U.S. Wheat & Barley Scab Initiative

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Last Revised: 5/27/04

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I. USWBSI Policies and Procedures

A. The Policies & Procedures (P&P) were developed by the NFO in conjunction with the Executive Committee. They were first approved by the Steering Committee on 7-24-01.

B. Process for Amending Policies and Procedures.
To be determined.

II. Scab Initiative's Goal Statement

The goal of the U.S. Wheat and Barley Scab Initiative (USWBSI) is to develop as quickly as possible effective control measures that minimize the threat of Fusarium head blight (scab) to the producers, processors, and consumers of wheat and barley.

III. Structure and Roles of USWBSI Committees and Administrative Office.

A. Steering Committee (SC).

1. Membership

a) Length of Term – 3 years (except for Executive Committee members and Research Area Committee chairs whose term on the Steering Committee is tied to their term or position on their other committee). Approximately one-third of the Steering Committee shall rotate off each year. Members may be re-elected. There is no limit on the number of consecutive terms that a member may serve.

b) Number of Members – 30-36

c) Committee Positions - Co-Chairs (Researcher and Grower)

d) Committee Composition

The Steering Committee shall consist of Executive Committee members (9), Research Area Committee Chairs (6), and have at least one member, but no more than 5 (includes Executive Committee members), from each of the following areas:

- Wheat (soft and hard) Miller
- Wheat Growers (at least 1 spring and 1 winter)
- Barley Growers
- Durum Growers
- Seed Industry
- Crop Protection Industry
- Public Plant Breeder – Wheat (at least 1 spring and 1 winter)
- Public Plant Breeder – Barley
- Pathology – Wheat (at least 1 spring and 1 winter)
- Pathology - Barley
- Food Safety/Toxicology
- Malting and Brewing Industry
- Pasta Industry
- Agricultural Experiment Stations (AES) – At least 1 rep from both the North Central (NCRA) and Southern (SAAESD) Regional Associations of Agricultural Experiment Stations Directors
- Consumer Group

The following organizations have permanent membership on the Steering Committee:

- Minnesota Barley Council
- National Association of Wheat Growers (NAWG)
- North Dakota Barley Council

e) Interest Groups (IG)
   (1) Each Steering Committee member will be designated (either by self-appointment or by Executive Committee) to one of the following interest groups;
      - Barley
      - Durum
      - Spring Wheat
      - Winter Wheat
   (2) The sole purpose and responsibility of the interest groups is to nominate their representative(s) for election to the Executive Committee.

2. Election of Members and Filling of Vacancies.
   a) Nominations for positions on the steering committee will be solicited prior to each annual Forum (or as warranted) via the Scab list server. Members of the Steering Committee will vote upon nominees via e-mail prior to the Steering Committee Meeting held in conjunction with the annual Forum.
      (1) North Central and Southern Regional Agricultural Experiment Station Associations of Directors will submit nominations for their representative.
   b) Voting Procedure – Election to the Steering Committee will be determined on an individual basis (i.e. casting a vote for an individual nominee is the equivalent of casting an individual ballot). The election will be deemed valid and a nominee elected if the following criteria are met:
      (1) An election will be deemed valid if a quorum is achieved (votes received by more than 50% of the current Steering Committee members). Blank votes will be considered invalid.
      (2) A nominee will be elected to the Steering Committee if the total number of 'yes' votes received is greater than 50% of the sum of the total votes cast (simple majority).
      (3) Final outcome of the Steering Committee election is subject to the maximum number of representatives per area and the maximum number of Steering Committee members as per the Policies and Procedures. In the event that the number of nominees exceeds the number of vacancies in any given area, nominee(s) will be appointed in accordance with the total number of 'Yes' votes received.

3. Meetings.
   a) The Steering Committee shall meet a minimum of twice a year, including one spring meeting and one meeting at the annual Forum.
   b) The USWBSI Co-Chairs shall chair Steering Committee meetings.
   c) Attendance by non-members is at the discretion of the Co-Chairs.
   d) The meeting in which the Steering Committee reviews and approves the recommended Budget Plan is a closed meeting (SC members only). However, the Co-chairs may request the Steering Committee waive this policy on an individual basis.
   e) The USDA-ARS Authorized Departmental Officer's Designated Representative (ADODR) has a standing invitation to participate in USWBSI meetings.

