

## **MA/RI-TACF Autumn 2020 Quarterly Minutes -- DRAFT**

10/18/2020

Meeting was held remotely via Zoom

9:05 am

Present: Jamie Donalds, Kathy Desjardin, Gray Curtis, Rufin Van Bossuyt, Gary Jacob, Yvonne Federowicz, Rich Hoffman, Paul Wetzel, Michael Novack, Dave Lent, Mark Meehl, Brian Clark, Brian McClain, John Meiklejohn, Bill Goodwin, Brad Smith, Jim Pelletier, Josh Soojian, Tim Seales, Karen Jones, Douglas Miner

### **Treasurer Report: Paul Wetzel**

Additional planting supplies purchased. Balances doing well.  
Remaining Manton Grant: 840.34 -- Brian Clark, any other outstanding expenses -- send in to Paul. Donations from Safari Club, also people donating through Amazon.

**MOTION:** Accept Treasurer's Report  
Accepted unanimously.

Welcome and Introductions: we went around to all. Numerous guests.

### **Secretary's Report: Kathy Desjardin**

5,093 members in TACF -- membership is up in spite of Covid  
She thanked Safari Club; they request note on how donation is spent.  
Rachel Cole: has volunteered in Maine, etc., SUNY. Moved back to MA. Internship?  
Potential volunteering w/Mark. What needs do we have? General orchard maintenance  
She was the Maine Chapter intern last summer  
Graduating in December.

**Action Item:** Kathy to reach out to Rachel, Rachel to be invited to January Meeting.  
We will work on defining work. Info to be forwarded to Kendra.

**January Agenda Item:** Intern to be discussed at January Meeting. Gary as prospective intern manager.

**MOTION:** Accept Secretary Report  
Accepted unanimously

**MOTION:** Accept minutes from Summer meeting

### **Communications Report: Yvonne Federowicz**

Burrillville Land Trust: 10/12/20 Meeting, Kathy and Yvonne attended. Possible orchard(s); Yvonne to visit sites; Ed to visit SKLT site. Ed as possible manager? He was put in charge by BLT of outreach to chestnut.

One BLT site

Web site -- some pages need work

Social Media -- (Brad Smith) Facebook: on a weekly basis, is admitting 2-3 FB members. He might do an advertising campaign to get more people interested.

Send items to Brad for page. (Versus group.) The page does not need admittance. The Group does. Send more content to Brad. Photos w/description are helpful.

Website also needs updated content.

QR codes -- Jamie showed examples of the signage with the QR code weather-resistant labels that he put onto our existing signage. They are on several signs: Lunenburg, Littleton,

Stockbridge, Pittsfield, Smith, Westboro,

Orchard Signs -- Medway, Rich Hoffman's F1 orchard

Google Groups? --

Orchard Managers Lists (emailing lists, that keep a history of our messages accessible to users): would be nice to have for the group. Jamie is positive about that. Board, and Board plus Cooperators.

Brad: Slack?

Jamie is pro Google Group

**Action Item:** Yvonne and Kathy will work on Google Groups

**Action Item:** Gary Jacob to work on signage for (Medway?) orchard, will be in touch with Kathy.

**January Agenda Item** -- discussion of Signage

TACF National Meeting: tomorrow! 10/19

**MOTION:** accept Communications Report

Accepted unanimously

**Science Planning Report: Michael Novack**

Using Recurrent Selection: (Presentation by Michael)

(Recorded by Jamie)

Continuing toward high levels of blight tolerance using standard recurrent selection methods

Michael presented on possibilities for Recurrent Selection with some of our crosses (Chinese-American hybrids, e.g. Nanking lines), to get more of the approximately 12 or more Chinese resistance genes into a blight-resistant population, than our previous Back Cross

Breeding approach did.

Small Stem Assay (SSA) at early age

Assuming: population includes all alleles from (Chinese) resistance; also, large enough for American genetic diversity to be included

For recurrent selection, need about 400

(Phenotypic selection) cannot get us the whole way to Chinese-type resistance; need progeny testing also

We don't eliminate non-optimal trees, just keep fewer of them.

Questions: do we continue with our current seed orchards? (Jamie)

Michael -- go ahead with current selecting if seed orchards already in; remove all but top trees Nankings -- we could use recurrent selections instead. We have about 15 lines of Nanking.

Doable? 6000 to 100 in 2 generations?

Difference in practical terms for our Nanking breeding program: we would not remove as many trees, we would keep more at current orchards. Each of 15 lines, reduce to 2 trees, get 160 nuts. Plant, keep about best 12 trees. (2 deviations up.)

Be sure we include all "lines"; skew toward what has best resistance. Keep more trees at BxF1 stage.

Brian not sure about SSA, need larger pots, labor-intensive. Many will survive.

Brad: what about selecting for American traits? Michael: height will require a very long time period of growth to select for.

Rich Hoffman: start with F1s, see how we get best blight resistance with F1s. Intercrossing F1s could get us to final goal. Get 2 F1 lines, intercross.

