

# APRES Peanut Quality Committee Meeting

June 9, 2021

## Attendees:

William Pearce, Golden Peanut and Tree Nut Company, Committee Chair

Lisa Dean, USDA, ARS

Ken Barton, Florida Peanut Producers

Mark Kline, The Hershey Company

Emma Gottschall, The Hershey Company

Ricky Hartley, Golden Peanut and Tree Nut Company

Peggy Tsatsos, MARS Wrigley Confectionary

Karen Ocamb, The Hershey Company

Mike Nolt, The Hershey Company

Christopher Liebold, The J. M. Smucker's Corporation

Anne Marie De Lorenzo, MARS Wrigley Confectionary

Absent: Naveen Puppula, New Mexico State University

Lyndsay Bashore, Hormel Food Corporation

## Meeting Minutes: Meeting called to order at 11:02 AM

### 1. Aflatoxin Contamination

The 2020 crop is on track to have much lower levels of aflatoxin contamination compared to the 2019 crop. The levels from the Southeast area were over 30% of the lots. Chris Liebold agreed that the 2020 crop is much better in yield and grade and that the levels are below 5% of the lots. Anne Marie compared it the 2012 crop which was considered the best quality year of the decade.

### 2. Seed Quality/Planting

Ricky reported since the planting seed was not high in aflatoxin contamination, the current crop looks to have good vigor especially for the high O/L crop. GA06G seems to lack vigor in general but there have been few customer complaints regarding it. The stands appear to be excellent and should produce a good crop if rain is sufficient. 98-99% of the acreage in the Southeast has been planted. Some fields may be late in planting as they are behind winter wheat. In the West, the dry weather followed by rain has delayed planting in the high plains areas. The planting has started. In Central Texas, there have been problems with flooding and it is still very wet. In South Texas, planting is also late, but they can go later due to minimal risk of frost concerns at harvest. Acres maybe down in places due to commitments to cotton. Acres are also down at some points due to the high prices for soybeans and corn and the demand for cotton. GA06G does not do well with the cropping practices in the West. Ken Barton represents the Florida Panhandle growers. He reported a slight delay due to the weather. The seed quality is outstanding, the stands are good. Chris Liebold asked if peanut acreage is down. Ken stated that it tends to be so when the price of corn rallies. Presently it is close to \$7. Peanuts will suffer as rotations are extended as corn is easy to grow, faster to harvest date and there is a need for a break in nematodes. Ricky stated that the price is appreciated on peanuts. Chris expressed concern about the decrease in acreage as there is a high demand.

### **3. Demand and Consumption**

William asked what is holding back growth and opportunity. Chris stated that Smucker's has had record value growth and sales in the past year or so. The sales may slow a bit with the recovery but there is double digit growth in the Un crustables product which is expected to continue, although the growth in jarred peanut butter is expected to slow from its double digit growth. Other countries are trying to buy peanuts which adds to the pressure.

Mark Kline reported that the Hershey nut sales are available publicly and present growth is expected to continue but they need to have high quality. Anne Marie at MARS reported that company is doing well and present growth should continue but quality needs to stay up with low aflatoxin levels. She asked if farming practices to reduce the levels will continue.

### **4. Nutritional Components**

Chris Liebold reported that a poster will be presented at the upcoming APRES meeting by Julie Marshall (Lubbock Christian University) that will show a high correlation between fat and protein levels. As the fat increases, the protein levels fall. The industry requires an increase in maturity, but don't want to lose the protein levels that peanuts are noted for. Currently, the jumbos and superjumbos have high fat content. The optimum range is found in the mediums and jumbos. Mark Kline stated that the industry wants consistency in the size as that affects butter character. The Nutritional Facts in the USDA database is in need of an update. There may be labelling issues and a follow up is needed on the topic that should be industry led. Chris reported that Smucker's always does validation using lab analyses. He questioned if moisture levels were being considered. Raw peanuts are 6 to 7% moisture which drops significantly (below 1%) with roasting and that will affect the proximate balance. He also asked Lisa Dean as the USDA member if fiber analyses could be considered to be added to current routine composition reports. Lisa replied that there is a great interest in fiber but there is no funding for her lab to add this. It requires a highly trained analyst, special equipment that can not be automated. Current cost from contract laboratories is about \$110 per sample.

### **5. High Oleic Purity**

Mark stated that the purity of lots of high oleic peanuts is of great importance. The high oleic levels increase shelf life of their products. It impacts consumers when purity of lots drops. He questioned how to preserve purity through the whole supply chain. The measure of the bulk oil is not sufficient. He reported about 7 or 8 years ago, purity was a major issue in the Spanish types when the bulk measure of the O/L ratio was below 11 and seed purity was 64 to 83% and there were complaints with one of their candy products. Measuring O/L ratio has issues. The refractometer method is time consuming and destructive. The Seed Meister and the Q Sorter make this more automated. Currently, the Spanish cultivar purity is improved. There are still challenges with the medium runner types. Some purity checks in the 2020 crop have been observed below 85%. The Hershey Company is paying premium for high oleic peanuts. Mark has data on the problem, but it is limited at this time and has not been sorted as to regions. It is

important that this problem does not continue into other years as it was not seen last year in the 2019 crop. There need to be checks throughout the supply chain, not just with the shellers. A follow up conversation on this issue was requested to industry wide to include breeders and shellers. Lisa will be the incoming chair of this committee and needs to schedule this meeting. Consumer complaints used to drive the visibility of this issue, but with the use of the Q Sorter, the supply can be checked. Anne Marie did not have information about this issue at MARS but will check with their scientific group. Chris questioned if immature seed led to the lower purity in the crop that year. Diane Roland has published on this. Mark stated that the industry needs greater than 95% purity and bulk O/L ratios of greater than 11. William asked if the poor quality of the 2019 crop is causing issues now. Mark stated that was a possibility, but that problem is more likely mixed lots rather than mixed seed.

Chris reported that Smucker's is working to find a compromise solution with both the candy manufacturers who need high oleic peanuts and the peanut butter manufacturers who currently require normal oleic peanuts.

#### **6. Uniform Peanut Performance Tests (UPPT)**

Lisa reported that the USDA labs are still under COVID restriction from the agency and are unable to work under normal conditions. She stated that all the participating samples have been received in Raleigh for the 2019 and 2020 growing seasons. The USDA, ARS National Peanut Laboratory in Dawson, GA should be able to report the yield and grade data. The chemistry is predicted to be ready by the end of August for both years.

#### **7. Peanut Foundation Proposals and Funding**

William reported that the Foundation is in Year 2 of Phase II of the Peanut Genome Plan. The areas of importance are peanut diseases resistance, drought tolerance, aflatoxin contamination and flavor retention. He stated that about 14 to 15 projects were funded for 2021. He will have more information at a later date. Chris was at the proposal selection meeting and reported that several aflatoxin studies were funded. Anne Marie asked if there could be a review of the progress on the funded studies at the upcoming Peanut Congress. William thought there would be a report then by Dr. Steve Brown.

#### **8. Other Issues**

Anne Marie asked about APRES. William reported that the meeting would be totally virtual as many university personnel are unable to obtain permission to travel. A report of this meeting will be given at the APRES board meeting on Tuesday, June 15, 2021.

The meeting ended at 11:58 AM.

Submitted by:  
Lisa L. Dean