

Minutes
SEQ GRAC Meeting
held 21st February 2012
at the Taabinga Room JBPRS Kingaroy
Meeting commenced at 9.30 am

1. Opening, Welcome by Chairman

Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed members and guests.

2. Attendance

Members: P Enkelmann (Chairman) C Clark, J Cross, G Birch, N Jorgensen, J Kingston, P Harden, A McDonald (part of meeting)
Nominees: Dr E Colson (DEEDI) R Taylor (GRDC) Dr D George (UQ Gatton)
Coordinator: J Obst

Guest Speaker G Rapps PBI Narrabri, Sydney University
Guest: G Dunne (grain grower Beaudesert)

3. Apologies

Dr G Fitt (CSIRO Nominee) I Crosthwaite, W Learmont, T Rook

4. Confirmation of Agenda

Agenda for meeting confirmed

5. Confirmation of Minutes (23rd August 2011)

Agreed, subject to corrections to date and venue details, that the minutes of the meeting held 23rd August 2011 be confirmed as true and correct.

6. Business from Minutes (not covered elsewhere on agenda)

Nil Business

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

Nil Correspondence

8. RAC Members' Reports

Each RAC member (not Nominee) reported on current & emerging production issues limiting profitability and any emerging threats and opportunities.

Sample of issues commented on:

- Bean Growers Australia (BGA) working closely with pbAgrifood and Soybean Australia trialling soybean varieties including M17 and M22.
- BGA has been trialling, with UQ support, re-selected navy bean line. Working with DEEDI on gaining PBR. Had been applied for previously but rejected on quality. Market quality requirements now different due to changes in processing.
- Excellent trialling work being performed by staff at the JBPRS staff.
- Good supply of new navy bean variety Arwon being bulked up.
- Generally struggling to get new navy bean varieties onto the market. (EC to follow up with JF and report back)
- NSW soybeans crop well down but large planting in Riverina / N Victoria.
- New South Wales growers still being provided with Hard Copy cropping notes by their Agri Department (approx \$4.50 copy) QDPI still refusing to revert to Hard Copy Cropping Notes with preference for electronic notes. Could possibly purchase NSW notes or work in with them with GRDC support
- Burnett grain outlets shrinking with ongoing reduction in dairying. Grain is being stored on farm for longer periods resulting in more pressure from stored grain insects.

- Peanuts, sorghum and maize continue to be dominant crops in Burnett region.
- Control of diseases in peanuts (particularly foliage) will become a bigger problem for growers if there is an ongoing return to average / above average summer rains.
- Growers keen to develop systems which embrace 'precision technology' which is being adopted by broadacre grain growers.
- Some peanut zero tilling being trialled with good results so far.
- Concern this season over efficacy of generic chemicals. Some very poor results occurred when following label instructions.
- Middleton and Tingoora peanut varieties badly affected by Nett Blotch and Sclerotinia. Fisher variety looking ok ever with its heavy foliage.
- Last season wheat excellent with current summer crops having good yield potential.
- Major concern developing among growers over weed resistance to glyphosate as well as possible longer term harmful effects on the soil.
- DPI Website very user un-friendly
- Grain cropping technical services very limited in the West Moreton.
- Major wipeout of pop corn in Beaudesert from foliar disease.
- North Coast Qld soybeans wiped out last season. Approx 900 ha planted this season.
- No forecast of increased soybean production along the North Coast.
- While a carbon tax will not be imposed on grain production, input costs will increase further eroding grower's prospects for profitability.
- Stored grain insect workshop arranged for March 2012.
- Whole grain community needs to get behind good grain storage husbandry in order to avoid insect resistance development.
- Cropping rotations are important for Burnett cropping. Need to be on lookout for input replacement options.
- Grain growers cannot survive at these current low commodity prices. Need to remove government imposts.
- Region needs a real focus on AWMP to reduce the threat from diseases in these cooler / wetter seasons. Need a complete fungicide program based around wet summers.
- Small increase in peanut plantings around Bundaberg. Once cane prices increase some growers quickly remove grain legumes from their systems. Core group of growers remaining with peanuts for rotational value to cane.
- Approx 1800 ha of peanuts planted in N Qld. Last year's crop badly affected with CPR. Current crop with dryer conditions looking good.
- Promising new fungicides being considered for registration by Bayer and DuPont.
- Current peanut breeding project has requirement to look for genetic resistance.
- Peanuts remain the most dominant crop in Burnet grain cropping systems. Overall grain production would diminish significantly if peanuts were not viable.

9. Review of SEQ GRAC Priority Issues

Members broke into 3 groups to determine up to 5 major production problems taking into account current and emerging threats and opportunities. Each group would then report back in a plenary session.

10. Guest Speaker

Graeme Rapp, University of Sydney, Research Assistant, Plant Breeding Institute – Narrabri gave a talk on the opportunity for biodiesel to be a replacement for fossil diesel and the possibility of mustard being produced as a grain crop to produce bio-diesel. The Sydney University Narrabri has been researching this and well as linking to research on soil biology and effects

11 Finalising Highest Priority Issues for 2012

Following the Group session discussing and determining Priority Issues, each group reported to the plenary session. A summary of these reports is contained in Attachment 1.

