

Minutes of CQ RAC Meeting – 26 Aug, 2010
Conference Room, Govt Offices, 99 Hospital Road Emerald

meeting commenced at 9:35am

1. Chairman's Welcome and Confirmation of Agenda

The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed the members and guests.

2. Attendance

Members: G. Spackman (Chairman), A. Farquharson, M. Ballentine, P. Durkin, N. Gregg,
M. MacTaggart, , R. Sequeira, C. Douglas, C. Dunne, P. McIntosh

Nominees: A. Ward (DEEDI), J. Sheppard (GRDC), S. Chapman (CSIRO), D. Lund (GRFL)

Guests: A. Cruickshank

Co-ordinator: L.Webb

3. Apologies

S. Eden, D. Midmore, D. Howard, D. Storey, D. Jordan

4. Confirmation of Minutes (23/03/2010)

Confirmed

5. Business

5.1. National issues update:

Grains Producers Association.

David Lund, Director GRFL, gave an outline of progress in the formation of GPA advising that it will be formally established on 27 Aug. 2010. He stated that it was with full GRFL support that Mr Mailer of GRFL, had taken a lead role in the formation and that GPA will become the Peak Body of national Grain Growers whose representation and voting rights will reflect their level of production. It was noted that the constitution was likely to be very similar to that of GRFL. He expected that there remained a meaningful role for state bodies.

5.2 Future GRFL Direction and Funding

L.Webb EO GRFL advised that GRFL would continue the role of coordinating RAC's in line with existing MOU's in place with AgForce and the State Gov. and current processes. The research matters arising from the void left by the Gov. will be prominent as will the need to develop a relationship with GPA. The matter of funding was a difficult issue that has prominence. The matter of the Leslie Research Centre and potential new site replacement was likely to require close involvement. The main GRFL role is to facilitate grower input to research. There are 75 members at present, but fees are targeted to raise profile/interest in research, not as funding source.

Action CQ-RAC to write to GRFL to say that we see continued role for GRFL as coordinator of RAC priorities.

5.3 NVT regional advisory committee

- coleoptile length still an issue.

Action for Scott Chapman – cropping central update on coleoptile length from Greg R. J Sheppard says that NSW I&I are doing screening of all current NVT entries. So, how do we get this info? Could be a story between CSIRO and NVT? with information about breeding for the trait, and how to find out what current varieties can do.

Dave Lund – how to get info on varieties? Should be links to breeding company. Also refer to variety guide.

5.4 Dichlorvos issue

- likely to be de-registered by end of 2010
- will need other management for stored grain
- a new chemical may be available, but not straight-forward to use
- other options exist

5.5 Co-ordinating production of the RAC's Priorities Issues Paper with GRDC's Investment Plan.

- G. Spackman- questioned whether GRDC really values the PIP paper. Reasons being that ; investment decision meeting was held before the document was produced; no longer regular meetings of RAC chairman with GRDC; no feedback on the PIP document from GRDC and GRDC held discussion with growers at recent summer grains conference..

- L. Webb – need audit trail of what work gets done or not. Gap analysis of current GRDC research vs previous priority issue papers

- J Sheppard – CQ-RAC PIP paper is definitely a source of information in setting priorities. Sorghum and pulse breeding (high priority in PIP) have been given high PIP by GRDC northern panel. Meeting with RAC chair hasn't happened yet this year, due to lack of time; no growers were able to manage to come to summer growers meeting through difficulty of finding time to get there.

-J Sheppard advised that the RAC Chairman meeting will happen.

- there are two sources of information about what GRDC is funding – the current list of funded projects; and the investment plan to request tenders for new projects that do not have negotiated providers

- - discussions concluded that the PIP needs to be a 'living' version, ie, updated anytime a research issue emerges.

- other roles (Andrew). Is feedback needed on issues like problem of reductions in research capability? Or a need to estimate the \$ value of some of the research issues, e.g. that feather-top Rhodes grass may have resulted in \$6M loss in 2010 summer

It was considered that the PIP become a "live" document, with a hard copy produced once a year.

5.6 Draft Discussion Document titled 'Optimising Investment in R,D & E for the Northern Grains Region - Mr J. Sheppard, GRDC

- initiated in 2009 with NSW growers
- want to obtain grower input into this as an industry plan. Not a GRDC document
- what capacity and capability is needed in future, especially with declining budget

Key questions

- Better coordination of RDE
- greater focus on whole farming system performance
- improved varietal performance via greater linkage of breeding and pre-breeding with the northern region
- enhanced support for regional science
- increased relevance of NVT

In the north, plan is for each of the 5 farming systems (CQ, Coastal, SE QLD, NNSW, NGOA) is to have their own budget to answer local questions in 1-3 years. Facilitate local and regional D&E. Sites, years, treatments.

Regional R&D has 3-8 year view.

- Issues need to be accurately determined
- Ensure RDE capacity is available
- Budget available in appropriate timeframe

Setting Priorities/Issues for northern panel RD&E

- GRDC updates, consultants, farmers, 1-3 year farming system projects, researchers, RACs,

Coleoptile length breeding – came out of a field day in CQ. CSIRO has handed over long coleoptile lines with alternative dwarfing genes. Issue for J.Sheppard was that from 900 lines, about 13 got through (mainly due to stripe rust).

What are growers fighting for?

1. what are the core RDE sites for next 20 years?
2. key capabilities for next 20 years?
3. priority crops and issues for next 20 years?

5.7 QAAFI update- DEEDI nominee

Andrew Ward provided an update and slide presentation on the QAAFI Institute at the University of Queensland.

