



U.S. Wheat & Barley  
Scab Initiative

**MINUTES**

USWBSI Steering Committee Meeting  
Thursday, May 26, 2005 9:00 AM – 4:30 PM  
Kennedy Room  
Crown Plaza O'Hare International  
Chicago, IL

**Members Present:** Tom Anderson (MN Wheat Growers), Louis Arnold (ND Barley Council), Jim Bloomberg (Bayer CropScience), Bob Bowden, Vice-Chair of EDM (USDA-ARS), Bill Bushnell (Retired, USDA-ARS), Blake Cooper (BARI), Daren Coppock (NAWG), Mike Davis ( American Malting Barley Association), Ruth Dill-Macky (University of MN), Marty Draper (SD State University), Ken Grafton (ND State University), Winston Hagler (NC State University), Pat Lipps (Ohio State University), Marcia McMullen (ND State University), Ben Moreno-Sevilla (WestBred LLC), Steven Neate (ND State University), Paul Schwarz (ND State University), Ron Skadsen, Vice-Chair of BIO (USDA-ARS), Rick Vallery (S.D. Wheat, Inc.), Rick Ward (Mich. State University), Les Wright (BARI) and Marv Zutz (MN Barley Council)  
**ADODR:** Kay Simmons, USDA-ARS-NPS  
**Guest:** Carl Griffey, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University  
**Support Staff:** Sue Canty, USWBSI-NFO

Meeting called to order: 9:10 AM

- 1. Opening Remarks/Introductions.**
- 2. Review minutes from 12-11-04 Steering Committee (SC) Meeting.**

Marty Draper made motion to accept minutes as amended; motion seconded. Motion was seconded by Pat Lipps. SC approved minutes as amended.

- 3. FY06 Funding Outlook.**

➤ **Update on Federal Budget (Mike Davis)** – The Administration's proposed FY06 budget contains \$11.3 M in cuts to ARS small grains programs that were added by Congress in the last five fiscal years. The USWBSI is targeted to be cut back to pre-FY01 funding level, with a proposed cut totaling a little over \$1 M. The only areas in the Federal budget allowed to increase their overall spending levels are Homeland Security and Defense. The NBIC and NWIC FY2006 lobbying effort was reviewed. Davis is confident that if either the House or Senate FY06 Agriculture Appropriation Bills restore funding for a program proposed for elimination, it will be maintained in the final bill. Both Davis and Coppock felt that it's possible that the Agriculture Appropriations bill this year may be finalized before the start of the next fiscal year, October 1.

- **Update on USDA-ARS Issues (Kay Simmons)** – The federal government is increasing accountability as part of the President’s Management Agenda. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) expects USDA-ARS to develop thorough strategic plans with milestones for monitoring progress. Further, OMB now expects USDA-ARS to track progress towards meeting the milestones in each research project. That accountability also applies to the external agreements/grants provided by the USWBSI through USDA-ARS funding.

This means that the USWBSI should proceed to develop a more detailed strategic or action plan for the Scab Initiative. Much of the planning has already been completed through the development of research priorities and plans by the USWBSI Steering and Executive Committees. Additionally, more detailed priorities have been developed by all the Research Area Committees including the identification of anticipated accomplishments over the next three fiscal years. Kay Simmons recommended that the USWBSI integrate these materials into a more formal Action Plan for the USWBSI. Dr. Simmons provided the Committee a copy of the standard ARS National Program Action Plan format, as well as a draft of the proposed Strategic Plan for the Soybean Rust Initiative as examples. She will work with the USWBSI leadership to develop the Action Plan for the Initiative.

Increased accountability in monitoring completion of proposed research by individual projects is also required. Monitoring of progress and completion of milestones is reported in the Annual Progress Reports required for each grant award USWBSI project. Kay Simmons encouraged USWBSI to enhance reporting of the impact of research accomplishments in the Annual Progress Reports. Questions to be considered include:

- Who will use the research results – Identify your customers.
- What problem was solved or is being solved?
- How did the research results address the customers’ needs (new scientific knowledge, improved germplasm, genomic technology, improved management practices, etc.)?
- Has the research been used by your customers or could it significantly change customer activities, if adopted?

