

MINUTES

Oregon Mint Rootstock Certification Advisory Committee Meeting

Thursday, January 12, 2012
Salishan Lodge, Gleneden Beach

Voting members present: Greg Bingaman, Darrin Walenta, Jim Cloud, Cynthia Ocamb by teleconference, Lowell Patterson, Mark Hagman,

Non-voting members present: Dan Curry, Russ Karow

Members absent: Mike Seely, Dennis Lundeen, Gary Butler, Scott Seus

Guests Present: Joe Jertberg, John Cheatham, Tim Butler, John Zielinski, Bo Ming Wu, Scott Setniker, Randy Knight

1. The Oregon Mint Rootstock Certification Advisory Committee Meeting was called to order at approximately 7:15 AM by Greg Bingaman for a breakfast meeting prior to the Oregon Essential Oil Growers League Annual Meeting.
2. The members and guests introduced themselves.
3. The Chair called for additions to the agenda, and none were received.
4. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as written.
5. Old Business

- a) Uncontrolled plants of specific weeds found in mint rootstock.

Knight requested direction from the committee in taking the next step on this topic. Knight had provided the committee with the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) noxious weed list by email after last year's meeting. He had received no feedback from the committee. Jim Cloud mentioned in review that all weeds are identified during the Oregon Seed Certification Service (OSCS) mint rootstock field inspection. The weeds are included in the report to the applicant. It would be up to the applicant (seller) if he wanted to share the results of the field inspection with the buyer. In some cases the buyer has opportunity to see the production field he intends to receive root stock from but that can be difficult to arrange in some cases. Knight reminded the group that any weeds that could be transferred by rhizomes in the root stock is considered a problem and will be addressed accordingly. The committee agreed to leave the standards as they currently read.

- b) GMO root stock

Knight said he had invited a representative from MIRC to attend today's meeting in an effort to answer questions from the committee on the subject of GMO root stock. This committee wants to work closely with MIRC as we move closer to the release of GMO root stock in an effort to be prepared to handle the product appropriately in the industry. Dr. Lange indicated in last year's Oregon Mint Growers Conference that it would be at least five years before GMO root stock would become available from his program. Tim Butler spoke to this committee today and confirmed it would be another four to five years before Dr. Lange has a variety. Tim also pointed out that mint will not cross-pollinate, from everything we know today, making it an easier crop to manage from the perspective of common concerns associated with GMO crops.

6. New Business

a) Review “Land Requirements” in Standards, specifically crop history and cultural practices.

Knight gave some background on this item. Two guests from Sierra Cascade Nursery wanted the Committee to review the crop history standards specific to the rotation with strawberries on their farm. They would like to produce certified mint root stock without waiting the three years following strawberry plants that our current Rootstock Standards require. Cynthia Ocamb gave the scientific response from the committee to our guests. Joe from Sierra-Cascade explained some of their farming practices and that they had experimented with some mint rootstock production and had apparent success in terms of freedom from *verticillium*. Cynthia asked Joe if the strawberry planting stock comes to their farm with soil and what the crop was on the land just prior to strawberries. Joe said they would plant a cover crop of wheat or triticale and disk that into the soil as green chop. The strawberry plants have been in soil in California in a screen-house prior to being move to Oregon as bare roots. Cynthia referred to a 1999 paper that revealed a study showing strawberry plants to be the host of *verticillium* that could be very aggressive on peppermint. Cynthia expressed concern for the certification of peppermint following strawberry plant production where the strawberry plants have been in other soil prior to being planted at the Sierra-Cascade farm. Russ Karow asked for clarification on the fumigation scheme. Joe said the increase block is fumigated. Cynthia pointed out that she understood that the fumigants do not penetrate any residual plant debris that is in the soil, thus potentially harboring *verticillium*. Cynthia considers methyl bromide with chloropicrin that Cascade-Sierra uses the cadillac of fumigants but even it is less than 100% effective and comes with an inherent risk. Greg Bingaman stated that we don't want to make the Standards unattainable, recognizing that mint rootstock is becoming more difficult to come by. John Zielinski suggested a scenario where a lower generation could be certified when the previous crop was strawberries or one of the other crops currently listed in the standards requiring three years out. Tim Butler suggested a trial period when visual inspections by OSCS staff in combination with soil samples be performed on the Sierra-Cascade farm to gain confidence in the rotation with strawberries. Greg thought OSCS should continue to work with Sierra Cascade to collect more insight to this rotation so the risk can be better defined. Cynthia agreed to contact Fred Crowe and possibly Ralph Barry to better understand the background of the three year rotation requirement. Mark Hagman said he would be willing to meet with the other committee members before this time next year in order to expedite the decision and if possible make have a protocol in place for Sierra-Cascade or any other rootstock producer to use this growing season. Randy agreed to discuss this topic further with Cynthia and pursue a time to get the committee back together before next year. Sierra-Cascade later agreed to document the cultural practices they are using for the entire strawberry plant production for the benefit of clarification to offer to the committee.

