



U.S. Wheat & Barley  
Scab Initiative

# MINUTES

## USWBSI Steering Committee Meeting

### Friday, April 18, 2008

University of Minnesota's Continuing Education  
and Conference Center, St. Paul, MN

**Co-Chairs:** Art Brandli (Private Grower, MN) and Dave Van Sanford (University of KY)  
**Members Present:** Louis Arnold (North Dakota Barley Council), Stephen Baenziger (University of NE), Jim Bloomberg (Bayer CropSciences), Blake Cooper (BARI, Inc.), Mike Davis (American Malting Barley Association), Jane DeMarchi (NAMA), Ruth Dill-Macky (University of MN), Elias Elias (ND State University), Rich Horsley (ND State University), David Kendra (USDA-ARS, IL), Larry Lee (ND Durum Grower), CJ Lin (Mennel Milling Co.), Ben Moreno-Sevilla (WestBred L.L.C), Barry Morton (National Assoc. of Wheat Growers, DC), Steve Scofield (USDA-ARS, IN), Linnea Skoglund (BARI, Inc.), Kevin Smith (University of MN), Clay Sneller (OH State University), Frances Trail (MI State University) and Marv Zutz  
**Participating from North Carolina State Univ. (NCSU) via Interactive Video:** Christina Cowger (USDA-ARS), Winston Hagler (NCSU) and Paul Murphy (NCSU)  
**Participating via Telephone/Internet:** Fred Kolb, University of IL (AM Only)  
**USDA-ARS-NPS ADODR:** Kay Simmons, Beltsville, MD  
**Guests:** Dave Torgerson (MN Wheat Growers Association) and Don Lilleboe (Lilleboe Communications)  
**Staff:** Sue Canty (USWBSI-NFO)

#### 1. Introductions and Opening Remarks

#### 2. Approval of the Agenda

Motion was made and seconded to approve agenda without changes. SC approved.

#### 3. Approval of Minutes from 12/04/07 Steering Committee Meeting

Mike Davis made a motion to accept the minutes as presented. Motion was seconded and approved.

#### 4. FY08 and FY09 Federal Funding Updates

Update on FY09 Federal Budget: Mike Davis provided the following update on the FY09 Agriculture Research Budget. In the past, each year, the President's budget called for the elimination of many Congressional program increases or "earmarks" going back to FY01. For small grains, there were about 30 such programs, including \$1.07 million in funding for the USWBSI. The FY07 budget passed by Congress had no directives to USDA in how to utilize that year's funding. Subsequently, most small grains earmarks were reviewed by the Administration and were "redirected to Administration research priorities." Although redirected, these projects continue to meet the needs and intent of the small grains community. The FY08 budget passed by Congress

accepted most of the redirections, but also stipulated that some programs not be redirected. What came out of this process is that almost all of these small grains projects, including the funding for the USWBSI were not proposed for elimination in FY09, except for two - \$541,185 for Karnal Bunt research, Manhattan, Kansas and \$308,823 for cereal disease research at St. Paul, Minnesota. Overall the President's FY09 budget calls for elimination of \$41.1 million in earmarks that Congress stipulated not be redirected and \$58.8M in new terminations or base funding reductions. New initiatives of \$47 million are proposed, but to be accomplished by redirecting current resources and not with new funding. The net result is a proposed \$84 million or 7.5% decrease in the ARS salary and expenses budget. For CSREES, the President's budget calls for the elimination of all Special Research Grants, an increase of \$66 million for the NRI, and a decrease of \$57 million in Hatch Act funding, with an overall net decrease of \$134 million or 20% for CSREES.

Update on USDA-ARS issues including FY08 Funding allocation (Kay Simmons):

**USWBSI Funding:** Kay confirmed that the funding for the USWBSI is now part of ARS' base budget for crop protection and production, and is no longer considered an earmark. Developing the prioritized USWBSI action plan, milestones, coordination, etc. greatly aided in accomplishing this. ARS must demonstrate that the USWBSI is a productive project, and one good way to document productivity is with technology transfer through release of new germplasm lines and varieties. So, it is very helpful if USDA-ARS is included on the [variety] release statement as a contributor or as a co-releaser. Co-release does not include any claim of ownership by USDA.

