Cherry Industry Administrative Board (CIAB)

Board Orientation Handbook

U.S. Tart Cherry Industry

October 2026

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Overview & How to Use This Handbook

This Board Orientation Handbook is designed to provide a clear and practical overview of how the Cherry Industry Administrative Board (CIAB) operates, how it fits within the broader industry structure, and how Board members contribute effectively.

The document is organized to build understanding in a logical sequence:

- **Sections 1–2:** Introduce CIAB's role in the U.S. tart cherry industry, explain the distinct responsibilities and geographic scope of CIAB, CMI, and MCC, and describe how their work connects.
- **Sections 3–6:** Explain CIAB's authority under the Federal Marketing Order, its responsibilities, and your role as a Board member.
- **Sections 7–10:** Describe the governance principles, decision-making framework, and meeting practices that guide effective Board service.
- **Sections 11–12:** Highlight the Board's FY27 strategic priorities and the commitments expected of every Board member.
- **Sections 13–14:** Provide key resources and reference materials to support your ongoing service.

This handbook is intended to serve as both:

- A foundational orientation resource for new Board members
- A practical reference guide for ongoing Board service

You are not expected to read this handbook cover to cover in one sitting. Instead, use it as a reference whenever questions arise during your Board service.

If you have questions or would like additional context, CIAB staff leadership is available to provide support.

1. Welcome & Purpose

Welcome—and thank you for your willingness to serve the U.S. tart cherry industry.

Whether you are joining the Cherry Industry Administrative Board (CIAB) for the first time or continuing your service, your leadership plays an important role in the future of our industry.

The U.S. tart cherry industry is supported by three distinct organizations—the Cherry Industry Administrative Board (CIAB), the Cherry Marketing Institute (CMI), and the Michigan Cherry Committee (MCC). Each Board operates independently, with its own authority, responsibilities, and geographic scope. Their activities may align, and they may share overhead or administrative expenses, while each Board retains independent decision-making authority over its functions. CIAB's work is guided by the industry's overarching purpose:

To Revitalize and Sustain the U.S. Tart Cherry Industry—Economically and Culturally— for Generations to Come.

The Cherry Industry Administrative Board serves a unique role within that system. Established under Federal Marketing Order No. 930, CIAB provides the governance, oversight, and regulatory framework that enables the industry to work together strategically and effectively.

This orientation handbook is designed to help you understand:

- How the U.S. tart cherry industry is organized;
- The unique role CIAB plays within that larger system;
- How CIAB, CMI, and MCC serve the industry through distinct roles while retaining independent decision-making authority; and
- What is expected of you as a CIAB Board member.

Our goal is not simply to provide information, but to help you understand how your service contributes to something much larger than any one organization.

This handbook is designed to serve as both an orientation resource and a practical reference guide throughout your Board service. You are not expected to memorize its contents. Instead, we encourage you to use it as a resource whenever questions arise about the industry, the Board, or your responsibilities as a Board member.

Everything we do—individually and collectively—should support our shared purpose and strengthen the long-term success of the U.S. tart cherry industry.

Tart Cherries and the Marketing Order's Scope

Federal Marketing Order No. 930 regulates the handling of covered tart/sour cherries grown within its defined production area: Michigan, New York, Pennsylvania, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wisconsin. These seven states are organized into nine districts—three in Michigan and one in each of the other six states.

The order's definition of cherries includes the tart/sour cherry varieties and specified hybrids described in 7 CFR 930.3. Its coverage extends beyond Montmorency and does not encompass all U.S. cherry production.

References in this handbook to U.S.-grown Montmorency tart cherries reflect the industry's market-development focus. CIAB's regulatory responsibilities are determined by the varieties, production area, and activities covered by the order.

Tart cherries are the primary focus of this shared industry work because that work spans seven producing states. CMI and MCC also serve sweet cherries, with those responsibilities limited to Michigan. This difference in scope is why we refer to the broader effort as the U.S. tart cherry industry.

