



BC Farm Industry Review Board

2019-20 VEGETABLE SUPERVISORY REVIEW

VMC Working Group and BCFIRB panel

Held: September 29, 2020

Meeting Report

Attendees:

BCFIRB: Daphne Stancil, Panel Chair, Tamara Leigh, Member, Dennis Lapierre, Member, Wanda Gorsuch, Manager Issues & Planning; Jansen Gibbs, Issues Management Analyst

VMC: Debbie Etsell, Chair, Peter Guichon, Vice Chair, Mike Reed, Member, Blair Lodder, Member, André Solymosi, General Manager

I. Attendance and opening

Attendees Confirmed

II. VMC Review submission – presentation and questions

The regulated vegetable industry is healthy and is attracting capital investment. The industry is very competitive, and agencies need flexibility. The VMC is focusing on having clear, concise expectations and compliance by being proactive in setting key measurables with stakeholders. Based on the input from industry members to the panel, clear, transparent and timely decision-making is fundamental to building trust.

VMC Structure: VMC is discussing in light of stakeholder input to the supervisory panel. It is important that producers retain control; that bias is managed, and industry knowledge is retained.

Agency Accountability: VMC desired outcome is strong, viable, competitive agencies, accountable to the regulated system. VMC is developing a clear set of “best business practices” or standards for agencies, with its Advisory Committees, that takes in to account diverse business structures. Example of a standard: having a marketing plan in place. Seen as a proactive step to support compliance and performance. Some form of compliance reporting to BCFIRB and public is planned. Agreed will need to balance setting standards with agencies having business flexibility and flexibility as to how standards are met. VMC next step is a facilitated workshop, at the request of the Agency Advisory Committee, in October to assemble draft standards to be used for further discussion with the Advisory Committees.

Storage Crop Delivery Allocation (DA): VMC goal is to add clarity to the rules involving grower market access. Primary input panel heard concerned issues with opportunities

for new entrants and opportunities for small producers to grow. Challenging to find a management framework that doesn't penalize existing growers and doesn't penalize new entrants through stagnation. To build a business solely based on DA earned from filling gaps is precarious. There is a new entrant program in place and so far no one qualified for the program has been turned down. A new entrant program review is planned after other priority projects are completed (e.g. strategic planning, agency accountability framework).

III. Supervisory review process status update

The panel is working on its final recommendations and directions.

IV. Agency application moratorium

The VMC in full will consider a date for lifting the moratorium and with a schedule for hearing any pending applications at its next meeting. The panel views lifting the moratorium as an urgent matter, recognizing the VMC must consider how to deal with multiple applications.

V. Next steps

The panel's goal is to complete the Review as soon as practical, enabling the VMC to focus on its projects and agency applications with BCFIRB directions and recommendations in hand.