- **Allocation of FY08 Funding:** The FY08 awards for all those Principal Investigators (PI) with existing agreements have been allocated. The Extramural Agreements Office (EAO) is still working on setting up the new agreements. PIs were copied on the funding notification e-mails from the EAO to the institutional sponsored programs office, so they are aware that the awards have been allocated to their institution.

Update from the NFO (Dave Van Sanford):

- **Updates on adjustments made to the FY08 Funding Recommendation:** Several individuals were asked to submit revised pre-proposals before the EC would approve their funding. Three individuals elected not to submit a revised pre-proposal and so the money earmarked for their proposed research was redirected to other projects included in the FY08 funding recommendation.
- **Update on agreements that are expiring due to 5-yr limitation:** There are six agreements that are closing at the end of FY07 (between April-June, 2008). All but one are receiving funding for FY08. Anyone with more the 10% of the FY07 award remaining, will have to provide a justification for the unspent funds along with confirmation that their FY08 award is a continuation of the research that was conducted under the closing agreement. Provided they meet the stated criteria, any remaining funds will be transferred into their new FY08 agreement. However, the transferred funds must be addressed in their FY09 request (i.e. FY09 budget request reduced by same amount of transferred funds). For closing agreements where a new agreement is not being set up for FY08, any remaining funds will be deobligated and returned to the U.S. Treasury.

## 5. News from the World: Stakeholder Issues etc.

Crop Insurance: Laird Larson contacted Dave Van Sanford with a concern about the protocols used by crop insurance loss adjustors to sample the wheat crop in order to determine a representative level of DON. The current protocol is to take samples before the grain is put into storage, because of concerns that DON levels will increase during storage. As a result of this protocol, samples would need to be taken from trucks, grain augers at harvest, or from the field prior to harvest. The co-chairs sent a letter to RMA referencing research that indicates: 1) If the grain has been dried prior to storage, DON levels will not change during storage; and 2) Sampling grain in the bin to estimate DON concentration will provide the best, most accurate estimate of toxin concentration. RMA's response was they would not alter the established protocol for mycotoxin sampling as they are sampling for over 200 mycotoxins, many of which may increase during storage. It would be too costly to maintain separate sampling methods and standards for all of the different mycotoxins. During the SC's discussion, it was suggested that we encourage RMA to fund research on sampling methods. It was also suggested that we invite representatives to attend the December Forum, as well as try to involve Felicia Wu, who spoke at the 2007 Forum in the FSTU session, in this issue (sampling for DON).

Folicur® Issue: A letter was sent from the Initiative to the EPA requesting an early decision on use of Folicur. Several individuals (researcher, growers and millers) met with the EPA in DC on January 22, and were told that EPA would not grant any Section 18s on Folicur®, because of other available products as well their plan to expedite a Section 3 - full registration - for Folicur®. The group requested that they grant the Section 3 no later than March 31. EPA did not meet the March 31 deadline and are now looking at the end of April. This delay will likely impact the southeastern states.

Barley: Mike Davis reported a historic first for barley. Two lines, with scab tolerance and DON lower than Robust, M122 developed at the University of Minnesota and ND20488 developed at North Dakota State University, have been rated satisfactory for malting quality in the American Malting Barley Association pilot scale evaluation program. These lines have now advanced to plant scale malting and brewing trials, the next and final step in the process towards recommendation as malting barley varieties.

Nebraska: Stephen Baenziger reported that the University of Nebraska has a couple of hard red winter varieties that are showing good promise of FHB resistance.

Millers: Jane DeMarchi mentioned that with the increase in wheat prices, an increase in the use of fungicides by growers is very likely. However, supplies are limited which was confirmed by Jim Bloomberg (Bayer CropSciences).