2. How the Industry Works Together

The U.S. tart cherry industry is supported by three distinct organizations with complementary roles. CMI works with CIAB and MCC, while each organization maintains its own authority, responsibilities, and geographic scope. Each Board independently makes decisions within its own authority. Each contributes through the following work:

- The Cherry Industry Administrative Board (CIAB) administers Federal Marketing Order No. 930 under USDA oversight. The order regulates the handling of covered tart cherries grown in its defined seven-state production area.
- The Cherry Marketing Institute (CMI) builds demand and expands market opportunities for U.S.-grown Montmorency tart cherries and Michigan sweet cherries through strategic marketing, communications, research, and market development.
- The Michigan Cherry Committee (MCC) strengthens Michigan's tart and sweet cherry industry through research, education, and strategic investments that support growers, processors, and the long-term vitality of the industry.

The broader cherry industry also includes other state, regional, and international organizations that support their respective growers and industries. Activities may align where priorities overlap, while each organization retains independent decision-making authority. This handbook focuses on the distinct roles of CIAB, CMI, and MCC and how their work connects.

Tart Cherry Industry Organizations at a Glance

Independent boards serving the cherry industry

OUR SHARED INDUSTRY PURPOSE

Revitalize and sustain the U.S. tart cherry industry—economically and culturally—for generations to come.

	CIAB Cherry Industry Administrative Board	CMI Cherry Marketing Institute	MCC Michigan Cherry Committee
LEGAL STRUCTURE	Federal Marketing Order No. 930	501(c)(6) nonprofit	State statutory authority
PRIMARY ROLE	Administers Federal Marketing Order No. 930 for producers and handlers within the regulated production area.	Builds demand for U.S.-grown Montmorency tart cherries and Michigan sweet cherries, and funds research.	Identifies Michigan growers' orchard research priorities and supports education and grower involvement.
INDUSTRY FOCUS	Tart cherries covered by the federal marketing order: seven states and nine districts.	U.S.-grown Montmorency tart cherries and Michigan sweet cherries.	Michigan tart and sweet cherries.
PRIMARY FUNDING	Handler assessments under Federal Marketing Order No. 930.	95% of Michigan tart and sweet cherry assessments, plus funding from Utah and Wisconsin tart cherry assessments.	Retains 5% of Michigan tart and sweet cherry assessments.
AUTHORITY AND OVERSIGHT	USDA Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)	CMI Board, under its bylaws	Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD)

How the Organizations Connect

CMI works with CIAB and MCC. Each board retains independent decision-making authority over its own functions.

MCC directs 95% of its Michigan tart and sweet cherry assessments to CMI.

Michigan sweet cherries: CMI and MCC also serve Michigan's sweet cherry industry.

3. What is the Cherry Industry Administrative Board (CIAB)?

The Cherry Industry Administrative Board (CIAB) administers Federal Marketing Order No. 930 under USDA oversight. The order regulates the handling of covered tart cherries grown within its defined seven-state production area. It provides a framework for growers and handlers to address shared challenges through authorized industry programs.

As a CIAB Board member, you help oversee the governance, funding, and strategic direction that support industry-wide initiatives, including supply management, research, and market development.

Because the U.S. tart cherry industry spans multiple growing regions, stakeholders, and changing market conditions, coordinated leadership is essential. CIAB exists to provide that leadership—ensuring the industry can work together strategically, responsibly, and within the authority of Federal Marketing Order No. 930 to support its long-term success.

4. What is a Federal Marketing Order?

A Federal Marketing Order (FMO) is a program authorized under the Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act of 1937, as amended. For tart cherries, Federal Marketing Order No. 930 is codified at 7 CFR Part 930 and administered under USDA oversight. It allows covered growers and handlers to work together through programs and activities specifically authorized by the order.

For the U.S. tart cherry industry, Federal Marketing Order No. 930 provides the legal and operational framework that enables CIAB to:

- Administer programs on behalf of the industry
- Collect and allocate industry assessments
- Support research, market development, and other authorized initiatives
- Manage supply through established mechanisms

As part of this framework:

- CIAB operates under USDA oversight.
- Board members are appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture.
- All Board actions must remain within the authority granted under the Marketing Order.

