

**Minutes
DD RAC Meeting
held Tuesday 8th April 2008
Australian Agricultural College, Dalby
Commencing 9.30 am**

1. **Opening, Welcome by Chairman**
The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed members.
2. **Attendance**

R Taylor (Chairman)	T Jorgensen (p of m)	Nominees
W Bidstrup	M Burgis	QDPIF R Williams
C Hornick	S Cook	CSIRO Z Hochman
S Pfeffer	J Rochecouste	GRDC B Freebairn
B Warren	J Thompson	GRFL W Newton

J Obst (Coordinator)

Guest: G Platz QDPIF
3. **Apologies**
Received from R Skerman, J Farrell, C Joseph (GRDC) P McIntosh, E Schmidt (USQ) **Accepted**
4. **Confirmation of Agenda** **Confirmed**
5. **Confirmation of Minutes (27th July 2007)** **Confirmed**
6. **Business from Minutes**
Letter of sympathy to / from Alexander family
7. **Correspondence and Business**

6.1 NVT and Wheat Varieties Guide Queensland (WVGQ) 2008: There was general discussion about NVT and the recently circulated WVGQ 2008. First there was general agreement that the wheat variety brochures provided by the private sector will focus on positive reporting. Therefore it remains necessary for there to be an 'independent umpire' to report across all wheat varieties. The WVGQ is held in very high regard by grain growers, agronomists and consultants. Disease information for variety selection is regarded as the highest priority. Furthermore growers want these disease ratings determined by pathologists in the production environment. On the Darling Downs, Root Lesion Nematodes (RLN) can be a major constraint on yield and expert ratings are essential. There was further concern over the longer term provision of pathology support with the transfer of applied wheat breeding to the private sector.

It was reported that in view of the transfer of applied wheat breeding from QDPIF to AGT that QDPIF will most likely cease publishing the WVGQ and that growers will be referred to NVT for wheat variety information.

There was general agreement that while information availability will be more website based, there remains an overwhelming need for hard copy information. Furthermore the current NVT information falls well short of the quality information provided in the WVGQ.

Resolved to inform GRDC and QDPIF that the grain industry will not accept anything less than the quality information published in the WVGQ.
8. **Overview of RAC Operations**
The Coordinator presented a brief overview of the operations of the RACs and the specific tasks to be completed within each 3 year term. Based on a Northern Region grain production GVP of approx \$2.5 Billion this would generate ~\$60 Million for investment (Grower/ Fed & State Govs) in RDE for the Northern Region. The challenge for grain growers and RDE Agencies is to target this ~\$60 Million RDE investment to maximise industry returns. The role of the RACs is to advise on Priority Issues for this RDE Investment. The RAC tasks include:
 - Identifying Key Drivers of Change in the region
 - Determining Present (2007-10) and Future (2117-20) Crop Importance Profiles
 - Determining Priority Issues (25 maximum) based on GRDC Lines of Business
 - Determine Top 8 – 10 Highest Priority Issues
 - Determine 3 most important Emerging Issues
 - Rating the alignment of the Priority Issues with the RDE Investment Program
 - Identifying GAPS in the RDE program for discussion with RDE Agencies.
9. **RAC Members to Report**
Agenda item not dealt with due to time constraints.
10. **RDE GAPS discussions**
At the last RAC meeting, possible GAPS in the current RDE program were identified. RDE Agencies were invited to comment on these GAPS.
These was general discussion of the possible GAPS with GRDC, QDPIF and CSIRO commenting.

Resolved to write to sorghum seed companies and GRDC outlining concerns over the standability of current sorghum varieties and the 'slow' rate of incorporation of the Staygreen germplasm into commercial varieties.

11. RDE for Barley Diseases

Greg Platz, QDPIF Plant Pathologist, reported on production performance of Fitzroy barley in 2007 and barley diseases in general.

12. Northern Crop Breeding Programs

Coordinator gave a brief report on the northern crop breeding programs Report tabled

13. Review of 2007 Priority Issues (PI) for 2008 Reporting

The 2007 Priority Issues for the DD Region were discussed and amendments made for the 2008 Report. Priority Issues attached

14. Emerging Issues

The following were nominated as the most important Emerging Issues for the DD region.

Lines of Business	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
Varieties	1. Develop maize germplasm for dryland systems		1. Access to GM for variety improvements
Practices	1. Understand & develop BMP to reduce N2O & CO2	1. Improve spray technology for herbicide resistance, healthy food and OH&S.	1. Regional management for herbicide resistance 2. Off-site management of herbicide residues 3. Defending our Environmental Credentials.
New Products		1. Bio-diesel from oilseeds & algae 2. Carbon trading	
Comm & Capacity			

15. RAC Nominees Reports

15.1 DPI: Dr R Williams

- Transition of commercial wheat breeding responsibilities to AGT nearing finalisation.
- EGA officially wound up on 29th February 2008.
- Future focus on feed wheat breeding being discussed. Remains a priority for QDPIF.
- New 3 year project being developed for mung bean breeding by Col Douglas & team.
- Refocused maize breeding program underway & new breeder Dr Solomon Fekybelu appointed.
- National framework for R&D progressing.
- Rob Setter recently appointed Acting Director General QDPIF.

15.2 CSIRO: Dr Z Hochman

- CSIRO's near completion of agricultural sustainability initiative
- 8 CSIRO divisions involved in this major initiative

15.3 GRDC: D Freebairn

- Northern Panel undertook an autumn visit to the SEQld region. Attended Grower Updates.
- Dr Freebairn has 'observer' status on the SQFS Project.
- N Panel soon to review project reports.
- Current membership term for NP finishes 30th June 2008.
- James Clark has been appointed NP Chairman replacing I Buss.

16. General Business

16.1 Some concern was expressed over wheat planting seed genetic integrity.

16.2 Some deep soil sampling should be undertaken for RLN prior to wheat planting. Could be a significant sub soil constraint.

16.3 Agreed that there be a focus on agri-engineering at the next DD RAC meeting. Messes Schmidt, Burgis and Bidstrup are invited to present their views on the need and opportunity for industry funding for public sector agri-engineering RDE.

17. Next Meeting

17.1	Date:	20 th August 2008
17.2	Venue:	NCEA USQ Toowoomba
17.3	Invited Speakers	Prof J Billingsley USQ

18. Closure

Meeting closed at 3.45pm.