## 6. Update on Executive Committee Action Items

- RFP Process (Submission and Review) for FY09:
  - **Criteria for Uniform Review of Pre-Proposals:** Dave Van Sanford gave an overview of the handout distributed to the SC. Research area chairs showed a general interest in working on developing standardized review criteria. There was general agreement to form a working group that would include the research leaders. Mike Davis suggested that Stephen Neate chair the working group and Ruth Dill-Macky volunteered to work with the group and help shepherd the process along. It was indicated by several individuals that there is a need for

uniform criteria both across research areas, as well as criteria that is research area specific.

**Motion:** A motion was made by Stephen Baenziger and seconded by Frances Trail to develop uniform criteria for review panels to use in judging pre-proposals. The criteria should include two parts – general, across the board criteria and research area specific criteria. A deadline of Sept. 1 will be set for the finalization of the criteria, however if that deadline is missed, reviewers will be encouraged to follow the intent of the uniform criteria developed by the group in their review of pre-proposals.

**Action:** Motion approved.

- **Review Process for Coordinated Projects (CP) – Year 2:** Rich Horsley summarized the process developed by the EC appointed subcommittee (Rich Horsley, Kevin Smith and Stephen Baenziger) for the review of the coordinated projects for year 2 funding. Each CP will be reviewed based on the following:
  - Planning Meeting – Each coordinated project must hold a planning meeting prior to submission of CP pre-proposal.
  - Develop a Milestone Matrix – Identify the milestones being addressed by each project within the Coordinated Project and include that information in the year 2 documentation.
  - A review form will be developed to evaluate progress made in first year. The form will be based on the review questions created by the subcommittee and included in the handout distributed to the SC prior to this meeting.

SC Discussion: Many SC members agreed that ambitious milestones are good, and that it is important to focus on the progress rather than the outcome. Not all research projects that focus on a particular commodity must be included in a specific Coordinated Project; however the CP pre-proposal should acknowledge the existence of those projects.

- **Update on Electronic Submission Process:** The Electronic Pre-Proposals Submission (EPS) System is in the process of being modified to accommodate the submission of all research area pre-proposals in electronic format.
- **New Pre-Proposal Form for Breeders:** During last year's review process, the suggestion was made to develop a form for breeders to complete and include with their pre-proposal to help the reviewers better evaluate the progress being made by the PI's breeding program. It was suggested that information included on these forms be forwarded to Mark Hughes for inclusion in the database he is developing for the USWBSI. It was also suggested to include on the form the type of disease rating system being used by the breeding program.
- Enhancing our Communication – Improving the Conduit to the Farmer: Art Brandli has developed a PowerPoint presentation that he has already presented at several field days. Art is going to Virginia in mid-May to attend and speak at a field day. He also indicated his interest and willingness to talk with any grower or industry groups. Jane DeMarchi, on behalf of the Millers, expressed appreciation for Art's willingness to go and meet with both researchers and growers, as well as indicated how great it is to have a grower advocate for the USWBSI. Jane also mentioned that Dave Van Sanford gave a presentation to a Millers' group a few months ago on varieties that are expected to be released in the near future. She conveyed that the Millers' are very satisfied with the actions the Initiative has taken in the development of its Action Plan, etc.

