



U.S. Wheat & Barley  
Scab Initiative

**MINUTES**  
*Approved 5-25-06*

USWBSI Steering Committee Meeting  
Sunday, December 11, 2005 8:30 AM – 12 PM  
Hilton Milwaukee City Center  
Milwaukee, WI

*Action items italicized in text and appended to the end of minutes.*

**Members Present:** Louis Arnold (North Dakota Barley Council), Stephen Baenziger (University of NE), Jim Bloomberg (Bayer CropScience), Bob Bowden (USDA-ARS), Bill Bushnell (retired, USDA-ARS), Blake Cooper (Busch Agricultural Research, Inc.), Mike Davis (American Malting Barley Association), Erick De Wolf (Penn State University), Ruth Dill-Macky (University of MN), Marty Draper (SD State University), Elias Elias (ND State University), Mark Gage (National Assoc. of Wheat Growers), Ken Grafton (ND State University), Winston Hagler (NC State University), Char Hollingsworth (University of MN), Larry Lee (Grower, North Dakota), Marcia McMullen (ND State University), Mohamed Mergoum (ND State University), Brad Miller (Dakota Growers Pasta Co., Inc.), Ben Moreno-Sevilla (WestBred, LLC), Steven Neate (ND State University), Herb Ohm (Purdue University), Mike Pate (Bay State Milling Co.). Ron Skadsen (USDA-ARS), Dave Van Sanford (University of KY), Rick Ward (MI State University), HP Zhou (Syngenta) and Marv Zutz (Minnesota Barley Council)

**USDA-ARS-NPS ADODR:** Kay Simmons

**Support Staff:** Melissa Klink and Sue Canty

Meeting called to order at 8:38 AM.

**1) Opening Remarks and Introductions**

**2) Review of 5-26-05 SC Meeting Minutes.** Mike Pate made a motion to approve the SC meeting minutes from the 5-26-05 meeting. The motion was seconded by Winston Hagler. Marcia McMullen called for the question; seconded by Ruth Dill-Macky. The SC voted and approved the 5-26-05 minutes.

**3) Updates on FY05 Federal Budget Update (Mike Davis) and USDA-ARS issues (Kay Simmons).**

- Kay Simmons – ADODR, USDA-ARS:
  - For the first time in years, the USWBSI knows what funding they will be receiving due to the appropriations bill being signed earlier than usual. There is a possibility of a small

rescission. If that were to happen, the tentative plan is to reduce-e all proposals proportionately. Louis Arnold raised the question of how Congress can go back to the budget and take 2-3% off, and if there is anything we can do to prevent this? Kay informed the SC that this is rescission across many department budgets, but to realize that it is not just USWBSI's budget that will be affected.

- Kay, on behalf of USDA-ARS, thanked all for their leadership within the Initiative. The cooperative work being done for the USWBSI serves as a model for other crop communities. Probably, the cooperation within the wheat and barley communities contributed to the awarding of the CAP Grants by USDA-CSREES/NRI (National Research Initiative) for wheat and barley.
- Stem Rust
  - The new African stem rust mutant is a potential disease threat to global wheat and barley production. In 2005, USDA-ARS used funds from the USDA National Plant Disease Recovery System to assess the vulnerability of US wheat varieties to this mutant. A specific cooperative agreement was developed with CIMMYT and the Kenyan Agricultural Research Institute (KARI) to screen commonly grown US wheat varieties and breeding lines in Kenya. USDA-ARS obtained the funding in late April.
  - All US wheat breeders were invited to submit cultivars and advanced breeding lines, then USDA-ARS collected the seed, treated them, and sent them to Kenya. Dr. Yue Jin, USDA-ARS wheat pathologist, St. Paul, MN, went to Kenya to assess the vulnerability of the U.S. wheat lines. Results from both the spring and winter wheat evaluation in Kenya are being distributed this week to all of the breeders. It is valuable to initiate assessment and breeding for resistance to the new wheat stem rust biotype in case the new mutant should appear in the United States. The funding from the USDA National Plant Recovery System to identify genes with resistance to potentially devastating diseases was provided for wheat stem rust research for one-year only. It is not a permanent increase to the USDA-ARS budget and may not be available in the future.
- Mike Davis:
  - Considering the federal budget situation, the National Barley Improvement Committee and its allies did well this year, maintaining program funding proposed for elimination and securing substantial new funding increases for barley and other small grains research. A detailed summary is attached (distributed to SC during meeting).
  - As mentioned earlier, even though the FY2006 budget has been signed, there still could be a rescission. If that were to happen, then all pre-proposals will be cut the same across the board.
  - **The current status of AMBA:** The US malting industry is not healthy, necessitating a reduction in dues and a 1/3 reduction in AMBA funded research programs that affect partnerships and some scab research. Malting facilities in the scab impacted Midwest are being displaced with new capacity in the West or imports from Canada.

