



“Working Together to Make Trade Work”

NAEGA MAP Trip Report – NAFTA TWG Meetings in Quebec City

Name of Traveler: Gary C. Martin, President and CEO, NAEGA

Dates of Travel: October 25-26, 2016

Purpose of Travel:

Consistent with advancing its NAEGA UES objectives related market education on facilitating trade and the innovation production technologies, Gary Martin, NAEGA President and CEO, travelled to Quebec City, Quebec on October 25-26 to attend and present before the North American Free Trade Agreement’s (NAFTA) Technical Working Group (TWG) on Pesticides.

Mr. Martin was invited to Quebec City by CropLife Canada to speak on and represent grain trade perspectives before the TWG. In his presentation titled *A Global View of Key Dynamics in Policy and Commerce for Grains, Oilseeds and other Agri-bulks*, Mr. Martin highlighted the business realities of trading grain on a global scale, the impacts of non-tariff barriers like missing or non-harmonized minimum residue limits (MRLs) for pesticides and the importance of collaboration and coordination on joint reviews of crop protection products and harmonization of MRLs amongst U.S., Canadian and Mexican authorities. In particular, Mr. Martin emphasized that close coordination and harmonization on MRLs is vital for encouraging the efficient and transparent trading of GRNOS products in the North American marketplace.

Summary of Findings/Conclusions/Accomplishment

The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) Technical Working Group (TWG) on Pesticides was established under the NAFTA provisions on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures. The role of the Technical Working Group on Pesticides is to serve as a focal point for addressing pesticide issues arising in the context of liberalized trade among the NAFTA countries. Since its creation in 1996, the Technical Working Group has been successful in facilitating cost-effective pesticide regulation and trade among the three countries. The Technical Working Group does this through harmonization and work sharing, while recognizing the environmental, ecological and human health objectives of NAFTA.

This meeting was a very effective in continuing the TWG’s mission. The work of the TWG is very consistent with the text related to regulatory coherence in the pending Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) agreement.

Some lack of understanding of the nature and needs of the global grain was evident at the conference and continued market education is needed. However, engagement and participation of officials from all three NAFTA countries and private sector experts at these meetings was exceptionally effective. Grain trade views and concerns were heard by all members of the NAFTA TWG, and the meeting provided an excellent forum to discuss ongoing multilateral issues related to NAFTA regulatory harmonization. For more information see: <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/cps-spc/pest/part/int/nafta-alena/index-eng.php>.



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Recommendations

The NAFTA TWG is an effective and important forum for encouraging continued trade and harmonization on the North American Continent. Engagement with the NAFTA TWG has been timely, and the forum serves as a key area to address and reduce non-tariff barriers, including trade distorting MRLs. In the future NAEGA should:

- Work to support and further engage in the TWG.
- Utilize the model and information provided by the TWG as guide for its work to support the International Grain Trade Coalition work on pesticide residues (see www.igtglobal.org)
- Monitor the TWG 5-year strategy (<https://www.epa.gov/pesticides/nafta-twg-five-year-strategy-2016-2021>), and as consider it as a sound example for extension into the global arena.

Attachments

- Presentation - *A Global View of Key Dynamics in Policy and Commerce for Grains, Oilseeds and other Agri-bulks* – NAFTA TWG on Pesticides – Quebec City, Quebec