- USWBSI's Structure and Operations:
  - **Review Proposed Revisions to the Policies and Procedures (P&P):** Mike Davis gave an overview of why we have the P&P (i.e. to be fair, equitable and accountable), and then summarized the proposed changes to the P&P being recommended by the Executive Committee. There was some discussion regarding the length of time pre-proposals could be saved by the research review panels before disposing of in a confidential manner (e.g. shredding). Some of the research leaders felt what was being proposed (3-4 months) was not sufficient as the pre-proposal would not be available for reference during the next fiscal year pre-proposal review process. The NFO agreed to make available the final proposals that have been funded by USDA-ARS as these are public documents, which satisfied the stated need of the review panel leaders.  
**Motion:** Mike Davis made a motion to approve the proposed revisions to the P&P as presented. The motion was seconded by Stephen Baenziger.  
**Action:** Motion approved.
  - **Configuration of FHB Management (MGMT) Research Area, Committee and Review Panel:** Dave Van Sanford, working with the Stephen Neate and Christina Cowger, concurred that they would continue to work under one research area – FHB Management (combined from Chemical, Biological and Cultural Control and Etiology, Epidemiology, and Disease Forecasting research areas). Last year's review process, the first year that pre-proposals in these two areas were submitted to the combined research area (FHB Management), was very difficult because of lack of expertise (e.g. panel members reviewing pre-proposals out of their area), conflict of interest, etc. Three basic areas of research under FHB Management have been identified: 1) Epidemiology studies which are very diverse in terms of focus; 2) Integrated Management studies – same protocol followed in multiple sites; and 3) Fungicide and Biocontrol studies – same protocol followed in different sites. One pre-proposal will be submitted for Integrated Management Studies (Pierce Paul will lead a coordinating committee to develop the pre-proposal), and one pre-proposal will be submitted for Fungicide and Biocontrol Studies (Carl Bradley will lead a coordinating committee to develop the pre-proposal). Researchers will also be encouraged to coordinate their proposed research in addition to the above mandated coordinated projects.
  - **Pathogen Biology and Genetics (PBG) - Interaction and Integration with other Research Areas:** PBG researchers met via conference calls (three) with scientists working in each of the following research areas: FHB Management; Gene Discovery and Engineering Resistance; and Variety Development and Host Resistance. The purpose of these conference calls was to better integrate PBG outputs with what is needed by these other research areas for incorporation into their research.
  - **Coordination of DON Testing Labs:** Dave Van Sanford, Jim Pestka and David Kendra met with the leaders of the DON testing labs via conference call to discuss better coordination of DON testing among the labs including submission of samples by researchers, use of same reference samples, etc. The leaders will meet in St. Paul in July to tour Dr. Dong's lab at University of Minnesota.

## 7. Discuss Results from Small Discussion Groups.

FHB Management (MGMT): **Goal 1** – made slight modifications to language. Question of which area (MGMT or VDHR) will take responsibility for studies looking at varieties plus management practices studies was discussed. **Goal 2** – develop a template web page for good management practices that can be customized for different states (Don Lilleboe, Marcia McMullen, and Jane DeMarchi are working on this idea). **Goals 3 and 4** – no significant changes made to either of these sections. It was suggested that this group contact members of the Barley CP committee for advice on developing the two MGMT’s coordinated projects (Integrated Management Practices and Fungicide/Biocontrol Studies). The Steering Committee discussed whether the need for surveys under goal 2 should be kept since there doesn’t appear to be any funding for these activities. Kay Simmons recommended keeping the research need as part of the Action Plan, but add language to address the funding issue (i.e. “Not immediately fundable by the USWBSI.”).

Food Safety, Toxicology and Utilization of Mycotoxin-contaminated Grain (FSTU): **Goal 1** – Dave Kendra reported that a workshop on proper sampling methods is needed for researchers. Also, a structure should be devised for prioritizing samples submitted by the different research programs. Optimizing the capacity for DON analysis is still needed as well as the need to look at different trichothecenes. **Goal 2** – Jane DeMarchi indicated that a white paper from Pestka on DON levels is expected in the near future. There were no significant changes suggested for this goal.

Gene Discovery and Engineering Resistance (GDER): Changes were made to structure this section of the Action Plan to be more inline with current research activities. Outputs for goal number 2 will be developed. As with PBG, GDER must synchronize their outputs with what is needed and is useful by the other research areas.

Pathogen Biology and Genetics (PBG): The group reviewed all three goals, inserted relevant milestones and cleaned up phraseology. Goal 1 – will be revamped to look at the biological relevance. For all goals, language will be added that the outputs must be connected to the needs of other RACs.

Variety Development and Host Resistance (VDHR): The group suggested combining goals 1 and 2 into a single goal, and then develop one or two overarching milestones. The group also recommended creating ‘mini’ milestones unique to each VDHR or commodity-based coordinated project.

**NOTE:** The final versions of the updated action plans from all groups must be received by the NFO no later than June 1 for inclusion in the FY09 Request for Pre-Proposals.

