



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Five Manitoba Commodity Groups Release Updated Amalgamation Proposal for Vote in 2020

Carman, MB – December 12, 2018 – Farmer directors from five Manitoba grower organizations have updated a proposal to amalgamate into a new not-for-profit organization focused on research, communication and market development. The five associations want to hear from farmer members over the next year, with a vote to amalgamate planned for each organizations' annual general meetings in February 2020.

The steering committee comprised of directors and staff from the Manitoba Corn Growers Association (MCGA), Manitoba Flax Growers Association (MFGA), National Sunflower Association of Canada (NSAC), Manitoba Wheat and Barley Growers Association (MWBGA) and Winter Cereals Manitoba Inc. with the assistance of consultant Rob Hannam of Synthesis Agri-Food Network have addressed many of the concerns heard through the January 2018 consultation period and at the 2018 annual general meetings in February.

The proposal includes information on a governance structure of the proposed new organization which includes four crop committees made up of 34 farmer delegates that will focus on the research and market development specific to each crop type.

"We heard the concerns expressed on the original proposal. Many felt director workload would be unmanageable in reducing the overall number of directors from over 30 to 12," said Fred Greig, MWBGA chair. "There were also concerns about crop representation, young director involvement with a smaller board of directors, and the ability to gather grassroots feedback. With the updated proposal, we feel strongly that the new governance structure addresses those concerns."

"Creating a new organization would result in administrative efficiencies and that in turn would translate into more money going towards research and communication efforts," states Myron Krahn, director with the MCGA. "Although there is a high level of collaboration between the five organizations already, the level of collaboration adds a level of complexity that wouldn't exist if there was the simplicity of one organization. One organization means one bank account, one audit, one payroll, one annual general meeting, and a more coordinated communication effort where members aren't receiving five different newsletters. As farmers, we don't have separate bank accounts for each crop grown on our farm. This simplicity will lead to move time and resources spent on the research and market development we need as farmers."

The steering committee and staff met again with the Minister of Agriculture Ralph Eichler, as well as the Manitoba Farm Products Marketing Council, to ensure the department was updated on the revised proposal. Staff have also met with legal counsel to ensure the steps to amalgamation are being done properly.



“From the initial Memorandum of Understanding signed in May 2017, we committed to consultation with membership to make sure farmers from each commodity organization have a voice,” said Mark McDonald, NSAC president. “We also committed to allowing membership to make the decision. We are honoring those commitments and taking the necessary time to communicate the proposal in 2019 with the final vote to occur in February 2020.”

The five organizations want to ensure members have all the necessary information prior to the vote in 2020. The updated proposal that is available now includes information on the governance, organization structure, legal process and timelines to amalgamate. Additional information will be released in the coming months, including by-laws of the potential new organization and the amalgamation agreement resolution.

On January 15 and January 29, 2019, the steering committee will host online webinar meetings for members to learn more about the updated proposal. The webinars will be recorded and made available for viewing later, if farmers are unable to participate on those days. Directors of the five organizations are also encouraging farmer members to attend the organization’s annual general meetings at the CropConnect Conference on February 13 and 14, 2019 to receive updates on the amalgamation proposal and to gather feedback.

The updated proposal will also be available at the following temporary website: www.mbcrops.ca. Feedback from farmer members is welcome and encouraged through email directly to Rob Hannam at rob@mbcrops.ca or to any of the directors and staff of the five organizations.

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