

## Combined SA Research Advisory Committee Meeting

### Boulevard Room, Stamford Plaza Adelaide

(150 North Terrace, Adelaide SA)

**Tuesday, 2 March 2010**

**Commencing at 9:30am**

### MINUTES

#### **Attendees:**

*SAFF Research Advisory Committee members:*

#### *Chairman*

- Michael Schaefer (Chairman, SAFF Grains Industry Committee and Eyre Peninsula RAC, Grain grower from Buckleboo)

#### *Eyre Peninsula*

- Matthew Cook (Grain grower from Minnipa)
- Mark Fitzgerald (Grain grower from Port Neil)
- Caroline Mudge (Grain grower from Wirulla)
- Michael Treloar (Grain grower from Cummins)

#### *Mid North / Yorke Peninsula*

- Dennis Dall (Grain grower from Kybunga)
- Roger Lange (Grain grower from Apilla)
- Ben Marshman (Grain grower from Owen)
- Matthew McCallum (Agronomist from Laura)
- Trevor Polkinghorne (Grain grower from Arthurton)
- Peter White (SAFF President, Grain grower from Andrews)

#### *Mallee / South East*

- Gary Flohr (SAFF Grains Industry Committee member, Mallee/South East RAC Chairman, Grain grower from Lameroo)
- David Brown (Grain grower from Padthaway)
- Robert Chant (Grain grower from Millicent)
- Owen Croser (Grain grower from Keith)
- Tom Fielke (Grain grower from Loxton)
- Anthony Gregurke (Grain grower from Parrakie)
- Andrew Hansen (Grain grower from Coomandook)
- Steven Jaeschke (Grain grower from Keith)
- Ted Langley (Grain grower from Bordertown)
- Peter Rose (Grain grower from Wynarka)

#### *GRDC Representatives:*

- Andy Barr (GRDC Southern Regional Panel member)
- Richard Konzag (GRDC Southern Regional Panel member)
- Alan Mayfield (GRDC Southern Regional Panel member)

- David Shannon (Chair of GRDC Southern Panel & farmer from Kapunda)
- Carolyn Pearson (GRDC Southern Regional Panel Support Officer)
- Sam Livingstone (GRDC Webmaster)
- Tom McCue (GRDC Extension and Grower Programs Manager)

*Other Representatives:*

- Jason Eglington
- Mike Krause

*SAFF Representative (Secretariat):*

- Deane Crabb (Acting Executive Officer – Grains, SAFF)

**Apologies:**

- Mark Modra (Grain grower from Pt Lincoln)
- Rowan Cootes (Grain grower from Spalding)
- Sam Holmes (Agronomist on Yorke Peninsula)
- Tom Saint (Grain grower from Maitland)
- Greg Schulz (Grain grower from Maitland and Keith)
- Garry Hansen (Grain grower from Coomandook)
- David Malpas (SAFF Grains Industry Committee member, Grain grower from Lucindale)

**1. Welcome**

The Chairman declared the meeting open and thanked all growers for attending. Everyone briefly introduced themselves to the meeting.

**2. Report from GRDC**

David Shannon, Andy Barr and Richard Konzag gave a joint presentation highlighting GRDC and particularly the activities of the Southern Regional Panel.

David gave an overview of GRDC – there continue to be good attendances at GRDC Updates, programs are continually evaluated, GRDC budget sound with good reserves, trying to maintain research at the current level, and now thinking about investments for the next two financial years.

Andy spoke about the new GRDC crop diary, frost and current wheat research projects. In relation to frost as many areas were badly hit last year by late frosts, GRDC is increasing its efforts. He spoke about the positive outcomes from a national frost workshop held in Perth in November 2009, and highlighted the frost research being done at Loxton with sowing time varied. There are a range of wheat projects, including two GM events even though progress is slow. Aim is to increase yields.

Richard spoke about the new products that GRDC have been working on, particularly the Harrington Seed Destructor which is achieving more than 80% control of resistant ryegrass.

**3. Report from October 2008 meetings**

Each of the regions was asked to give an update from their respective meetings in October 2009. Each of them referred to the minutes provided from their respective meetings in October, as circulated. These were all confirmed.