## 8. Reports/Updates on Research Area/Coordinated Project Planning Meetings.

- VDHR Northern and Southern Soft Winter Wheat Coordinated Projects: Clay Sneller summarized what took place during the meeting that was held in Wooster, OH on March 11, 2008. The common theme was that more communication and exchange of information is needed among the researchers (total of 13 programs between the two Coordinated Projects). Use of the database being developed by Mark Hughes (participated via conference call) in the Cereal Disease Lab (St. Paul, MN) will greatly aide in this exchange of information. The issue of research that combines breeding with best management practices was discussed. The question of how such studies will be funded (i.e. from VDHR or MGMT budget) is something the USWBSI should address. See full report posted on Scab website

([http://www.scabusa.org/pdfs/Report\\_VDHR-Soft-Wheat\\_CP-Mtg\\_3-08.pdf](http://www.scabusa.org/pdfs/Report_VDHR-Soft-Wheat_CP-Mtg_3-08.pdf) - See page 10; Item 12 for a summary of the 'Major Conclusions'). Overall, there was great input from the majority of participants (public and private researchers, graduate students, private growers and industry representatives i.e. Millers, etc.).

- VDHR - Spring Wheat Parents Coordinated Project: Dave Garvin (Chair of the VDHR-SPR CP Committee) was not able to attend the SC meeting, so Art Brandli (who attended the meeting along with several other stakeholders) gave the update on the planning meeting. There was much agreement among the participants that all PIs involved in the Coordinated Project should be copied on all communications pertaining to the planning needs for the project. Mark Hughes from the Cereal Disease Lab also participated in this meeting via video conference and gave a presentation on the database he is developing for the USWBSI. See full report posted on website ([http://www.scabusa.org/pdfs/Report\\_VDHR-SPR\\_CP-Mtg\\_3-08.pdf](http://www.scabusa.org/pdfs/Report_VDHR-SPR_CP-Mtg_3-08.pdf)).
- Hard Winter Wheat Coordinated Project: Stephen Baenziger informed the SC that the HWW-CP will hold its planning meeting in Manhattan, KS on April 28. They have formed their stakeholder's committee which consists of industry and grower representatives from Kansas, Nebraska, South Dakota and North Dakota. The group has been communicating and sharing information via a web-based file sharing site and discussion board set up by the NFO. This group is seeking confirmation that their strategy is acceptable to the Executive Committee: reducing DON to the EU standard for flour in 7 years. In order to achieve this goal, they proposed working closely with the FHB Management research area. Art Brandli mentioned that there is a great deal of interest in growing Hard Winter Wheat in Minnesota, and a breeding position is being lobbied for at the University of Minnesota.
- Barley Coordinated Project (BAR-CP) Planning Meeting: The BAR-CP planning meeting will take place on June 3 in Fort Collins, CO. More than 21 participants including researchers, growers and industry representatives are expected to attend. A major topic of discussion will be developing a milestone matrix for this coordinated project as well as identifying expected outputs. The group will also look at their overall plan for any changes that need to be made for year 2.
- Gene Discovery and Engineering Resistance - Tour of FHB Nursery for Transgenic Materials: A tentative date of July 9 has been selected, but a delay with APHIS permits has held up planting which may effect the date for the tour. The tour would start at Univ. of Minnesota campus looking at nurseries for conventional breeding lines of wheat and barley, and then the group would travel to Rosemont, MN (about 45 minutes south of St. Paul) where the transgenic nursery (48 Barley lines, 7 wheat lines plus checks) is located. Once the final date is set, a notice will go out to the FHB Listserver. A second tour was suggested (and being considered) for breeders later along in the growth stage when evidence of disease is more likely. The final date(s) will depend on when the nursery is able to be planted. (Post SC meeting: the delay in planting has pushed the tentative date of the tour to July 25<sup>th</sup>).
- FHB Management and Pathogen Biology and Genetics Planning Meetings: These two research area groups will meet on July 27 during The American Phytopathological Society's 2008 annual meeting which will be held in Minneapolis, MN. The two groups will meet separately and then hold a joint meeting to discuss collaborative research across the two research areas. The PBG group will focus on developing coordinated projects with their area. The MGMT group will focus on working out the details for the coordinated projects that have already been identified (Integrated Management Studies and Fungicide/Biocontrol Studies).