#### 4) Proposed FY06 Research Plan and Budget (Rick Ward).

- Overview of the EC recommended research plan, which included the process the EC and RACs followed to arrive at the final recommendation.
  - The SC had realigned and restructured the research areas this past year, increasing from six areas to eight areas. This was driven by developments in technology and a need to fix some issues in the system. Everything was a little off of the normal schedule this year due to the restructuring.

- It is suggested that the SC consider changing the timing of when the working caps are set for the next Fiscal Year. Options mentioned were to either set the working caps during the spring SC meeting, or immediately after.
- **Action Item:** Investigate a way to enforce that the Principal Investigators (PI) are explicitly associating their objectives with the priorities they are targeting in their pre-proposals.
- Presentation of EC Recommended FY06 Research Plan and Budget.
  - A marathon session took place on December 10, 2005 in which the chair and vice-chair of each research area committee met with the Executive Committee to review and confirm their committee's funding recommendation. Following the meeting with the RAC Chairs and Vice-Chairs, the EC met in a closed session to finalize the research plan and budget. It was during this meeting that the \$250,000, which was not included in the sum of the RA Working Caps, was distributed over the submitted pre-proposals in a manner aimed at achieving overall balance in the final budget and research plan.
  - There are several projects, included in the funding recommendation, in which the PI will be asked to revise his'/hers' proposed project and resubmit for a final review.
  - Steve Baenziger motioned to adopt the recommended budget to the USDA-ARS. Ken Grafton seconded the motion. Louis Arnold called for the question. Brad Miller seconded. The SC approved the recommended budget with no changes.
  - **Action Item:** RACs summarize their review process and funding recommendation for their respective area.
- The next step is for NFO to send a letter to each PI asking them to construct a formal USDA-ARS Grant Application. When there is a large gap between the requested amount and the recommended amount, the PI will be asked to indicate whether they can do the same work for the recommended amount, or will they need to cut their originally proposed work to fit within the new budget.
- Discussion on when to make public the recommended FY06 Research Plan and Budget:
  - These are recommendations to the USDA-ARS, and nothing is official until they are approved by USDA-ARS, and the appropriation has been finalized.
  - It was suggested that at the point when the letters of notification are sent out, people can discuss freely with collaborators, etc., but that it should be made clear that these are only recommendations until final award is given out.
  - Kay Simmons indicated her preference that she would like to check with USDA-ARS Headquarters before the USWBSI make public its recommendation.

## 5) Process for Developing FY07 Research Plan & Budget.

### Drafting and Finalizing Research Area Program Description and Research Priority:

- Rick Ward proposed that the like this past year, the program descriptions are developed separately from the research priorities, setting them apart sequentially.
- The suggested process is summarized below:
  - (1) Finalize the research area committees' members and positions (Chair/Vice-Chair).
  - (2) Develop RA Program Descriptions – the RACs submit their recommendations to the SC for consideration and final approval
  - (3) RACs then draft the research priorities for their area. Those drafts are then posted on the Web for input from the scab community. The priorities continue to evolve as input is submitted. Research Priorities will be voted on by the Steering Committee no later than the spring SC meeting.
  - (4) Final step, the SC set the Research Area Working Caps (percentage of total allocation for each Research Area). This can be done simultaneously with the call for pre-proposals.

