

**BYLAWS OF THE  
CHRISTMAS TREE PROMOTION BOARD**

Approved April 28, 2020

ARTICLE I

Name

**Section 1.** This board is established pursuant to the authority of the Christmas Tree Promotion, Research and Information Order [7 CFR Part 1214] and shall be designated as the Christmas Tree Promotion Board, hereinafter referred to as the “Board.” The Board is authorized by the Commodity Promotion, Research, and Information Act of 1996 (the “Act”) [7 U.S.C. 7411-7425].

ARTICLE II

Purpose, Powers and Duties

**Section 1.** The purpose of the Board and these Bylaws shall be to implement the provisions of the Christmas Tree Promotion, Research and Information Order, hereinafter referred to as the “Order,” and to carry out a coordinated program of promotion, research, consumer information and industry information for cut Christmas trees, and to establish a fair and orderly procedure to assess and collect adequate funds to sufficiently fulfill the provisions of this program.

**Section 2.** The powers and duties of the Board are herein adopted as described in the Order [7 CFR Part 1214.46]. These Bylaws shall not take precedence to federal statutes (including the Act), the Order, and the USDA, governing powers and duties of the Board.

ARTICLE III

Principal Place of Business

**Section 1.** The principal place of business of the Board shall be at its office located in Howell, Michigan. The Board is hereby granted full power and authority to change the location of the principal office and may establish such other offices, as it deems appropriate.

## ARTICLE IV

### Meetings

**Section 1.** The board shall hold regular meetings. At the first meeting of each calendar year, the Board will select a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer and other officers as appropriate, who will conduct meetings throughout the period.

**Section 2.** Regular Meetings. All Board members will receive a minimum of 14 (fourteen) days advance notice of all Board and committee meetings. The Secretary of Agriculture shall be given the same notice as Members.

**Section 3.** Special Meetings of the Board may be held whenever called by The Chairperson, or Vice-Chairperson acting in the Chairperson's stead, or by joint call of a majority of the Board Members. Such notice must be delivered at least twenty-four hours before the time of such meeting as specified in the notice. Any and all business coming before the Board may be transacted at such special meetings.

**Section 4.** The General Order of Business, unless otherwise determined by the Chairperson shall be as follows:

- a. Roll Call
- b. Reading and approving of minutes of previous meeting(s)
- c. Reports of officers and standing (permanent) committees
- d. Reports of special committees, if necessary
- e. Old business
- f. New business
- g. Additions to agenda items
- h. Executive Session, to address personnel or legal issues, if necessary

**Section 5.** Attendance. If a Member of the Board consistently refuses or otherwise fails to perform the duties of a Member of the Board, or if a Member of the Board engages in acts of dishonesty or willful misconduct, the Board may recommend to the Secretary of Agriculture that the Member be removed from office.

**Section 6.** Quorum and Voting. It will be considered a quorum at a Board or committee meeting when a majority of Members of the Board or persons assigned to a committee are present. Unless otherwise expressly provided by these Bylaws, matters requiring approval or adoption by the Board shall be approved or adopted by a majority vote of the Members present and voting. There shall be no voting by proxy.

**Section 7.** It is the responsibility of the Board through its designee to maintain minutes of all meetings and submit such records to the Secretary. Draft minutes shall be submitted to the Board for review as soon as practicable after the meeting. Approved minutes will be presented in a public format following approval of the Board.

ARTICLE V  
Officers and Their Duties

**Section 1.** The Officers of the Board shall consist of a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer.

**Section 2.** Officer elections are to be held at the first meeting of each calendar year. Officers elected by the Board shall serve one year terms, or until new officers are elected. Officers may be re-elected annually for up to four consecutive one year terms to the office previously held, but may not hold more than one office per term. If so designated by the Board, the position of Secretary/Treasurer may be combined but must be re-established each year as combined.

**Section 3.** The duties of the Chairperson shall be (a) to work closely with the Board Staff, (b) to ensure an agenda for all meetings, (c) to preside at all meetings of the Board; (d) to call meetings of the Board when deemed necessary; (e) to call any meetings necessary of the Executive Committee and preside as Chairperson of such meetings; (f) to have general knowledge of the affairs of the Board, and to perform all acts and duties usually incident to and required of a presiding officer; and (g) to be an ex-officio member of all committees (non-voting and not counting towards quorum).

