



# *Fusarium Focus*

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## USWBSI Seeks Co-Chair Nominees

— *Researcher Nomination Deadline is September 1* —

The U.S. Wheat & Barley Scab Initiative is seeking nominations for the USWBSI research community co-chair position currently held by Dave Van Sanford, who is stepping down in late 2017 after 11 years of service in that capacity. Nominations will be accepted until September 1, 2016, and should be submitted to the USWBSI's Networking & Facilitation Office: [nfo@scabusa.org](mailto:nfo@scabusa.org).

**General Description:** Co-chairs of the USWBSI provide leadership to a consortium of wheat and barley research scientists, producers and industry representatives who together form the U.S. Wheat and Barley Scab Initiative (USWBSI; [www.scabusa.org](http://www.scabusa.org)). The mission of the Initiative is to enhance food safety and supply by reducing the impact of Fusarium Head Blight (scab) on wheat and barley. The Initiative's budget of approximately \$5 million is managed by USDA-ARS and is part of the ARS National Program for Plant Disease. In fiscal year 2016, USWBSI recommendations to USDA-ARS were awarded as grants to 126 projects carried out by 81 researchers at 24 land grant universities along with the USDA's Agricultural Research Service.

The two co-chairs of the USWBSI represent the researcher community (currently occupied by Van Sanford, University of Kentucky wheat breeder)

and the stakeholder groups (currently occupied by Art Brandli, grower from Warroad, Minn.) The co-chairs participate in the governance of the Initiative and serve as the principal spokespersons of the Initiative to U.S. wheat and barley growers, the milling, malting and brewing industries, members of Congress and legislative staff, and the general public.

The co-chairs together lead both the Executive Committee (EC) and the Steering Committee (SC) of the Initiative. The EC serves to review the research priorities and the annual call for pre-proposals, and aids in the development of the process for the evaluation of pre-proposals by review panels. The EC also reviews all of the pre-proposals and develops the annual research plan



Warroad, Minn., producer Art Brandli (left) has served as USWBSI shareholder co-chair since January 2008, while Dave Van Sanford (right), University of Kentucky wheat breeder, has been researcher co-chair since January 2006. Brandli will step down in December 2016 and Van Sanford in December of 2017.



and budget for the SC's consideration, aids in developing the agenda for the annual National FHB Forum, and approves workshops to facilitate collaboration among scientists within the Initiative.

The Steering Committee comprises broad representation of the research and stakeholder communities. The SC provides direction and guidance to the Initiative and is responsible for the review and approval of: research priorities of the Initiative, the process by which the Initiative requests research pre-proposals, and the Initiative's annual research plan and budget recommendations.

**Position Description/Nomination Volunteer Responsibilities and Expectations of the Researcher Co-Chair:**

The researcher co-chair plays a vital role in both the governance and continued evolution of the USWBSI. In addition to the formally defined duties that are described below, the researcher co-chair must take the responsibility for initiating discussions and activities that will move the USWBSI forward, adapting to address the changing science, ARS directives and stakeholder needs.

The researcher co-chair serves as the primary spokesperson for the U.S. Wheat and Barley Scab Initiative, and as the liaison with USDA-ARS and various stakeholder groups impacted by FHB. In this capacity, he/she communicates research results and impacts to USDA-ARS and stakeholders. However, the co-chair also serves as the liaison transmitting information from the stakeholders to the PIs whose research is funded by the ARS through USWBSI. In this capacity, the co-chair communicates the problems of stakeholders and serves to remind the PIs that their research must be directed towards an expeditious solution to the problem of scab. Examples of previous communication activities carried out by the current researcher co-chair are listed below:

- Gave presentations to stakeholder and research groups on the USWBSI.
- Developed white paper on the 2009 Southern SWW scab epidemic.

