



U.S. Wheat & Barley
Scab Initiative

MINUTES

USWBSI Steering Committee Meeting
Tuesday, December 12, 2006 1:00-5:00 p.m.
Sheraton Imperial Hotel
Durham, NC

Members Present: Louis Arnold (North Dakota Barley Council), Stephen Baenziger (University of NE), Bob Bowden (USDA-ARS), Bill Bushnell (retired, USDA-ARS), Blake Cooper (Busch Agricultural Research, Inc.), Daren Coppock (National Assoc. of Wheat Growers, DC), Mike Davis (American Malting Barley Association), Erick De Wolf (Penn State University), Ruth Dill-Macky (University of MN), Elias Elias (North Dakota State Univ.), Winston Hagler (NC State University), Calvin Haile (Private Grower, VA), Char Hollingsworth (Univ. of Minnesota), Rich Horsley (ND State University), David Kendra (USDA-ARS), Fred Kolb (University of IL), Laird Larson (SD Wheat Grower), Larry Madden (Ohio State Univ.), Marcia McMullen (ND State University), Mohamed Mergoum (ND State University), Brad Miller (Durum Pasta Growers Company), Ben Moreno-Sevilla (WestBred L.L.C), Steven Neate (ND State University), Herb Ohm (Purdue University), Jim Pestka (MI State University), Ron Skadsen (USDA-ARS), Dave Van Sanford (University of KY), and Marv Zutz (Minnesota Barley Council)

Member participating via Teleconference (audio only): Tom Anderson (Private Grower, MN)

USDA-ARS-NPS ADODR: Kay Simmons

Guests: Jane DeMarchi (North American Millers' Association and Don Mennel (The Mennel Milling Company)

Support Staff: Sue Canty

Meeting called to order at 1:00 p.m.

- 1. Welcome and Introductions.** Dave Van Sanford asked the Steering Committee (SC) to allow Jane DeMarchi (incoming Executive Committee member) and Don Mennel (attending Forum in place of CJ Lin from The Mennel Milling Company, and sitting member of the SC) to attend the closed SC meeting. There were no objections from the SC to this request.
- 2. Approve Minutes from 5-25-06 SC Meeting.** A motion was made to approve the minutes from the 5-25-06 Steering Committee meeting without changes. Motion was seconded and approved.
- 3. Update by Mike Davis (MD) on the status the FY07 Federal Budget.** Prior to the SC meeting, a memo was distributed to the SC via e-mail detailing the House and Senate versions of the FY07 Agriculture Appropriations bills. ARS earmarks dating back to FY01, targeted for elimination in the President's budget were maintained in either or both bills, including approximately \$1M of USWBSI funding. However, as of this time, the FY07 budget process is stalled and now the new Congress is expected to pass a Joint Funding Resolution (JR) to finalize a FY07 budget. MD distributed to the SC a press release from the Chairs of the Senate and House Appropriations Committees (attached to minutes) summarizing plans for the JR, in which they indicated that there would be a moratorium on earmarks for FY07, and the process reformed for FY08. MD indicated

that the final outcome for USWBSI FY07 funding could include funding at FY06 levels or a possible rescission of 6% or some other amount.

4. **Report from Kay Simmons, USDA-ARS, National Program Staff.** ARS has instituted a policy for their national programs to develop action plans. In consultation with stakeholders, who expressed their need to see faster progress in FHB resistance and DON problems, ARS has requested that the Scab Initiative develop such a plan which should include milestones with an assessment of progress at the end. Dr. Simmons is very pleased with the results of the brainstorming sessions as a start to the development of an action plan.
5. **Presentation of Proposed FY07 Research Plan & Budget.** The Executive Committee's (EC) FY07 funding recommendation was distributed to the SC for review. Dave Van Sanford (DVS) gave an overview of the planning and budgeting process. The first step was the development of the FY07 research priorities, which were finalized by mid-July. The FY07 Request for Pre-Proposals (RFPP) was distributed in early August. The deadline for submission of pre-proposals was September 19th. They were then processed and distributed to the RACs and the EC for review. The RACs met with the EC on December 9th to make their recommendations. DVS also informed the SC of the outcome of the special request that went out this past summer (July '06) for submitted proposals for the purchase of GC/MS equipment to enhance the Initiative's capacity of DON testing. The DON testing lab at the University of Minnesota was awarded the funding which allowed the purchase of a second unit. The EC's recommended FY07 Budget includes an extra \$50,000 for increased DON testing (i.e. analyze more samples from breeders).

Questions raised by SC members during review of funding recommendation.

What were the reasons for requesting the resubmission of certain pre-proposal? Answer: A variety of reasons - PI needs to remove an objective from proposed research; the proposed research is sound, but pre-proposal needs more detail or further clarification, etc.

One outcome from brainstorming sessions was improved communication activities; does this funding recommendation include additional money for such activities? Answer: No

How will the Initiative/ARS handle a 6% rescission? In the past, rescissions have been processed as across-the-board reductions of all recommended projects. However, past rescissions have never been this large (possibly 6%). Dr. Simmons indicated that there are two possible options: 1) an across-the-board reduction of 6% on all recommended projects; or 2) fully fund projects as recommended by the USWSI until the money runs out. There was no recommendation from the SC as to which method is preferred.

A motion was made to accept the EC's FY07 recommended budget as proposed. The motion was seconded and approved by the SC.

