

Premium Standard Farms
Community Advisory Panel
Meeting Minutes - Sept. 18, 2003

Members Present: Bill Schnelle, Jack Tucker, Ed Rhoades, Ron Hinds, Mark Yungeberg, Bob Rathe

Also Present: Bill Homann, Cliff Gauldin, Glynn Young

Bill Schnelle was elected chairman of the meeting, which opened at 7 p.m. in the PSF Education Center.

Hotline Report

Cliff Gauldin reported that only a couple of calls had been received on the hotline, and both concerned Human Resource questions. There were no calls from neighbors or about transportation.

Incident Reports

Bill Homann reported that there were no formal incident reports to share with the panel, but that a couple of incidents were still being investigated and reports would be ready for the next meeting. In one incident, a plug caused a backup, but not enough gallons were involved for the incident to be reportable to Missouri DNR. Another incident concerned a number of small problems with plugs at a sow farm, one of which was reportable but had been contained in the secondary containment system. And in an incident this past week, hay in an old barn caught fire while a tenant was operating a chain saw. DNR heard that PSF was burning an old shed without a permit and may get a Notice of Violation on air quality.

Questions & Answers/Discussion

Q: I've heard that a union is trying to organize the Milan plant. Is that true?

A: Union people were handing out materials at the end of the plant driveway; PSF Human Resources people handed out materials as well. Plant turnover is down considerably from past years.

Q: Have you seen any change in the buildup of sludge in the lagoons?

A: We know that more of the phosphorus is staying the sludge. I don't have a precise analysis right here, but I can get it. Unutilized feed seems to be a large part of the sludge composition.

Q: I've heard that some of the lagoons might be expanded?

A: The lagoon at the Green Hills Farm will be desludged in 2004. Missouri DNR allows us to have only so many spreadable acres.

Bill Schenlle read a letter that he had written as a private citizen to the DNR regarding getting permits for spreading manure waste. He was told on the phone by DNR that if PSF was the source, they were under different rules.

Q: How is sludge removed?

A: There are two primary methods. One is using a floating dredge with a cutter head. It runs like a combine at a very slow rate across the bottom of the lagoon, and the sludge material is siphoned up to trucks. The other method is using a centrifuge, which produces a material with the consistency of potting soil.

Q: What kind of use-life do you have on the grow/finish units? I believe originally PSF said it was 20 years.

A: The book depreciation is 20 years. Currently, the oldest units (Somerset) are about 12 years old. With normal repairs and maintenance, 20 years is about right.

Q: Are the lagoon covers made of good material?

A: With the covers installed the earliest, we thought we had about a 3-5 year use-life. It will be closer to three than to five. The biggest problem is deterioration from ultraviolet light. The later covers are longer lasting.

Q: Have the government teams testing stream quality reported their findings yet?

A: We don't know of anything that's been published.

Q: Does PSF monitor streams where they enter company property and where they leave?

A: I believe we do but I will check and verify that.

Q: It would be a good practice if you did monitor stream quality.

A: We are required to monitor stormwater runoff, containment areas, etc. The DNR inspects all farms on a quarterly basis, and it also checks streams. We haven't had any issues with the streams.

Q: Are PSF's farms in North Carolina in the path of Hurricane Isabel?

A: I don't know if they are in the direct path, but a number of emergency precautions were taken, including early feed deliveries, emergency planning and the closing of the plant yesterday (Sept. 17).

Neighbor Survey

Glynn Young distributed copies of the brief telephone survey that panel members will use to call neighbors about lagoon covers. Panel members divided up neighbor lists; each member will make 2 or 3 phone calls and report results at the October meeting. The purpose of the survey is to see if neighbors have noticed any changes with the installation of the lagoon covers. Bill Homann noted that approximately 100 lagoons have been covered.

New Business

The panel discussed adding additional members to the group, particularly representatives from PSF's western operations. Suggestions included soliciting new members through the community newsletter and perhaps inviting county commissioners to attend a meeting.

The next meeting of the CAP will be Thursday, Oct. 23, in the PSF Education Center.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Glynn Young