b) Review “Varieties Certified” listed in the Rootstock Standards.

Knight asked for clarification regarding the names Murray Mitcham and Redefined Murray. Do we know if they are the same or is there some distinction between the two. Mark Hagman thought there was a distinction between the two and that all the production today is Redefined Murray. The committee thought Rocky and Jolene Brush from MIRC or Bob Henderson might be able to shed some light on the subject. Greg asked about the status of B90-9 and the committee thought it should be investigated to see if it could be listed as a variety in the Standards. Knight said he would contact Rocky and or Jolene along with Bob Henderson to seek more information.

7. Reports

a) Mint Rootstock Certification

Randy Knight reported that one greenhouse operation produced three lots of Nuclear generation rooted cuttings. These were the public varieties Mitcham and Murray Mitcham and B90-9 peppermint. No spearmint varieties were certified. For field-produced rootstock, no acreage was entered for certification in Program A, the Strict Land Requirements Program. One grower in Harney county produced one fifteen acre lot each of Mitcham and Murray Mitcham peppermint. This production was entered into Program B, the Field Class Program. Both lots passed full certification requirements. Acreage certified was up from 23 acres in 2010.

b) Seed Services Report

Dan Curry provided a handout to the group addressing this past years activity in certification and in the seed laboratory. Certified acres were up 6.3% from the previous year. The lab streamlined the germination testing process and is looking at a couple of rules that would aid in the testing of orchardgrass and tall fescue. The handout also provided information on the Grass Seed Warehouse Seed Lot Size Experiment, new flax varieties, a study on inert levels of tall fescue from different Oregon labs and another study in progress looking at different testing methods on perennial ryegrass.

c) OSU Crop & Soil Science Department Report

Russ Karow distributed a report to the committee identifying the highlights of activities over the past months in Crop and Soil Science (CSS) as they affect clientele groups affiliated with CSS. The College of Ag Sciences attempt to merger the Crop and Soil Science and Horticulture departments is on hold. Other departmental mergers are moving ahead.

The OSU Extension Service has moved to a regional administration model for county extension faculty. The Ag extension budget presently stands at over one million dollars in the red with more reductions anticipated.

Federal Budgets are essentially the same as the last fiscal year.

State budgets do not look favorable for departments and branch experiment stations.

Grant funding continues to play a larger role, including a portion of the salary for new hires.

Replacements for the potato breeding position in Hermiston and field crops position in Malheur County are in the process of being identified.

Russ also gave the committee a Willamette Valley Extension Cropping Systems Survey. This survey along with future meetings are an effort to solicit input for the process of reducing the currently three to two regional field cropping system positions.

8. Jim Cloud was nominated to serve as Vice-Chair for the next year, and Mark Hagman moves from Vice-Chair to Chair. Jim Cloud, Greg Bingaman and Lowell Patterson agreed to another term on this committee. It is yet to be determined if Gary Butler and Scott Seus will be serving another term.
9. Mark Hagman agreed to serve as this committee's representative at the Certification Board meeting in February.

10. Greg Bingaman adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:45 a.m.

Minutes submitted by:

Randy Knight

Secretary

Oregon Mint Rootstock Certification Advisory Committee

The current *Oregon Peppermint and Spearmint Rootstock Certification Standards*, the current *Directory of Oregon Certified Mint Rootstock*, and minutes of recent Oregon Mint Rootstock Certification Advisory Committee meetings are available at the OSU Seed Certification website (<http://seedcert.oregonstate.edu/>) under the respective Mint or Advisory Committee headings.

1/20/12