



“Working Together to Make Trade Work”

NAEGA MAP Trip Report – IGTC Meetings and IGC Conference - London, UK

Names of Travelers:

Gary C. Martin, President and CEO, NAEGA; President, IGTC
Katy Lee, Secretariat, IGTC
Dr. Marcel Bruins, Science Advisor, IGTC/NAEGA

Dates of Travel:

Saturday, June 3 - Wednesday, June 7, 2017

Purpose of Travel:

Consistent with advancing NAEGA UES objectives Gary Martin, President and CEO of NAEGA and President of the International Grain Trade Coalition (IGTC), Katy Lee, Secretariat of the IGTC and Dr. Marcel Bruins, NAEGA/IGTC Science Advisor travelled to London, United Kingdom on June 3-7, 2017. The primary purpose of this mission to London was implementation of the IGTC Business Plan through the enhancement of IGTC Policy Teams, Working Groups and operations, engagement and information exchange with IGTC members and corporate stakeholders and new member recruitment. The delegation travelled to London in order to lead and execute meetings with 25 grain trade leaders from around the world, as well as government officials and international institutions. Specific activities carried out by Gary C. Martin, Katy Lee and Dr. Marcel Bruins included:

- **IGTC Strategy Session:** On June 5 the IGTC will host a Strategy Session for all members and corporate stakeholders. The purpose of the Strategy Session is to strengthen the work of IGTC Policy. During the strategy session participants will review working group activities and discuss policy files, including plant breeding innovations, maximum residue limits, electronic documentation, the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, the IPPC’s ISPM for grain and low level presence. IGTC will welcome nearly 30 global grain trade leaders at the meeting from Argentina, Australia, Canada, Eastern Africa, Europe, Mexico, Ukraine and U.S.
- **IGTC Management Council:** On June 6th the IGTC Management Council will hold a breakfast meeting in order to make decisions on issues resulting from the Strategy Session, review the Business Plan and plan for upcoming meetings in 2017.
- **2017 International Grain Council (IGC) Grains Conference:** On June 6 Mr. Martin, and Ms. Lee will attend the 2017 IGC Grains Conference at the Queen Elizabeth II Centre in Westminster. A copy of the agenda is available here. During the conference the NAEGA/IGTC mission will gather information on global grain trade trends and represent IGTC members and policy files.
- **GAFTA Annual Dinner:** On the evening of June 6 Lee and Martin attended the Grain and Feed Trade Association (GAFTA) Annual Dinner at the Sheraton Grain London Park Lane.



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Summary of Findings/Conclusions/Accomplishments:

During this mission NAEGA and IGTC accomplishments included:

- Execution of an IGTC Strategy Session with members and corporate stakeholders.
- Approval of the [IGTC’s policy document on MRLs](#) by the Management Council.
- Approval by Management Council of the [IGTC’s response to the LLP](#) “practical approaches” statement by the Global LLP Initiative.
- Confirmation of June Arnold, Gafta Head of Policy, as MRL team lead.
- Confirmation of Teresa Babuscio, COCERAL Secretary General, as plant breeding innovation team lead.
- Review of IGTC calendar and [upcoming events](#).
- Attendance at the International Grains Council:
 - o Implementation of the IGTC’s ‘Observer’ status at IGC Council. IGTC was formally part of the agenda at the 45th Council session on Monday June 5.
- Representation and networking at the annual IGC conference on June 6, including support for a speaking spot of NAEGA Board of Directors member Randy Ritchie (Gavilon).

IGTC Strategy Session

The Strategy Session was led by IGTC/NAEGA President Gary Martin, as well as London hosts GAFTA. Katy Lee and Dr. Marcel Bruins provided Secretariat support.

Grain trade leaders attended from IGTC associations, councils and corporate stakeholders from: Argentina, Australia, Canada, China, Europe, Mexico and the United States. Significantly, the President of the Ukrainian Grain Association attended, as well as a representative of potential Ukrainian corporate stakeholder, both with the intention of formalizing participation in the IGTC.

The meeting represented an important opportunity for IGTC participants to discuss current grain trade priorities. Regarding IGTC files, the meeting was especially timely given the urgency of global policy developments on plant breeding innovation, maximum residue levels (MRL) for pesticides and the IPPC’s International Standard for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPM) on grain.

Specific decisions and actions adopted at the meeting included:

Maximum Residue Limits:

1. Revise policy document for Management Council approval.
2. Broaden input from members and Corporate Stakeholders, including information on business case studies.
3. Engage with World Bank *Enabling the Business of Agriculture* project to assess trade impacts.



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4. Request Management Council to make decision on joining the International Agri Food Network (IAFN - www.agrifood.net) Coalition for an Enhanced Codex.

Low Level Presence:

1. Define IGTC response to GLI practical approaches paper for Management Council approval.
2. Establish path forward for GAABT policy document for Management Council approval.
3. Update IGTC literature to reflect Australian situation – no government “policy” on LLP but there is a strategy to deal with import occurrences.

Plant breeding innovation:

1. Revise policy document.
2. Continue with webinars for perspectives from outside experts (including Australia/Japan/Latin America/OECD/food and feed companies).
3. Refine advocacy strategy.
4. Continue dialogue with the ISF, particularly on “transparency”.

