

Minutes of Darling Downs RAC Meeting – 17 Aug, 2010

Dalby RSL, Dalby

meeting commenced at 9:35am

1. RAC introduction

The co-ordinator and others present introduced themselves.

2. Chairman's Welcome and Confirmation of Agenda

Mr Bidstrup opened the meeting and welcomed the members and guests.

3. Attendance

Members: W. Bidstrup (Chairman), C. Hornick, C. Joseph, M. Burgis,
Nominees: R. Williams (QDPI), Z. Hochman (CSIRO), M. Sutherland USQ, W. Newton (GRFL)
Guests: D. Skerman,
Co-ordinator: L Webb

4. Apologies

S. Pfeffer

5. Confirmation of Minutes from the meeting of 2 March,2010

Confirmed

6. Matters Arising

6.1 Phosphine is moving to a "Restricted" classification ...see (High Priority #13)

7. Business

7.1. Setting Priority Process Review

The Chairman outlined the need to align the Priority Process with GRDC so as to ensure the matters were before them for inclusion in their review process.

The co-ordinator advised that he was planning to arrange a process to establish any gap in research planned or currently being undertaken compared to current Priorities.

7.2. National Issues Update

GPA -Damien Scanlan, Chairman 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.

7.3. Future GRFL Direction & Funding

D Scanlan Chairman 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..

Action:- write to GRFL requesting that they facilitate a Forum that will consider the value of increased Grower Research Funding.

7.4. QAAFI update (Queensland Alliance in Agriculture and Food Innovation.)

Dr Williams 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, 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.

8. Guest Speaker Col Douglas, Mung Bean and Chickpea Breeder DEEDI, Warwick

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

9. RAC members' reports

RAC members reported to the meeting.

Comments included:

- late planted crops had serious frost damage
- Southern Downs had the best crops ...patchy elsewhere
- Class action started regarding water allocation by Toowoomba Council
- expect a huge summer crop
- Coal Seam Gas Industry incursion causing grief
- big cotton crop will bring increased spraying issues
- High moisture variable reading occurring at different sites
- Summer insect levels expected to be high

10. RAC nominees' reports

Dr Williams (QDPI) reported on a number of items including:-

- Very good science outcomes this year
- QDPI website has been revamped with improved info retrieval capacity
- Barley Breeding program only had about 12 months to run

Dr Hochman (CSIRO) reported on :-

- SQ Farming System project is coming to an end.
- NVT - “adding value” at 10 sites -3 Sowing dates managed by BMP

Prof Sutherland (USQ - Centre for Systems Biology).

- Crown Rot scoring system
- Durum susceptibility to Crown Rot
- Frost and GMO research

Action ..write to GRFL advising of the RAC support for the USQ GM Frost program and requesting that the matter of necessary arrangements (including Gene Technology Licence) to enable GM wheat plot propagation, be taken up with GRDC.

RAC nominees' reports cont....

Mr Newton reported on

- the PISC Review and requested that the documentation be resent and encouraged feedback. He indicated that it was as result of a National Audit of Agriculture having a Grains section. It now required State Government sign off from which funding arrangements will occur. It will include a pre-breeding program for wheat and summer crops in Qld.

11. Next meeting

Date: 24 Feb, 2011

Venue: Toowoomba

Visit:- USQ

12. Closure

Meeting closed at 3:10pm