Mark Fitzgerald reported on the Eyre Peninsula meeting highlighting the main aspects as listed in the minutes. Michael Treloar made additional comments about Diamondback moth and Blackleg.

Dennis Dall reported on the Mid North / Yorke Peninsula meeting, highlighting heat stress, frost, barley diseases and burning of chaff heaps.

Gary Flohr reported on the Mallee / South East meeting highlighting frost - very pleased that GRDC has now got involved. Robert Chant mentioned snails, label registration for chemicals and Rhizoctonia – mainly on sands in barley.

#### **4. Presentation on topics suggested in October 2008**

- **GRDC budget and collection of levy**

Leecia Angus, GRDC's Executive Manager Corporate Strategy and Impact Assessment joined the meeting by phone from Canberra.

Leecia outlined how the levy is collected through DAFF from traders at the point of sale. The Government makes a co-contribution towards GRDC.

There was a discussion about leakage, which has become an issue with de-regulation. Leecia undertook to check with DAFF about leakage. David Shannon indicated that he understood the compliance was about 95% in South Australia and Western Australia, but only 50% in Queensland and 75% in New South Wales.

It was noted that DAFF does not send a form to graingrowers about grain sold, but it does for cattle.

The discussion then broadened to a discussion about the Review of Rural R&D. Michael reported that Minister Burke had recently spoken at the annual conference of the Pastoralists and Graziers Association of Western Australia, indicating that he supports the government contribution to RDC's and that the review is to do with getting value for money.

It was noted that there are 250 Western Australian farmers with a quarter of Australia's crop who believe they do not get value for money. The response was that spending the levy where it is earned is not always the best fit, especially when there is not the infrastructure in place.

- **Farm business management pilot project**

Mike Krause, an economic consultant, joined the meeting and spoke about the pilot program he had conducted with 15 agronomists. The feedback from the participants had been good.

Following on from this project, GRDC had given Mike five additional questions to analyse:

1. What are growers' farm management needs and relationship with adoption?
2. Identify current farm management training
  - now only Marcus Oldham and Charles Sturt, with nothing in South Australia from TAFE

3. What are the gaps in the market?
4. What are other RDC's doing?
  - Dairy Australia leading the field with short-term farm management courses, with AWI and MLA still focussing on physical production
5. What can GRDC do?
  - Report prepared outlining possible strategies:
    - encourage farmer discussion groups
    - use Groundcover
    - influence funding and support institutions
    - dedicated section of GRDC
    - actively support farm management research
    - GRDC could partner "Planning to profit" type developments

There was a brief discussion, with the meeting indicating that this was an important issue.

- **Frost research**

Jason Eglington, Barley Program Leader at the University of Adelaide, joined the meeting.

Jason spoke about both frost tolerance in barley and wheat. He had started 10 years ago in frost research. For barley, currently validating commercial merits of Japanese varieties, with a 7 – 8% difference between Japanese lines and Australian (Galleon). Latest results show Keel and SloopSA to be as good as Japanese lines.

There is a need to benchmark all important Australian wheat and barley varieties. Previous research had concluded there was no useful variation for frost tolerance in Australian cereals, but now analysis is showing a range in variation between some Australian varieties. Can we support effective selection against frost susceptibility – to give at least 8 – 12% reduction in frost damage.

There was a brief discussion about other ways to alleviate frost damage, but it was felt that anti-freeze products were not cost effective on broadacre cereal crops.

- **Barley breeding**

Jason also spoke about barley breeding.

Barely Breeding Australia had been formed in 2006, with a key objective to manage the withdrawal of New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania from barley breeding. It terminates in 2011. While Western Australia and Queensland are also changing their emphasis, the University of Adelaide has reaffirmed a commitment to barley breeding as core business, with a major role in applied research and training

As GRDC wants separation of breeding from pre-breeding, and incorporation of barley breeding, the University is considering incorporated models while retaining research leadership and training and teaching role. Currently barley is yielding 20% more than wheat.

While Viterra's contract as a commercial partner also ends in 2011, it appears that in principle they want to continue to support barley research.

