

**Onion Research & Development Program
Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
March 21st, 2023**

The meeting was called to order by J. DiSalvo at 1:03 pm.

Board Members Present: G. Smith; J. Disalvo; G. Glowaczewski; W. Shattuck (Department Representative)

Board Members Absent: J. Rapasadi, R. Minkus

Additional Persons Present: J. Scaglia (Cornell University).

Board Member Reports

Board members reported on their specific farms and regional growing conditions. All board members indicated a normal growing season last year and the overall consensus is that the upcoming year should see normal yields. Thrips, weeds, nematodes and bacterial infection were most prominent issues raised by board members.

Guy Smith – Average planting last year, lot of irrigation. Good crop overall. Good quality, above average yield. A few early rains came through. No big changes expected with planted acreage. One less grower in Elba. Matt Mortellaro has retired and losing that acreage.

Joe Disalvo – Rather uneventful season. Fairly moderate in all respects. Excellent, high-yield crop, ran out of storage and bins, no extreme rains, no extreme dry spells. Climate, planting less acreage purely based on rotating which farm is being used for onions.

Gary G. – Great season, best crops ever, 80% or better Spanish onions, great pricing and quality, extremely dry, stayed cool in beginning of the season. Direct seed and transplant methods were successful. Stemphyllium and maggots were biggest crop issues. Labor costs and ability to maintain H2A workers also issues.

Administrator's Reports

Balance Sheet

- The cash balance as of 3/17/23 is **\$73,926.07**, which is up from \$53,702.18 this time last year. Grower funds were not used to fund projects last year, as sufficient State Local Assistance funding was available. The ORDP account should have this entire value carried over into the next year.

Collections

- Assessment income and accounts receivable through 3/17/23 totaled **\$25,744**. This is a 13% decrease compared to last year through 3/17/22 (\$29,547.32) and 6% lower than the last 5-year average (\$27,589.01). Some of this seemingly significant decrease can be attributed to a timing issue, as each year we continually follow-up on delinquent assessments and received a significant influx of prior year payments in the 2021-22 cycle.

Budget Comparison

- Current year draft budget for grower funds is set at \$0, as the Department anticipates significant unspent prior year State Local Assistance reappropriations to be available plus \$70,0000 in new appropriations. The Board is confident we will be able to fund 2023-24 projects with State funds and maintain significant funds in reserve for next year (anticipating approx. \$103,268 in cash balance as of 3/31/24).

Research Proposals

The board reviewed 6 unique onion research projects totaling \$82,550 and recommends funding all projects with State Local Assistance funds from the 2023-24 enacted NYS budget. Prior year reappropriations as well as new appropriations are expected to be sufficient to cover this entire budget.

Full scopes of work and budgets for these projects are maintained by Division staff.

Advisory Board Motions

A motion was made by G. Smith, seconded by J. Disalvo, to carryover funds on hand March 31, 2023, for use as needed in future years. Motion carried.

A motion was made by G. Glowaczewski, seconded by J. Disalvo to set the assessment rates for the 2023-2024 year at \$4 per planted acre, with the option for growers to submit a voluntary contribution. Motion carried.

A motion was made by J. Disalvo seconded by G. Smith to approve the above budget decisions for the 2023-2024 crop year, with \$0 in grower funds allocated as needed for contract expenses. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned by J. Disalvo at 2:45 PM.