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FEQL Advisory Board Meets

Dave Winckler, Incoming Chair, FEQL Advisory Board

The Food and Environmental Quality Laboratory (FEQL) at Washington State University (WSU) held its spring Advisory Board meeting on Wednesday, April 17, 2002, on the Tri-Cities campus of WSU. Highlights of this meeting included changes in board members and officers, restructuring of meeting format, and reports by FEQL faculty. Board chair Marilyn Perkins opened the meeting at 9:10 a.m.

Background

The FEQL was mandated by the Washington State Legislature to focus research and extension efforts on all aspects of crop protection technologies across the state. The need for such a WSU facility grew out of two concerns: potentially devastating losses of crop protection tools for the minor crops characteristic of Washington agriculture and the safety of these tools to human health and the environment. In accordance with the founding legislation, FEQL is advised by a board of stakeholders representing a number of distinct functions pertaining to Washington State agriculture. Board members generally serve three-year terms, with new officers elected annually.

Changes to the Board

The board recognized Scott McKinnie's service as inaugural chair of the board by presenting him with a framed certificate. McKinnie, of Far West Agribusiness Association, holds the Chemical and Fertilizer Representative seat on the board and served as president before Marilyn Perkins. Perkins is with the League of Women Voters and holds the Consumer seat.



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Dr. James Zuiches, Dean of the WSU College of Agriculture and Home Economics, explained that he had appointed Ralph Cavalieri to replace him on the FEQL advisory board. This move comes in response to recognition that the original legislative intent of this position on the advisory board was to represent Washington State University's research function. Dr. Cavalieri's position as Director of WSU's Agricultural Research Center makes him a very appropriate board member. Dr. Zuiches becomes an ex-officio board member.

The terms of Marilyn Perkins, Matthew Keifer, Royal Schoen, Gregg Möller, Dave Winckler, and Barbara Morrissey were all scheduled to expire June 30, 2002, but all present members agreed to accept appointment to another term. Keifer is with the Pacific Northwest Agricultural Safety and Health Center and holds the board's position for a Health Professional/Human Toxicologist. Schoen is with the Washington State Department of Agriculture and holds the board position reserved for that governmental body. Möller, from the University of Idaho, fills the board's position for an Oregon or Idaho Laboratory representative. Winckler, with the Washington State Farm Bureau, holds the position of Farm Organization representative. Morrissey holds the Washington State Department of Health seat.

The board elected new officers for the coming year. Dave Winckler will serve as the next chair and Ann George as vice-chair for the Advisory Board. George is with the Washington Hop Commission and holds the position of Washington State Commission on Pesticide Registration representative to the FEQL board. Winckler's and George's terms begin July 1, 2002.

Budget Update

Dean Zuiches explained the impacts of recent state budget cuts on higher education in general and Washington State University in particular. The net result of the various reductions is a cut of \$17 million to the university. Budget cuts will be required throughout the university, including an approximate \$1.2-1.5 million cut to the College of Agriculture and Home Economics. Zuiches also outlined some of the positive things that are happening in the university, including the completion of strategic plans throughout the various departments and initiatives that are underway toward development and strengthening of programs in enology and viticulture, biologically intensive and organic agriculture, and watershed management and water quality.

Faculty Accomplishment Reports

In the interest of time and thoroughness, FEQL faculty members Catherine Daniels, Allan Felsot, Vincent Hebert, and Doug Walsh had prepared statements detailing their accomplishments of the past six months. These statements had been distributed to board members in advance of the meeting so they would have a written record of this material for passing along to their constituencies and so they would have an opportunity to formulate questions for faculty members.

Discussion of Dr. Catherine Daniels' accomplishments included feedback on the Pesticide Information Center (PIC) newsletter, *Agrichemical and Environmental News*. The newsletter became an exclusively electronic publication in January 2002 (after thirty years as a print

publication and six years on-line). Members expressed uniform satisfaction with the enhancements in the electronic edition. Daniels' program also includes development of crop profiles (<http://www.tricity.wsu.edu/%7Ecdaniels/wapiap.html> or <http://aenews.wsu.edu/Apr02AENews/Apr02AENews.htm#CropProfiles>). The board expressed satisfaction with the content and utility of these profiles and questioned why more of them are not produced. Discussion ensued about how important and useful crop profiles are and why more of them aren't produced. PIC staff stands ready to assist in the production of crop profiles, but growers and commodity groups often don't seem to recognize the full value of producing these detailed pest management reports.

