

Augusta County Agriculture Industry Board Minutes

Thursday, June 22, 2023 7 PM to 8:30 PM

Augusta County Extension Office

Members in Attendance: *Sonny Balsley, Jeremy Shifflett, Cole Heizer, Doug Horn, John Benner*

Members Absent: *Keith Phillips (with notice), Andrew Crummett, Willie Ruleman*

Guests in Attendance: *Laura Begoon*

Sonny Balsley opened the meeting at 7:04.

Old Business:

The meeting began by John asking everyone in attendance to take a tumbler from the Augusta Ag Appreciation Gala. The minutes March 23, 2023 meeting were reviewed and approved.

Sonny then turned the meeting over to Laura Begoon for a presentation on the Non-Insured Crop Protection Program by the USDA. The program provides financial assistance to producers undergoing a weather-related crop loss for crops that do not have crop insurance (corn, soybeans, etc). Horticultural crops and hay are major areas of production that qualify for the NAP program. The program has a February 15 sign up date of the production year, 2-4-year yield production history, acreage reporting, as well as additional eligibility requirements. The program has a base service fee, as well as additional premiums producers need to pay to enroll, depending on coverage level selected. The program issues a payment to producers if hay quality is under a certain Relative Feed Value (RFV). The RFV values that trigger payments are at a level that make it feasible for producers to receive a payment.

The board had a few follow up questions to the presentation. Sonny then thanked Laura for joining the meeting and for providing information on the program.

New Business:

John provided an update on the proposed ag technology field day for Friday, October 20, at Marshall Farms. The main draw of the program is demonstration of flying on a cover crop mix with a drone. John is working with Wes to determine what cover crop mix may work for the proposed drone use. Doug also proposed looking at using a drone to spray Johnsongrass in corn. John also stated that he is planning to reach out to additional vendors and ag drone users to determine sponsorship and grant funds.

John mentioned that there are several sponsors that would be willing to present on a livestock side. These include Performance Livestock Analytics by Zoetis, Select Sires Cow Manager®, and Virginia Cattlemen's Association. However, the program may be too long if it includes all of these topics. The board decided to focus on the crop production angle while having a later program focusing on livestock.

Board membership.

Currently there is a vacancy for the Middle River district position. The board then discussed the possibility of new members joining the board to fulfill the vacancy and future vacancies.

The next meeting was tentatively scheduled for August 31 at the Extension Office.