There was a general discussion about current barley varieties, including Schooner (low fermentability gives it a market segment, and hence a price premium) and Hindmarsh (still being ascertained as a malting barley).

In relation to end point royalties, a comment was made that the ultimate aim is for a centralised system of collection which would be more equitable – similar to the GRDC levy.

## **5. Identifying and prioritising current and emerging issues**

David Shannon reiterated that feedback on GRDC is vital. There is a need to know the real issues.

The meeting then discussed the issues based on GRDC's lines of business – varieties, practices, new products, communication and capacity building.

### **Communication**

Points made were -

- Target top 40% of growers
- Concern about the GRDC segments on commercial rural radio – clashes with ABC Country Hour
- Ground Cover – happy with content, but do not like the multiple inserts
- Audio of Ground Cover – good for younger workers
- Paddock Diaries – about half use these, difficulties when need to transfer details to computer
- Website – some use, could not use to register for GRDC Updates, would like links to other grain related organisations (such as SA Crop Society), feedback from this meeting and copies of presentations
- GRDC Updates – need localised content, need to be moved around, concerns about Jon Lamb's replacement
- Adviser Updates – timing of these questioned, but timed to get last years data together

### **Practices**

A number of issues were raised, including –

- Need a break crop
- Disc seeder research
- Top cropping of wheat for ryegrass
- Need independent soil and tissue testing
- Grazing cereals – incorporate grazing as part of NVT process
- Resistant ryegrass on fence lines
- Header fires – use of chains, agricultural engineering research
- Spray diaries – will be required for mandatory chemical spraying
- Registering of chemicals for off-label use
- Snails

## Varieties

Some of the issues raised were –

- Canola varieties and windrowing
- Yellow leaf spot
- Trading over the fence
- Blackpoint and rust
- Chilling problems with Durum
- Availability of seed for trials
- Wheat test weights
- End point royalties – hard to comply
- Lentils – extending where can be grown
- Breeding herbicide tolerant crops
- Pest and diseases
- Frost

## New products

Richard Konzag gave a brief explanation of what new products cover. It includes long term high risk possibles.

Suggestions made included –

- Biological moth control
- Inoculant for peas
- Use of GRDC label
- Testing of biological products

## Prioritising the issues

From all the issues raised, those present then voted on what they saw as the top priorities (listed in order of votes received).

*(13 votes)*

Rhizoctonia

*(11 votes)*

Frost tolerance in varieties

Heat stress

Break crops

Label registrations for new uses on chemicals

Snails

Farm economics into Ground Cover

*(10 votes)*

Yellow leaf spot – varieties to manage this

Topcropping of wheat for ryegrass control

Moisture probe data from representative sites on GRDC website

*(9 votes)*

Wheat varieties – CCN resistance

Water use efficiency

BT genes in pulses and canola resistance to DBM/Heliothis

Herbicide and pesticide registration

*(8 votes)*

Low rainfall break crops

Header fires

Diffuse Gradient Thin Film Test

*(6 votes)*

Grain storage/hygiene

*(5 votes)*

Wheat test weights

CD of Ground Cover

*(4 votes)*

Grazing cereals

Canola varieties and windrowing

Non wetting seed issues

Cheaper moisture probe

Black spot in peas

Alternative products for chaff

*(3 votes)*

Legumes – fast growing to manage livestock and cropping interaction

Disc seeder research

*(2 votes)*

Wheat – Crown rot resistance

Seed sterility with Durum

*(1 vote)*

Blackpoint

Rust

Concern over planting date of trials

Salt tolerant varieties

N leaching soils

David Shannon thanked the meeting for the input made in giving this feedback on priorities. This would be fed back into GRDC.

## **6. Where to from here?**

It was decided that the end of September would be a better time for the regional meetings.

Succession planning for the membership of the three Committees was briefly discussed. Members were asked to consider who else in their regions should be invited to join.

In closing the meeting, Michael thanked all for their contributions. He reminded the Committee members to complete their claim forms for the cost of attending this meeting.

*Meeting closed at 4.00 pm.*