**Section 4.** The duties of the Vice Chairperson shall be to preside over meetings and otherwise act in the place of the Chairperson in his/her absence, disqualification, desire, or at his/her direction.

**Section 5.** The duties of the Secretary shall be to work closely with the Chairperson and Board staff. The Secretary shall be responsible for working with staff to ensure: (a) The creation and timely distribution of meeting notices; (b) The accurate recording and distribution of the minutes of all meetings of the Board and Executive Committee (c) The accurate recording and distribution of the Bylaws and Polices of the Board.

(g) **Section 6.** The duties of the Treasurer shall be to work closely with the Chairperson and Board staff but does not take day to day responsibility of the finances of the Board. The Treasurer shall be responsible for ensuring: (a) The creation and monitoring of the annual budget including presenting the budget to the board for approval; (b) The submission of Quarterly Financial

Reports to the Secretary of Agriculture and to present a financial report at regular board meetings which shall include: (i) balance sheet, (ii) income statement, and (iii) comparison of expenses with the budget ; (c) Holding regular Finance Committee meetings and to serve as chair of those meetings. (d) The creation and review of financial policies; (e) An audit is conducted annually by an independent certified public accountant and that the final report is made available to the public. That all insurance policies including any fidelity bonds covering officers, employees and agents of the Board are paid and in full force. The Treasurer shall, along with the Executive Director or, in the Executive Director's absence, with the Chair or Vice-Chair, have signing authority for bank accounts and check disbursements. The Treasurer may delegate such duties, subject to Board approval, to an authorized employee(s) or agent(s) of the Board as necessary.

## ARTICLE VI Executive Committee

**Section 1.** The Executive Committee shall consist of the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and Immediate Past Chairperson. In the event that the Past Chairperson is no longer a Board Member, he or she will not be allowed to vote. The Executive Committee will perform the following duties:

- a. Review income and expenditures, monitor cash flow, oversee investment of the Board's cash reserves, and oversee the development of the following year's budget.
- b. Propose periodic budget amendments consistent with actual income and expenditures as may be necessary.
- c. Approve actions when the Board is not in session and to approve Board activities presented by various Board Committees, industry members, vendors or staff as long as the activity and/or action does not obligate funding beyond previously approved limits.
- d. Function as the policy steering committee for the Board subject to final approval by the Board.
- e. Receive and hear complaints regarding Board actions, and make recommendations for corrective action to the Board.
- f. Review personnel and legal matters affecting the Board, including lawsuits challenging the Board.

ARTICLE VII  
Staff and Their Duties

**Section 1.** The Board, or the Executive Committee at the direction of the Board, shall hire an Executive Director, and such other employees as the Board may designate. The Board may contract for management services, in which case contractor must designate one individual who shall serve as Executive Director.

**Section 2.** Subject to the general supervision and control of the Board, the Executive Director shall: (a) employ, supervise, and be responsible for the discharge of all Board employees, independent contractors, consultants, and other suppliers; (b) be responsible for all notices the Board is required to give; (c) assemble, compile, analyze, and provide all information necessary in connection with the performance of official Board duties; (d) be responsible to the Board at all times for the proper administration of Board activities.

**Section 3.** The Executive Director shall ensure compliance with all provisions and requirements of the Act, Order, USDA Guidelines for AMS Commodity Research and Promotion Programs and these Bylaws.

ARTICLE VIII  
Committees

**Section 1.** Standing Committees.

Section 1.1. The Board shall establish Standing Committees as deemed necessary for the carrying out of the purposes and objectives of the Order. The Board Chairperson may appoint Committee Members from public or industry persons in general to serve on Standing Committees where public or industry input is deemed appropriate. All Committees must have at least two Board Members. Standing Committees should include, but not limited to, the following: (a) Promotion; (b) Research; (c) Finance; (d) Industry Relations; and (e) Governance.

Section 1.2. The Board Treasurer shall serve as Chairperson of the Finance Committee. All other Committee Chairpersons and Vice Chairpersons shall be appointed by the Board Chair and confirmed by the Board.

