



2024 SASKOATS AGM MINUTES
Wednesday, January 10, 9:00 AM
PrairieLand Park & via Zoom

Attendees: 82 total attendees, including 35 registered voters (Virtual and in-person)

Ambrely Ralph, SaskOats Chair welcomed everyone to the hybrid SaskOats Annual Business Meeting and highlighted the voting instructions for those joining virtually. Ralph then introduced the Honourable David Marit, Saskatchewan Minister of Agriculture to make a research funding announcement, and later introduced Brett Casavant, CEO of C-Merak Industries for his presentation.

Ralph called the business portion of the meeting to order at 9:35am.

Approval of 2024 AGM Agenda: no additions were brought forward.

Motion: Chris Rundel/David Katerynych to approve the agenda as presented. Carried.

Ralph introduced current Board members: Elwood White, producer from Pangman and the SaskOats Audit Chair; Jessica Slowski, producer from Sheho; Ryan Zuchkan, producer from Foam Lake; and Landon Kuschak, producer from Ituna (on-line) and Vice Chair. Ralph shared that Chris Rundel, producer from Foam Lake terms out this year. Rundel was a past chair, and was very active attending numerous Ottawa missions, meetings around the province, and a Japan trade mission this last year. Rundel's contributions will be greatly missed, and the board hopes he considers coming back to the board in the future! Ralph invited Rundel up for a thank you gift from SaskOats.

Ralph mentioned that SaskOats held an election this year. There were three positions up for election and three people put their name forward. Ralph acclaimed herself, Landon Kuschak and David Katerynych an oat producer from Richard, SK to the SaskOats board.

Ralph also introduced the POGA staff – Executive Director Shawna Mathieson; Pam Yule working part-time on special projects (online); and Kaitlyn Kitzan, POGA part-time Marketing Coordinator.

Approval of 2023 AGM Minutes: Ralph noted the minutes from SaskOats 2023 AGM held January 11, 2023 were posted on the POGA website, and available to those in the room.

Motion: Chris Rundel/Jessica Slowski to approve the 2023 AGM Minutes as presented. Carried.

Resolutions: Ralph noted that no resolutions had been brought forward for discussion as per the 30-day notice deadline of December 10, 2023.

Levy Increase Motion: Ralph shared that along with the other Western Canadian Oat Commissions, SaskOats is asking for an increase in the oat levy to \$0.75 per tonne, up from \$0.50 per tonne. Ralph shared that this increase would mean that SaskOats would be able to do more research projects that have merit that are currently not feasible, look at additional markets to expand to, and assist the oat breeders more as federal funds continue to erode. In addition, Ralph shared that this levy has not been increased since the levy came into force in 2006 and there's a lot of cost increases in that 18 year timeframe. Oats currently has the lowest check off of any crop in Western Canada and this levy increase would put oats closer to par. Ralph also shared with only 1.5 staff spread between four organizations there's no cost cutting that can be done there. Ralph noted that SaskOats has over \$1M in the bank. SaskOats has a policy to hold one year of revenue in reserves. That's about \$800,000. With that there, the extra money in the bank is not enough to support a long-term project and keep it going since SaskOats has not added to that GIC reserve in over 10 years. With this increase SaskOats can use the reserve to fund long-term worthwhile projects and do more work to continue to make oats a viable crop to grow on your farms.

The following motions have been brought forward from the board of directors for consideration:
Motion: Elwood White/ Ryan Zuchkan to increase the Saskatchewan Oat Development Commission (SaskOats) levy from \$0.50 per tonne to \$0.75 per tonne effective August 1, 2024. Carried.

Director Per Diem Motion: Ralph shared that the board discussed this motion more than a year ago as SaskOats has the lowest director per diem of any commission in Western Canada and the board wants to make sure that's not a deterrent to attract new directors to the board, and that there is more adequate compensation for director's time. The board did not feel comfortable putting this motion forward due to the increase in Levy. However, since this discussion this motion was advertised SaskOats asked if anyone wanted to make the following motion.

Darren Yungman/Ken Sarauer amended the motion to the following: To increase the Saskatchewan Oat Development Commission's (SaskOats) director remuneration to \$300 per day and for the chairman to \$350 per day effective March 1, 2024. Carried.

Review of 2022-2023 Financial Statements: White, 2023 SaskOats Audit Chair, reviewed the 2023 audited SaskOats Financial Statements and presented the 2023-2024 SaskOats Budget. White noted that, for the year ending July 31, 2023, SaskOats realized a net gain of just over \$61,000 which was an increase from the previous year's loss of over \$220,000. White shared that producer check-off revenue was up over 48% or by over \$256,000 from the previous year.

