

## MINUTES

**LOUISIANA SWEET POTATO COMMISSION**  
**Ville Platte Civic Center**  
**704 N. Soileau St.**  
**Ville Platte, LA 71350**  
**TUESDAY, JANUARY 12, 2010**  
**1:00 PM**

### CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Larry Fontenot called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm

### ROLL CALL

Mr. René P. Simon called the roll. A quorum was declared.

### MEMBERS PRESENT

Mark Fields  
Nelson Bordelon  
James Deshotel  
Randy Deshotel  
Mark Fields  
Larry Fontenot  
Lee Jones  
Venoy Kinnaird  
Kelsey McKoin  
Ryan Quebedeaux  
Larry Thibodeaux  
Kenneth Thornhill

### MEMBERS ABSENT

Commissioner Mike Strain

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**MOTION** made by Randy Deshotel and second by Lee Jones to approve the minutes from the August 10, 2009 meeting. The motion was passed unanimously by voice vote.

### FINANCIAL REPORTS

The financial reports from November, 2009 were read by René P. Simon.

**MOTION** by Ryan Quebedeaux, second by Lee Jones to approve the report. The motion was passed unanimously by voice vote.

### DIRECTOR'S REPORT

#### **A. Marketing Campaign for the Evangeline Variety**

Rene` Simon asked about a marketing campaign for the Evangeline variety. The board agreed that there was not enough information or quantity to launch a big campaign at this time. They would like feed back from other states that are growing the Evangeline. Dr. Tara Smith told the board that Dr. David H. Picha with the LSU Ag Center has a grant to study the Evangeline. His specialty is in Post harvest Physiology of Horticultural Crops.

Mr. Simon may be able to obtain a grant from USDA that can be used for market research and has talked to Dr. Roger Hinson with the Agricultural Economics and Agribusiness Department about working with the Board on the Evangeline. The Board asks that Dr. Hinson work with the sweet potato brokers on this project.

#### **B. PMA recap**

Mr. Simon and Mary Gallent, LDAF Marketing Specialist, reported on the successful trip to Anaheim, CA representing the Board at the Produce Marketing Association Fresh Summit. The Evangeline was showcased to the delight of convention participants.

#### **C. Reviving the yam trademark**

Commission members discussed reviving the yam logo as the way to differentiate the Louisiana Sweet Potato from other states. Commission members reinforced their support for logo and would like to see it featured more prominently.

#### **D. Crop Insurance Update**

Commissioner Strain and Mr. Simon are working very closely with Louisiana Farm Bureau, and the Louisiana Sweet Potato Association to add sweet potatoes to the list of crops which are covered by crop insurance. Larry Fontenot, Nelson Bordelon and , Mr. Simon, will be traveling to Washington, DC with Brian Breaux, Sweet Potato Commodity Director for Louisiana Farm Bureau and others to walk the Hill to gain support for the addition of Sweet Potatoes.

### **REPORT BY AL MCDUFF, DIANE ALLEN and ASSOCIATES ON ADVERTISING AND PROMOTIONS**

Mr. Al McDuff with Diane Allen and Associates (DAA) introduced Holly Clegg, Spokesperson for the Board and Katie Stanford, Intern and the daughter of a grower to the Board. Mr. McDuff and Ms. Stanford then handed out information on Holly Clegg's activities from August 2009 through the present. Ms Clegg reported that she will be working with Wal-Mart on National campaign promoting good nutrition and would use sweet potatoes in her recipes.

### **UPDATE ON REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) FOR ADVERTISING AGENCIES**

René Simon gave an update on the process and introduced Wanda Ward; LDAF staff in charge of RFP's and contracts. Mrs. Ward stated that it was not necessary to do RFP's. A discussion followed and it was decided to call for RFP's.

**MOTION** by Mark Fields and seconded by Nelson Bordelon to move forward with the Request for Proposals from advertising agencies. The motion was passed unanimously by voice vote.

### **SWEET POTATO WEEVIL ASSESSMENT**

Mr. Simon opened the discussion and introduced Craig Roussel, Director of Horticulture & Quarantine Programs. Mr. Roussel discussed the possibility and then introduced Tad Hardy, State Entomologist who also made comments.

**MOTION** made by Venoy Kinnaird and second by Lee Jones to request lowering the assessment for Crop Year 2009. The motion was passed unanimously by voice vote. Chairman Fontenot appointed Mr. Kinnaird and Mr. Bordelon to a committee to work with Commissioner Strain and the LDAF staff to formulate a proposal that is practical for the industry and the Department of Agriculture and Forestry... A proposal is to be ready by February 1<sup>st</sup>.

### **FOOD SAFETY WITH FRESH MARKET SWEET POTATOES**

Dr. Smith discussed the growing concern with food safety and will discuss it at a meeting of the Louisiana Sweet Potato Association Board of Directors.

### **NOMINATIONS FOR EXPIRING COMMISSION MEMBERS SEATS AND DISCUSSION ON THE ADDITION PROCESSOR MEMBER**

Chairman Fontenot appointed Mr. Quebedeaux and Mr. Thornhill to the nominating committee which will present its recommendations at the April meeting.

Members discussed the addition of a processor's seat to the commission because of ConAgra/Lamb Weston new sweet potato fry plant in Delhi. This would require the statutes that govern the commission to be changed by the Louisiana State Legislature

**MOTION** was made by Mr. Thornhill to request a change in the statutes to add a third processor member to Commission. It was seconded by Mr. Kinnaird. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

### **NEXT MEETING DATE**

The next meeting will be in Chase. The date and time will be announced at a later date by the Chairman.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION** made by Mr. Fields and second by Mr. James Deshotel to adjourn. The motion was passed unanimously by voice vote.