

Minutes
South East Qld RAC Meeting
held at JBPRS Kingaroy
On Wednesday 26th July 2006
Commencing at 9.30am

1. Opening of meeting and Chairman's welcome

In view of the Chairman W Learmont being unavailable for this meeting, it was agreed that P. Enkelmann act as chairman.

2. Attendance

Members: P. Enkelmann, C. Clark, I. Crosthwaite, R. Coe, T. Rook, J. Kingston,
Nominees: K. Heit (DPI&F deputizing for E. Colson) C. Joseph (GRDC deputizing for G Wright)

Acting Coordinator: J. Obst

Guests: Dr. P. Collins (DPI&F), Dr. H. Brier (DPI&F)

3. Apologies

Apologies were received from W. Learmont, G. Wright, P. Harden, A. James, D. George. A. Cruickshank. G. Mills.

Moved: I. Crosthwaite **Seconded:** R. Coe that apologies be **Accepted. Carried.**

4. Changed RAC Coordination Arrangement

J Obst advised that the GRF was currently in negotiations with Agforce Grains and GRDC to replace J. Twyford as Northern Region RAC Coordinator for the current term ending 30.06.08. J Twyford has previously indicated his desire to retire from the position he has held for 10 years.

5. Confirmation of Minutes (Meeting held 3rd Mar 2006)

Moved: C. Clark **Seconded:** R. Coe that the minutes be accepted as correct

Carried.

6. Election of Chairman for following 12 months

The meeting was advised that the current Chairman, W. Learmont had indicated his interest in extending his chairmanship until the July 2007 meeting.

It was **agreed** to extend Mr. Learmont's chairmanship term until the July 2007 meeting.

7. Business from the Minutes (not covered elsewhere on agenda)

7.1 Mung Bean Planting. The meeting was briefed on the Accredited Mung Bean Seed Scheme recently introduced by the Australian Mung Bean Association. This scheme should ensure planting seed of high physical quality and genetic purity. A reselected Emerald line has been introduced.

8. Correspondence & Business

8.1 Inwards

8.2 Outwards:

There was no correspondence and business.

9. Seasonal / Crop Report

The following are some of the key comments made by members:

- Smut in the coastal sugar cane areas will increase interest in soybean.
- Sugar-cane growers will have to introduce crop rotations.
- Cane growers are targeting the higher valued soy flour and edible markets.
- On-farm grain storage is limited on coastal farms.

- There is an interest in private sector investment in coastal central storage
- This is possibly the first time that there is a 'real' commitment by sugar-cane growers to soybean production.
- Coastal soybean production is around 1500 to 2000 tonnes with potential of 5000 tonnes.
- Low peanut yields in the Burnett remain a problem
- Burnett growers moving to increase sorghum possibly at expense of peanuts.
- If peanut production reduces then growers will need a 'break crop' in sorghum / maize production.
- Local swing to beef production for grazing and grain fattening.
- More growers putting up silos to retain grain on-farm for the domestic markets.
- With more grain being held on-farm for longer periods of time, particularly over summer, control of stored grain insects will become a major challenge.
- All grain receivers will need to adopt and enforce stricter insect contamination receival standards.
- Mung beans remain an important summer crop for opportunity situations.
- Continuing run down of younger farmers as properties sold to life-style purchasers.
- May need to regulate the buying and use of phosphine to retain its current registration.
- Need to further look at the opportunity for 'short' crops such as mung beans, azuki beans, navy beans etc.
- Local irrigated cotton growers considering grain production.
- Increasing interest in lucerne production as a high value crop.
- Fuel will underpin future international grain prices
- We need to be looking at sorghum quality for domestic ethanol production.
- Need to look at the future of soybeans and possibility for their utilization in bio-diesel production.

C. Joseph reported that GRDC is reviewing its soybean investment program for determining further research needs. Also CSD has recently installed a plant for producing 'nato' beans for the Japanese market.

10. PIPn 2006 (recently sent out by Jack Twyford)

This report was noted.

11. Report on RAC Chairmen / N Panel GRDC

Due to the absence of W. Learmont who attended this GRDC meeting in June 2006, a report was not presented. Minutes of this meeting will be provided shortly by GRDC.

