

**Minutes
DD RAC Meeting
held 14th August 2008
at the Leslie Research Centre Holberton St Toowoomba
commencing 9.30 am**

- 1. Opening, Welcome by Chairman**
The Acting Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed members and guests.
- 2. Attendance**
- | | | |
|-------------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| W Newton (Acting Chair) | M Burgis | Nominees: |
| W Bidstrup | S Cook | QDPIF: D Poulsen |
| S Pfeffer | J Rochecouste | CSIRO: Z Hochman |
| B Warren | J Farrell | USQ: E Schmidt |
| J Thompson | | GRDC: D Freebairn |
- J Obst (RAC Coordinator)
- Guests: J Harvey (GRDC), J Clark (GRDC), A Bedggood (NVT), A Gwynne (grain grower) R Gwynne (grain grower) J Sheppard (GRDC) R Taylor (GRDC), J Agnew (AgForce)
- 3. Apologies**
C Hornick, T Jorgensen, R Skerman, R Williams, P Reading (GRDC) **Accepted**
- 4. Confirmation of Agenda** **Confirmed**
- 5. Confirmation of Minutes (9th March 2008)** **Confirmed**
- 6. Business from Minutes (not covered elsewhere on agenda)**
- 6.1 Finalisation of the PIP 2008
The Coordinator reported that this 2008 report has been further upgraded to improve its standing as an important grain industry reference document for regional Priority Issues. Hard copies have been sent to all RAC members and to RDE Agencies. Copies were mailed to 300 active Queensland grain growers. The report has been posted on the GRFL Website and the report linked to approx 250 researchers and agronomists.
- 6.2 Letters to / from QDPIF re the WVGQ: Letters noted for later discussion
- 6.3 Letters to / from Seed Companies & GRDC re Staygreen Noted
- 7. Correspondence and Business (not covered elsewhere on agenda)**
- 7.1 QDPIF Plant Science (Delivery) Business Plan 2008-2013 Noted
- 7.2 GRDC Northern Region Investment Report 2007-08 Noted
- 7.3 Letters to / from seed companies re long coleoptile in wheat Noted
- 8. RAC Members' Reports**
Following is a sample of issues mentioned by members:
- 2007 barley had very high screenings
 - 2008 sorghum produced exceptional yields
 - Winter crops planted late. Heavy frosting slowing development.
 - Mice very active in the fields. Baiting occurring in some areas.
 - Some dryland soybeans planted in 2008. Big bushes but not much seed harvested.
 - Input costs causing a lot of concern amongst growers.
 - Sorghum crops NW Dalby yielded up to 10 t/ha.
 - Dryland maize yielded from 5 -10 t/ha.
 - Some frost damage showing up in chick pea.
 - YLS showing up in wheat on wheat.
 - Increasing interest in dryland maize for the high value markets. Good escape from sorghum ergot.
 - Mice trappings showing extremely high numbers in very good condition. No signs yet of breeding.
 - Concerns over on-going monitoring of mice
 - Powdery Mildew a concern in sunflower production.
- 9. GRDC - NVT**
The Chairman invited Messrs Harvey, Clark and Bedggood to join the meeting to discuss NVT. Mr Clark thanked the RAC for the opportunity to discuss current concerns over NVT. He reported that GRDC has announced a review of NVT and encouraged RAC members to submit their concerns. Mr Bedggood gave a presentation on NVT and the new initiatives being introduced. Considerable discussion followed on NVT trialling and the Website. Mr Harvey gave a brief report on the changing face of Australian wheat breeding. At the conclusion, the Chairman thanked Messrs Harvey, Clark and Bedggood for their attendances and in-depth presentations. Dr Poulsen reported that QDPIF is presently appointing a senior plant pathologist. The WVGQ will be produced in 2009. The Department will continue to produce and circulate wheat variety disease information at least until NVT becomes an equivalent replacement. Discussions are presently underway between QDPIF and GRDC regarding on-going wheat disease ratings.

10. Discussion Topics

10.1 Innovation through Agricultural Engineering

Dr E Schmidt gave a presentation from a researcher's perspective.

Messrs Burgis & Bidstrup gave a presentation from a producer's perspective.

Ideas mentioned included:

- Mechanisation Officer - one per state – refer to Mathew Durack's "issues paper"
- Website : specifically sharing ideas –old and new
 - Verification of equipment performance covers all types of Machinery and auxiliary equipment
- Testing facilities
 - NCEA, an old idea but still relevant,
 - Training ground for new graduates
- GPS systems:
 - Develop record keeping program-fertiliser& chemical application
- Weed Resistance:
 - More work on application, to include nozzles adjuvants, chemical, water quality, stubble cover
- CTF:
 - More work needed to move farmers into the system

10.2 On-farm energy efficiency

Dr E Schmidt gave a presentation from a researcher's perspective.

It was resolved to write to GRDC expressing concern over its lack of investment in Agricultural Engineering / Mechanisation research and recommending that a scoping study be funded to determine the potential benefits to be achieved by such investment for the northern grains region.

11. RAC Nominees' Reports

11.1 QDPI: Dr D Poulsen reported as follows:

- New Director General being appointed
- Dr P Grieve appointed Acting General Manager Plant Science (Delivery)
- New Science Leader for Farming Systems to be appointed.
- QDPIF has now finalised the licensing of its wheat germplasm to AGT.
- A 12 month transitional arrangement has been put in place with AGT
- The agreement with AGT contains a number of 'performance indicators' which must be met including the location of a wheat breeder in Toowoomba.
- Dr P Banks leading the development of a wheat pre-breeding initiative. Discussions being held with CSIRO. Focus will be on drought, feed and disease traits.
- 3 new wheat varieties released namely Stampede, Kidman and Bounty.
- QDPIF leading a national initiative on frosting in wheat.
- Licensing a new barley variety similar to Grout which has a 40% market share in Queensland.
- QDPIF has licensed 510 elite sorghum lines in the past 6 years.
- New mung bean variety namely Crystal being released.
- 2 new chick pea varieties being released.
- New graduate entomologist being appointed.
- Minister has announced a *Fresh Approach* to doing business and this will include a review of science / facility capacities.
- Approval has been given to allow re-investment of any realised assets.
- Livestock review is well under way with the first meeting with the grain sector held recently.
- The aim is to establish a 'centres of excellence' to underpin the grain industry for the foreseeable future.
- What is happening in QDPIF is happening across most other States somewhat in response to reduced funding for research.

Mr Burgis presented his view on the secondment of a QDPIF researcher to CPAS UQ Gatton. He requested that his concern regarding the need for QDPIF to second a person "with strong grain industry endorsement" be noted in the minutes. Mr Burgis said that CPAS provides the grain industry with considerable research opportunity and it is crucial that only suitably qualified and experienced people be appointed to the centre.

11.2 CSIRO: Dr Z Hochman tabled and spoke to a written report.

With regards to carbon, Dr Hochman said that C would need to trade at least \$50 tonne for it to be worthwhile for grain growers to consider. Presently the Government is looking at a value of around \$20 tonne. Dr M Bell QDPIF is presently conducting some excellent research in this field.

11.3 GRDC: Dr D Freebairn reported on GRDC matters.

12. Election of Chairman

Defer to next meeting

13. Next Meeting

13.1	Date:	26 February 09 (to be confirmed)
13.2	Venue	Hermitage Research Station Warwick
13.3	Invited Speakers	Speaker on Mustard

14. Closure

Meeting closed at 4.05pm.