## USWBSI Executive Committee Backs Lentz To Succeed Brandli As Stakeholder Co-Chair

The U.S. Wheat & Barley Scab Initiative Executive Committee has unanimously agreed to recommend Doyle Lentz, a producer from the north central North Dakota community of Rolla, as the next stakeholder co-chair, to be voted on by the USWBSI Steering Committee at its next meeting, December 6. Doyle would replace Art Brandli of Warroad, Minn., who will be stepping down at the end of 2016 after serving in that capacity since January 2008.

- Worked with USWBSI scientists to develop the DON white paper.
- Met with USWBSI pathologists to develop the FHB Alert program.
- Wrote a letter to U.S. EPA urging expedited review of Section 18 for tebuconazole (Folicur).
- Gave interviews to news sources and other groups on the USWBSI.
- Facilitated the process for developing the USWBSI's Impact Statement document.

Represented the USWBSI on the organizing committee for the FHB International Symposium (which occurs every four years).

- Wrote letters to U.S. Wheat and the National Association of Wheat Growers about CODEX and attended a U.S. Wheat meeting to provide information and stakeholder perspectives.

In addition to the items above, the researcher co-chair visits ARS headquarters annually to solidify that relationship and underscore the importance of the partnership.

The researcher co-chair is also the director of the USWBSI's NFO. In this capacity, he/she must communicate fre-

quently (sometimes daily) with the office manager of the NFO on matters pertaining to the efficient operation of a \$5 million annual grants program. Examples of these matters include:

- Address changes in federal regulations that impact the USWBSI grants.
- Requests from PIs for changes to grants, letters of reference, etc.
- Development of agendas for administrative meetings and conference calls.
- Requests for funding support of Forum speakers and Steering Committee members.
- Implementation policy/procedure changes made by the Steering and/or Executive committees.
- Discuss issues impacting the Initiative's various web-based systems.
- Inquiries from stakeholder groups and news sources.
- Accounting issues pertaining to grant for the NFO/USWBSI headquarters.

In addition to the above activities, the researcher co-chair should expect to attend the annual National FHB Forum in December, the SC meetings in April/May (every other year) and December (the December meeting is held in conjunction with the Forum), EC meetings in April/May and December (also held in conjunction with the Forum), to evaluate pre-proposals, meet with researchers and stakeholder groups as needed, and participate in weekly calls with NFO staff and periodic conference calls with EC members.

### Nomination Process and

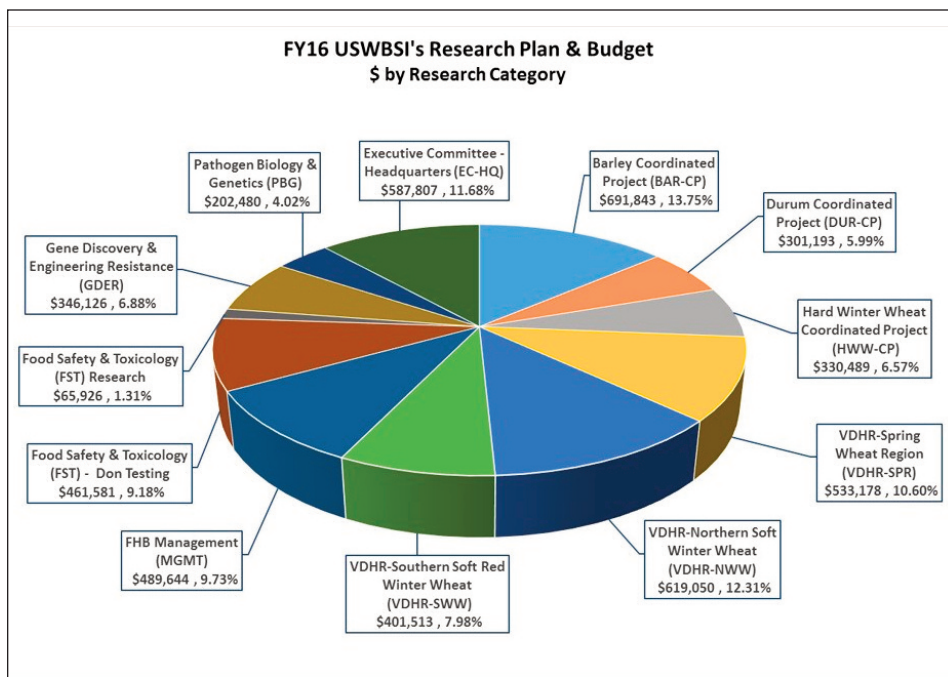
**Requirements:** USWBSI hopes to identify the next researcher co-chair by the end of calendar 2016 so that he/she can join the NFO staff and learn the position before assuming the role at the end of 2017. Self-nominations or nominations of others are acceptable. Interested parties should submit a nomination packet comprised of a brief (one-page) statement of interest and qualifications for the position, and a two-page biosketch by September 1, 2016.

