Introduction - Jay Brunner

Jay Brunner gave a brief opening statement and introduced Bruce Grim, who is replacing Jim Hazen on the Executive Committee. Dennis Nicholson, a Peshastin grower, was introduced as a new member of the Advisory Committee. Other people introduced: Dennis Smith, sitting in for Aaron Avilla of GS Long; Kent Waliser, sitting in for Ed Garcia of Sagemoor Farms; Kurt Wagner for Washington Growers Clearing House Association; Mary Jo Ybarra Vega of Moses Lake/Quincy Community Health Center, a potential new Advisory Committee member; and Kit Gavin of PNASH, here with Rich Fenske.

Everyone was asked to briefly introduce themselves.

Overview of Progress, Funding, Reporting and Personnel – Jay Brunner

Jay Brunner briefly introduced Nadine Lehrer, a post-doc hired by the project to focus on assessment and documentation issues. He mentioned that she is working on the assessment surveys that she will report on shortly.

He went on to talk about the loss of the NASS pesticide use surveys. Apple and cotton were the last crops that were surveyed for the 2007 season. The apple report, as expected, reported high-level use of pesticides. He stated that much of that is due to the fact that NASS includes horticultural oil in with the rest of pesticides. This inflates the overall AI usage values because of the way oil AI is calculated. In fact oil accounted for 75% of the AI nationally and 80% in WA. Usage by other notable chemicals: AZM at 25%, Lorsban at 16.5% and Seven at 15%. For the “newer” materials: 4% usage from Esteem + Rimon + Assail. Reported amounts are a bit confusing because the AI for these is in oz/acre not pounds. Also, NASS does not report use of pheromones and only has limited data on organic production. This type of information is needed.
to help track changes in practices. Nadine Lehrer was hired to address this need through the Ag Pilots funding to help with grower and consultant surveys.

Jay introduced Bruce Grim and discussed his role on the project.

Reports were submitted to Ag Pilots and WSDA in June. The next scheduled reports are due in December for Ag Pilots and January for WSDA.

On a separate, sadder note the passing of Naná Simone was brought up. There is now a huge hole in PMPT, EQIP and Spanish-language areas that she covered. The project is looking to identify individuals that can help take over some of her duties in those areas.

**Ruckelshaus Center & Ag Pilots – Jim McFerson**

Jim McFerson discussed what the Ag Pilots program is and explained that it is separate funding from the PMTP money that came from the legislature through WSDA. The Ag Pilots funding comes through the Ruckelshaus Center at WSU/UW and allowed for the expansion of PMTP. This also means that there is an extra requirement for documentation and communication. Input and cooperation by the advisory committee is essential for the success and future funding of this project.

**WSHA Support for PMTP – Bruce Grim**

Bruce Grim said that WSHA expects this to be not just a 2-year project, but rather hopes that continued funding would come from the legislature. However, with the current fiscal problems this will be difficult. Legislators will need proof of viability of the project. WSHA continues to support this project and is moving head to fight for additional funding. They are looking for project partners and other constituent groups to advocate this project with the State Legislature.

**Implementation Units and Field Days Report – Keith Granger**

Keith reported that Nick Stephens and Naná Simone were the project’s Regional Coordinators. Naná organized the Tonasket area IU and was responsible for the Yakima Spanish-speaking IU. Currently, there are 14 IUs that are broken down into 4 types, going from most sustainable to least sustainable:

1) Warehouse centered (growers and managers affiliated with a particular warehouse);
2) Warehouse fieldmen & associated Ag Chem. distributor fieldmen;
3) Regional coordinator groups (targeted individuals in a given geographical area);
4) Walk-ins (people that signed up via the web or at winter meetings)

Specific statistics on IUs are in the June/July progress report, available online. All IU members received handbooks and additional people have received hard copies or downloaded the handbook contents off the website.

The Advisory Committee had a few comments and questions about the IUs. Questions were asked about the size and number of the groups in terms of what was manageable. Keith said that about 15 groups with no more than 20 people would be best, focusing on warehouse-centered groupings for the best effect and sustainability. There was concern about maintaining Naná’s Tonasket and Yakima groups. Keith said that Tonasket wasn’t a problem because he was involved in that group, but they would need a Spanish-speaker to help with the other group. It was suggested that Malaquias Flores might be willing to assist because he was already associated with that IU. It was asked if the project could get agreement to meet with grower-shipper
organizations to build on warehouse centered IUs. There was agreement amongst the grower
group representatives on the committee that they would facilitate this process and that it should
begin soon before the 2009 growing season.
The final IU meetings for the year would be held in November. Members will be asked about the
usefulness of the meetings, the content, and frequency of meetings using a new survey tool
called TurningPoint, a plug-in that works with PowerPoint. Meetings for 2009 will be retooled
depending on the results of the questions.
Keith demonstrated the use of TurningPoint. The system was explained and a series of test
questions were asked with instantaneous results posted and graphed on the screen.

