

## MINUTES

**Meeting:** Southwest Council of Agribusiness  
Organizational Meeting  
Plains Cotton Cooperative Association Delegate Body Room  
December 14, 2006

**Attendance:** See attached list

Farwell, Texas cotton producer Mark Williams brought the meeting to order at 2:10 p.m. Williams explained that the purpose of the meeting was to finalize the establishment of the organization known as the Southwest Council of Agribusiness. Williams thanked those in attendance for their interest and asked each to introduce themselves and the organizations they were representing. Following introductions Williams asked Plains Cotton Growers, Inc. Executive Vice President Steve Verett to present a membership report to the group.

Verett reported that the Southwest Council of Agribusiness has received financial commitments from a total of 44 organizations that include non-profit agriculture representative organizations, agribusinesses and financial institutions. Verett noted that the agenda provided to those in attendance (**Attachment One**) lists 43 SWCA members, but does not include the Lubbock Chamber of Commerce, which had voted earlier that day to support the SWCA. He added that at the conclusion of the day's meeting the SWCA would officially be an entity that stands on its own, with structure initially formulated to accomplish the common goal of extending the provisions of the 2002 Farm Bill when Congress rewrites U.S. farm policy in 2007. He noted that beyond the 2007 Farm Bill debate the SWCA's Board of Directors and Officers would also have the responsibility to determine the organization's future structure and purpose. He noted that in the longer-term the SWCA provides a structure that many believe can become a vehicle to address a broader set of issues important to the organization's membership. Verett then introduced Larry Combest and Tom Sell of Combest Sell and Associates, who presented an overview of the political landscape following the November 2006 Congressional elections and discussed the potential impact of the resulting Democratic takeover of the House of Representatives and the Senate. During their remarks both gentlemen commented on the good story that agriculture has to tell in regard to the 2002 Farm Bill and the fact that the Democratic leadership in the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress provides a unique opportunity to work for the extension and improvement of the Commodity programs that the SWCA supports as well as garnering additional budget authority to fund expanded initiatives in the Energy and Conservation titles in the next farm bill without taking anything away from Commodity programs. Sell noted that the strength of a group like the SWCA lies in the broad range of non-traditional farm program supporters that it includes. He noted that the opinions of agribusiness and financial institutions carry a considerable amount of weight, especially when they are echoing the message legislators are hearing from commodity groups. Sell then discussed the overall goals of Combest Sell and Associates, noting their many ties to both production agriculture and the southwest region. He explained that by bringing together a group that has interests in Texas, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Kansas the SWCA adds a strong voice to the farm policy debate that a broad range of legislators will identify with, but give credence too.

Williams then introduced Zach Brady who presented the proposed Southwest Council of Agribusiness Bylaws and explained the process through which the recommended structure for the Board of Directors, and elected leadership had been derived. During discussion of the

proposed Bylaws, Verett noted that it was important that the document allow the current focus of the organization to be accomplished, but flexible enough to allow for changes that will allow the organization to continue to function in the future. During discussion of the proposed Bylaws (**Attachment Two**) a number of changes were suggested by the membership that included:

- Article III. Section 2 – Clarified that the initial Board of Directors would total 14 members
- Article III. Section 3 – Included the designation of one Board position representing cattle producer Non-Profit Agriculture Representative Organizations
- Article III. Section 3 – Clarified provision to establish an annual review of Board allocations among member classes
- Article III. Section 12 – revised to allow an authorized alternate to vote in person on behalf of the appointed/elected board member
- Article III. Section 15 – Revised language to read “The Board of Directors may select an executive committee. The Board of Directors may authorize the Executive Committee to take all actions the Board of Directors would be authorized to take in the time between board meetings. Such actions shall not require the later validation of the Board of Directors.”
- Article IV. Section 2 – struck the words “for such terms not exceeding three (3) years” for the first paragraph

Following the discussion of the changes Brady asked if there was a motion to approve the Bylaws as amended by the membership. Dee Vaughan, Corn Producers Association of Texas (CPAT), then made the following:

**MOTION:** That the membership of the Southwest Council of Agribusiness adopt the proposed Bylaws as amended by the membership on December 14, 2006 and that an official copy (**Attachment Three**) of the Bylaws be incorporated into these minutes.

The motion was seconded by Trey Miller, American State Bank, and passed by unanimous vote.

Williams then asked the representatives for the three SWCA membership classes to caucus and elect their representatives to the SWCA Board of Directors as described in the newly adopted Bylaws of the organization. Following the caucus the following individuals were selected to serve on the SWCA Board of Directors:

**Cotton:**

Mark Williams	Plains Cotton Growers, Inc.
Rickey Bearden	Plains Cotton Growers, Inc.
Steve Verett	Plains Cotton Growers, Inc.
Mike Alexander	Rolling Plains Cotton Growers
<i>TBA</i>	South Texas Cotton & Grain

**Corn:**

Dee Vaughan	Corn Producers Association of Texas
-------------	-------------------------------------

**Peanuts:**

Ted Higginbottom	Western Peanut Growers Association
------------------	------------------------------------

**Grain Sorghum:**

Glen Schur	Texas Grain Sorghum Producers
------------	-------------------------------

**Wheat:**

Tommy Womack	Texas Wheat Producers Association
--------------	-----------------------------------

**Cattle:**

Don McCasland	Texas Cattle Feeders Association.
---------------	-----------------------------------

**Agribusinesses:**

Tag Webb	Southwestern Association
Wally Darneille	Plains Cotton Cooperative Association

**Financial Institutions:**

Bud Holmes	Plains Capital Bank
Mitchell Harris	Ag Texas Farm Credit Services

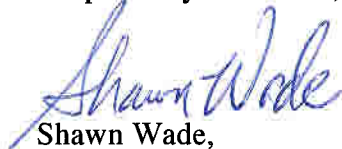
Terry Dane, First Ag Credit, then made the following:

**MOTION:** That the SWCA membership approve the results of the Board of Directors caucuses as presented.

The motion was seconded by Kelly Horton, Panhandle Peanut Growers Association, and passed by unanimous vote.

There was no further business and the meeting adjourned at 3:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Shawn Wade,  
Recording Secretary