UQ and QDPI are developing QAAFI in order to strengthen agricultural research in Queensland, get better industry outcomes, attract additional funding (up to 40%), and increase student numbers. QAAFI will formally be established 1 Oct 2010, with approximately 40 QDPI staff expected to become UQ staff (that being about 10% of Deedi staff). QAAFI will focus on three main areas: plant science (including grains), animal science and food technology. QAAFI will be a “virtual centre”, with no new infrastructure being built to house the Institute. Spackman - How to ensure that QAAFI staff maintain industry focus?

6. Guest Speaker

Mr Col Douglas. Deedi, Mung Bean and Chickpea Breeder

Mr Douglas presented an extensive slide presentation on the developments in Mung Bean breeding which indicated some improved lines had been identified having better disease resistance than current commercial lines and that improvements in yield were significant also (up to 20%).

He thought a 100,000 tonne market existed. Current production was about 50,000 tonne

7. RAC Members' Reports 1330

Michael MacTaggart (Moura)

- frost damage in wheat and chickpea
- rain just in time to keep wheat going
- good profile under previous summer crop, so preparing for soy and sorghum, but FTRhodes coming through
- MR43 was under water at harvest for 2.5 weeks, but still yielded 2.5t/ac

Myles Ballantyne (Banana)

- difficult to dry-down the summer crop harvest
- plant establishment problem was with poor seed (plus heatwaves around sowing)
- 1.5 plants/m, lot of lodging, perhaps due to need to leave crop so late for harvest
- lot of wheat and chickpea planted, looks v good, but only little amount of frost
- 2.5" rain two weeks ago kept it going well

Peter Durkin (Theodore)

- wet feb/march so reduced summer planting, but some reasonable crops. Hard to dry down.
- Some good mungbean crops, with good price

- Little rain on winter crops til 2 weeks ago. Wheat should all fill fine. Chickpea looks good.
- some mice being baited

Nigel Gregg(Dysart)

- sorghum variable w good yields or poor (flooding and summer weeds)
- lots of drying needed
- not much wheat put in (2 crops) and a little chickpea
- corn being harvested now
- flush of FTR – good to spray out soon

David Lund

- issues with FTR and metolachlor affecting establishment
- yields ok, no standability problems
- little rain in April during early plantings, starting to hay off a bit now. Yield to 0.75t/acre
- later wheat crops benefit more from the rain

Paul McIntosh

- locust watch
- P, K, Zn still a bit mysterious. Not enough research
- dryland cotton likely to increase this year (want to plant, but wait til Oct to see what goes in)
- product shortages for summer due to large plantings planned for south (need to be ready)

Col Dunne(Duaringa)

- sorghum plant was poor (v. dry til Jan; rains delayed plantings)
- lot of people growing corn and Mungbean (spring or summer)
- potential issues with chem. applications with greater number of crops (heading to 1.5 per year)
- almost no fertiliser applied now, but will be needed
- no frost damage to winter crops

Graham Spackman

- Metolachlor damage in sorghum has been an issue
- dessication of mature Mungbeans is an issue (espec. Crystal)
- issues of weed management in Mungbean
- K deficiencies occuring, especially in chickpea – Mike Bell working on this
- product shortages in summer

Andrew Farquharson

- FTR and Metolachlor
- herbicide tolerant hybrids to be tested G99, G56 to see how they go
- brigalow soils – K issues
- good fertilizer responses in chickpea NPKZn mixed w inoculum and seemed to work well
- variability in performance of inoculants in generating nodulation
- 80 to 85k ha chickpea – av or above yields
- 175k ha wheat – av or above yields
- 210k t sorghum – estimated 350k t this year
- lot of N deficiency espec in sorghum this year (good rains)
- Myles - 35 kg/ha MAPZ good for chickpea (P response)

Richard Sequeira

- new project \$400k/y about 50% to spend on-farm/industry partners
- significant research issues are to be channelled through to GRDC for further funding
- development of integrated weed management, rotations of legumes and nutrition management

8. RAC Nominees' Reports

8.1. GRDC Northern Panel: Mr J. Sheppard

- summer grains conference – highlights having growers present
- Pre-breeding – AGT, Intergrain, LongReach. Apart from InterGrain, they will be testing in northern region and developing varieties for CQ.
- NVT – looking better in terms of number of sites and advisory committee has been helpful. Co-operators are important in the system
- Climate Champion being looked for by Sara 38467111 (1day/quarter) to keep growers informed

8.2. DEEDI: A. Cruickshank, A. Ward

- 3 new oat lines with rust resistance
- Maize ACIAR project studying maize and legumes and working with drought-tolerant maize from CIMMYT
- lot of deliverables/new projects

8.3. CSIRO: Dr S. Chapman

- Climate change project – running 3 planting dates +/- irrigation at Emerald Ag College. Includes very late (1st week August) planting to look at high temperature adaptation
- Zvi Hochmann (CSIRO St. Lucia) – running new national project alongside 10 of the NVT trials to look at Genotype x Environment x Management interaction for at least 8 varieties per site
- Peter Carberry – looking at developing research ideas for irrigated cropping, including consideration of lodging tolerant, high yielding wheat.

8.5. GRFL: D. Lund

Other issues:

- frost resistance at USQ – not sure of Freedom To Operate via a GM solution. Work is still being evaluated.

9. Next meeting

Date: 15 March 2011

Venue: Biloela

Speakers: AGT wheat breeder, and visit an NVT site, or Mike Bell.

10. Closure

Meeting closed at 3:25pm