ISPM:

1. Provide Policy Team with information about the status of the process at IPPC.
2. Continue with advocacy strategy on an urgent basis. Milestone is November Standards Committee meeting.

International Grains Council Session

Dr. Marcel Bruins represented the IGTC at this meeting, during which there were two specific agenda items relating to the IGTC: (6) “Dialogue with the IGTC on major policy issues affecting grains trade”, and (7) “IGTC proposal for further cooperation with the IGC” (agenda is in Annex to this trip report).

Regarding item (6), Dr. Bruins gave a brief presentation (8 slides – see attachments), regarding the status of membership and membership outreach of IGTC, as well as information about the work of Policy Teams and Working Groups. The issue of plant breeding innovation and its impact on the trade of grains, pulses, oilseeds and other agri-bulks was explained in more depth. In this regard, the IGTC’s three policy pillars were presented: 1.) The need for international alignment and similar approach per technique across jurisdictions and increased legal certainty; 2.) Transparency in the regulatory status of plant varieties throughout their commercial life cycle; and 3.) The responsibility of industry using plant breeding innovations to undertake comprehensive educational effort to inform the public of the benefits and risks, if any, of modern biotechnology. No questions were asked from the floor regarding this policy file.

After Dr. Bruins elaborated on the current IGTC work program. There was also a one-hour discussion among IGC member governments about future cooperation with the IGTC under item (7) of the agenda. It was explained that during the IGTC President’s visit to the IGC in March 2017, there was a proposal for more formalized cooperation between the two organizations. The



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IGTC offered to 1.) Provide increased information as necessary/appropriate for IGC member governments; and 2.) Help to create links and mobilize in-country conversations whenever appropriate.

The member governments of the IGC showed a stronger interest than ever in this topic, with a truly evaluative conversation taking place on the merits of engaging with the IGTC. It should be noted that some countries presented a more conservative, even cautious, attitude towards having formal cooperation with one specific private sector body, and asked for engagement with the IGTC to be the first step in the IGC working also with *other* relevant bodies from the NGO community, and to avoid this interaction to enter the sphere of ‘lobbying’ at all costs. Other countries were more enthusiastic, clearly stating that the IGTC is an important information resource, that the Coalition’s mandate is of direct relevance to that of the IGC, and that there is a historical and trusted partnership between the two organizations. For his part, IGC Executive Director Etsuo Kitahara reaffirmed his commitment to regular dialogue with the IGTC as a key representative of the grain trade community.

International Grains Council Conference

Ms. Lee and Mr. Martin joined other IGTC participants in raising the profile of NAEGA UES objectives among a group of international delegates through attendance at the conference. This year, the conference was entitled *Trading in an evolving market: What prospects for the future?*. Executive Director Etsuo Kitahara announced that Oman would become the IGC’s 28th member government from July 2017, and gave updates on the work of his varied and professional team of staff. Mr. Kitahara also noted the progress in the global trade of pulses market, which has seen an increase of 48% over the last decade, from 9 million tons in 2005 to 14 million tons in 2015, positioning them between barley and sorghum in terms of global trade. Regarding the IGTC, the Executive Director gave a special mention in his opening speech, noting “the Council also agreed to further develop collaboration with the International Grain Trade Coalition (IGTC), a major stakeholder in the private sector, by sharing information about progress being made on regulatory frameworks affecting trade in grains, with the aim of contributing to trade facilitation”.

After this, the conference speakers took stage, giving a *tour de table* on policy and trade practice in diverse regions of the world. Specifically, speakers came from the following countries to give in-depth analysis: Russia (future of wheat exports); United Kingdom (how will Brexit affect the economy, and imports and exports of grains?); Egypt (government policy e.g. consumer subsidies, as well as regional politics and the impact on grains); the United States (changes brought by the Trump administration, importance of milling industry to export markets).

It is important to note that the NAEGA had the opportunity to propose a key speaker at the event: Randy Ritchie of Gavilon who is also a member of the NAEGA Board of Directors. IGTC member association U.S. Wheat Associates also took the floor.

Recommendations:



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1. IGTC Secretariat should issue full report of the 5th June meeting without undue delay.
2. Ukrainian Grain Association (UGA) and Transship Limited should be formally engaged as IGTC participants.
3. IGTC Secretariat should lead in implementation of follow-up actions from Strategy Sessions – ISPM, LLP and plant breeding innovation are all urgent priorities.
4. IGTC President, Executive and Management Council to redouble efforts in using their connections to increase geographical diversity of participation at upcoming meetings in 2017/8.
5. Continue to be available to the IGC and build a relationship whereby both sides provide guidance, advice and opportunities for outreach.

NAEGA should continue to lead IGTC efforts to address its UES. **Attachments:**

1. *IGTC Strategy Session agenda, June 5*
2. *IGTC position paper on MRLs, approved June 6*
3. *IGTC position paper on LLP Practical Approaches, approved June 6*
4. *IGC Council agenda, June 5*
5. *IGC Conference agenda, June 6*
6. *IGC presentation – Randy Ritchie, Gavilon, June 6*
7. *IGC presentation – Vince Peterson, US Wheat Associates, June 6*
8. *Attendance lists*