Section 1.3. Only Board Members may serve as Committee Chairs and Vice Chairs, and no Member shall serve as Chair of more than one Standing Committee.

Section 1.4. Committees will develop program plans and proposals for their respective program areas, or any special tasks assigned by the Board, and present such plans and proposals to the Board for approval prior to implementation. Committees will execute their plans after receiving Board approval and keep the Board updated on their progress. Should a committee's plan require significant change a revised plan will be presented to the Board for approval prior to implementation.

Section 1.5. Any person appointed to a Committee who is not a Board Member, shall have all the rights, powers and duties of any other Committee Member, including voting privileges on the Committee, unless otherwise provided in these Bylaws.

Section 1.6. It will be considered a quorum at a Committee meeting when a majority of those assigned to the Committee are present.

## **Section 2. Special Committees.**

Section 2.1. From time to time, Special ad hoc Committees may be established by the Board for the investigation, study or reviews of specific matters as are deemed necessary.

Section 2.2. Special Committee purposes shall be approved by a majority vote of the Board. Special Committees shall limit their activities to the accomplishment of the purpose for which they were created and terminate upon completion of the purpose. Special Committees may be renewed annually by Board approval.

Section 2.3. The Board will outline the intent and purpose of a Special Committee. The objectives and activities of any Special Committee shall be communicated to all Board Members.

Section 2.4. Any person appointed to a Special Committee who is not a Board Member, shall have all the rights, powers and duties of any other Committee Member, including voting privileges on the Committee, unless otherwise provided in these Bylaws.

Section 2.5. It will be considered a quorum at a Special Committee meeting when a majority of those assigned to the Committee are present. Decisive acts of the Special Committee are subject to final Board approval and are to be presented in the form of recommendations.

## ARTICLE IX Personal Liability

**Section 1.** No Board Member or employee shall be held personally responsible, either individually or jointly with others, in any way whatsoever, to any person for errors in judgment, mistakes, or other acts of either commission or omission of such Member or employee of the Board, except for acts of dishonesty or willful misconduct. The Board shall maintain appropriate Board and Officers liability insurance coverage.

## ARTICLE X

### Bonds

**Section 1.** Board Officers, employees, and agents who handle funds for the Board shall be placed under fidelity bonds issued by a reputable bonding company in an amount to be fixed by the Board prior to the start of the fiscal year. The premiums of such bonds shall be paid by the Board.

## ARTICLE XI

### Procedure and Transaction of Business

**Section 1.** The Board shall be governed in its deliberations and in the transaction of business by these Bylaws and the provisions of the Order and the Act. Any matter of procedure not covered by these Bylaws shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order.

**Section 2.** No person who is not a Board Member, Committee member, or employee or representative of the Secretary of Agriculture shall be entitled to participate in the deliberations and proceedings or speak at official meetings of the Board, its Executive Committee, or its other Committees, unless authorized by the Chairperson or the Committee Chairperson.

## ARTICLE XII

### Powers of the Board

**Section 1.** Any Officer, agent, employee appointed, elected, or employed by the Board shall be subject to removal or suspension by the Board at any time. No Board Officer, Member, employee, or agent shall have the authority to obligate the Board unless such authority has been expressly delegated. All decisions, acts or performances of any such Officer, Member, employee or agent shall be subject to the continuing right of the Board to disapprove of the same, and upon disapproval by the Board, shall be deemed null and void to such extent as the Board may determine.

## ARTICLE XIII

### Expenses

**Section 1.** Board Members, committee members, or employees, when acting on authorized business, shall be reimbursed for necessary and reasonable expenses incurred by them in the performance of their duties as stated in our policy statement.

ARTICLE XIV  
Amendments

**Section 1.** The Board may amend these Bylaws subject to approval of the Secretary of Agriculture at any Board meeting by an affirmative vote of a majority of its Members. All Board Members and the Secretary of Agriculture shall be notified at least fourteen (14) calendar days in advance that an amendment will be considered.

ARTICLE XV  
Adoption

**Section 1.** These Bylaws and any amendments thereto shall become immediately effective upon adoption by a majority vote of the Board and approval of the Secretary of Agriculture.