Again, nominations should be sent to: [nfo@scabusa.org](mailto:nfo@scabusa.org). ❖



# USWBSI Research Funding: FY16

— Project Support Totals \$5,030,830 —



The U.S. Wheat & Barley Scab Initiative (USWBSI) has submitted its fiscal year 2016 Research Plan and Budget to the USDA Agricultural Research Service, totaling \$5,030,830 in scab-related research projects. The total includes 126 projects in 26 states and encompasses 24 land grant universities plus USDA-ARS.

The above pie chart depicts the percentage of recommended funding broken down by research area, plus the actual amount for each area. The dollar level recommendation and number of projects for each area are as follows:

- *Barley Coordinated Project* - \$691,843 / 13 research projects
- *Durum Coordinated Project* - \$301,193 / 7 projects
- *Hard Winter Wheat Coordinated Project* - \$330,489 / 10 projects
- *Variety Development & Host Resistance (VDHR) / Spring Wheat*

- *Region* - \$533,178 / 10 projects
- *VDHR / Northern Winter Wheat Region* - \$619,050 / 24 projects
- *VDHR / Southern Winter Wheat Region* - \$401,513 / 11 projects
- *FHB Management* - \$489,644 / 26 projects
- *Food Safety & Toxicology / Research* - \$65,926 / 1 project
- *Food Safety & Toxicology / DON Testing Labs* - \$461,581 / 4 projects (labs)
- *Gene Discovery & Engineering Resistance* - \$346,126 / 9 projects
- *Pathogen Biology & Genomics* - \$202,480 / 5 projects
- *Executive Committee & USWBSI Headquarters* - \$587,807 / 6 projects

Each year, the U.S. Wheat & Barley Scab Initiative is charged with developing a comprehensive research plan and budget recommendation that is aimed at achieving the Initiative's primary

mission — *i.e.*, that of enhancing food safety and supply by reducing the impact of Fusarium Head Blight (scab) on wheat and barley.

The process followed to develop this research plan and budget is the product of extensive deliberations overseen and approved by the USWBSI Steering Committee (SC), which is comprised of wheat and barley growers, farm organization representatives, food processors, public and private scientists and consumer groups. The USWBSI's Networking and Facilitation Office coordinated this process in close consultation with the organization's Executive Committee (EC) and the chairs of each individual research area and coordinated project.

The Executive Committee's recommended plan and budget were presented to the Steering Committee at its meeting following the 2015 National Fusarium Head Blight Forum in St. Louis last December. In its entirety, the recommendation encompassed 110 pre-proposals (including several multi-PI ones) from 76 PIs. The sum of all recommended award amounts was equal to the \$5,030,830 anticipated to be available to USDA-ARS for collaborative scab research for FY16.

Following a briefing and study of the plan, the Steering Committee passed it by a unanimous vote. So the plan then became the official USWBSI comprehensive research plan and budget for fiscal year 2016. Subsequently, the plan was translated into individual USDA-ARS grant applications, which were submitted en masse in March as USWBSI's recommendation for how ARS could allocate the \$5,030,830 awarded it for scab research by Congress.