Working Within Federal Requirements

CIAB's authority permits collective work on activities authorized by the Act and the Marketing Order. Antitrust protection is limited to that authorized work. Board members and staff must not enter into unauthorized agreements to fix prices or otherwise unlawfully restrict competition.

CIAB assessment funds may not be used for lobbying. Communications with government officials must follow USDA requirements, which allow factual education and actions specifically authorized by the Act or Marketing Order.

If there is uncertainty about a proposed discussion or activity, seek guidance from the Chair, staff leadership, or USDA before proceeding.

5. CIAB Responsibilities

The Cherry Industry Administrative Board provides strategic oversight of Federal Marketing Order No. 930 and serves as a steward of the U.S. tart cherry industry. Through strategic leadership and thoughtful investment of industry resources, the Board helps strengthen industry stability, ensure responsible stewardship of assessment dollars, and position the industry for long-term success.

Authority Under the Marketing Order

CIAB's authorized functions and duties include:

- Volume regulation, inventory reserves, and diversion programs.
- Production and processing research, market research and development, and promotion, including paid advertising.
- Minimum quality standards and related inspection and certification requirements.
- Industry data collection, reporting, protection of confidential information, and compliance monitoring.
- Assessments, budgets, contracts, financial records, and audits.
- Organizational governance and administration, including bylaws, committees, staffing, and recommendations to USDA for amendments to the order.

These functions must be carried out within the order's requirements and applicable USDA approvals. Some authorized tools may not currently be in use. The responsibilities below explain how the Board governs and oversees this work.

Manage Supply

Balance available supply with market demand by overseeing the volume regulation provisions of the Federal Marketing Order. When necessary, the Board may recommend free and restricted percentages to help promote orderly marketing and long-term industry stability.

Invest Industry Resources

Allocate assessment dollars to initiatives that strengthen the U.S. tart cherry industry. Investments may include research, market development, promotion, and industry priorities approved through the Board's strategic planning and budgeting processes.

Set Policy & Provide Organizational Oversight

The Board sets organizational policy and strategic direction, provides oversight of the President, and evaluates the results of Board-approved programs.

Staff leadership develops program proposals and day-to-day operating procedures, implements approved initiatives, and reports on progress within approved policies and delegated authority.

Regulatory rules and procedures remain subject to the Marketing Order and applicable USDA approval requirements.

Ensure Responsible Stewardship

Operate within the authority of Federal Marketing Order No. 930 while maintaining sound governance, fiscal responsibility, and accountability for industry resources. Through thoughtful decision-making and oversight, the Board helps safeguard the integrity of the Marketing Order and the confidence of the industry it serves.

6. What This Means for You as a Board Member

Serving on the CIAB Board means serving as a steward of the U.S. tart cherry industry. Your role is not to manage day-to-day operations, but to provide strategic leadership, exercise sound judgment, and help guide the long-term success of the industry.

As a CIAB Board member, you will:

- Set the strategic direction of the organization.
- Approve budgets and major initiatives, subject to applicable USDA approval requirements.
- Represent the interests of producers and handlers within the regulated production area.
- Ensure Board decisions remain within the authority of Federal Marketing Order No. 930.
- Provide oversight while empowering staff leadership to execute the Board's direction.

Staff leadership manages day-to-day operations and implements the Board's direction. Together, the Board and staff leadership work in partnership to advance the long-term success of the U.S. tart cherry industry.

Board Structure and Service

The Board includes growers, handlers, at-large members, and a public member. Each member has an alternate. Representation across the nine districts is based on production, and Board size may change under the order's allocation rules. Use the current roster for membership and district assignments.

Selection and Terms

The Secretary of Agriculture appoints members and alternates through the nomination and selection process established by the Marketing Order. Regular terms are three years, beginning June 1 and ending May 31, with a limit of two consecutive three-year terms. Consult staff about an individual appointment, partial term, or vacancy.

Alternates

An alternate acts in the member's place when that member is absent. An alternate may not act in place of a member who is attending. If you cannot attend, contact Heather Weber in advance to coordinate your alternate's participation. If both you and your alternate will be absent, contact Heather to confirm that any proposed substitute alternate meets the order's applicable constituency and district requirements and that the required designation process is followed. This is not an unrestricted proxy vote.

