

Minutes
DD RAC Meeting
Held Tuesday 7th August 2007
at Leslie Research Centre, Holberton St Toowoomba
Commencing 9.00 am sharp

1. Opening, Welcome

The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed members and guests.

2. Attendance

R Taylor (Chair)

C Hornick

J Farrell

W Bidstrup

S Pfeffer

L Berry

S Cook

P McIntosh

M Burgis

Nominees

C Joseph GRDC

R Williams QDPI

P Carberry CSIRO

W Newton GRFL

J Obst RAC Coordinator

Guests: S Walker (QDPI), A Cruickshank (QDPI), P McCullough (C Alliance)

3. Apologies

Apologies were received from B Warren, J Rochecouste, D Alexander, T Jorgenson, R Skerman.

Accepted

Moved P McI Seconded MB that a letter of support be sent to D Alexander during his extended illness and that his membership remain current.

Agreed

4. Election of Chairman

The Chairman vacated the chair and the Coordinator called for nominations. WN nominated RT. Seconded P McI. RT accepted and there being no further nominations, RT was elected Chairman.

Carried

5. Confirmation of Agenda

Confirmed

6. Confirmation of Minutes

Moved MB Seconded WB that the minutes of the meeting 20th February 2007 were true and correct.

Carried

7. Business from Minutes

7.1 Chairman's report on meeting with NP GRDC

The Chairman reported on this meeting held on 4th July 07. Minutes will be circulated shortly. He said that there needs to be some broad vision developed for the northern region grains industry around which to develop the RDE investment program. A Bidgood Manager NVT also addressed the RAC Chairs on the development of the NVT Trials and Website.

7.2 Chairman's report on Sorghum Research Workshop Bribie Island

The Chairman said that he attended this recent Workshop at the invitation of the planning committee.

7.3 R Williams reported on Dr S Walker's move to integrated management options for weed control. It was agreed that the focus should be on management rather than on resistance as resistance is already with the industry. There was concern that private 'spray application' trainers were not getting enough support from grain growers to continue their training business.

7.4 Availability of Integrated Weeds Manual for RAC members

Agreed to discuss this later in the meeting with S Walker.

8. Correspondence and Business (not covered elsewhere on agenda)

8.1 Circulate PIPn 2007

The Coordinator advised that the PIPn 2007 was linked to approx 400 scientists and agronomists. Hard copies were mailed to all RAC members. The feed back has been positive.

8.2 GRDC Strategic R & D Plan 2007-12

GRDC has released its Strategic Plan for 2007-2012. (Copies were made available)

9. RAC Members' Report

Following is a sample of comments made by members:

- Low rainfall on the central Downs. Reduction in irrigation water is a major concern.
- Growers interested in getting access to coal seam gas water.
- Growers focusing on sorghum rather than cotton and using lower rates of N.
- Winter crops on southern Downs a failure and most summer stubble gone.
- Cost of N going to be a major problem for growers.

- Reasonable winter crop west of Dalby with fair subsoil moisture. Still need heavy rains for summer crop plantings.
- Plenty of soil testing underway as growers aim to avoid over applying N due to high price.
- A lot of sorghum stubble bailed. Landmark has spreadsheet on real cost of stubble removal.
- Winter crop planting seed had quality problems particularly that held by growers.
- High seed prices of \$1000 tonne for wheat and barley seed a concern for growers as is EPRs. Need a system which allows 'grower to grower' seed sales.
- Stored grain research program has been transferred to the CRC for Plant Bio Security. Dr P Collins QDPI and program leader is seeking direction on priorities.
- Qld Murray Darling Commission focus is on NRM issues and needs to be linked to crop productivity.
- Nutrition and soil health are major issues. Going from 20 years of grain to grass requires inputs.
- Hartog still the benchmark for wheat on Western Downs. Are we serious about measuring the advancements in wheat yields over the past 20 years?
- No one off the Downs is soil testing. They don't want to know about it.

10 Research Presentations

- 10.1 Dr S Walker:- Integrated Weed Management by 2018
Dr Walker reported on how he saw the future of weed control in cropping systems.
- 10.2 Dr A Cruickshank - Sorghum varieties by 2018. What could they be?
Dr Cruickshank reported on the QDPI sorghum improvement program located at Hermitage Research Station.
- 10.3 P McCullough CEO Condamine Alliance
Mr McCullough reported on completed, current and future research projects managed by Condamine Alliance.
- 10.4 M Burgis:- A View on Carbon
Mr Burgis presented a report on carbon prepared by Dr P Grace QUT.