12. Nominees Reports

Each Nominee reported on their Research Agency operations with a focus on Activities and Outcomes relevant to the South East Queensland grains region ie Burnett, West Moreton, North Coast)

12.1 DEEDI: Dr E Colson

A number of new major projects have been contracted after many months of negotiation with external partners:

- Crop sequences to manage soil pathogens and reduce the yield gap of northern grain production – led by CSIRO, Jeremy Whish
- Integrated Weed Management for the Northern region – led by Steve Walker, QAAFI

Currently finalising the following project specifications and projects with GRDC:

- Barley Foliar Pathogens project led by Greg Platz
- 12 month extensions - Integrated Pest Management project led by Melina Miles
- 12 month extension - Integrated Disease Management project led by Mal Ryley

In this extension

- (i) investigate the identity, biology and aspects of the management of white grain (caused by a *Botryosphaeria* species)
- (ii) conduct virology research on pulses and oilseeds
- (iii) conduct a field trial to assess the efficacy of 3 rates of 5 fungicides for the management of ascochyta blight and botrytis grey mould on chickpeas

Grains 2020 and Strategic Accommodation Review

- Still progressing
- Working with GRDC on purchase of field property.
- Accommodation review in Toowoomba has been completed; recommendations have been put into ministerial briefing note.

12.2 UQ: Dr D George

- UQ has amalgamated studies to create School of Agriculture and Food Sciences
- Dr George has an affiliation with QAAFI
- Looking at non food crops such as those possibly suitable for producing bio-fuel from plant material.
- Doing some work with SCG company looking at using CSG extracted water for irrigation purposes.
- 1st year agriculture / applied science student intake approx 40 and steady.
- Revising curriculum for Applied Science.

12.3 GRDC NP: R Taylor

- GRDC has adopted 6 Investment Themes to replace the 4 Lines of Business.
- GRDC is seeking feedback on its 2012-17 Investment Themes Grower Consultation Report.
- Northern Project Manager is being appointed and deployed in the northern region to assist the Northern Panel.
- One outcome of the above appointment is to reduce the present workload for panel members from 40 days to 20 days.
- GRDC requires its logo to be applied to all GRDC funded projects.
- GRDC requires researchers funded by it to directly engage with grain growers.
- The Northern Panel undertakes summer and winter crop tours within its region to ensure it understands regional production problems.

13. Next Meeting

- 13.1 Date: Tuesday 21st August 2012
- 13.2 Venue Taabinga Room JBPRS Kingaroy
- 13.3 Invited Speakers: to be determined

14. Closure

The meeting was closed at 3.30pm.

Attachment 1**Priority Issues determined by the 3 Groups. Not necessarily in order of importance.**

	<i>Group 1</i>	<i>Group 2</i>	<i>Group 3</i>
1	<i>Develop a better understanding of soil carbon subsoil constraints, biology and nutrition</i>	<i>The provision of Hard Copy Cropping Notes continues to be a high priority for SEQ grain growers.</i>	<i>Need to continue with strong peanut breeding effort focused on Yield, resistances to foliar and soil borne diseases and suitable for dryland and irrigation systems.</i>
2	<i>Develop management practices to extend the life of glyphosate products and identify the possible harmful effects of glyphosate on the soil from long term use.</i>	<i>Grain growers want the option to plant chick pea. Excessive plant growth and diseases have been a major problem with recent varieties. Need management practices specific to the Burnett region.</i>	<i>Need to continue with a strong pulse breeding effort</i>
3	<i>Continue to develop management practices and plant resistances to effectively control diseases in peanuts particularly in view of a return of wetter summers. Without the option to produce peanuts, grain production will decline significantly in the Burnett region</i>	<i>Lack of understanding of insect differences in soybean. Ally resistance in a soybean variety would help.</i>	<i>Need to develop a better understanding of soils and their management in particular in relation to plant nutrition.</i>
4	<i>With the average age of grain growers increasing and the increasing reluctance of youth to engage in the grain industry, there needs to be an ongoing and collective effort to attract youth to ensure a future production capacity Checkout: http://www.gatewayschools.qld.gov.au/agribusiness/</i>	<i>Need management practices for production of Adzuki beans including information on varieties, weedicides and fungicides.</i>	<i>Need to develop better management for control of weeds in peanuts during later crop growth</i>
5	<i>With the food market being the target for most soybean producers, there needs to be a strong focus on breeding for harvestable food quality particularly if this normal rainfall pattern continues. New soybean varieties need to be rated for weathering ability.</i>	<i>Need AWMP for use of Group A herbicides and promotion and adoption of management practices to prolong the efficacy of glyphosate.</i>	

Emerging Issues

- 1.** *Loss of local agronomists is posing a major concern for growers to be able to access 'best agronomic information'.*
- 2.** *Efficacy of generic farm chemicals*
- 3.** *The incorporation of precision technology into systems based on peanut production.*
- 4.** *Approval of chemicals for use in minor crops.*
- 5.** *Continuing development of weed resistance to glyphosate and the possible harmful effects of glyphosate to the soil.*