12. Crop production profile for SEQld Region:

The Coordinator said that in order for the RAC to prioritise issues with a high level of confidence he felt it necessary to rank the individual crops grown in the SEQ region in the order of importance that growers place on them. This ranking could be best determined by taking a regional view across several seasons. The ranking would be incorrect if determined on the current drought season only. Members were invited to complete the form from which an average would then be taken. This ranking of importance would be further discussed at the next meeting and following any amendments would be used as a broad guide to determining priority RDE issues for 2006-07. The following is the average of the individual rankings.

Crop	Winter Crop					Summer Crop							TOTAL	
	Wheat			Barley	C Pea	Sorghum	Maize	S'flower	Mung Bean	Soy Bean	P'nut	Navy Bean		Mil
	M	D	F											
Estimate based on DPI data	0	0	2	2	0	15	27	0.5	1	2	48	0.5	2	100
	2													
Y 2006 (RAC answer)	0	0	6	4.5	1.5	29	21	1	3	4.5	26.5	1	2	100
	6													
Y 2011-2016 (future task)														

For Wheat M = Milling D = Durum F = Feed

13. Brief discussion on macro-factors which will / could influence future crop production

The Coordinator said that research providers and funders were looking for guidance from the RACs as to the future direction of the grain industry. With continuing pressure on the availability of funds for RDE investment in the Northern region it was important to invest for future needs and opportunities rather than solving yesterday's problems. The list of macro factors provided by the Coordinator was noted. (list attached)

14. Sub-Com Report on Consolidation of Priorities:

The meeting noted the report prepared by the sub-committee consolidating the priority issues for SE Qld. It was agreed to build these sub-committee decisions into the PIPn 2006.

15. Stores Grain Insect Control. (SGIC)

Dr P Collins Senior Entomologist DPI&F addressed to meeting on stored grain insect control with respect to RDE. Following are some key comments:

- Not a lot of national resources allocated to SGIC RDE.
- There is excellent national RDE coordination.
- Extension of information is a major issue.
- Phosphine used across 80% of Australia.
- The problem of SGIC is a bigger issue in the northern region.
- Unlikely for there to be a better product than Phosphine.
- Industry accepts Phosphine as 'nil residue'.
- There are 3 extension people in the north.
- There is a National Working Group for stored grain insect control.
- Monitoring resistance levels to insecticides is part of the national program.
- Growers need to be able to cool in-store grain to control insect buildup.
- Good in-store insect control depends on Time X Dosage X Temperature
- Insecticide resistance can be overcome by using sealed silos.
- Overseas stored grain insects have much greater levels of resistance to insecticides.
- Phosphine is lighter than air however it will slowly diffuse down through the stored grain profile.
- Phosphine takes a minimum of 7 days to be fully effective.
2 days to vaporize and 5 days to diffuse throughout the grain.
- It is illegal to use Phosphine in grain in transit.

- BHC's routinely use phosphine in bulk storages and this could accelerate resistance.
- Work is being done with the BHC's to develop an IPM approach.
- At < 17 degree C insects stop breeding.
- As grain temperatures increase the time for insecticide to affect insect extinction decreases.
- Air does not circulate in silos.
- Grain at the bottom of the silo is 'most at risk'.
- Silos > 100 tonnes very difficult to fumigate.
- There is uncertainty about the future of the Stored Grain Research Lab at CSIRO Canberra.
- A new SGIC RDE program is being put to the CRC on Biodiversity to possible value of \$2 Million annually. (\$800 K from GRDC and \$1.2 Million by BHCs)
- Experience to date shows that it is very difficult to get growers to workshops on SGIC.

Dr. Collins was thanked for his presentation.

16. **IPM in pulse and grain crops:**

Dr. H Brier addressed the meeting on IPM in pulse crops. Following are some key points presented:

- IPM is being increasingly adopted in pulse and grain crops.
- IPM is now in place for White Fly control in soybean.
- Insecticide rates have been halved in mung bean using IPM.
- Brazil cropping heavily into IPM.
- DPI&F extension staff very involved with IPM.
- Soybean aphids have been controlled by lady beetles.
- Looking at heliothis threshold levels in Mung beans.
- Consultants have been accredited for IPM in pulses.
- Northern pulse industry very small and it is very difficult to get companies to do research and make application to amend chemical labels.
- There is no soft/ effective chemicals pod sucking insects.
- No effective control for Red Banded Shield Bug which made up 75% of Green Vege Bug population.
- Effective IPM is difficult in the edible markets due to the low threshold requirements to avoid seed blemishes.
- Endosulfan will not be available for pulses on new labels.
- The moth stage is possibly 'the soft link' in controlling etiella.