R. Ward suggested that expectations (of accomplishments) should be built into call for pre-proposals, as well as the annual performance reports.

Kay Simmons noted that it would also be helpful if University researchers acknowledge USDA-ARS funding and collaborations in performance reporting. For example, if an ARS scientist significantly contributes to a germplasm or variety release through end-product quality analysis or disease evaluation, then the ARS scientist could be invited to join as a coauthor on the germplasm release statement.

- **National Institute for Food and Agriculture (Rick Ward)** – \$1B Bill proposed by Senator Bond (R-MO) for competitive peer-reviewed NSF based institution for agriculture research. A similar bill was introduced into the house as well. The good news is that the Federal government currently funds approximately 1.8B in research, so if passed, it would double the funding for agricultural research.

#### 4. **Current Status of the USWBSI.**

- **Update on FY05 USWBSI Funding Recommendation.**

See handout for detailed summary of FY05 funding.

All Institutions have been notified by USDA-ARS of FY05 awards. However, ARS is still waiting on several agreements to be signed and returned by universities. Some unspent USWBSI funds from the previous fiscal year were transferred to new, continuing FY04 awards as the result of the 5-year grant closing process. That meant that some additional FY05 funding (approx \$90K) could be provided to additional FY05 USWBSI projects. The Executive Committee recommended that these funds be used in FY05 to support three additional USWBSI projects: an ongoing project within the Chemical and Biological Control area (PI - Gary Bergstrom at Cornell University) which was ranked #1 in Category II - 'Recommended for Funding, but not within Working Cap; and then two breeder-genotyping center collaborative pilot projects (1 spring wheat and 1 barley) were commissioned by the Executive Committee at the recommendation of the Co-Chairs (in collaboration with ARS – Simmons). All three projects received approximately \$30K (exact amounts indicated in funding summary handout).

- **Summary of actions taken since 12/11/04 SC meeting.** (See handout distributed with meeting packet.)

Aerial Application Projects – Several communications took place between the Co-Chairs and the three PIs (McMullen, Halley and Hollingsworth) of the aerial projects, in order to work out some problems as a result of not funding the aerial team out of Texas A&M University. Changes were also made to improve standardization across the three projects. It should also be noted that Marcia McMullen agreed to take the lead as the main coordinator of the three projects.

## 5. **Reorganization of Research Areas (RA)**

At 12-11-04 SC meeting, the SC authorized the EC to draft a proposal for reorganization of the current research areas. The overarching objects behind the need for reorganization are: 1) minimize situation where proposals require review by more than one committee (narrow the focus or scope of research); 2) and increase the effectiveness of committees by eliminating the need to add additional reviewers to cover broad areas of research (i.e. transformation and mapping) within a single area. One issue discussed repeatedly was that the Initiative needs to focus on the practical outcomes (i.e. results, accomplishments). 'Practical outcomes' should be part of the program descriptions. – Strategic plan, allocation of funding, reviewers of pre-proposals.

- **Action on EC Proposal (attached) for Reorganization.**

The SC discussed the proposed reorganization, including the language describing the objectives for each new area. There was agreement with the general focus of the new areas, and the titles (i.e. names). The SC then discussed what types of research each area would cover (set distinct boundaries). The result of that discussion is listed below:

- ✓ **Host Genetics and Genomic (HGG)**
  - Characterization of
    - Host-Resistance (to FHB)
    - Genetic (classical) Inheritance Studies
  - Low resolution mapping (QTL)

- Fine Mapping
- Gene Cloning and Validation
- Sequencing
- Structural and Functional Genomics
  - Validation of Transformation

*(Rick Ward, working with Gary Muehlbauer, will draft a program description (based on items listed above) for this area.)*

- ✓ **Genetic Engineering and Transformation (GET)**
  - Science and Technology leading to GMO varieties (non-host, alien, etc.)  
*(Ron Skadsen will draft a program description (based on items listed above) for this area.)*
  
