

SEQ RAC minutes: March 15th 2013 at BPRS Kingaroy.

Attendees:

Damien Andersen, Peter Enkelmann, John Kingston, Greg Birch, David Ford, Andrew McDonald, Julian Cross, Pat Harden, Neil Jorgensen, Ian Crosthwaite, Michael Burgis.
Mark Hickman-DAFF nominee, Mark Sutherland- GRDC nthn panel, Troy Jensen- NCEA-USQ.

Apologies: Colin Clarke, David Ford, Peter Howlett, Greg Dunne.

Confirmation of last meeting minutes: **accepted by all**

Secretary Report.

RAC's charter, GRDC review of RAC's, Bazley review.

Summary of the QAFFI new sorghum investment, a Bill Gates donation of \$4 million. **Mark Hickman offered to supply information to accompany the minutes.**

Qld Chairs meeting with GRDC northern panel.

Shared priorities from each region, discussed RAC review. Peter discussed the lack of Mung Bean insect management & resistance strategies. High risk of failure in minor crops due to lack of management packages. Packages required for an array of dry bean crops for the Burnett – Wide bay region.

(M Sutherland). GRDC – Rohan Rainbow will start a new project (July) to commence a rapid response initiative for the minor crops.

(M Hickman) Suggested that the grains industry should have an industry wide committee to discuss the agronomic issues relating to grain crops, these issues include insecticides, fungicides and herbicides.

(A McDonald) There legal ramifications (MRL's) in regards to chemical use and vender declarations, which are provided to buyers and exporters. Dry Bean work occurring through Bean Growers Assoc. They have imported beans and have trials at the BPRS Kingaroy.

Members Reports:

Weather issues this season. RAC members suggested that we draw priorities from a wider group of farmers by having more discussion prior to the RAC meeting. (Chair reiterated that it is the responsibility of RAC members to speak with neighbours and other growers to ascertain their ideas on regional research needs before these meetings). There is a need or more legume crops in the farming system in the region. There is a decreasing area of soybeans being sown, this will lead to issues of finding contractor harvesters. The new Soybean varieties still to prove themselves locally. Irrigation tariffs are rising adding pressure to farm economics. Local corn suffered from lack of early rain. Disease issues in peanuts due to the summer weather. Age of farmers will impact peanut areas. Plenty of erosion in parts of the Burnett, it requires a catchment approach to restore and sustain the region, difficulties in finding leadership. Dry bean crop opportunities for the region, needs more support and direction. There is a peanut and soybean field day with PCA and the Grower Solution group next week. Peanut harvest started this week, at least 2- 3 weeks behind

normal schedule. Sclerotinia is an issue this year with the wet season, net blotch prevalent in all peanut crops. Agricultural chemical registrations for small crops are essential and a high priority and critical for the region's future farm practises.

Grower Solutions Update – Ian Crosthwaite

GS groups focus is short term, 1 – 3 years

Research is being conducted in the first year of a 3 year project on the following:

- Corn N trial
- Peanut fungicide trial
- Peanut kernel B and Ca levels
- Soybean plant population demo
- Spray application workshops

Mark Sutherland was asked to respond to the question of the total \$ investment in Grower Solution Groups in the northern GRDC region.

Prof. Mark Sutherland – Northern Panel nominee, USQ Toowoomba.

Mark currently researching barley foliar pathogens and Crown Rot. The GRDC Northern Panel will have 1/3 spill every 2 years to replace the members on the panel. Mark gave an overview given on GRDC investment methodologies. Explained, that there is a review on GRDC's communication with all stakeholders across the eastern states. A new Mungbean will be released at the Summer Grain conference in July, a crystal type. A new soybean variety is to be released from the GRDC -CSIRO program. There are 900 projects operating across the six GRDC themes. Mark encouraged members to contact him on any issues relating to GRDC research or USQ work.

Mark Hickman, DAFFQ nominee Toowoomba.

Acting Science Leader Farming Systems – Crop and Food Science.

Discussed a QUT grant, a \$4.2 million investment for GM's, nutrition, systems modelling and novel gene science. DAFF are currently completing a Land Audit, reviewing options for future land use. DAFF are leading the flood recovery response. You-Tube presentations are available from Biloela workshop on flood recovery. Graham Harris, from DAFF's irrigation team has produced an excellent video on restoring pumps and irrigation equipment. DAFF currently negotiating with GRDC on a project involving Pulse crops, to be led by the Kingaroy team. There is a plant diagnostic service available from Toowoomba. A free service, except for the nematode testing component. DAFF are leading post-harvest research work regarding phosphine use in silo bags. DAFF are supporting a Weeds Smart App and Website to assess herbicide resistance. Mark was asked to explain lack of DPI staff with most on external project funds. There is No spare capacity and budgets are constrained

Dr Troy Jensen- NCEA- USQ nominee Toowoomba.

Precision Ag and remote sensing with the DPI. Now works for the Faculty of Engineering and Surveying at USQ. Troy is currently working for the Sugar Cane industry from a PA perspective. Also, researching soil compaction issues in the cotton industry, particularly the compaction from the new round bale pickers. Has a Green Seeker project, identifying weed species in sugar industry (green weeds in a green crop). Also, involved in WUE work in irrigation and energy audit work.

Election of 2013 Chair:

Peter Enkelmann by a majority.