Officers and Committees

The Board elects its officers annually. Officers include the Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, and at-large leadership positions as provided in the current governing documents.

The Executive/Finance Committee supports the Board's work, including review of audit findings and recommendations to the Board. Committees and working groups carry out assigned duties within their documented authority; they do not automatically hold the full Board's decision-making powers.

For current officer assignments, committee membership, and any delegated authority, consult the Board roster, CIAB By-Laws, and relevant Board actions.

References: 7 CFR 930.20–930.28; CIAB By-Laws, Articles II and V.

7. Governance Foundations

Effective governance is the foundation of a high-performing Board.

The Cherry Industry Administrative Board operates on behalf of producers and handlers within the regulated production area. Every Board member shares a responsibility to provide strategic leadership, exercise sound judgment, and act in the best interests of the industry served by the Marketing Order.

The governance principles that follow provide the foundation for how the Board fulfills that responsibility.

Govern Strategically

The CIAB Board:

- Sets strategic direction within the framework of Federal Marketing Order No. 930
- Approves budgets and major industry initiatives, subject to applicable USDA approval requirements
- Provides oversight of programs and resource allocation
- Represents the interests of producers and handlers within the regulated production area

Empower Staff Leadership

CIAB staff leadership:

- Executes Board-approved programs and initiatives
- Manages day-to-day operations
- Implements the Board's strategic direction
- Provides analysis and recommendations to support Board decision-making

Fulfill Your Fiduciary Duty

As a Board member, you are entrusted with:

- Acting in the best interests of the industry as a whole
- Exercising sound judgment in decision-making
- Ensuring the responsible and effective use of industry resources

Think Independently. Lead Collectively.

- Bring your individual experience and perspective to every discussion.
- Respect and consider differing viewpoints.
- Once decisions are made, support them as a unified Board.

Operate Within Your Authority

As a federally authorized Board operating under USDA oversight:

- Conduct all activities within the authority of the Federal Marketing Order.
- Follow applicable federal requirements and Board policies.
- Recognize that the Board governs by setting strategic direction, approving major initiatives, and providing oversight, while empowering staff leadership to manage day-to-day operations within the authority of the Federal Marketing Order.

Strong governance begins with understanding roles and responsibilities. The next section builds on these principles by describing how the Board and staff leadership work together to support effective decision-making and execution.

8. How We Work Together

Strong governance depends on more than clearly defined roles—it also depends on how we work together.

Effective Board service is built on trust, open communication, mutual respect, and a shared commitment to advancing the best interests of the U.S. tart cherry industry.

When Board members and staff leadership understand their respective roles and work collaboratively, the Board can focus its time where it adds the greatest value.

We Each Have a Role

Clear decision-making is central to effective governance.

Board:

- Set direction and priorities
- Approve budgets and major initiatives, subject to applicable USDA approval requirements
- Evaluate and guide key organizational decisions.

Staff Leadership:

- Lead execution of Board-approved initiatives
- Manage day-to-day operations
- Develop recommendations and strategic options for Board consideration
- Implement Board direction and oversee programs and partners

Together:

- Share industry perspective
- Discuss opportunities and challenges
- Challenge ideas and recommendations

When these roles are clear, decision-making becomes more efficient, focused, and effective.

Where the Board Adds the Most Value

The Board's role is not to manage day-to-day execution, but to focus on areas where its perspective and leadership are most impactful:

- Set strategic direction.
- Make key decisions.
- Provide industry insight and perspective.

Focusing on these areas ensures that Board time is used where it matters most.

How We Work Together

Effective Board operations are grounded in a few key principles:

- Clarity of roles – Understanding where Board and staff leadership responsibilities begin and end
- Trust – Confidence in the roles and expertise of both Board and staff leadership
- Open communication – Constructive, respectful dialogue
- No surprises – Ensuring transparency and alignment on key issues

Meeting Expectations

Board meetings are designed to:

- Focus on key decisions and strategic discussions
- Provide the information needed to make informed decisions
- Allow for meaningful discussion and input

Board members and alternates are expected to:

- Come prepared and engaged.
- Focus on the issues at hand.
- Contribute constructively to discussions.
- Bring their experience and district perspective while putting the long-term interests of the industry as a whole ahead of individual business interests.