**Action Item:** Michael -- please create an "abstract"-like single paragraph of your presentation work, for these minutes

Michael to present on this at our Annual Meeting

**Nomination Committee Report:** John Meiklejohn

All Directors and Officers have agreed to continue; Bill Davis agreed to come on Board.

**Nominated Slate accepted by Board**

Voting: John M. will discuss during our meeting.

"Elections shall be held at the Annual Meeting" in Bylaws.

Massachusetts has passed legislation allowing organizations to use remote tech during Covid, likely including our elections -- Michael

Annual Meeting:

Will be held via Zoom

Speaker(s);

Jesse Green; Michael; additional speaker

Date: December 6

Time:

8:00am separate Zoom address for Board, elections to be held. John Meiklejohn to set up that Zoom.

9:00am-? Chapter Annual Meeting. To include some unstructured socializing time.

Breakout rooms? Can there be an optional one?

Main meeting to be recorded

“Chestnut bee”: does Kendra know of a good speaker?

Michael Beit: can he do a presentation on these bees?

Advertising/contacting members about our meeting:

Will a postcard help? Just email?

Brad and Kathy to draft an email. All our Social Media also.

FB, Twitter.

Brad to start Chestnut 101 at 8:30?

**Orchard Report: Brian Clark**

**Seedling Inventory (Incomplete notes)**

~600 from 2019, wintered over in greenhouse

~3,000 F2s potted up from 2019, 2018 nuts

9 Graves lines

8 Clapper lines

1500 planted this summer

**Planting (Incomplete notes)**

Weston (2 Block Clapper seed orchard)

2 new Graves plots added to block 1

Direct nut planting

Norfolk County Ag (Graves seed orchard)

Total loss of 8 plots

Replanted 200 seedlings in 2 plots in May

Irrigation put in

1 plot for October planting  
Fence damage from utility lines down and repair (electric fence)  
Granville Graves seed orchard  
100 replacements  
2 new Graves plots  
2 new Clapper plots (seedlings)  
Westboro planting party!

Westboro signage in place, nice chestnut wood

Westboro drainage ditch is helping a lot; the parking lot was draining into the orchard!

Springside 3 yr old plots 15-foot at 3 years!

### **Inoculations (incomplete notes)**

Pittsfield  
4 2019  
5 2020

Smith  
5 2020

Weston  
8 plots

Hawley  
4 lines: Nanking, SG and Weakly

Inoculations should be on downwind side so strong part is upwind

2020 Harvest, Clapper  
More than 5700 nuts, 26 trees, 13 lines

2020 Harvest, Graves  
More than 2200 nuts, 23 trees, 12 lines

Granville  
Littleton  
Medway  
Princeton  
Grafton, W Boylston, Weston not harvested

Hydraulic helper! Brian provided

Controlled pollinations

Pollen from Upton St Park timber form Chinese

Canton/Pakeen large American: 283 nuts

Outstanding selected BC trees:

Princeton's Westwood WW5563 pollen (Graves) to Lincon's CF1367 (Clapper) 199 nuts

Weston's SP809 (Graves) to Wayland's FB 283

Wild American Harvest

Mark and Dave: 30 trees, mostly in E MA -- 4300 nuts

Sandisfield seed orchard -- Doug Miner -- does not have updates yet re. Mortgage; still making land prepping progress

Burrillville Land Trust (RI) -- Yvonne and Kathy spoke at their meeting; YF to visit Burrillville and Edmund Croteau to visit SKLT. After November 3rd. Orchard possibilities will be discussed per our usual questions.

GCO orchards: Lincoln, MA -- (Mark Meehl)

Insurance needs to be modified and that is proceeding well

Trees planned to be a permanent feature, gift to the town, if we have to leave.

Lots of public exposure, good spots for signage. Chestnuts to be on a slope. Well is on site.

Walking path near it. Lovely spot. Lincoln town seal has a chestnut tree on it. Depression from old chestnut still there. 1750-1920. Wood from the chestnut was used to panel a room.

Plimouth-Patuxet MA (Brad Smith)

Demo planting site? Spring more likely. Two spots: near colonists' and near Native American areas

We have many good trees w/crosses made now; we could provide "demos" for people beyond the Meadowview B3F3s.

Discussion after:

Some of our "best" trees are mostly American per the Genomic analysis, but what does this mean re. The total genes of the trees? Not all genes are actually tested, it is some sort of sampling.

Separate question... How are the pure Americans doing at Chestnut Cooperators' project?

What does the genomics analysis of % American from National actually mean? How do uncommon and common American genes interact with blight resistance- related Chinese genes? Lots of issues that the "% American" number from National don't tell us.

The Public Comment Period for the OxO tree ends tomorrow.

Activities Report due September; still to be submitted.

**Action Item:** Everyone please send estimate of time spent, July 1 2019 - June 30 2020.

Meeting ended: 12:58