Dr. Doug Walsh reported that he has been assigned a laboratory at the Prosser Irrigated Agriculture Research and Extension Center (<http://www.prosser.wsu.edu/>). Of Walsh's many field research projects, he spoke of his success in procuring grants and conducting research on buffer zones. Technically a field entomologist, he works closely with growers in a number of commodities including mint, hybrid poplars, and wine grapes. Walsh has also been working with WSU virologist Dr. Gary Grove to include disease research as well as insect research on these crops. He is also working on a project with Dr. Fran Pierce, Director of the Center for Precision Agricultural Systems. A grant from American Farmland Trust has enabled CPAS to establish a site-specific weather network through which weather data is monitored and shared among a network of growers. This network model may be applicable to insect and other research. Walsh also spoke about last year's study among apple thinners and cherry pickers for carbaryl (Sevin) and AZM (Guthion) residues, enlightening the board about a number of practical concerns when conducting on-site residue testing with humans.

Dr. Vince Hebert talked about his first year and a half with FEQL, emphasizing the infrastructure-building process in which he has engaged over the past eighteen months, especially bringing the FEQL analytical laboratory facility to Good Laboratory Practice (GLP) standards and establishing functional working partnerships with industry and Federal/state agencies. Regarding specific projects, his IR-4 (Interregional Research Project #4 minor crops protection) studies have been completed ahead of schedule. Two magnitude-of-residue studies have been completed, written, submitted, and approved; a third is completed and being written at this time. This year, Hebert will be involved in a pesticide spray drift exposure study in cooperation with Dr. Richard Fenske at the University of Washington. The study will use global positioning technology (GPS) to track movements of twelve children within their home and community toward defining real-life exposures and associated risks. Subjects and their environments will be monitored (via urine testing, hand wipes, air sampling, dust sampling, etc.) following spraying of nearby fields. Hebert and his staff will also be involved in a study examining the kinetic behavior of aged pheromone dispensers. Pheromone mating disruption has become a major component of codling moth control in Pacific Northwest apple orchards. In cooperation with Jay Brunner at the WSU Tree Fruit Research and Extension Center, FEQL will monitor and analyze the release rates from dispensers at various ages. In keeping with Dr. Hebert's area of specialization, atmospheric transport, he will also examine the fate of the released pheromones.

Allan Felsot distributed a handout on his study of the effects of the number of spray applications on azinphos-methyl (AZM) residues in composite and single serving apples and a copy of a journal article he published in *Toxicology* (<http://aenews.wsu.edu/June02AENews/FEQLReport/FelsotToxicologyArticle.pdf>). Felsot discussed his transgenic crops research, explaining that not all research takes place in a laboratory; some of his work involves reviewing and elucidating existing research. He also told the board about a new research project on sprayer technology funded for crop year 2002 by the Washington Tree Fruit Research Commission. Enhancing application efficiency is one path toward reducing production costs as well as reducing human health hazard. This project will investigate the relative efficiency of various spray technologies in an effort to determine the most efficient equipment, the minimum effective application rate, residue deposition, better means of determining worker hazard, and methods that minimize drift.

Carol Ramsay, WSU Pesticide Education Specialist, gave the board an update on a Cooperative Extension opportunity via conference call from Pullman. Because of the success of Ramsay's past Pesticide Issues Conferences, she has been asked by University of Washington to take the lead on co-hosting a pesticide issues conference. Where Ramsay's conference had generally been held in the fall, a later date is being targeted for this new conference in order to give late-maturing crop (e.g., orchard) growers a better opportunity to participate. The date proposed is February 26, 2003. An advisory committee is being assembled. The tentative conference theme is "Agriculture and Health Issues." Anyone with suggestions for conference advisors should contact Ramsay at ramsay@wsu.edu or (509) 335-9222.

Advisory Board Survey

In an effort to streamline the important interface of the advisory board with FEQL faculty, a survey of board members was conducted last winter. The following items were agreed upon:

- ◆ On the balance, twice a year, full-day meetings in Tri-Cities seemed to be the best frequency, duration, and location.
- ◆ The FEQL faculty appreciates and respects the board in its advisory capacity. They take the comments of the board into serious consideration when pursuing the overall mission and functions of FEQL and PIC.
- ◆ The board is a valuable communication hub. Not only do FEQL and WSU internalize the opinions of the advisory board, advisory board members take the information about FEQL activities back to their constituencies.
- ◆ In response to suggestions from the board, this advisory board meeting was organized around a theme (worker exposure). As this seemed to be a very successful meeting, discussion ensued on possible themes for future meetings. Water quality was mentioned as one possibility.

The next meeting of the FEQL Advisory Board is scheduled for October 23, 2002.

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Dave Winckler is a Project Director with the Washington State Farm Bureau. He begins his term as chair of the FEQL Advisory Board July 1, 2002. For questions about the FEQL or its board, contact FEQL support staff members Doria Monter-Rogers at monter@tricity.wsu.edu or (509) 372-7462 or Sally O'Neal Coates at scoates@tricity.wsu.edu or (509) 372-7378.

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