Clarity in how we operate enables stronger decisions, better execution, and greater outcomes for the industry.

What This Looks Like in Practice

Examples of how this structure applies:

Optimum Supply Computation

- **Board:** Reviews the analysis, evaluates options, and adopts recommendations within the Marketing Order. Final free and restricted percentages are recommended to USDA.
- **Staff Leadership:** Develops analysis and recommendations, coordinates required USDA submissions, and administers decisions after the necessary approvals or regulatory action.

Industry Initiatives (e.g., True Tart™)

- **Board:** Sets direction, approves the program framework, and oversees results within the Marketing Order and applicable USDA requirements.
- **Staff Leadership:** Leads program development, administration, rollout, and reporting within approved policies and delegated authority.

Budget & Resource Allocation

- **Board:** Approves priorities and funding recommendations, secures required USDA approval, and monitors financial performance.
- **Staff Leadership:** Manages spending within approved budgets, internal controls, and delegated authority; provides financial reports to support Board oversight.

9. Decision Authority & Accountability

Effective governance depends on clear decision authority. Understanding which decisions belong to the Board, which belong to staff leadership, and which require USDA approval helps ensure accountability, efficient operations, and effective use of Board time.

While Board members and staff leadership work closely together, they have distinct responsibilities that complement one another.

Decision Ownership

Board Governs

The Board establishes the organization's strategic direction and provides oversight of:

- Strategic priorities and direction
- Annual budgets, funding recommendations, and financial performance
- Major industry initiatives and programs
- Policies and actions within the authority of Federal Marketing Order No. 930

Staff Leads

Staff leadership leads execution by:

- Executing Board-approved initiatives
- Managing operational decisions within approved budgets, policies, internal controls, and delegated authority
- Developing recommendations and strategic options for Board consideration
- Overseeing program implementation and external partners

USDA Approval and Regulatory Action

CIAB's authority comes from the Marketing Order. A Board vote may approve an organizational action or adopt a recommendation that requires USDA approval or regulatory action before it takes effect.

- Budgets and assessments: The Board develops its budget and assessment recommendations for USDA review and approval. USDA establishes the assessment rate following the Board's recommendation.
- Volume regulation: The Board evaluates supply and demand and recommends final free and restricted percentages. USDA issues the applicable volume regulation under the order. USDA's informal rulemaking follows the Administrative Procedure Act's applicable proposed-rule and public-comment requirements.
- Other programs and procedures: Follow the Marketing Order and applicable USDA requirements for approvals, amendments, and implementation.

Before a vote, make clear what the Board is deciding, what further approval is required, and who is responsible for the next step. Staff coordinates the necessary submissions and keeps the Board informed.

References: 7 CFR 930.40–930.41 and 930.50–930.51.

Shared Responsibilities

Board members and staff leadership share industry insight, evaluate opportunities and challenges, discuss strategic options, and strengthen decisions through open dialogue.

In Practice

A helpful way to think about decision-making:

- Direction, priorities, major initiatives, and oversight: Board, within the authority of the Marketing Order.
- Day-to-day execution: Staff leadership, within approved policies, budgets, and delegated authority.
- Actions requiring USDA approval or regulation: Board recommendation followed by the required USDA process.

Why This Matters

Clear authority focuses Board time on important issues, enables staff to execute efficiently, reduces duplication and confusion, and supports timely decisions.

10. Board Meetings: What to Expect

Board meetings are where the Board fulfills its governance responsibilities. They provide time for informed discussion, decisions, and oversight of the Marketing Order and Board-approved programs.

Board members should understand the basics of Robert's Rules of Order, including making a motion, obtaining a second when required, participating in discussion, and applying the Board's quorum and voting criteria. The Chair and staff leadership guide the process so every member can participate confidently and effectively. The following page explains these procedures and voting requirements.

