) to fund 5+ active research projects yearly; 10-15 more members could help us reach this number
- j. Continue with short term projects for the first two years to show productivity.
  - i. Consensus from committee

## 6. Next steps

- a. Continue recruiting efforts
- b. Planning the Research Spotlight Meeting
- c. Planning the spring event, hopefully in person experience, Short Course (or webinar?) and Research Planning Meeting
- d. Obtain Q4 reports on the two PPIC funded projects (due Sep 30)
- e. Obtain Q1 reports on the three newly funded PPIC projects
- f. Two new hires!
  - i. Amy has taken a job with Agropur and we have a candidate for the role of “Manager of Operations” that we will be extending an offer to
  - ii. We created an Assistant Director position, and we have the perfect candidate that currently works as a research director on a similar platform
  - iii. Referrals are welcome!

Q: How are we managing the Technical Committee as it continues to grow?

- It is a challenge to find a time where everyone can participate because we want to make sure everyone has a chance to voice their input; able to manage this for now but it will become more of a challenge as we grow
- Technical Committee also suggested we have 1:1 meetings with each company under NDA to find common interests among companies to unite companies with like research priorities for potential collaborative projects

## Post-Meeting Action Items

- Facilitating Connections
  - Jason will put us into contact with Plantable Foods startup based out of California
  - Jason will re-initiate connection with Plant Based Foods Association
  - Denis will connect with Extractis regarding potential collaboration with PPIC
  - Denis will reach out to engineering university in Paris regarding potential student exchange program
  - All are encouraged to update the Exec Board Shared Resources Google Drive document with external communications and potential contacts
- FFAR grant: Greg will look into what is holding up funding approval
- PPIC will be disseminating Q4 reports for projects funded from PPIC first RFP cycle; due Sept. 30<sup>th</sup>
- Research Spotlight Meeting: PPIC will connect with CFANS communications team (Meredith Dwyer and Tim Loesch) to attend meeting and put together montage of recorded clips for external advertisement
- Christina will follow up with Scientific Societies about getting literature database on website
- Referrals are welcome for open PPIC positions! We are hiring for two postdocs, one advanced researcher, a Manager of Operations, and Assistant Director