



Important Info for NOP Members Update 9-3-09

As you know the NOP and AHW Boards have been exploring the possibility of combining into one national organization for women associated with the breed. This process has been the work of the Strategic Planning Committee since early spring of 2009. By meeting on a regular basis throughout 2009 the SPC has formulated a proposal for your consideration.

After a great deal of thought as to how we can facilitate feedback from the membership while moving the process forward in an organized manner, the SPC formulated the following schedule:

- 9-9-09 Post draft proposal from SPC to NOP & AHW web sites (52 days pre-meeting)
- 9-9-09 Start of 12 day comment period
- Please direct your comments or suggestions to the SPC members*
- 9-21-09 End of 12 day comment period
- Member feedback will be reviewed and incorporated as needed*
- 9-28-09 Post revised proposal from SPC to NOP & AHW web sites (33 days pre-meeting)

NOP by-laws require a vote of 2/3 of members present to approve such a measure. However, given the importance of the decision, absentee ballots will also be available by request for those NOP members unable to attend the meeting. These members may request an absentee ballot to cast their vote on the decision to go forward with forming one national association. See form at end of this document.

You will notice above that the draft proposal will be available to you 52 days before the meeting. You will then have 12 days to review and send comments to the SPC. The SPC will then incorporate member comments and make the *revised* proposal available 33 days pre-meeting. Absentee ballots will be due to the CPA by October 16 which gives everyone a week to review the revised proposal before needing to mail their ballot with adequate time for it to be received by the deadline.

Those present in KC will have the same review and comment period as above and will additionally be able to participate in discussion at the Women's Forum II and then vote the next day at the membership meeting on (1) the decision to go forward with one national organization, and (2) the proposed name, logo, and by-laws.

NOP Annual Membership Meeting Saturday October 31, 2009 at 12:30 pm

Hilton President Hotel – Aztec Room

Please RSVP if you plan to attend to the meeting - Lunch menu and cost TBA

Susan at 918-342-0327 or segebhart@hotmail.com

Betsy at 765-522-3396 or abcbeck@tds.net



The proposal includes the following important features:

- **The structure of state groups will not be affected.** If combined, the new national organization would affiliate with and support all members of women's state organizations regardless of status – polled, horned or combined memberships.
- **The new national organization will continue all of the programs currently in place with both organizations.** We hope that a stronger combined organization would result in more programs to serve youth and women associated with the breed.
- Both existing organizations would come into the new organization with about the same amount of money. **All funds currently earmarked for a specific purpose would be expended for that purpose only** until exhausted.
- **All details of the proposal will be available to members on the NOP website** or mailed by request to members before the vote takes place.
- Initial discussions have taken place for a **History Preservation Committee** to look into setting up an electronic archive of NOP history, documents, and photographs. Photos of the Gammon Barn and its' contents would be included in this project.

Thank you for your time in reviewing this information.

Please call any of the NOP Strategic Planning Committee Members if you have any questions or comments.

Susan Gebhart

Betsy Beck

Mary Ann Berg

918-342-0327

765-522-3396

330-857-7967



NOP Absentee Ballot Request

Mail your ballot request to:

Tanya Swindell CPA, Kirkendall & Swindell CPAs, PLLC, 405 W. Claremore St., Claremore, OK 74017

Name _____ Tel. number _____

Address _____

_____ E-mail _____

_____ I am unable to attend the NOP Annual Membership Meeting in Kansas City on Saturday October 31, 2009. Therefore I request an absentee ballot to cast my vote regarding the proposal to form one national organization for women associated with the Hereford (polled and horned) breed of cattle.

_____ **E-mail my ballot.** I understand that the proposal regarding formation of one organization will be available for my review on the web at www.poll-ettes.com

_____ **Mail my ballot.** I am unable to access the proposal on the internet and request a copy of the information be mailed with my absentee ballot. *Please help us conserve funds - only for those without web access.*

Members eligible to vote must have renewed membership & paid dues by August 10, 2009. Ballots must be returned by October 16th to the NOP CPA in order to be counted and tabulated. In order to verify membership each ballot must include the voter's name and address. No late ballots will be counted.



Report from the Women's Forum on the Future – July 7, 2009 – Tulsa OK

Approximately 70 women attended the “Women’s Forum on the Future” on July 7, 2009 in Tulsa. The Forum, organized by the Strategic Planning Committee, was held following the National Organization of Poll-ettes (NOP) breakfast meeting.