Before the Meeting

- Review the Board packet and pre-read materials in advance.
- Identify questions, information gaps, and the strategic implications of agenda items.
- Contact Heather Weber promptly if you cannot attend so alternate participation and applicable constituency requirements can be confirmed under the Marketing Order.

Agenda Structure

These agenda categories help members prepare and use meeting time effectively:

Pre-Read

Information provided in advance for Board awareness. Members may request clarification without requiring a full presentation of every update.

Discussion

Items requiring Board dialogue, feedback, or strategic guidance before future action.

Discussion & Board Action

Items requiring formal consideration and, when appropriate, a motion and vote. The requested action should distinguish a Board decision from a recommendation requiring USDA approval.

Meeting Flow

- Call to order, roll call, and confirmation of a quorum.
- Approval of previous meeting minutes and financial statements for the reporting period ending on the date specified in the agenda, and review of the agenda.
- Discussion of agenda items and consideration of motions.
- Confirmation of decisions, follow-up responsibilities, and any required USDA action.
- Adjournment.

How Board Decisions Are Made

A member makes a motion, another member seconds it when required, the Board discusses the proposal, and a vote is taken. A second indicates support for considering the motion; it does not necessarily indicate support for the proposed action.

The Chair follows the Marketing Order, applicable regulations, and CIAB By-Laws. Robert's Rules of Order guides procedural matters not covered by those documents.

Quorum and Voting

Two-thirds of the Board's members, including alternates acting for absent members, constitute a quorum. For an action to pass, at least two-thirds of the entire Board must vote in support. The required vote is based on the entire Board, not only those present.

Public Meetings and Minutes

Board meetings are open to the public, with limited executive sessions for certain business as permitted under the Marketing Order. Meeting notice and participation procedures must follow the order, CIAB By-Laws, and applicable USDA requirements.

Minutes summarize the subjects discussed, motions, and voting results, including individual votes when a roll call vote is taken. They record the Board's recommendations and the information supporting its work.

References: 7 CFR 930.28 and 930.32; CIAB By-Laws, Articles IV and VII.

Strategic Questions

When evaluating proposals and recommendations, ask:

- Does this advance CIAB's FY27 priorities and the long-term interests of the industry served by the Marketing Order?
- Is this within CIAB's authority, and what Board or USDA approval is required?
- Is the proposed use of assessment dollars consistent with the purpose and requirements of the funding?
- What results do we expect, and how will the Board evaluate progress and effectiveness?
- How will this help improve grower profitability and strengthen the industry's long-term viability?

Our Collective Board Behaviors

The FY27 industry framework identifies four collective behaviors. CIAB members apply them within the responsibilities and authority of this Board.

EDUCATE — Come Prepared

Review materials, ask questions, and share knowledge that helps the Board make informed decisions.

INNOVATE — Think Strategically

Consider new ideas, evidence, and practical improvements that support the industry's long-term success.

ADVOCATE — Contribute Your Perspective

Bring your experience to Board discussions and help explain the industry's needs through factual education and authorized activities. CIAB assessment funds may not be used for lobbying; communications must follow USDA requirements.

COLLABORATE — Value Every Voice

Listen respectfully, allow space for differing viewpoints, and work toward sound collective decisions. Participate fully, whether attending in person or virtually.

11. FY27 Strategic Priorities

CIAB's FY27 priorities connect the U.S. tart cherry industry strategy with the Board's responsibilities under Federal Marketing Order No. 930.

The shared tart cherry strategy has three mandates:

- **Improve Industry Profitability — Starting with the Grower**
- **Sustain Marketplace Growth — Focus Where It Matters Most**
- **Unite the Industry — Build Capacity for the Future**

CIAB and CMI advance aligned strategic priorities through separate budgets, responsibilities, and approval processes. Each Board independently determines its organization's actions. CIAB governs its investments within the Marketing Order and applicable USDA requirements. Alignment does not transfer authority or funding responsibility between organizations.

For example, the multi-year varietal innovation roadmap is part of the shared industry strategy and is assigned to CMI's investment plan. CIAB's principal FY27 priorities are outlined below.

