Participants
Conor Bergin               AGCO
Bill Hurley                AGCO
Ken Lehmann                Case IH
Heather Van Nest           Deere & Co.
Brent Stiers               Equipment Technologies
Mark Anderson              GVM, Inc.
Dale Szuminski             Hardi North America
Grant Lien                 Versatile
Charlie O’Brien            AEM
Anita Sennett              AEM

Presenters
Todd Howatt                AGCO
Karl Klotzbach             Case IH
Chris Burziek              Deere & Co.
Anne Overstreet            EPA – Office of Pesticide Programs
Faruque Khan               EPA – Office of Pesticide Programs

Guests
See attached copy of sign-in sheet

Absent & Excused
Bob Armstrong              Hagie Manufacturing

Chairman Dale Szuminski, Hardi North America, Presiding

I. Welcome:
Chairman Dale Szuminski, President, Hardi North America welcomed the group and thanked AGCO for hosting the meeting. He noted that this would not be a conventional meeting, but would consist mainly of a presentation and dialogue with EPA’s Office of Pesticide Programs on their new star rating program for Drift Reduction Technology as well as a proposal by the AEM Liquid Applications Equipment Technical Group with regard to group collaboration on R&D projects related to drift reduction. Introductions were made around the room.

II. Previous Meeting Minutes:
The minutes of the previous meeting on February 12, 2015 were approved as is.
III. **EPA – Drift Reduction Technology star rating program:**

AEM Director of Government Affairs Nick Tindall introduced Anne Overstreet, Chief, Communication Services Branch and Faruque Khan, Senior Scientist, both from EPA’s Office of Pesticide Programs.

Anne and Faruque spoke about the new star rating program for agriculture sprayers developed as part of EPA’s Drift Reduction Technology program. Essentially the program would rate sprayers’ effectiveness at drift mitigation, and apply a star rating – much like the star rating program used for household appliances’ energy efficiency today. Star rating stickers may be applied to sprayer products.

Farmers will benefit from buying product with higher star ratings because the higher the rating, the fewer use restrictions they will have to contend with. Reduced buffer zones is a good example.

When asked, EPA stated that they launched the program in order to benefit farmers and the agriculture industry overall. Chemicals are being re-tested and re-classified, and EPA anticipates that buffer zones and other restrictions will greatly increase. They see this program as a means by which farmers may decrease those buffer zones and other restrictions, benefitting the farmer and ultimately all of us by not severely reducing crop acreage and thereby slashing yields.

Manufacturers would need to conduct tests and submit data to EPA in order to be a part of the registry. EPA stressed that before doing any testing, manufacturers should contact EPA to ensure they are done in accordance with the program and that the data submitted is formatted correctly and meets the program requirements.

While EPA initially intends to focus the program on nozzles, they understand now that drift mitigation is a complex challenge encompassing many different aspects beyond the nozzle. They learned firsthand about the various product innovations and numerous drift mitigation approaches undertaken by AEM Sprayer Leadership Group members while touring their booths with AEM staff at Farm Progress Show the previous day. They acknowledged that talking directly with manufacturers and viewing the equipment was extremely educational and helped them to understand that there is a much broader scope than initially realized.

EPA requested that manufacturers contact them to begin conducting tests and submitting data for benchmarking. Several members stayed after the meeting for more in-depth, one-on-one discussion with Ms. Overstreet and Mr. Khan. For more details, see the attached summary compiled by members of AEM’s Liquid Applications Equipment Technical Group who were in attendance at the meeting. Also attached are materials provided by EPA.
IV.  **Collaborative Spray Drift Reduction R&D Proposal:** Chris Bursiek, Todd Howatt and Karl Klotzbach of AEM’s Liquid Applications Equipment Technical Group (LAETG) provided an update on collaborative spray drift mitigation research and development projects underway and planned for the future. Several AEM sprayer manufacturers have been involved. They noted that a presentation on the projects was given at the February Sprayer Leadership Group Meeting. This was followed by a WebEx presentation going into further technical detail.

LAETG recommends that, especially in light of the need for benchmark and other test data expressed by EPA, it would make sense for the Sprayer Leadership Group to all come together and collaboratively conduct research resulting in science-based data and use that to develop industry solutions towards mitigating drift. The projects would also involve universities and groups like CropLife America, and would allow AEM sprayer manufacturer members some influence over the publication of test results. All of these stakeholders together would have a stronger voice with EPA.

LAETG proposed that each Sprayer Leadership Group member company submit an initial contribution of $5,000, or whatever each company would deem appropriate, towards this research under the AEM umbrella. One AEM/LAETG member company already contributed $50,000 seed money to initiate the work. Participating companies would benefit from the data directly, as well as indirectly by gaining an industry solution beneficial to manufacturers. A series of projects will be undertaken over the next 5 years, and additional requests may be made as required.

VII.  **Next Meeting:**
The next meeting is to be determined – perhaps at Louisville in February or Commodity Classic in March.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Anita Sennett
9/28/15