

WERA1009 Meeting Notes

Jan 23, 2014

In accordance with traditional arrangements, the WERA meeting was held in conjunction with the Pacific Northwest Wheat Quality Council and PNW Section of the American Association of Cereal Chemistry International. A detailed meeting agenda is provided as a separate attachment.

To open the WERA1009 meeting, administrative representative Russ Karow, Oregon State University Head of Crop and Soil Science provided comments on the recent positive news on federal budget passage and slight gains in programs that would affect the university experiment station and extension in the audience were briefly outlined. Karow also announced that he would be retiring at the end of 2014 and OSU would need to find another administrator to work with the WERA 1009 group. From an administrative standpoint the group is in good standing provided meeting announcements and reports continue to be filed in the NIMSS system. The project was renewed in 2012 and will not need to be renewed, if the decision is made to do so, until January 2017.

Chair Mike Pumphrey then lead the group through state reports in alphabetic order. Both university and private sector scientists reported on activities and new developments in their programs. Reports were given for Arizona (Monsanto/WestBred), California (UC Davis, WestBred, Limagrain), Colorado (CSU), Idaho (UI, Limagrain, WestBred) Montana (MSU, WestBred), Oregon (OSU), Washington (WSU winter program, WSU spring, WSU wheat quality lab, Western Wheat Quality Lab, Syngenta, Limagrain, Dow, ARS club breeding program) and the Wheat Marketing Center in Portland. Details of some reports can be found in the other documentation filed for this meeting.

The dry condition across the region was a major topic of discussion among all those reporting, as were new variety releases. Increasing incidence of *Fusarium* head blight was reported by several scientists, seemingly a direct result of increased corn acreage and frequency of corn in rotations across the region. Double haploids are being routinely used by many programs as a means to speed variety development. The usual minimum 10-12 years required for release of a line can be shortened to as little as 6-7 years if aggressive field testing can be done. Assurance of quality across a range of environments is a concern as field testing duration is reduced. Seed stocks availability for new releases is also a concern.

Limagrain, Dow, Syngenta, Monsanto/WestBred all have stabilized or expanded their operations in the Pacific Northwest. All look toward new releases in the short-term and toward continued or enhanced working relationships with the public sector groups in the region.

Trying to discern the cause of the drop in falling numbers that has been reported in some instances when such a drop would not be expected continues to be a topic of much research and debate. Drought tolerance assessment of varieties and germplasm is of interest given current weather phenomenon. Disease resistance (stripe rust, fusarium resistance, BYDV) and pest resistance (Hessian fly, stem saw fly, wireworms, nematodes) are on-going concerns in addition to maintaining quality of call market classes. There was considerable discussion about what seems to be a general quality decline of the HRS moved into international channels in recent years. Some attribute this to the bottleneck through which breeders needed to quickly move varieties to obtain stripe rust resistance several years ago. Others are not sure this is the sole cause of decline.

FGIS reported no major concerns and encouraged all breeders to send seed of new lines from their plot work so that inspectors can identify any potential problem lines and become familiar with new materials that are likely to move into the grain trade.

Several pieces of new quality assessment equipment were demonstrated and seem to have
Juliet Marshall, University of Idaho, was elected as 2015 WERA 1009 committee chair.