- ✓ **Host Genetic Resources (HGR)**
  - Discovery of novel sources of germplasm and allelism testing.
    - R. Ward indicated the importance of maintaining access to International sources of germplasm.
  - Preliminary Deployment (Pre-breeding using Marker-Assisted Selection (MAS)).
  - Assembling multiple sources of resistance for deploying into parents.
  - Short-term (objective/deliverable) Genotyping Center/Breeder collaborative projects.  
**Note:** Each of the three Genotyping Centers (Fargo, Manhattan and Raleigh) has \$90K based funding coded for FHB research.  
*(Ward, working with Les Wright and Carl Griffey, will draft a program description (based on items listed above) for this area.)*
  
- ✓ **Variety Development and Uniform Nurseries (VDUN)**
  - Some of the breeding programs have MAS incorporated into their research for developing FHB resistant varieties.
  - No validation studies will be included in this area.  
*(Ward, working with Les Wright and Carl Griffey, will draft a program description (based on items listed above) for this area.)*
  
- ✓ **Etiology, Epidemiology and Disease Forecasting (EEDF)**
  - Understanding disease development at cellular, tissue and whole plant & population level, and understanding interaction between the host and pathogen.
  - Physical, Chemical and Structural determinants of disease pathway (DON as well as other mycotoxins).  
*(Ruth Dill-Macky, working with Marty Draper, Marcia McMullen, Pat Lipps, Bob Bowden, Marty Draper, Bill Bushnell and Stephen Neate, will draft a program description (based on items listed above) for this area.)*
  
- ✓ **Pathogen Genetics and Genomics (PGG)**
  - Diversity (subcellular)
  - Structural and Functional Genomics
  - Classical Genetics  
*(Bob Bowden will draft a program description (based on items listed above) for this area.)*
  
- ✓ **Chemical, Biological and Cultural Control (CBCC)**
  - See attached EC proposal

*(Marty Draper working with his committee members will draft a program description incorporating 'Cultural' control.)*

✓ **Food Safety, Toxicology and Utilization of Mycotoxin-contaminated Grain (FSTU)**

- The SC agreed to set two separate working caps for the following:

1) DON Diagnostic Services

- R. Ward agreed to find out what is planned for MSU's DON Diagnostic Service with the impending retirement of Pat Hart.

2) Competitive Research Projects.

- Milling studies to show what reduction of DON content occurs with different milling processes.

- Research focused on new methods or technologies for detecting DON (i.e. Biomass screening) in wheat and barley.

*(Paul Schwarz will draft a program description (based on items listed above) for this area.)*

Kay Simmons and Rick Ward volunteered to work together in developing a template (based on ARS' organization) for use in developing the program descriptions, which would standardized the format across all research areas. This template would then be distributed for use in crafting the new program descriptions.

**Post SC Meeting Follow-up** - Following the SC meeting, Ward and Simmons agreed that the format the USWBSI had been using was quite similar to that used by ARS, and only needed minor changes. Therefore, the designated individual/groups were asked (by the NFO) to proceed with crafting their appointed program descriptions based on the existing format.

➤ **Process for Election/Appointment of Members and Chairs/Vice-Chairs for Research Areas.**

The SC agreed to assign/reassign current members to new research areas, and then fill in vacancies from the list of volunteers. A few individuals not on the list of volunteers were selected by the SC to be asked to serve on RACs. Four individuals were assigned to each research area. The SC also appointed the Chairs and Vice-Chairs for each committee. The SC's recommended RAC membership is listed below:

✓ **Host Genetics and Genomics (HGG)**

- Chair – Herb Ohm

- Vice-Chair – Gary Muehlbauer

- Members: Anne McKendry and Shahryar Kianian

✓ **Genetic Engineering and Transformation (GET)**

- Chair – Ron Skadsen

- Vice-Chair – Blake Cooper

- Members: Therese Ouellet\* and Steve Scofield

\*NOTE: SC agreed, with encouragement from ARS, to allow non-US based individuals to serve on RA committees.

