

**Minutes**  
**WDM RAC Meeting**  
**held 25<sup>th</sup> March 2008**  
**Memorial Club 23 Albert St, Goondiwindi**  
**Commencing 9.30 am.**

**1. Opening, Welcome by Chairman**

The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed members particularly new members A M Bach and L Hill.

**2. Attendance**

N Boland (Chairman)	A M Bach	<b>Nominees</b>
V French	A Borrell	QDPIF: D Poulsen
C Nason	P Banks	CSIRO: L McIntyre
J Crocker		GRDC: C Joseph
L Hill		GRFL: D Scanlan

J Obst RAC Coordinator

Guest: G Rennick (Agforce Grains)

**3. Apologies**

Received from M Dieters, M Duffield, D Freebairn, B Barkle, J Sturgess, B O'Mara **Accepted**

**5. Confirmation of Minutes**

**Confirmed**

**6. Business from Minutes**

6.1 NVT Website Upgrade: There was general discussion on NVTrials, the Website and Website information. Also discussed was the Wheat Variety Guide for Queensland (WVGQ) compiled and distributed by QDPIF and commercial Wheat Variety Guides. There was strong agreement that the WVGQ is a report highly regarded by grain growers, agronomists and consultants. On the other hand NVT in its present form is not a suitable replacement. There is particular concern over trial integrity, disease ratings and difficulty in comparing yield data over time and across sites. Disease ratings determined within the actual growing environment are regarded as more important than trial yields. Dr Poulsen reported that QDPIF will possibly cease providing the WVGQ, at least in its present form, after 2009 in preference of NVT. Mr Joseph reported that NVT is to be reviewed.

Resolved to ask Mr Joseph to inform GRDC of the WDM RACs concerns over NVT and for the Chairman to write to GRDC recommending an external review of NVT with Mr Boland being appointed a member of the Review Panel representing customers.

6.2 GRDC Grower Accountability:

There was general discussion about the present formal accountability arrangements between grain growers and GRDC. Presently the 2 largest grain states of WA and NSW are not members of GCA. Reference was made to the MLA and AWI models for accountability comparisons. Some concern was expressed over the actual ownership of IP licensed to GRDC.

6.3 Greenhouse Gas Agenda for the Northern Grain Region: Reference was made to the Agriculture, Greenhouse & Emissions Trading Summit being hosted by AFI on 21-22 April 08 at Maroochydore. Mr Scanlan said that GRFL was endeavoring to ensure grain grower representation at this important summit. The grain industry is in a very dangerous position of being labored with substantial costs without any offsetting benefits.

**7. Correspondence and Business**

7.1 Inward: Nil

7.2 Outward: Nil

**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 based on GRDC Lines of Business (25 maximum)
- 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**

Following is a sample of key points made by members

- Some stripe rust & yellow leaf spot evident last winter season
- A lot of small grains / high screenings due to moisture stress
- Some detection of head blight last season on Downs but not confirmed
- Downgrading of some sorghum due to prolonged rain at maturity
- Need to focus more on 'energy' and not 'protein' for grain quality
- Uncertainty of soil fertility status after prolonged drought (deep N ???)
- Will be a large shift to wheat at expense of barley and chick peas.
- High price of glyphosate major concern with some looking at out of patient herbicides and detector sprayers. Double knock-downs lunacy. Not environmentally sustainable.
- There has been no predictability in the region. Need varieties with better WUE.
- No 'big thinking' by growers until more money in the industry
- Roundup price rise has brought herbicide resistance to the fore.
- Can't afford to lose 'zero tillage' practice with climate change happening
- Availability of farm labour continues to be a major problem
- Sorghum crops are reasonable
- In crop spraying for Stripe Rest in irrigation block was successful
- Barley performed poorly although could have been in less favorable situations
- Chick peas performed well
- This current season sorghum yielding 3.5 to 5 t / ha. Cool summer helped
- Meline Miles research on RGB is excellent
- Fleabane major weed with variable control results. Sprayseed working well.
- Detector Sprayers are an emerging issue
- Tactical cultivation has a place in zero tillage on certain soil types
- Biggest current problem with sorghum is logistics to markets
- Concern over the future of the Roma Research Station
- Need to get more from long term trials using short term funding.
- Main stream growers not attracted to Roma Grower Update
- MLA & GRDC should combine for some Grower Updates
- Soil carbon is an excellent opportunity to secure additional funding for research
- Not sure to what extent younger grain growers are using the Web for technical information
- Current Roundup prices forcing growers into cultivation.
- Concern over nil GRDC investment in agri-engineering
- Acid Grass spreading around the Roma area ( C Nason to refer to CMA)
- Approx 60,000 t of sorghum west of Roma with some mung beans
- Growers considering double cropping from sorghum to chick peas
- QDPIF looking for diversified sorghum genes for G x M x E approach
- Commercial breeding companies have preferred varieties with broad adaptation. Now showing some interest in specific adaptation.
- QDPIF now project leader of a national project looking at frost resistance in wheat. Elite lines being tested.
- Qld Gov funding drought adaptation
- Privatization of wheat breeding will reduce genetic diversity
- Can get 100% yield loss from Stem Rust
- Future of QDPIF feed wheat breeding program still unresolved. Stampede released.
- Feed wheat breeding could be regarded as 'market failure'.
- Hasn't been much uptake of feed wheat varieties. Focus on milling quality

