



*“Working Together to Make Trade Work”*

## **NAEGA MAP Trip Report – IGC and ISF Meeting - Zurich, Switzerland and London, UK**

### **Name of Traveler:**

Gary C. Martin, President and CEO of NAEGA, President of IGTC  
Marcel Bruins, NAEGA Chief Science Advisor  
Katy Lee, IGTC Secretariat

### **Dates of Travel:**

March 5-7, 2017

### **Purpose of Travel:**

Consistent with advancing NAEGA UES objectives, Gary Martin, President and CEO of NAEGA and the International Grain Trade Coalition (IGTC), Marcel Bruins, NAEGA/IGTC Science Adviser and Katy Lee, Secretariat of the IGTC traveled to Zurich, Switzerland on 5 and 6 March to attend the Plant Breeding Innovation Working Group meeting of the International Seed Federation (ISF). From there, Mr. Martin and Ms. Lee travelled to London on March 7 for a day of meetings with the International Grains Council (IGC) and GAFTA.

During the meetings, the NAEGA/IGTC delegates met with international partners - including governments from more than 13 countries - to discuss key IGTC policy files and contribute to NAEGA outreach on tariff and non-tariff barriers for GRNOS. Further meetings with GAFTA, a member of the IGTC Management Council, on March 7 was a notable opportunity to make progress on IGTC governance and plans to transition to an organization fully funded by its members.

It should be noted that both the ISF and the IGC prioritized the visit of the Mr. Martin in the agendas of their respective meetings. As a result, there was fruitful dialogue and a number of follow-up actions were called for in order to enhance collaboration in 2017.

### **Summary of Findings/Conclusions/Accomplishment:**

#### *ISF Plant Breeding Innovation Working Group – Zurich, Switzerland*

At the invitation of the ISF, the IGTC attended the March 6<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Plant Breeding Innovation Working Group. The agenda of the meeting (attached) focused on a plant breeding innovation outreach strategy.

Attendees to the meeting included:

ISF Secretariat (Communications lead and Secretary General), ISF President (French Seed Association), American Seed Association, Argentinian Seed Association, Canadian Seed Association, CropLife International Secretariat, CropLife International membership (Bayer Crop Science, DuPont Pioneer), European Seed Association, South African Seed Association, IGTC President Gary C. Martin, IGTC Secretariat Katy Lee, NAEGA Science Advisor Dr. Marcel Bruins.



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## **Outcomes**

1. IGTC presented the work of its Policy Team on plant breeding innovation and highlighted three pillars:
  - a. Regulatory coherence
  - b. Transparency of information
  - c. Responsibility across the value chain

The IGTC also intervened to provide insights on potential trade disruptions resulting from the commercialization of plant breeding innovations, as well as regulatory information from key countries such as Australia, Argentina, New Zealand and the United States.

1. ISF call for IGTC cooperation:
  - a. Providing trade perspectives as ISF prepares to draft new papers on transparency and the impact of case-by-case approaches.
  - b. Providing ideas on upcoming key global events where PBI advocacy would be appropriate and welcome.
  - c. IGTC may wish to facilitate dialogue with major grain trading countries on this file.
2. ISF internal strategy:
  - a. Decision to hold a third briefing session for core governments on September 6-7 in London, UK. ISF core countries will be invited plus Sweden, South Korea, Canada and Chile.
  - b. Summary of plans for further circulation of the ISF’s Consistent Criteria paper, now translated into Chinese, Korean, Spanish, Japanese.
  - c. Decision to draft two new papers: one on case-by-case approaches; and one on transparency. Deadline April 2017.
  - d. Consultation with special interest groups, most notably the International Federation for the Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM). Engagement with academia, CGIAR system and producers are also important.

### *Bilateral meeting with GAFTA – London, United Kingdom*

As President and Secretariat of the IGTC respectively, Mr. Martin and Ms. Lee held a bilateral meeting with the Director General of GAFTA, Jaine Chisholm-Caunt on the morning of March 7<sup>th</sup>. This was an opportunity to update GAFTA, a member of the IGTC’s Management Council, in person on improvements to governance and financial stability of the Coalition. Crucial for NAEGA and its objectives, there is currently a transition underway to make sure that the IGTC is a self-sustaining entity independently funded by its member associations. GAFTA is supportive of this effort and wishes to see a uniform funding structure in place, as well as increased global participation in the Coalition.

Aside from this, GAFTA reiterated its offer to host the IGTC’s Strategy Session in London on June 5. The IGTC has accepted this offer and plans were made to invite the global participants of the Coalition. NAEGA, with its strong links to grain trade leaders around the world, will be instrumental in making this a successful and well-attended meeting.



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On policy ‘files’, Gafta underlined its interest in the recently established Policy Team on Maximum Residue Levels (MRLs) at the IGTC, and signaled that it would like to play a positive role in this Team. Other policy issues that were touched upon during the meeting were the use of methyl bromide fumigation, and SPS measures more generally.