Dr. Brier was thanked for his presentation.

17. **Feed Wheat Breeding-New DPI&F initiative.**

Mr. Heit, DPI&F reported to the meeting on the new DPI&F feed grain initiatives.

Following are some of the key points presented:

- The recent feed grain workshop identified that every 3 to 5 years in 10 there will be a shortage in feed grain supply.
- The barley breeding program at Hermitage Research Station will be refocused to 80% breeding for feed quality and 20% malting quality.
- An additional wheat breeder has been appointed at the Leslie Research Centre to focus on breeding higher yielding wheat of feed quality.
- In breeding programs 'world's best practice' is an annual yield increase of 1%.
- Sorting through the current wheat lines it is possible that a higher yielding wheat could be released in 3 to 5 years.
- Additionally breeding a new higher feed wheat from scratch could take 8 to 10 years before release date.
- Grain quality for bio-fuels will also be considered.
- The new feed grain program is a joint DPI plant and animal sciences initiative.

18. Reports by RAC Nominees: DPI, CSIRO, Uni, GRF

DPI&F: K Heit

- The farming systems project " Viable and sustainable farming systems in Ferrosols" is due for completing on June 2007. This project is presently being reviewed to consider a new application (possibly extending into the coastal area) to GRDC and SRDC.
- Dr M Bell has been researching the core issues of soil biota with the project finishing June 2006. This project is superseded by a DPI/DNR/GRDC initiative extending information to growers through a series of workshops.

Comment was made that the research undertaken by Dr Bell was outstanding and valuable to the region. It was agreed to write a letter of support to Dr Bell.

GRDC: C Joseph provided an overview of GRDC operations to the meeting. He emphasized the important role of the RAC's in presenting priority issues to the GRDC.

GRF: J Obst referred the meeting to the GRF notes attached to the agenda.

19. General Business

19.1 Review RAC name

It was agreed that the name 'RAC' did not clearly spell out to the industry or wider public the extent of the role of the committees in the grain industry.

Moved: I Crosthwaite **Seconded:** C Clark "that the committee ask the GRF to review the name RAC to determine if a more descriptive name could be used".

Carried

19.2 Report by Dr. Robert Baker UNE.

The Acting Chairman said that he recently heard an address by Dr Robert Baker of UNE Armidale outlining his views on 11 and 22 year weather cycles. The theory being proposed has not been peer reviewed. It was agreed that some further consideration needs to be given to Dr Baker's views on weather cycles.

19.3 Controlled Traffic Conference Sponsorship:

The Coordinator advised that the GRF is offering to sponsor 4 RAC grower members to this conference at Ballarat Vic on 24th September / 1st October 2006. Each sponsorship is for \$445 ea as part of the CFI Bus Tour. Those interested are to contact J Obst Secretary GRF.

19.4 Australian Agronomy Conference Sponsorship:

The Coordinator advised that the GRF is offering to sponsor 2 grower RAC members to this conference to be held in Perth W Aust. on 10th to 14th Sept 2006. Each sponsorship is to the value of \$1500. Those interested are to contact J Obst Secretary GRF.

20. Date and Venue of Next Meeting

It was agreed to hold the next meeting on 23rd February 2007 at the JBPRS Kingaroy.

21. Meeting Closure

The meeting closed at 3.30 pm.

Some Future Opportunities and Threats

Not only is the role on the RAC to identify and prioritise current issues affecting profitable and sustainability grain production but they are also encouraged to consider the future and aim to identify emerging issues. With continual downward pressure on available funds for research investment, the challenge is to invest in areas of research that will deliver the greatest future returns. There is little use in solving yesterday's problems.

The following are some of the factors (opportunities and threats) which will / could have a significant effect and substantially change the shape of the northern grains industry. No doubt any one of these change will bring forward a new set of production problems. The challenge is to predict and invest in research to minimize any negative impacts.

Climate Change	Hotter & Dryer and more CO2
Future Markets	Feed Grains and bio-fuels, Organics, International competition
Community Expectations Environmental Requirements, OHS	BMP & EMP, Food Safety
Precision Ag , Mechanisation	Shortage of farm labour, higher N costs
Greenhouse	Carbon Sequestration, Trading Carbon Credits
GM approach to crop improvement	No moratorium in Queensland
Supply / Price Fossil Fuels	Forecast increase in farm fuels costs, bio-fuels, natural gas
Biological approach to farming	Managing soil health
Research capacity and capability	Downturn in university agri science students