**10. RDE GAPS discussions**

At the Aug 07 RAC meeting, possible GAPS in the current RDE program were identified. RDE Agencies were invited to report on these GAPS. (GRDC & CSIRO tabled written responses to the GAPS) DPI, CSIRO & GRDC Nominees discussed the GAPS with the RAC members.

**11. Northern Crop Breeding Programs**

Coordinator reported on the northern crop breeding programs. A Paper was Tabled.

**12. Review of 2007 Priority Issues for 2008**

The 2007 Priority Issues for WDM Region were discussed and amendments made for the 2008 Report. **Copy of 2008 WDM Priority Issues is attached**

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

<b>LOB</b>	<b>Group A</b>	<b>Group B</b>	<b>Group C</b>
<b>Varieties</b>	1.Ug99 Rust Gene 2.Grain shortages leading to reduction in feed demand	1.Ug99 Rust gene	1.Bio-security eg rusts 2. Alternative legumes
<b>Practices</b>	1.Herbicide Resistance	1.Robotics-including spray technology 2. Changes in fallow management	1. Conducting long term trials using short term funding cycles.

<b>New Products</b>	1. Carbon Penalties / Credits	1. Biofuels from grain 2. Carbon Penalties / Credits	1. Carbon
<b>Communication Capacity Building</b>	1. No mentoring program in place	1. Gap in technology uptake	

**13. RAC Nominees to Report**

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13.1 DPI: D Poulsen

- Exclusive license for wheat lines being finalised with AGT
- Under the license there will be agreement for QDPIF to continue to use lines for pre-breeding
- Pre-breeding material will be made available non-exclusively to the wheat breeding market.
- Recent pre-breeding scientific workshops focused on drought and quality traits
- For WVGQ some areas remain unfunded and gathering of information will be more difficult
- GRDC supports NVT moving forward. Agencies encouraged to use NVT for variety information for any publications.
- QDPIF aiming to produce WVGQ in 2009. Collecting high quality data getting difficult because no longer supported through breeding program.

13.2 CSIRO: L McIntyre

- International Wheat Genetics Symposium being held in Brisbane 24-29<sup>th</sup> August 08.  
Website <http://www.fcconventions.com.au/IWGS/>
- RDE Agencies involved in wheat pre-breeding will be linked to GRDC Website

13.3 GRDC: C Joseph

- J Clark replaced I Buss as Chairman of the Northern Panel GRDC
- Northern Panel membership is process of being re-selected for 2008 -11.
- NVT has been attracting considerable comment. Will be reviewed.
- EPR/ PVR. AGT trialled a Grower to Grower sale permit scheme in S Aust.
- GRDC will focus on re-building reserve following 2 drought years.

**14. General Business**

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14.1 Roma Research Station: Concerns were raised about the on-going future of the RRS for grain RDE. This facility has always been highly valued by grain growers. If QDPIF sees no future role for RRS for grains RDE then industry could possibly take on some responsibility for the facility.

Resolved to write to the Minister for PIF seeking his view on the on-going use of the RRS for grains RDE and indication to him growers' interest in becoming involved in the facility. Copies could also be sent to CSIRO & UQ.

**15. Next Meeting**

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15.1	Date:	Thursday 21 <sup>st</sup> August 2008
15.2	Venue:	Roma
15.3	Invited Speakers	to be determined

**16. Closure**

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**Meeting closed at 1530.**