



## **MEETING OF THE HGCA BOARD 25 MARCH 2015 SUMMARY MINUTES**

### **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 January 2015 were agreed as a true record and were signed by the Chairman.

### **MATTERS ARISING**

Date of visit by Chinese delegation to progress the development of a protocol for trading barley with China had been confirmed as 12-20 May. A full programme was in place.

### **HGCA CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

New HGCA Chairman, Paul Temple, would take up post from 1 April 2015.

New AHDB CEO, Jane King, was undertaking a review of the structure of the organisation. Proposals would be presented to the AHDB board meeting on 21 April.

### **RB209**

Technical working groups and a steering group had been set up to progress this work. New science since 2009 needed to be reviewed and a call would be launched on 12 May with a 1 July 2015 deadline. The revised document would be published in 2017.

### **RODENTICIDES**

New requirements for the use of rodenticides were being introduced. AHDB were liaising closely with the NFU and other trade associations and an online training course would be developed.

### **NUTS2**

New research, MIN-NO, needed to be incorporated into the original NUTS2 report evidencing that grain from the UK is closer to meeting the new GHG savings figure, which was about to rise from 35% to 50%.

### **LEVY INCOME REFORECAST**

The board approved the Q4 accrual based on the assumptions derived from the area and yield data taken from the latest Defra data in December 2014. Production estimates for 2015 would be updated further when the spring planting data came out.

### **REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Progress of the regional development programme had resulted in 16 monitor farms now being established, along with 40 arable business groups with 800 members. 73 monitor farm meetings had now been held with 2,450 attendees in all. Benchmarking was gathering momentum and the new web-based Cropbench+ had been launched. The pace of some future plans, such as expanding the number of regions and Regional Managers for England and Wales, would be dependent on the outcome of the AHDB structure review but there were plans to launch a further 8 monitor farms, target 105 monitor farm meetings, engage 5 additional business groups and to hold a further monitor farm workshop in November 2015.

### **AHDB RE-BRAND**

Three focus groups, 100 1:1 interviews with farmers and feedback from AHDB staff on the branding concepts had all taken place and the results from the interviews were expected shortly. Meetings with the design company were scheduled to progress the artwork concepts. The AHDB board would be

asked to sign off the artwork at their 21 April meeting and the project was on course to go live at Cereals in June 2015.

### **COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY**

The board approved the implementation of a 3-year communications strategy to follow on from the current strategy when it came to an end. Elements of the new strategy included getting messages from the Monitor Farms and Arable Business groups far and wide and in real-time, regionalising our outputs, using the Regional Managers to get feedback from the industry and adopting a campaign or themed approach. The strategy would be easily adaptable to any outcomes from the current review to re-structure AHDB in to one organisation.

### **RED TRACTOR**

The board approved a proposal for a further one-year's funding for Red Tractor, at the current level. Any further funding would be unified at AHDB level following this.

### **NUFFIELD SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME**

The programme had been sponsored to date as it was felt that it was important to identify, develop and promote 'Innovation Champions', important to establish a team of global networkers and that there was value in training up a new generation of spokespersons. Following discussion around the merit of continuing to fund the programme, the board approved a proposal for sponsorship of Nuffield Scholars for a further 3-years, at the current level. Funding would be classed as AHDB funding going forward.

### **MARKET INTELLIGENCE**

Heavy supplies of feed grain in the spot market and uncertain new crop were having an unusual effect on forward prices. It was expected that the effect of the weak euro would turn Europe into the biggest wheat exporter this year and possibly next but for the UK the strength of sterling against the euro was making UK exports uncompetitive to EU destinations. Maize imports into the UK this season so far were quite high and would have a direct impact on the UK feed wheat market. The UK was expecting to see a lower wheat area because of the impact of black grass and other issues.

### **HAULAGE SURVEY**

There was discussion around how much value the Haulage Survey added to the haulage market. Current issues facing the grain haulage industry included a shrinking pool of hauliers to pull from and only 6 responses had been received from the review and consultation. It was agreed that the haulage survey was contributing little to the industry and the board approved discontinuing it.

### **INDUSTRY HAULAGE REPORT**

The report built on work undertaken in 2006 by the Cereals Industry Forum (CIF). The main findings of the report had been taken to the Cereals Liaison Group in December and also to GAFTA. The board approved additional research be undertaken, which would focus on other parts of the supply chain and benchmarking the cereal supply chain with other relevant sectors both in the UK and internationally.

### **APPROVAL OF COMMITTEE EXPENDITURE**

The board approved funding for the following projects:

- a) Fusarium risk reporting – based on real time data collection (2130002105)
- b) Investigation of HT2 and T<sup>+</sup> mycotoxins in oats from the 2014 harvest (2140008105)
- c) Evaluation of resistance levels to Verticillium wilt in UK oilseed rape varieties and relevance to productivity (2140002105)
- d) The Fertiliser Manual (2130002117)
- e) Agri-Tech East Innovation Awards (2110001100)
- f) Cabbage stem flea beetle larval survey (2140025)

The next meeting of the HGCA Board would be held on 20 May 2015 in the board room at AHDB's offices on Stoneleigh Park.