

Congressional Briefing report:
May 11th and 12th 2009

The committee had a successful trip to Washington DC. I want to thank Dale Enerson, Patrick Splichal, and Doug Johnson for their time. Their trip was paid for (along with Novecta's) out their own pockets so we own them a lot of gratitude.

On May 11th, Dale set up a meeting at 2:00 PM ET with the National Farmers Union: We met with Roger Johnson, President and Sarah Gallo, Government Relations Representative and received an update on the proposed Waxman-Markey legislation. Sara Brodnax from the Clark Group set up a meeting with Sally Collins at 3:00 PM ET. We met with Sally Collins and Carl Lucero from the office of Ecosystem Service and Marketing and discussed the standard and ask for opinion on how we could interact. Sally recently introduced me to David Antonioli CEO of the VCS and Davis and I have a meeting in DC planned for the afternoon of June 18th.

Mike Parrish from Monsanto allowed us to meet from 4:00 – 6:00 at the Monsanto office to put the final touches to the presentation for the Congressional briefing. He gave us background and coached us on the presentation. We want to give a big thanks to Mike and his staff for all the time and contacts to set up the briefings. It would not have happen without their efforts.

Mike, Dale, Doug and Patrick went to supper and I attended a gathering with USDA people who knew Beth for a memorial.

Dana Stahl set up a meeting with USDA for 9:00 AM ET. Patrick, Dale and myself went to meet the USDA while Doug went to the congressional briefing meeting location to set up and get ready for our 10 AM meeting.

For the USDA meeting we met with Jim Riva USDA ARC, Dave Shipman USDA AMS, William Hohenstein Director of Global Change Program for the USDA, Charles Martin Deputy Associate Administrator USDA AMS and Dana Stahl. We briefed them on the content of the standard and took questions that they had. We had to cut the meeting short due to House Congressional Briefing.

The Senate Congressional Briefing had around 25 in attendance with both the majority and minority leaders aids present. The presentation lasted around 35 minutes and we took questions for another 30-40 minutes.

The House Congressional Briefing was the same numbers and questions. At the House we had press from Point Carbon, Kim Moore, who has covered this standard from last August. IMI Global had Jay Truitt attend from Policy Solutions LLC to ask questions from the audience and provide support.

Overall I sent out 12 presentation and a copy of the standard to press that was unable to attend the briefings and Dale reported that he did at least one press interview. It was a successful trip for the committee and we had a lot of support and help from many members of the committee.