11 Degree of alignment of current RDE program with DD RAC Priority Issues

As a pre-meeting exercise members were asked to rate their views to the best of their ability on the level of alignment between the current RDE program and their Priority Issues. The results are as follows:

<-----not satisfied-----> <--satisfied----> very sat--->

Line of Business	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Varieties						xx	xx	xxx	x	x	
Practices					x	x	xxx	xx	x		
New Products					x		xx	xxx	xx		
Communications & Capacity Building				x		x	xx	xxx	xx		

12 Identify GAPS in current RDE program

Members were divided into 3 Groups with the task to identify possible gaps in the current RDE program. Results were:

Line of Business	Group A	Group B	Group C
Varieties	Frost in winter cereals	Sorghum standability-need Staygreen in both sides of parent lines.	Sorghum breeding and genetics – standability / stress tolerance / energy levels / grain size / insects (rutherglen bug)
	Maize – dryland (good gritter) variety.		
	GM feed grains		
Practices	The 'M' in sorghum G x M x E	Yields of barley/ wheat /durum	Soil health and nutrition (decline in soil organic matter , soil health and nutrient run down)
		Understanding Carbon and	

		its impact on gas emissions on-farm (N2O)	Sucking insects (Rutherglen Bugs in sorghum, Mirids and Green Vege Bugs in soybean) Sorghum rotations (need robust rotations (M)
New Products	Implications of biomass (eg ethanol) on nutrient run-down, organic carbon and cover.	Fertiliser Test (cheap /user friendly)	Bio-fuels – ethanol options using grain and <u>not</u> biomass
	"H2O into Wine" use of brackish (bore coal seam) water for grain production		
Communications and Capacity Building	Hard copies of crop information packages	Capacity building-across all industry players (farmers, agronomists, researchers)	Loss of skills base, teaching facilities and staff to communicate and build capacity (DPI , Agribusiness)

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Line of Business	Group A	Group B	Group C
Varieties	Dryland maize varieties	Higher WUE for Yields	Question current investment in wheat breeding in Queensland when yields are not increasing and winter rainfall is unreliable
		Dryland maize	
Practices	Pastures for sustainability – particularly uplands (not flood plains) and management of pastures (BMP)	Cold tolerance in sorghum for early planting (August)	Sustainability of cropping practices involving nutrient run-down, stratification and soil health (organic matter)
New Products	N fixing grain crops (non legumes including sorghum and wheat)	GM for weed management, yield (WUE, drought / heat tolerance)	Bio-fuels –why slow uptake in Australia relative to other parts of the world – knowledge information gaps
	Biofuels (eg new high yielding sub tropical oilseed crops, biomass crops)	Deep desalination of water	
Communications and Capacity Building	Building capacity to provide new expertise in RDE – scholarships, cadetships, partnerships in unis, course development, schools.		Universities are losing capacity to teach agricultural production – need to find a way of maintaining or rebuilding capacity including mentoring.
	Build better links with CMAs.		Challenge to get bottom 20% to 30% of growers to adopt new and more sustainable farming practices.

RAC Nominees' Reports

14.1 DPI:- R Williams (report attached)

14.2 CSIRO:- P Carberry

Dr Carberry reported on the CSIRO Agricultural Sustainability Initiative (ASI) focal areas. He undertook to provide written information

Dr Carberry advised that due to his appointment as Theme Leader of ASI he will have to step down as the DD RAC CSIRO nominee. Dr Zvi Hochman will most likely be the CSIRO nominee.

14.3 GRDC:- C Joseph

Mr Joseph reported on the following

- Northern Panel GRDC meeting with the 8 Chairs of the Northern RACs.
- GRDC 5 Year Strategic Plan 2007 – 2012

- Project Tenders for 2008 – 2009
 - Re-introduction of the e-concept for funding
- 14.4 GRFL:- W Newton
Mr Newton reported on his recent study tour of USA.

15 General Business

- 15.1 Departure of Dr P Carberry
Moved MB Seconded CJ that a vote of thanks be recorded for Dr Carberry for his contribution to the DD RAC as CSIRO nominee. **Carried**
- 15.2 Weeds
Moved MB Seconded CJ that the DD RAC support member's registration at the Herbicide Resistance Workshop at DPI Toowoomba on 6th Sept 07 or alternatively a copy of the Integrated Weeds Management Manual. Members to contact the Coordinator. **Carried**
- 15.3 Weeds CRC
The Coordinator was asked to obtain further information on the future of the Weeds CRC

16 Next Meeting

- 16.1 Date: Wednesday 27th February 2008
- 16.2 Venue; Dalby Agri College
- 16.3 Possible Invited Speakers: C Dowling/ D Lester, N Dalgliesh, M Bell

17. Closure

Meeting closed at 4.00 pm.