Reform the Optimum Supply Formula

Why It Matters

The Optimum Supply Formula (OSF) supports the order's supply-management process. Annual production, inventories, and market conditions require careful analysis so Board recommendations support orderly marketing and long-term industry stability.

FY27 Focus

- Assess the 2026 learning year, including the recommendations, available data, and stakeholder experience.
- Develop process improvements, including clearer data, transparency, and consideration of an economic adjustment factor and extreme situations.
- Determine the FY27 approach and bring recommendations to the Board, with any required changes subject to the Marketing Order and USDA approval.

How the Board Adds Value

Review evidence and stakeholder perspectives, evaluate proposed changes, and distinguish recommendations from actions that can be implemented under existing authority.

Scale the True Tart™ Certification Mark

Why It Matters

CIAB administers the True Tart™ certification program to help buyers identify qualifying products whose tart cherry ingredients are 100% U.S.-grown Montmorency tart cherries. The 100% statement describes the tart cherry ingredients' variety and origin; it does not mean the entire finished product consists of cherries.

Products must also meet the program's other eligibility and use requirements. The current certification standards and program materials govern qualification and use of the mark.

FY27 Focus

- Increase participation by processors and expand the number of qualifying products carrying the mark.
- Strengthen appropriate use of the mark on packaging, websites, and at trade shows.
- Build awareness through coordinated communications and industry voices.
- Apply program criteria consistently and monitor participation, marketplace adoption, and program performance.

How the Board Adds Value

Set direction, oversee certification standards and program governance, evaluate policy recommendations, and protect the mark's credibility. Staff administers the program and reports results within approved policies and delegated authority.

Sustain Marketplace Growth

Why It Matters

Demand development and supply management support the same long-term goal: a viable U.S. tart cherry industry. FY27 concentrates marketplace investment where the strategy identifies the strongest opportunities to build use and demand.

FY27 Focus

- Strengthen foodservice and ingredient buyer adoption through focused outreach, culinary applications, and connections between interested buyers and industry suppliers.
- Advance the industry's voice through coordinated communications, earned media, and credible third-party expertise.
- Amplify existing health-benefits research, including work on muscle strength and recovery, and advance the evidence on sleep. Communications must accurately reflect the science and comply with applicable U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and Federal Trade Commission (FTC) communication requirements.
- Evaluate program performance and adjust execution within approved budgets and responsibilities.

How the Board Adds Value

Approve priorities and investment recommendations, oversee CIAB-funded work and its coordination with CMI, and evaluate intended results. Staff and program partners manage execution and provide the reporting needed for Board oversight.

Build Industry Capacity

Why It Matters

The industry's future depends on informed Board members, effective leadership, and continued participation across growing regions and generations.

FY27 Focus

- Develop industry leaders through connected Board orientation, governance education, and leadership development.
- Strengthen alignment through focused committees and working groups, including CIAB's OSF work and development of a next-generation leadership group.
- Sustain industry engagement through the Tart Cherry Snapshot, regional engagement, and participation in key industry conferences.

How the Board Adds Value

Participate in development opportunities, clarify the role and authority of each group, encourage wider industry involvement, and evaluate how these efforts strengthen governance and industry capacity.

Use the FY27 industry strategy and CIAB's current approved budget together when considering investment decisions. The strategy explains the direction; the budget, governing documents, and required approvals define the resources and authority for execution.

Reference: FY27 U.S. Tart Cherries Strategy & Investment Plan, September 2026; CIAB FY27 budget and applicable USDA approvals.

12. Your Commitment as a CIAB Board Member

Serving on the Cherry Industry Administrative Board is both an honor and a responsibility.

Every Board member brings valuable experience and perspective to the table. By preparing thoughtfully, participating actively, and acting in the best interests of the U.S. tart cherry industry, each member contributes to stronger governance and better decisions.

The following commitments reflect the expectations of all CIAB Board members.

Prepare Well

- Review meeting materials in advance.
- Come ready to ask questions and contribute.
- Stay informed about industry issues.

Participate Fully

- Attend and actively engage in Board meetings.
- Share your perspective while listening respectfully to others.
- Support thoughtful, constructive discussion.