### **Action Item:**

- *The committees should be populated, the program descriptions set and priorities set (all done separately) by the spring SC meeting, May 25, 2006.*
- *For the SC meeting in spring, Rick Ward suggests deliberate consideration for setting the research area working caps of how to take a relative distribution of percentages from 100 people and get a rational consensus out of it.*

#### **6) Election of Steering Committee Co-Chair.**

Dave Van Sanford recently became Director-in-waiting of the USWBSI's Networking & Facilitation Office, through a nomination and recommendation process by the USWBSI to USDA-ARS. This process recognized the formal position of Director of the NFO, and conceded the final selection to USDA-ARS. Dave will become Director May 1, 2006, or earlier if Rick Ward resigns his faculty tenure position at Michigan State University. The position of Director is different than that of Co-chair. The current Co-chair, Rick Ward, will resign if the SC votes to elect Dave Van Sanford as Co-Chair-in-waiting

- Mike Pate motions to elect Dave Van Sanford as Co-Chair when the office becomes vacant. Stephen Baenziger seconds the motion. Stephen Baenziger then calls for question, Herb Ohm seconds. All approve, Rick Ward resigns, and Dave Van Sanford becomes the new USWBSI Co-chair.

#### **7) Other Items.**

- AMBA has four lines that have some scab tolerance with DON lower than in Robust.
- Brad Miller states that the number of SC members falling off from North Dakota is high and would like to suggest that the NFO contact the ND grain growers to solicit them for possible nominees.

##### ***Action Items:***

- *Add the ND grain growers to the NFO's distribution list when soliciting nomination for SC membership.*
- *Compile a list of organizations and people who should be contacted when soliciting nominations for election to the Steering Committee.*
- *Organizational representation should be addressed at the spring SC meeting since it is a part of policy and procedures.*
- Dave Van Sanford views his becoming the new Co-Chair and Director of the USWBSI as an opportunity to articulate how we could do things better within the Initiative. This change is what he consider 'phase 2' or 'chapter 2'; focusing on results and outcomes. Dave is open to any and all suggestions. He suggests that the Website can be used as a tool to communicate among each other more effectively, and has plans to make it less static and more informative.
- Are we getting closer to releasing a scab-resistant barley variety? Some resistant varieties have been released, even though some didn't fair well in trials. Mike Davis says that we are not where we need to be, and that he too was hoping we would be a lot further along by now. AMBA has 4 lines that have some scab tolerance, a little lower than robust. The results coming from the Scab Initiative after 5 years is what is needed for Kay Simmons to defend the budget. Marv Zutz indicated that some people had severe scab damage despite using fungicides and resistant varieties. Although some wish we were further along, it is certain that the delay is not from the lack of effort or misdirection, but from Mother Nature. This is one of the most intractable problems as evidenced by the 23 states working as hard as possible to solve it. Science-wise, we are closer to bringing more resistance through GMOs. Louis Arnold says that if something isn't done soon, we will see a great reduction this year, and in the next two years we will see no barley grown in North Dakota. If a GMO solution comes, the North Dakota growers will support it. A solution will consist of a combination of help from many different areas and disciplines and will

not be a conventional answer. We probably will never get rid of it, but will instead greatly minimize its threat.

- **Action Item:** Consider a press release stating we are close to releasing a scab-resistant barley variety.

**8) Location and Date of next Steering Committee meeting:**

- Location: Chicago, IL
- Date: May 25, 2006

**Meeting adjourned: 11:00 am**

Minutes recorded by Melissa Klink  
Michigan State University

**ACTION ITEMS:**

1. Investigate a way to enforce that the Principal Investigators (PI) are explicitly associating their objectives with the priorities they are targeting in their pre-proposals.
2. RACs summarize their review process and funding recommendation for their respective area.
3. The committees should be populated, the program descriptions set and priorities set (all done separately) by the spring SC meeting, May 25, 2006.
4. For the SC meeting in spring, Rick Ward suggests deliberate consideration for setting the research area working caps of how to take a relative distribution of percentages from 100 people and get a rational consensus out of it.
5. Organizational Representation on Steering committee
  - a. Add the ND grain growers to the NFO's distribution list when soliciting nomination for SC membership.
  - b. Compile a list of organizations and people who should be contacted when soliciting nominations for possible election to the Steering Committee.
  - c. Organizational representation should be addressed at the spring SC meeting since it is a part of policy and procedures.
6. Consider a press release stating we are close to releasing a scab-resistant barley variety.