For more information about the U.S. Wheat & Barley Scab Initiative's funding application and approval process, go to its website — [www.scabusa.org](http://www.scabusa.org) — and then click on the "About USWBSI" and "Research Categories." ❖



# 2016 FHB Forum Scheduled December 4-6 in St. Louis

Photo Courtesy 'Explore St. Louis'



geared toward public and private scientists, millers, maltsters and brewers, additional food processors, wheat and barley growers, grower group representatives, consumers and others with interest in Fusarium Head Blight (scab) and its impact.

The 2016 FHB Forum begins at 1:00 p.m. on Sunday, December 4, and concludes at noon on Tuesday, the 6th. The program will consist of oral and poster presentations, along with focus group discussions. The popular Flash & Dash presentations for graduate students, post-docs and early career professionals will be held as well.

A draft of the full Forum program should be available by early September. For updates, visit [www.scabusa.org](http://www.scabusa.org). The USWBSI website also includes full details on registration and making hotel reservations.

Here's a summary of key dates:

- *Nov. 4* — Deadline for early registration (fee: US \$155.00). Last day to receive full refund.

- *Nov. 5* — Late registration begins (fee: US \$190.00).

- *Nov. 7* — Deadline for registration of posters/papers/abstracts. Deadline for submission of abstract and paper content for the Forum proceedings.

- *Nov. 14* — Last day to reserve hotel room with guaranteed availability and rate.

- *Nov. 18* — Last day to receive a partial refund.

- *Nov. 23* — Online registration ends.



## ***Fusarium Focus***

*Fusarium Focus* is an online newsletter published periodically by the U.S. Wheat & Barley Scab Initiative. The USWBSI is a national multi-disciplinary and multi-institutional research system whose goal is to develop as quickly as possible effective control measures that minimize the threat of Fusarium Head Blight (scab), including the production of mycotoxins, for producers, processors and consumers of wheat and barley. Contact information is as follows:

U.S. Wheat & Barley Scab Initiative  
Networking & Facilitation Office  
1066 Bogue St., Room 372  
East Lansing, MI 48824  
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Website — [www.scabusa.org](http://www.scabusa.org)

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The National Fusarium Head Blight Forum returns to St. Louis, Mo., for the third consecutive year. The Hyatt Regency St. Louis at the Arch, site of the FHB Forum in 2011, 2014 and 2015, is the venue for the 2016 event, which is scheduled for Sunday-Tuesday, December 4-6. This will be the 19th National Fusarium Head Blight Forum.

Hosted by the U.S. Wheat & Barley Scab Initiative, the annual Forum is

## **Recent Peer-Reviewed Scab-Related Publications**

- David, R.F., Marr, L.C., and Schmale, D.G. 2016. Ascospore release and discharge distances of the plant pathogen *Fusarium graminearum* under controlled temperature and relative humidity. Published online on 1 March, 2016. <http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10658-016-0891-0>

- David, R.F., Bozorgmagham, A., Schmale, D.G., Ross, S.D., and Marr, L.C. 2016. Identification of meteorological predictors of *Fusarium graminearum* ascospore release using correlation and causality analyses. *European Journal of Plant Pathology* 145 (2): 483-492.

<http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10658-015-0832-3>

- David, R.F. May 2016. Impact of Meteorological Conditions and Maturity of Perithecia on the Release of *Fusarium graminearum* Ascospores. Ph.D. Thesis, Virginia Tech. Major Advisors: Marr, L. and Schmale, D.

*Listings of recent FHB-related publications by USWBSI-associated principal investigators are invited for submission to be listed in future issues of Fusarium Focus. Listings can be sent to the attention of Don Lilleboe at [lillcomm@yahoo.com](mailto:lillcomm@yahoo.com).*