Lead with Integrity

- Place the interests of the industry above individual interests.
- Declare any conflict of interest before discussion, including when a proposed Board action would provide you alone with a financial benefit.
- Respect confidentiality when appropriate.
- Comply with applicable policies and the Federal Marketing Order.

Think Strategically

- Think strategically and focus on long-term success.
- Serve as a positive ambassador for the U.S. tart cherry industry.
- Support Board decisions once they have been made.

Closing Thought

The strength of CIAB is not defined by any one Board member—it is built through the collective leadership, experience, and commitment of those who serve. Thank you for investing your time, expertise, and passion in advancing the future of the U.S. tart cherry industry.

13. Resources & Key Contacts

The following resources and contacts are available to support you in your role as a CIAB Board Member.

When in Doubt

If you have questions or need clarification on any topic, please reach out.

Staff leadership is here to support you and ensure you have the information needed to participate effectively.

CIAB Staff Leadership

CIAB operates with a lean team, and staff leadership serves as your primary resource for information, materials, and support.

Amy Cohn, President

- Primary point of contact for Board matters
- Provides strategic guidance and recommendations
- Leads execution of Board-approved initiatives
- Serves as the bridge between Board direction and implementation

Heather Weber, Vice President of Operations

- Supports Board meetings and logistics
- Manages operational execution and coordination
- Provides data, materials, and follow-up support
- Ensures day-to-day activities run smoothly

Board Expense Reimbursement

Contact Heather Weber for CIAB's current Board expense reimbursement guidelines, required forms, and instructions for completing and submitting reimbursement requests.

USDA Contacts

CIAB operates under the oversight of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). USDA representatives are available to provide guidance related to the Federal Marketing Order and compliance requirements.

USDA Marketing Specialist (AMS)

- Provides oversight and regulatory guidance
- Ensures activities align with the Marketing Order
- Serves as a resource for compliance-related questions

Other Industry Organizations

These organizations also support the industry, each under its own independent authority:

Cherry Marketing Institute (CMI)

- Builds demand and expands market opportunities for U.S.-grown Montmorency tart cherries and Michigan sweet cherries through strategic marketing, communications, research, and market development.

Michigan Cherry Committee (MCC)

- Strengthens Michigan's tart and sweet cherry industry through research, education, and strategic investments that support growers, processors, and the long-term vitality of the industry.

Industry Website

Visit the Industry section at ustartcherries.com/industry/ for industry news, events, program information, and reference materials. Use this section as an ongoing resource throughout your Board service.

Key Governance Resources

Board members may reference the following materials for additional detail:

- CIAB By-Laws
- USDA Guidance (Antitrust and Lobbying)
- Internal Control Policies
- Marketing Order materials (including full text, amendments, and related documents)
- Board Roster
- FY27 U.S. Tart Cherries Strategy & Investment Plan
- CIAB FY27 budget and applicable USDA approvals

For current copies of these materials, contact Heather Weber.

14. Appendix & Reference Materials

The materials listed below support your understanding of CIAB's governance, structure, and requirements under the Federal Marketing Order. For current copies of these resources, contact Heather Weber.

Key Governance Resources

- Marketing Order at a Glance
- Marketing Order No. 930 (Full Text)
- Amendments to the Marketing Order
- Referendum Results
- CIAB By-Laws and current committee assignments
- Internal Control Policies
- USDA guidance on antitrust and lobbying
- Current Board and alternate roster

FY27 Strategy and Investment References

- FY27 U.S. Tart Cherries Strategy & Investment Plan
- CIAB FY27 budget and applicable USDA approvals

Board Expense Reimbursement

- Current Board expense reimbursement guidelines
- Required reimbursement forms and submission instructions

How to Use These Materials

Use these resources whenever you need detail on governance, compliance, financial policies, or administrative requirements. Staff can help you find the right reference for a particular question.

This handbook introduces Board service. If a summary in this handbook differs from the Marketing Order, applicable regulations, USDA requirements, CIAB By-Laws, or Board-approved policies, those governing authorities control. Staff leadership can help you locate the current document and clarify the appropriate process.