R&D decreased this year because a few of the SaskOats projects were completed in the year. With many Federal and Provincial funding programs ending in March of 2023. There is typically a reduction in projects every 5 years while we wait for funding announcements and then for researchers to apply under the new guidelines.

White noted that producer refund requests in 2022-2023 were 6.2% of dollars collected and 3.5% of the total number of producers paying the levy. This is a slight decrease from 2022-2023 refunds of 6.4% and 4.2% respectively, but on par with the general industry standard of around 7%.

SaskOats has approximately \$1.1M in GICs right now and the goal, long term is to be closer to one year of operating revenue which is about \$800,000-\$850,000 right now.

SaskOats is a member of the Prairie Oat Growers Association (POGA) which includes the other provincial oat associations from Alberta and Manitoba, and all three Prairie commissions pay a proportionate amount of their levy revenue, into projects funded by POGA.

POGA projects are focused to benefit all oat growers. POGA has a Western Canadian voice and representation which allows for more access to government funding as opposed to each province doing projects alone and allows for one central office reducing staff and costs. SaskOats does support some Saskatchewan projects outside of POGA and they are listed in the SaskOats Annual Report and the audited financial statements.

Review of the 2023-2024 Budget: For 2023-24, White stated that the Canadian oat acres were down significantly, or nearly 50% vs. last year according to the last Statistics Canada report. This will certainly impact the SaskOats budget next year in terms of revenue from producer levies. For 2023-2024 a deficit of just over \$141,409 is projected.

Producer levy income is forecasted at \$600,000 based on Statistics Canada projections. This is a large drop in income compared to last's year revenue of \$779,000 but this is expected due to the drop in oat acres last year. White shared that one thing that the board did this year, that has not been done in the past for the budget, was to include the oats estimated in carry out. The reason for this change was because the carry out number is so large this year, expected to be about \$200,000 in revenue, that to not include it would make our budget unrealistic. SaskOats has the reserves to cover this loss but will continue monitoring expenses closely and will be reviewing this again regularly.

Motion: Elwood White/David Katerynych to accept the audited 2022-2023 SaskOats Financial Statements and the 2023-2024 Budget as presented. Carried.

Motion: Chris Rundel/Jessica Slowski to appoint Baker Tilly of Yorkton, SK as SaskOats Auditor for 2023-2024 year. Carried.

Project Overview & Slide of Spending Priorities Pie Chart: Ralph noted the SaskOats priorities for funding: 45% for market development, 35% for research, 10% for communications, 5% for advocacy, and 5% for building partnerships.

Ralph also indicated that SaskOats, independently and through POGA supports over 30 projects with seven different provincial and federal funders, plus industry support. Through these partnerships, POGA, through the three provincial associations, have turned \$5.6 M of levy dollars into \$36.3 M which is about 15 cents of every dollar paid by producers for this work.

Ralph noted a few highlights from the past year, including continued work on the marketing campaigns in Mexico, Japan, and Canada. POGA also started a small Latin American project with Peru being the initial main target. It was noted that more information on all of the marketing campaigns and missions can be found in recent Oat Scoops, which were mailed to all oat producers, and it is also available on-line at poga.ca.

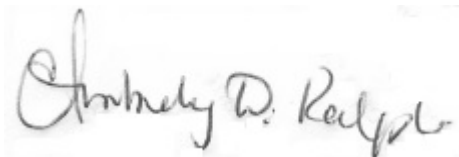
SaskOats, Ralph noted, along with the commissions in Manitoba and Alberta, continues to support every Western Canadian oat breeder including Dr. Aaron Beattie at the Crop Development Centre, Jim Dyck with Oat Advantage of Saskatoon, and Dr. Kirby Nilsen at the AAFC Brandon program.

In addition, she said that SaskOats continues to meet with the Minister of Agriculture in Saskatchewan, annually, to discuss oat specific and general agriculture issues.

Ralph closed with reminding everyone that all SaskOats Board of Directors also sit as directors on the POGA board. Ralph also encouraged everyone to check out Oats Everyday website and try some new oat recipes.

Motion: Larry Frisky to adjourn at 10:10 am.

Ralph thanked everyone for attending, and introduced the next speaker, Murad Al-Katib, AGT Foods President and CEO as well as Chuck Penner with Leftfield Commodity Research.



Ambrely Ralph, Chair

March 20, 2024

Date