

**Minutes  
Minnesota Sunflower Council  
Monday, March 17, 2025 8:00 am  
Zoom Meeting**

Members Present: John Swanson, Kevin Capistran, Tom Smude, Greg Hilgeman, and Tom Dowdle. Members Absent: None

Others Present: Tina Mittelsteadt, John Sandbakken, Chuck Todd, NSA Board President, and Justin Parisot with Drexel Chemical

The meeting was called to order by Kevin Capistran at 8:06 a.m. as John Swanson is running a few minutes late due to bad roads. John Swanson arrived at 8:10 a.m. and continued with running the meeting.

Introductions were made since there were guests in attendance.

The minutes of the January 6, 2025, were reviewed – **a motion to approve the minutes was made Kevin Capistran and seconded by Tom Dowdle. Motion passed.**

Tina Mittelsteadt provided the financial report for February 2025. The Council collected \$6,277.60 in check-off funds and \$6.29 in interest. We had no expenses in February. The MSC has a cash fund balance of \$45,324.74 as of February 28, 2025.

**Greg Hilgeman made a motion to approve the financial report, and it was seconded by Kevin Capistran. Motion passed.**

**DC Update:**

Tom Dowdle provided the council with an update on the NSA's DC Trip. Five NSA board members and John Sandbakken made the trip to DC. They had extensive meetings with various state representatives where they shared the NSA's policies and priorities. They also asked for the continuation of the monies for the greenhouses and the sunflower breeding initiative. They met with Senate and House Ag Committees to try and push a new Farm Bill; however, the consensus is the current Farm Bill will be extended.

**NSA Research Grant Update:**

Tom Dowdle reported that the NSA funded seven of the seventeen research projects they received with the amount around \$242,000. The NSA Confection Committee, High Plains Committee, and Manitoba Crop Alliance contributed funding towards projects.

**Defol® 5 Discussion:**

Justin Parisot with Drexel Chemical made a presentation to the Council on Defol® 5. The product is the only leading Sodium Chlorate product in the U.S. market. It is used as a

desiccant. 15 gallons per acre for ground application and 5 gallons per application for arial application, apply in temperatures greater than 60 degrees, and no rain within 24 hours.

Justin said if there is a grower or two would be interested in testing the product to contact him and he would set them up with the product and whatever is needed at no cost.

### **Crop Reports:**

John Swanson reported he has received phone calls from producers showing interest in growing sunflowers so acres should be up in his area this year.

Kevin Capistran reported that the Mentor plant has been purchased by a birdfood plant (Lizzie Mae's Bird Seed and Dry Goods). They are offering contracts for 2025. Kevin said acres will increase in his area, especially with the Mentor plant opening back up.

Tom Smude reported the price of seed increased a lot. They still need about 4 million pounds to make it to new crop. They need about 8,000 acres per year with about 40 to 44 percent oil for processing. They will be refining without any chemicals (using citrus) now that their refinery is complete. They plan to contract directly with producers to deliver directly to plant at harvest.

Tom Dowdle reported they have received five inches of snow, and it is still snowing. He is seeing an increase in interest since the price of sunflowers have increased. The remaining sales will be high oleic seed. Tom has increased the acres on his farm for 2025.

Greg Hilgeman stated the 2024 crop has finally been harvested in his area. He believes acres will be up in his area.

### **Other Business:**

None

Next Meeting: Tuesday, May 20<sup>th</sup> 7:30 a.m. via Zoom.

**Motion to adjourn by Greg Hilgeman and seconded by Tom Smude. Motion Carries.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:42 a.m.

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Chairman: John Swanson  
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Signed by:  
Secretary: Tom Smude  
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