6. **Summarize Outcome of Forum Brainstorming Sessions.** Dave Van Sanford conveyed his observation that the Forum resulted in an outstanding two and a half days of true exchange of ideas. The response from many of the participants was that the exchange of information during this year's Forum has offered numerous collaborative opportunities, as well as a better understanding of the urgency in solving this problem. Mike Davis gave kudos to the facilitators/leaders of the brainstorming sessions for being able to manage their sessions which resulted in clear and concise plans.
7. **Determine process to be followed for the development of FY08 Research Plan & Budget.** Until the new action plan is finalized, a process can not be determined. The next step in the process of developing an action plan is to get feedback from the community at large on what was developed

during Forum. Dave Van Sanford suggested that this process will consist of a back and forth dialog which will result in presenting the final action plan to the SC at the spring meeting for approval.

Questions/Suggestions raised during SC discussion:

- Initiative needs new ways to write and review grants: move away from competitive based grants; allow for multi-year grants with staggered start/end dates; allow for different formats/types of research projects (regional and/or commodity based proposed projects, multi-disciplinary/institutional approaches). It is important to remember that one size does not fit all and the Initiative should continue to allow for small disciplined-based projects. For more detailed information on how commodity-based projects might be developed, visit the Barley or Wheat CAPs (Coordinated Agricultural Projects) Websites (below).

Barley Cap - <http://www.barleycap.org>

Wheat Cap - <http://maswheat.ucdavis.edu>

Along with the development of the new Action Plan, the Initiative must also change how it recommends funding. This will enforce adoption of the action plan by researchers. Proposals should include who will be impacted by the results/outcomes of the proposed research. Letters of intent could be added to the pre-proposal process. The Initiative should look to other funding agencies for a template of a letter of intent as well as the process to be followed.

- There needs to be more sharing of communication within and from the Initiative: Current achievements and results by researchers should be assembled and made available to everyone via the Scab Website. The expectation of sharing information (i.e. data, germplasm, etc.) should be included in the final action plan. Progress reports should be expanded to include more detailed results. Concern with cap model – some people may not get funding. This could result in the disenfranchising of people who could be making very significant contributions. Don't want to be a closed group. The Initiative must continue to be open to new researchers.
 - SC Concerns. The leadership should be sensitive to the possibility that there may be uncertainty among researchers; a very aggressive timeline is needed for completing the action plan.
 - What is the end goal of the action plan? After much discussion, it was clear that one overarching goal could not be identified at this meeting. However, consensus was that stakeholders must be involved in the development of the action plan. One suggestion was to identify benchmark varieties that address both reduction of DON and improved yield. Researchers voiced concerned that the goal be based upon something that can be controlled (e.g. developing tools that the farmer can use). However, stakeholders responded that such a goal must include a measurement of adaptation of the tools by the farmer.
- 8. Election of Steering Committee Members for terms beginning January 1, 2007.** The EC delayed the SC elections due to concerns by the Co-Chairs that the balance of membership could tip from Stakeholders (growers/industry) to researchers/scientists. For 3-year terms starting January 1, the SC will be voting on nine nominees (five of whom are public scientists) for five vacant seats. Before voting begins, the Co-Chairs want to stress the importance of maintaining stakeholder involvement on the Steering Committee.

9. Spring '07 Steering Committee Meeting. At the 5-25-06 SC meeting, the SC had discussed holding its spring '07 meeting by web conference. However, with the likelihood of significant changes within the Initiative, the EC recommends that the SC meet as it has in past years - late May or early June somewhere in the Midwest. Several SC members voiced their preference that the SC meeting is not held in Chicago. The NFO will test the use of web-conferencing for EC meetings, and then consider using this format for spring SC meeting 2008.

10. New Items.

Empower EC with additional decision-making authority. Dave Van Sanford, acting on behalf of the Executive Committee, requested that the SC authorize the EC to act on issues too cumbersome or time critical to get approval from the entire SC. Any decision made by the EC could be reversed by a vote of the SC at the next SC meeting. A motion was made that the SC authorize the EC to make decisions normally decided upon by the SC as long as it is in the best interest of the organization. The EC would need to notify the SC promptly of its decision by e-mail. The SC would have the opportunity to review and possibly reverse any decision at the next SC meeting. Motion was seconded and approved by the SC.

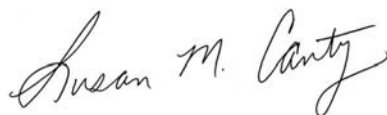
Revision of the current Policies and Procedures (P&P). DVS informed the SC that one outcome from the 'Reinventing the Initiative' brainstorming session was the need to revise the current P&P. While the P&P must provide due process and accountability, they could be simplified, streamlined to allow for more rapid action. The development of the action will plan will likely determine significant changes that will need to be made to the P&P. However, it was suggested that a sub-committee be formed now to identify changes that could be made that would not be effected by the final action plan.

Can submitted pre-proposal titles be immediately posted on the Scab Website? The Initiative can not post this information as it does not own the pre-proposals. All information associated with submitted pre-proposals is confidential. Only after a (pre-) proposal has been awarded funding may selective information (title, award amount, abstract, etc.) be made public.

What is the status of the Electronic Submission Process? A technology committee has been formed that will review the electronic submission process, as well as other aspects of the USWBSI's Web presence. After reviewing feedback from those who participated (PIs and reviewers) in the process, major changes will be made to the system. The CBCC research area will again be used as a test group for the FY08 submission of Pre-proposals. The goal is to make the process more streamlined and user-friendly.

Meeting adjourned at 2:55 p.m.

Minutes recorded and written by:



Susan M. Canty, Manager
USWBSI's Networking & Facilitation Office