

RAIN Research Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

Monday, May 30, 2016 at 2:00pm

Laird Township Board Room

In attendance: Christine O'Reilly, Pedro Antunes, Edith Orr, Errol Caldwell, David Thompson, Alf Roberts, Kristen Taylor

Regrets: Jason Koivisto

CO'R opened the meeting with an overview of the steps involved to develop new research projects and the role of the Research Steering Committee. See rainalgoma.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Research-Project-Process-Flow-Chart.pdf and <http://rainalgoma.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Research-Project-Development-Timeline.jpg>

CO'R updated the committee on the field research projects underway for 2016.

The committee reviewed the research priorities from RAIN's pilot project (2013-2015) and through general discussion updated them to better reflect the directions local agricultural sectors are moving, and to align better with RAIN's updated vision statement. The new priorities for 2017-2019 are as follows:

- Forage Improvement: BMPs for soil health, pasture, and forage crops
- Crop Portfolio Diversification: investigating production of oil seeds, grains, horticultural crops, and niche/specialty crops
- Storage, Processing, and Local Market Development: business/market research along agri-food value chains to support local businesses

The committee reviewed some projects under development for 2017 and provided feedback. Most projects fit under at least one of the new research priorities. Other ideas presented for potential projects include irrigation, water retention strategies (trees, cover crops, etc), and markets for specialty meats.

The meeting closed at 4:00pm.