Dana Hatter, of Oklahoma State University kick -started the meeting by sharing some experiences she has encountered as a professor at OSU. Though OSU has an outstanding Ag Department, there is an “anti-ag” presence even at a school like OSU, where Ag students (“barn kids”) are sometimes treated with disrespect by other students and faculty. Through a specific program initiated by Dana, it has been proven that the “barn kids” are as intelligent (often times more so) as other students on campus. In addition, their work ethic and responsibility/accountability are superior. However, often times these students lack the ability to stand up for themselves and their lifestyle when an adverse situation arises. Dana contends that because our children are taught to be polite and respectful, often times they are not comfortable, or appropriately trained, to assert their beliefs and support their agricultural life style when placed in a confrontational situation. She urges us, as parents, to do what we can to help teach our children to be assertive, knowledgeable and prepared to talk about the positive aspects of agriculture. In addition, Dana reminded us that because all aspects of agriculture are under attack, the need for groups to band together is greater than ever.

The Strategic Planning Committee is comprised of 3 members of the NOP Board of Directors; Susan Gebhart, Betsy Beck and Mary Ann Berg, and 3 members of the American Hereford Women (AHW) Board of Directors; Cheryl Evans, Deb Carlson and Della Ehlke. Members of the SPC committee provided a basic outline of the purpose of the committee, their work to date and some general observations. The committee has been meeting since January discussing the possibility of combining the two women’s Hereford organizations into ONE national women’s organization. All aspects of each organization were outlined side by side on paper for ease in comparison. This recap was handed out to the group and specific items were reviewed by committee members. Programs, bylaws, director elections and structure of each organization were compared and found to be very similar in many areas. In the event of combination of the two national organizations the structure of state groups would not be affected. If combined, the new national organization would accept membership from and support all members of women’s state organizations. A merger would not reduce any of the programs currently in place with both organizations; rather the hope would be that a stronger combined effort would, perhaps result in expanded programs. Both existing organizations would come into the partnership with about the same amounts of money. The SPC committee believes that there are women in the Hereford community that would join and support a national organization, but are not interested in the “drama” caused by a division. Since many younger women are more involved “hands on” in their cattle operations, we need to look to make sure that their voices are heard and that the national organization meets their present



day needs. It is the conclusion of the SPC committee that the similarities of the current two organizations would allow for a fairly easy and seamless combination of the two.

The SPC committee believes that the time is right for such a merger but could not go any further in the process until getting some feedback from the members.

After the presentation of the SPC committee, the meeting was opened up to comments from those in attendance. Following is a summary of the context of the comments made by the very passionate and determined group:

- we are all about the same thing; Hereford cattle and youth, and we are all friends, it is past time for us to work together
- the first step towards being taken seriously by the men and the youth; with hopes of being part of an effective, collective leadership is to put our differences behind us
- the history and legacy of each of the organizations is important and needs to be documented and preserved, however we cannot live in the past, we must move ahead. The daughter of a founding member of the NOP echoed the sentiment on behalf of her mother that it was time to leave the past and form one organization
- given the overall negative attitude towards agriculture in general, not just on college campuses, but everywhere, we have much bigger battles to fight than horned versus polled. We need to combine our efforts into a stronger, cohesive group
- women are out there wanting to be a part of what we are doing, but they don't want to be involved in the struggle between the two groups

An overwhelming majority of the comments made expressed a positive attitude towards combining the groups as soon as possible

Some discussion ensued about potential reasons that earlier efforts to join the groups failed. Those who had experience with previous merger attempts agreed that the idea of a combined organization was voted down primarily because of fears of losing identity and history.

A quick show of hands would indicate that more than 75% of the people in the room owned both horned and polled Hereford cattle.

The bylaws of the two organizations vary in the manner in which combination could be approved. The decision could be made by the majority vote of the Board of Directors of the AHW, but it would make more sense to put it to a membership vote. The NOP by-laws would require the majority of members present at a meeting vote to approve the measure. The SPC committee noted that it was important that careful consideration be given to the appropriate process for voting on a merger, despite the minimum



requirements of each organization's by-laws. Interactive discussion deliberated the pros and cons of voting via membership meeting, mail-in, proxy voting or delegates.

Before the group disbanded, they were asked to write down their opinion - "Yes" or "No" to a combined organization. This information will help the committee decide if it is appropriate to move ahead with a proposed set of by-laws, mission statement, how to populate a new Board of Directors, etc.

Opinion Poll Results at the Forum I

Question: Should we continue the pursuit of one combined women's organization?

61 of those in attendance responded "Yes"

5 responded "No"

Based on the response received from the Forum, the SPC committee will proceed with drafting a proposed: set of bylaws, mission statement, propose a manner in which to populate a new board, logo and name possibilities. Comments are encouraged by calling one of the SPC committee members or by commenting at www.barnaisle.blogspot.com

Prepared by Della Ehlke, SPC Secretary