

WDM RAC Minutes: March 21st 2013

at Moonie .

Attendees; Lindsay Ward, Paul McIntosh, Geoff Slaughter, Chris Cook, Andrew Coleborn, Andrew Milla, Chris Bazley, Michael Widderick, Emma Coulson, Maryse Bourgault, James Coggan, Phil Egan, Anthony Doljanin, Damien Scanlan, Michael Burgis.

Apologises: Ann-Maree Bach, Luke Arbuckle , Ross Uebergang, Lee Hickey

GRFL- RAC Report -Damien Scanlan.

RAC's charter, GRDC review of RAC's, Bazley review.

GRFL grower owned business. The Foundation is involved in the following; a) QLD RD & E review , tasked a consultant to provide a report for a the formation of a new Research Institute model for Qld. b) Approached the QLD Ag Minister to run the Eagle Farm quarantine centre that is being axed by DAFF, it plays an important part of providing new germ- technology for the industry. c) The Foundation made an application to commercialise a new barley variety line from the Hermitage barley program. d) Reappoint and re-in vigour the RAC's.

There is a 20% cut to the DAFF budget coming in 2014, Ag will not be immune from these cuts.

Lindsay Ward – There is general concern about the future building blocks of Agriculture, there is a need for more focus on what is affecting the pointy end of agriculture; *can GRFL help promote this message.*

Chris Bazley- RAC overview: Need younger people involved great work from RAC network that was not being promoted. Ensure that the feedback from the long term research priorities is fed back to the farming communities. The RAC's are the conduits for extending the messages from the research effort, therefore the committee members need to promote the messages.

Paul McIntosh: Chairman.

Acknowledgement of the past committee of WDM RAC, thanked them all for the explicit efforts in promoting the Research issue.

Confirmation of last meeting minutes: **accepted.**

Business arising from previous minutes.

Extension of RAC information was questioned. Economic viability once again challenged and part of the long term research focus.

Qld Chairs meeting with GRDC northern panel- Brisbane

Shared priorities from each region and discussed RAC review. GRDC took on board all the chairs issues.

Members Reports:

Restoration of the crop-water –land systems, needs an integrated pasture-ley system as part of the farming system. More sorghum in the farming system, worried about sorghum cold tolerant. Problems with extension throughout the region and worried about commercialisation of some of the wheat varieties and the messages conveyed. Require new wheat varieties for managing Nematodes. Local NVT trials do not represent the local management practices. (Write to GRDC and asked for info on NVT trials). Attended an excellent weed workshop held in Roma presented by the DAFF weed team. FTRG still a major issue, need more research work. Problems can be found on roads, pig chaser vehicles etc. Too many solutions being offered but not all solving the FTR management question. Require alternate reliable crops for the region. Nutrition and soil fertility is a major issue, need to understand the need to deep place fertiliser. Glyphosate resistance in grasses, not many growers recognise they have resistance, needs continued extension. Chemical label restrictions, needs urgent action to gain permits to use on specialised crops. Harvest management options for weed management needs to be reviewed. Need to look at new barley /wheat varieties from South Australia that are being bred for low P –S soils , will they have a fit for the northern system.

Weather issues this season. RAC members suggested that we draw priorities from a wider group of farmers by having more discussion prior to the RAC meeting. (Chair reiterated that it is the responsibility of RAC members to speak with neighbours and other growers to ascertain their ideas on regional research needs before these meetings). There is a need for more legume crops in the farming system in the region. There is a decreasing area of soybeans being sown, this will lead to issues of finding contractor harvesters. The new Soybean varieties still to prove themselves locally. Irrigation tariffs are rising adding pressure to farm economics. Local corn suffered from lack of early rain. Disease issues in peanuts due to the summer weather. Age of farmers will impact peanut areas. Plenty of erosion in parts of the Burnett, it requires a catchment approach to restore and sustain the region, difficulties in finding leadership. Dry bean crop opportunities for the region, needs more support and direction. There is a peanut and soybean field day with PCA and the Grower Solution group next week. Peanut harvest started this week, at least 2- 3 weeks behind normal schedule. Sclerotinia is an issue this year with the wet season, net blotch prevalent in all peanut crops. Agricultural chemical registrations for small crops are essential and a high priority and critical for the region's future farm practises.

Nominee Report s.

Dr Emma Coulson: Plant Test Diagnostic Service - available free of charge, two staff working on the program. Mal Rylie won SEED of Light Award at Goondiwindi GRDC Update . Principle Pathologist Scientist to be hired by DAFF to replace Mal when he retires in next 12 -18months Realeases Crown Rot- 47 varieties lines with elevated crown rot resistance, also 5 lines of nematode resistance line being offered to commercial companies. Michael Widderick appointed as DAFF senior weed team

leader in TWBA , discussed their team program and priorities. Looking to identify alternatives to RoundUp, appointed Andrew Sommerville to review options. Also looking at non chemical options, e; burning and cultivation. Extension from the weed team, 3 fax's per year and 3 electronic newsletter / year . Mark Congreve – ICAN -appointed as the information extension officer for the weed team and grower solution team. Not doing any non-crop weed control work. Need to do more work with residual herbicides. Looking at the ecology of weeds, long term research.

Dr Geoff Slaughter, USQ – Business for Sustainable Development . Integrated business application

Next Meeting August: Dates to be nominated .