- Durum Coordinated Project (CP): The newly formed Durum Coordinated Project is planning to hold a meeting, and have set a tentative date of May 8<sup>th</sup> in Fargo, ND. The focus of the meeting will be to review the action plan and identify milestones for their CP, as well as individuals for their stakeholder's committee.

## 9. Discuss Changes in Request for Pre-Proposals/Review Process for FY09

- Year two of Coordinated Projects
  - **Review of CPs for Year 2:**  
**Motion:** Stephen Baenziger made a motion that the review for year two funding will be handled only by the Executive Committee, and that the review should be based on the proposed CP review process that was developed by the subcommittee. The motion was seconded by Dave Kendra.  
**Discussion:** The question was raised on how the USWBSI would address any new proposed projects that fit under an existing coordinated project. The EC had agreed that any new proposed CP-related projects should be submitted to the Executive Committee for review, and if recommended for funding the money would come from the EC's holdback.  
**Action:** Motion approved.
  - **Impact on Working Caps:** All of the Coordinated Projects (BAR, HWW and the three VDHRs) will remain at their FY08 Funding level for Year 2. Adjustments to working cap percentages may only be made to the individual research areas (MGMT, FSTU, GDER and PBG) and the Executive Committee/Headquarters.
- Proposal to move to two-year funding cycle for RAs: Dave Van Sanford reminded the steering committee that at last year's spring SC meeting, it was discussed that the individual research areas would begin a two-year funding cycle starting in FY09.  
**Motion:** Ruth Dill-Macky made a motion to adopt a two-year funding cycle starting in FY09 for the following research areas: FHB Management, Food Safety, Toxicology and Utilization of Mycotoxin-contaminated Grain, Gene Discovery and Engineering Resistance, and Pathogen Biology and Genetics. Motion was seconded by Steve Scofield.  
**Action:** Motion approved.
- Process for Setting FY09 Working Caps: Following the guidelines addressed in the paragraph above '**Impact on Working Caps**', the NFO will begin polling the Steering Committee on the percentages for working caps on July 1. As stipulated in the Policies & Procedures, the SC will go through two rounds of polling, allowing individual members to adjust their initial recommendation following the review of results (including comments/feedback from members) from the first poll. Using the results from the second poll, the Executive Committee will develop a recommendation for consideration by the Steering Committee.

## 10. 2008 National FHB Forum: The Forum will be held in Indianapolis, IN, December 2-4.

- Program Format
  - The Executive Committee proposed a combination of talks, discussion groups and poster sessions for the general format of the Forum program. There was discussion concerning how we might get more grower participation. There was general agreement among the



research leadership that the discussion group sessions cover both within and across research disciplines.

**Motion:** A motion was made by Stephen Baenziger and seconded Mike Davis to approve the EC's proposed format for the Forum program.

**Action:** Approved by the Steering Committee.

- Schedule of Administrative Meetings

- 12/1: Executive Committee meet with RAs/CPs leaders meet to discuss their funding recommendation.
- 12/2: Executive Committee meets to finalize FY09 funding recommendation.
- 12/4: Steering Committee meets in the afternoon following the Forum
- 12/4: Executive Committee meets for post-Forum wrap-up.

### Meeting Adjourned at 3:15 PM

Minutes recorded and written by:

*Susan M. Canty*

Susan M. Canty, Manager

USWBSI's Networking & Facilitation Office



Screen (left to right): Christina Cowger, Winston Hagler and Paul Murphy

Standing (left to right): Larry Lee, Jim Bloomberg, Ben Moreno-Sevilla, Dave Kendra, Blake Cooper, Mike Davis, Barry Morton, Stephen Baenziger, Frances Trail, Clay Sneller, Ruth Dill-Macky, Linnea Skoglund, Jane DeMarchi, Steve Scofield, Kay Simmons, CJ Lin and Sue Canty

Sitting (left to right): Rich Horsley, Louie Arnold, Elias Elias, Dave Van Sanford, Art Brandli, Kevin Smith and Marcia McMullen