*IGC Council Market Conditions Committee (MCC) – London, United Kingdom*

The IGC MCC meetings was attended by thirteen countries, including Russia, Egypt, Iraq, Cote d’Ivoire, Ukraine, Argentina, Canada, Japan, European Union (Commission), USA, India, Spain, UK. In addition, NGO from around the world also participated including, Live Rice Index, U.S. Grains Council, International Grain Trade Coalition and the International Grains Council Secretariat.

Following the meeting with GAFTA, Mr. Martin and Ms. Lee spent the rest of the day at the International Grains Council’s twice yearly Markets Conditions Committee (MCC). The IGC is an intergovernmental body of 27 members and remains a significant venue for the IGTC. During the March 7<sup>th</sup> MCC, the IGTC was in the privileged position to be an official Observer while countries presented ‘national updates’ detailing political developments that impact the trade of grains, rice and oilseeds. Such examples included returns of soybean tax to producers in certain regions of Argentina; temporary duty-free imports of maize in Kenya; and investments of \$248 billion to boost the quality of arable land in China.

The IGTC President was asked to give a report on “current developments on policy and trade practice” as part of the agenda, and took the floor following an “expert presentation” by the U.S. Grains Council. To acknowledge the presence of the IGTC President at the meeting, the 13 government representatives at the MCC were invited to stay for one hour after the meeting ended in order to exchange views with Mr. Martin. Countries to stay on for this discussion included the United States, Argentina, Canada, EU, Iraq, Cote d’Ivoire, Japan and the UK. During this informal discussion, general agreement emerged on the themes of consumer access, economic wellbeing, and food security.

The IGC’s general session the Council also released its Grain Market report. The report argues that global grains stocks could be at their second highest level ever following this growing season. In addition, there has been a steady rise in consumption of wheat (food), and maize (feed and industrial uses). Regarding wheat, huge gains have been made in Australia and above average forecasts for Argentina and Brazil mean there could be a record world harvest. For maize, it was noted that large crops can be expected in South Africa and China, however maize acreage is expected to drop for the second year because of efforts by the government to divert marginal land to alternative crops. However, the overall global outlook is dependent on spring weather. In soy, the Council reports that all countries are harvesting more than ever and heavy supplies mean strong global uptake. It appears that the market is also calculating in an expected rise in soybean acreage this growing season. Important especially for soy supply, anecdotal evidence was presented to show that the state of Brazilian ports are improving following new investments. In particular, Brasilia has prioritized development of ports on the northern Atlantic river, and diversification of



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ports more generally. During the meeting, important updates were also shared on barley, rice and other agri-bulks. The full market report is attached.

**Recommendations:**

*Plant Breeding Innovation:*

1. Continue cooperation with ISF over the course of 2017 at the same time as leading a grain-trade specific strategy. Cooperation with ISF will involve participation in meetings, and providing grain trade insights on forthcoming communications materials/case-by-case approaches paper/transparency paper.
2. Amend IGTC policy document as needed.
3. Communications: PBI Team Lead should draft a proposal for IGTC Management Council on the most urgent needs for this file, including:-
  - a. A graphic to describe “how the grain trade works” – this can be tailored for the specific needs of IGTC advocacy on different files.
  - b. Powerpoint slides and infographics available on IGTC website for use of members and Corporate Stakeholders
  - c. Twice-yearly reports for IGTC participants on latest developments. This should focus on national and regional regulation, as well as commercialization, and consumer and producer acceptance.
4. Collaboration with producer groups, especially IGTC members.
5. Setting the next IGTC PBI Team Call for the end of March 2017.

*IGTC Strategy Session June 5, 2017*

1. Circulate draft agenda to IGTC Management Council for approval before end of March 2017.
2. Send out invitations to the meeting to all IGTC global participants.
3. Make sure Gafta is aware of number of attendees in order to adjust room booking if necessary.
4. Inform IGTC participants of the opportunity to attend the IGC Conference and Gafta dinner on June 6<sup>th</sup> with a preferential rate on ticket price.

*Relationship with the International Grains Council (IGC)*

With a view to increasing meaningful discussion and mutually acceptable outcomes, IGTC proposes:

1. To expand its reporting to IGC via the MCC. This would include submission of assessments of official measures (national, regional and multi-national) that impact the trade. Endeavor to submit such a report in advance of MCC meetings. At its discretion IGC may include all or parts of the IGTC reports in subsequent IGTC reporting of trade related and other policy developments.
2. To make IGC aware of its current global outreach program. The intention would be to garner IGC assistance and advice to help IGTC create links and inform relevant officials on matters of mutual interest to IGTC and IGC.

**Attachments**



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- Agenda of ISF Plant Breeding Innovation meeting March 6<sup>th</sup>
- Agenda of IGC Market Conditions Committee (MCC) March 7<sup>th</sup>
- Powerpoint presentation to support IGTC intervention at MCC
- IGC MCC report (status of plantings, harvest, demand and trade of key commodities)