



MEETING OF THE HGCA BOARD

21 January 2015 at Woodside Conference Centre, Glasshouse Lane, Kenilworth
MINUTES

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The minutes of the meeting held on 22 October 2014 were agreed as a true record and were signed by the Chairman.

MATTERS ARISING

Defra balance sheet and survey work to be discussed at future board meeting once Defra's own internal review was complete.

The R&KT Committee had approved a new piece of work with ADAS to undertake further research on the larvae populations for Cabbage Stem Flea Beetle.

Date of visit by Chinese delegation for protocol on exporting barley to China was still not known but in preparation supply chains had been identified for them to see. AHDB were now part funding a post in China. The split of funding between sectors would be looked in to.

HGCA CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

HGCA sponsored Nuffield Scholar for 2015 was researching cover crops and companion cropping.

SECTOR DIRECTOR REPORT

The re-drafted GM report was aimed at levy payers to offer a balanced report on the advantages and disadvantages of growing GM crops and referenced scientific work available.

A total of 800 growers had attended the Monitor Farms phase 1 and 2 open days. It was felt that they created excellent networking platforms and that the meetings encouraged farmers to discuss production costs.

FINANCE AND STRATEGY

National Audit Office had looked at our levy forecasting model and accepted that it cannot be improved on.

Feedback had been received from 23 organisations on the AHDB Corporate Plan, 4 related to HGCA. NFUS made positive comments about our level of engagement and NFU suggested that going forward we should, wherever possible, co-ordinate our activities with other sectors.

ELECTRONIC GRAIN PASSPORT

Development of the system and desktop system was now complete and systems integration was almost complete with those companies who decided to integrate their own systems with the e-Grain system. The live industry trials started pre-Christmas for the Milling Wheat supply chain and the Malting Barley supply chain testing would commence in February. The industry trials which run until pre-harvest would be reviewed and evaluated over the summer with a report to the industry in the autumn.

The next step was to agree access, ownership and funding for the system which the Steering Group was considering. Three options were currently being considered for ownership; AHDB, Consortium Agreement or another option with several options for funding.

REGIONAL TEAM STAFFING

The Regional Team were recruited in 2013 and during the last 18 months had built a strong profile locally and developed extensive contacts with the industry. The existing regional model was designed to provide cover across England and Wales and was a compromise, based on driving time and distance from home for each manager. The board approved a proposal to increase the number of HGCA regions covering England and Wales from four to six and align the HGCA regions with the NFU model; this proposal did not affect Scotland. Two new posts would cover a new north region and a south east region. This additional resource would allow the current managers based in the east to focus their attention on the East Midlands and East Anglia respectively.

HGCA BOARD AND COMMITTEE REVIEW

The board approved the implementation of recommendations by the review panel, which included:

- Reduce annual number of board meetings by one, removing the May meeting
- Replace Finance Committee with Levy Forecasting Panel
- Monitor progress of Business Improvement Expert Panel
- Include more information on developments in AHDB

APPROVAL OF COMMITTEE EXPENDITURE

The board approved funding for the following projects:

- a) Combating resistance to aphicides in UK aphid pests (20113768 extension)
- b) Optimising sulphur management to maximise oilseed rape yields and farm profitability (2160007 extension)
- c) Sclerotinia risk live-reporting system for oilseed rape (214007)
- d) Arable Crop Disease Alert System (2140021)
- e) Integrated platforms for barley breeding and genetic research (INTEGRA-2) (2200004)
- f) A genome wide analysis of key genes controlling diastatic power activity in UK barley (DPGENES) (2170006)
- g) An evidence based review on the likely economic and environmental impact of genetically modified cereals and oilseeds for UK agriculture (20123810)
- h) Introgressing Resilience and Resource Use Efficiency. Traits from Scots Bere to Elite Barley Lines (REBEL) (04)
- i) Variable rate application of plant protection products - investigations to establish the feasibility and potential cost-benefits (44)
- j) Utilising the patchy distribution of slugs to optimise targeting of control: improved sustainability through precision applications (52)
- k) Identification of Fusarium resistance within UK oat breeding lines (14)

R&KT STRATEGY

A preliminary draft copy of the R&KT Strategy 'Investing in Innovation 2015-2020' was presented to the meeting. It would be distributed to key stakeholders and research contractors and available on the HGCA website from February 2015. It was proposed that the strategy period be extended to five years. The framework for the proposed strategy was to:

- Inform on-farm decisions
- Improve business opportunities
- Prepare the industry

It was confirmed that water was one of the key subjects and there was a strong call for it to be treated with urgency.

AHDB BRANDING

AHDB were using in-house expertise with the additional external resources of a design agency to create the logos and a market research company to facilitate focus groups. The plan was to launch the rebranding during summer 2015. It was hoped that through the market research exercise a strapline would be developed as an easy descriptor of what AHDB stands for. The Recommended List would

remain but would become the AHDB Recommended List.

RECOMMENDED LIST REVIEW

The RL project was currently undergoing a review prior to procurement of a new project in 2015. The process included a review of the performance of current contractors encompassing successful delivery of trials and timely submission of data with a view to informing the procurement process. This presentation would go to the RL Project Board and they would be looking at the processes and selection criteria.

R&KT SUCCESSION PLANNING

Two key members of the RL team were currently approaching retirement and in one case they wish to reduce their hours to part-time from this spring. Two Research and KT Managers had recently left to other more senior positions in the industry and this had provided an opportunity to adjust the structure of the team and recruit some new expertise that would strengthen overall capability and enhance succession planning.

The board approved a proposal to create two new senior posts: Field Operations Team Leader and Data and Informatics Team Leader. The roles would overlap with existing roles and provide continuity. They also approved the recruited of three trainee research managers.

The next meeting of the HGCA board would be held on 25 March at AHDB, Stoneleigh Park.