**Update on Field Days:** Keith reported on the three PMTP Field Days that were held in June. The
website has a write-up on what was covered and the locations of each event. Handouts were given
out with take-home information coving the topics presented by the session speakers. There were
also demonstrations of different sprayer technologies and the effect of varying volume,
concentration and tractor speed on spray deposition. Spraying was done in advance of the
sessions. Participants were shown the results, but not the actual spraying. It was suggested that the
field day experience could be improved in the future by having the people see the equipment in
operation. The difference was much more dramatic seeing the way the spray came out rather than
just looking at leaves after the fact. However, the events were well attended and participants
appeared to have gained from the overall experience.

There was an additional Field Day event in July. PMTP presented a session as part of the 3-Day
EPA/WSCPR Field Tour for State Legislators and policy makers.

**PMTP Website – Wendy Jones**

Wendy presented website statistics for the period between June 1 and October 1. There were
approximately 1500 visits to the site. 82% of the visitors were from the US; of those, 74% were
from WA State. Of the non-US visits, the hits were distributed globally with the majority coming
from other major apple producing countries. A question was asked about how you can assess
whether the number of hits represent effective communication. Wendy stated that it is difficult
to compare the number of hits that come to commercial sites and a site like this with content of a
much narrower audience appeal. She said she would try to get comparative stats from similar
types of sites. Gwen Hoheisel commented that many customers still prefer hard copies of
information to web-based content keeping site visits down. Dave Gleason suggested that Wendy
approach various technology providers (OrchardRite, Clearwest, etc.) to get them to set up links
to the PMTP site.

As for website content, newer content changes since the last meeting were highlighted, including
changes to the events calendar to make it easier to access and the addition of the Fruit School
registration information. It was suggested that the WSHA meeting in December be added to the
calendar.

**PMTP Surveys and Contacts with broader stakeholder groups - Nadine Lehrer**

Nadine introduced herself and gave a brief rundown of her background and qualifications as
related to the project. Her graduate work was in natural resources and agriculture and she is fluent
in Spanish. Her portion of the project is built on the Ag Pilots Program. Her goals on assessment
and outreach include understanding adoption of new practices and identifying barriers to
adoption. She will also work to understand perceptions by labor and environmental groups.
One of the assessment tools she will use is a survey. The consultant survey went out in July and the results are currently being tabulated and analyzed by the survey center on campus. There was a 52% (38 out of 73) return rate on the survey. Although 52% is a good response rate for surveys, the return is numerically low due to a small sample size and probably due to the timing of the survey coinciding with increased fieldwork. A similar survey is being finalized for growers and is included in the committee members’ packets for comments. The main hold-up on getting this survey out is a lack of a good mailing list. Bruce Grim may be able to solve that problem by accessing to the Washington Apple Commission’s list. It is hoped that this survey and a revised consultant survey go out by January. Both of these surveys will be sent out again towards the end of the project and results compared to assess change in attitudes and practices.

Additional assessment needs include monitoring Implementation Unit success. It was suggested that case studies of key members be performed to help illustrate the process of changing practices and documenting specific successes and failures. Key issues to document: is PMTP having an impact?; is AZM use decreasing?; and how smoothly is the transition occurring?

The strategy for outreach has so far been meetings. Nadine attended over 80 meetings and one-on-one events. She met with and is planning to continue meeting with environmental and farm worker advocacy groups. She has and will continue to attended health fairs, conferences and classes. And she is in the process of finding out more on where groups’ positions and perceptions are. One of the items she’s focusing on is farm worker knowledge of pesticide safety and risk.

There appears to be a lack of information among farm workers about pesticides in general and specifically on new materials. There are many opportunities and venues for training. The question is, what is the role of PMTP and how should it get the information out to the labor community? She is looking to develop posters and flip charts for farm labor to help train existing trainers. She is also looking at information dissemination by radio, newspapers and presentations.