✓ **Host Genetic Resources (HGR)**

- Chair – Stephen Baenziger

- Vice-Chair – Carl Griffey
- Members: Xiwen Cai and Les Wright
  
- ✓ **Variety Development & Uniform Nurseries (VDUN)**
  - Chair – Dave Van Sanford
  - Vice-Chair – Jim Anderson
  - Members: Mohamed Mergoum and Linnea Skoglund
  
- ✓ **Etiology, Epidemiology and Disease Forecasting (EEDF)**
  - Chair – Erick DeWolf
  - Vice-Chair – Christina Cowger
  - Members: Char Hollingsworth and Jeff Stein
  
- ✓ **Pathogen Genetics and Genomics (PGG)**
  - Chair – Bob Bowden
  - Vice-Chair – Francis Trail
  - Members: Nancy Alexander and Corby Kistler
  
- ✓ **Chemical, Biological and Cultural Control (CBCC)**
  - Chair – Marty Draper
  - Vice-Chair – Don Hershman
  - Members: Stephen Neate and Erik Stromberg
  
- ✓ **Food Safety, Toxicology and Utilization of Mycotoxin-contaminated Grain (FSTU) – NO CHANGE IN MEMBERSHIP**
  - Chair – Paul Schwarz
  - Vice-Chair – Jim Pestka
  - Members: Cynthia Henson and Bill Epperson

Les Wright made a motion that the individuals selected by the SC become official members, and chair/vice-chairs, once individuals accept offer of membership and position. Motion was seconded. SC approved motion. Thought does need to be given to staggering the terms of chairs and members, so not all are rotating at the same time. The NFO will draft a proposal for RAC terms to be distributed to the SC for review and approval.

## 6. Review FY06 Funding Recommendation Process.

**Setting of RA Working Caps** – Mike Davis made a motion that the SC follow the same policy as used in the past (as stipulated in the Policies and Procedures). The motion was seconded by Stephen Neate. Following discussion (see below), the SC approved the motion.

**Discussion** – NFO was asked to compile a history of past funding based on the new research areas. Transformation was the main focus of the discussion. The barley industry as a whole is not supported of research leading to GMO varieties. Both the Wheat Growers (NAWG) and Millers' (NAMA) associations approved a policy in March which supports 'biotechnology research' (i.e. results in GMO varieties) as a high priority.

In the past, the final RA Working Caps were not distributed until after the pre-proposals had already been submitted. However, the SC agreed that as a result of the reorganization of the

research area, and out of fairness to the scientist submitting pre-proposals, the process for setting working caps will be moved up, and the results distributed to the public well before the deadline for submission.

**7. 2006 Spring Steering Committee Meeting.**

The reason behind setting the date of the 2006 spring SC meeting now is so that members can get it scheduled into their calendars before other conflicts arise.

- SC selected Chicago for the location of the 2006 Spring SC meeting.
- The SC agreed in principle on Thursday, May 25 for the meeting date. The entire SC will be polled by e-mail before the date is finalized.

**8. 2006 National Fusarium Head Blight Forum**

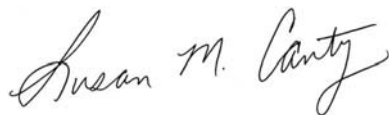
- The SC agreed on December 10-12 for the 2006 NFHB Forum. The Networking and Facilitation Office (NFO) will poll the community at large for any possible conflicts before dates are finalized.
- Raleigh, NC was suggested as the location for the 2006 NFHB Forum. This will be finalized by an e-mail vote of the SC.

**9. New Items.**

Section 18 for Folicur – Louis Arnold asked the USWBSI as a body to contact the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) urging approval of granting a Section 18 for Folicur in North Dakota (ND). Daren Coppock of the National Association of Wheat Growers (NAWG) has already submitted a letter to EPA urging approval for North Dakota (ND), Michigan (MI) and Minnesota (MN). Blake Cooper made a motion that Rick Ward, acting on behalf of the USWBSI Steering Committee, contacts the EPA urging immediate positive actions making available all options resources, including Folicur, for the combat of FHB in wheat and barley in ND, MI, and MN. Motion was seconded by Ben Moreno. SC approved motion.

Meeting Adjourned at 4:35 p.m.

Minutes recorded and transcribed by:



Susan M. Canty