Comments were made about the need to develop materials based on important factors like absorption rates, but also that materials should be kept simple and logical. It was also pointed out that any materials developed need to follow universal standards including label colors. Another comment was made asking how much information is really necessary and how much is effective. Nadine stated that there is tremendous variation: some operations do well with informing their workers; others have workers wanting more information. She said that the focus should be on solid balance of worker, grower and trainer needs for information transfer. Its important to target the right audience whether it be spray applicators or field workers. It was suggested that L&I and WSDA need to be contacted to ensure any training products be legal and not a duplication of existing materials.

With regards to the environmental focus, many environmental groups are supportive of PMTP, but many lack time to engage in the process. Possible roles for PMTP in this area include policy collaborations with environmental groups including possible efforts to establish NASS-style data collection on a state level; connecting interested growers to SalmonSafe certification, Xerces Society, or other organizations focused on agricultural sustainability; and seeking data collection strategies to align our pesticide data with water quality data for direct comparison purposes.

Nadine’s goals for the next six months include: creating educational materials, continuation of presentations and continued evaluation of potential collaborations.
Feedback from the Advisory Committee

Comment 1: Be careful about “mission creep” in PMTP, so that the focus remains on grower education.

Comment 2: The survey data should be utilized to figure out why some areas are progressing and others not.

Comment 3: Suggestion that we try to determine if individuals have phased out AZM. Response: Hopefully that information will be gained from the repeating the surveys.

Comment 4: How do we encourage a better survey response rate from growers? It was recommended that we energize the warehouses, handlers and fieldmen through the POM Club and NCWFA.

Comment 5: In regards to the grower survey, it was suggested that section E be reworded to account for those who have already phased out of AZM.

Comment 6: Suggestion that the survey results be used to generate communication pieces for press releases, stories, positive information, etc.

Comment 7: Suggestions on the survey format: Keep it short as possible. Response: The way the survey center builds the booklets, the format is either 12 pages or 16 pages. So if we want to cut the survey, now at 16 pages, we will need to cut significantly so that it fits into the 12-page format.

Comment 8: Can we ensure that we cover owners of large and small acreages respectively? Response: the mailing list of growers should include all growers currently paying assessments to the Apple Commission. This includes larger companies and independent growers. The grower list should be vetted prior to mailing the survey to make sure that growers affiliated with warehouses are broken out sufficiently to ensure coverage of the total production acreage.

Comment 9: Emphasis in the PMTP needs to stay on message that we are implementing new science and technology, and that it is more expensive and is not without risk.

Decision Aid System – Jay Brunner

Jay stated that DAS is deployed and widely used. The funding base is limited and WSU needs to develop a business plan for sustained funding. DAS will be dynamic and new models are under development, but new operations funding is necessary.

It was asked what the sense of the group was on fee-based system for DAS? Many would be supportive of paying user fees. But it was stated that it would be difficult to convince everyone since some agricultural weather information is already available and free. We need to look at a variety of revenue sources, such as individual users and corporate users.

Questions were asked about the subscribership policy and if it can be used elsewhere in the Pacific Northwest or internationally. Response to use: There is a statement that the models are only known to work in the Pacific Northwest and the pesticide recommendations are only legal for Washington state.

A suggestion was made that funding be gained from corporate sponsors. And it was asked if it (funding) is something to go to the legislature with for a permanent funding solution. Response: With the current budget short fall, that is not a promising option.
Events for 2009 – Keith Granger

1) WSHA program session on December 2\textsuperscript{nd}.
2) WSU Fruit School scheduled for December 10-11.
3) Winter meetings and recruitment/reorganization of IUs
4) Field Days to be planned for summer 2009.
5) Nadine will be presenting at a number of environmental and farm labor group meetings

Comments: AC agreed that this was an important aspect, but that we need to ensure that
the project remains focused on its objectives: education and change. At the same time, it
is important to seek dialog and collaborations with interested groups in the state.

Volunteers for legislative meetings – Jim McFerson

Jim stated that it is important for this project to be focused on the objectives: education, outreach
and extension. Participants are not seeking to change policy, but do expect to provide industry
organizations with information generated from this project. Hopefully, the work on this project
will provide plenty of evidence that we are making progress and moving in a positive direction as
an industry and that our efforts are a wise use of taxpayer dollars. Jim also suggested that AC and
industry member organizations be ready to participate in educational sessions with State
Legislators for the upcoming session.

Next Steps: Plan another AC meeting for Spring 2009 – probably February again.