4. Voting Procedures.
    a) Quorum.
        A quorum shall consist of more than 50% of the current members. This also pertains to voting by e-mail.
    b) Meetings.
        Any subject may be brought to the Steering Committee for consideration in the form of a motion. Once the motion has been made and seconded, it is open for discussion. Members may ask for a mail/E-mail vote on any issue brought before the Steering Committee if there are any Steering Committee members not present during the meeting.
    c) Voting Alternates.
        Only two categories of Steering Committee members can designate a voting alternate if they are unable to attend the Steering Committee meeting:
            - Organizational Representatives
            - Research Area Committee Chairs (Alternate: Research Area Committee Vice-Chair)
    d) Mail/E-mail Voting.
        (1) In addition to mail/E-mail votes called for at Committee meetings, mail/E-mail votes may also be conducted in between Committee meetings on issues put forward by the Co-Chairs or the Executive Committee.
        (2) Every effort will be made to ensure all members receive information regarding the matter under consideration.
    e) Results.
        Voting outcome shall be determined by a simple majority of votes cast.
5. Responsibilities.
    Along with providing direction and guidance to the Initiative, the Steering Committee is responsible for the following:
    a) Review and approve research area program descriptions and research priorities.
    b) Review and approve the Request for Pre-Proposals (RFPP) Process.
    c) Recommend and approve the dates and location, as well as review and approve the agenda for the Annual Forum.
    d) Review and approve the USWBSI Recommended Research Plan & Budget (RRPB).
    e) Review and approve the structure and composition of the Steering Committee, Executive Committee and Research Area Committees.

B. Executive Committee (EC).
1. Membership.
    a) Committee Positions - Co-Chairs (Same as Steering Committee Co-Chairs).
    b) Length of Term – 4 years. Approximately one-quarter of the Executive Committee shall rotate off each year. Members may be re-elected. There is no limit on the number of consecutive terms that a member may serve.
    c) Number of representatives: 9
        Members shall consist of the following:
            - two barley representatives
            - one durum representative
            - three spring wheat representatives

- three winter wheat representatives

d) Members should also represent the diversity of disciplines and interest areas specified under the section on committee composition of the Steering Committee.

2. Election of Members and Filling of Vacancies.
   a) Nomination process and election of Executive Committee members shall take place electronically in the fall of each year.
      (1) Nomination Process: The Interest Group for the area the elected Executive Committee member will represent shall nominate a candidate, and the Steering Committee shall vote upon the nominee.
      (2) Election Process: The nominee is elected if both of the following criteria are met:
         (a) A quorum is achieved: the sum of the "Yes" and "No" votes for that nominee equal or exceeds the minimum required for a quorum.
         (b) A simple majority is received: the nominee receives more "Yes" than "No" votes. Executive Committee members shall not serve concurrently as Research Area Committee members.
      (3) Meetings.
         (a) Executive Committee will meet as needed.
   b) Procedures - Same as Steering Committee.
3. Responsibilities.
   a) Review Research Area Program Description-Research Priorities.
   b) Review draft of Request for Pre-Proposal Application Kit developed by the Networking & Facilitation Office.
   c) Develop in conjunction with the Networking & Facilitation Office (NFO) the process for evaluating pre-proposals
   d) Review and recommend pre-proposals to the Steering Committee for consideration of funding.
   e) Develop the agenda for the annual Forum in conjunction with the Research Area Committee Chairs.
   f) Review and approve the budget for educational meetings organized by Research Area Committees (See Appendix C for Research Area Workshop Guidelines).
   g) Monitor terms of Research Area Committee members.
   h) Review and approve policy and procedures for the NFO.
   i) Draft annual calendar/timetable of Initiative's activities.
   j) Inform Steering Committee of all actions, decisions, and meetings.
4. Voting Procedures.
   Same as Steering Committee Voting Procedures.

C. Research Area Committees (RAC).
   1. Membership.
      a) Committee Positions - Chair and Vice-Chair.
      b) Length of Term.
         (1) Chair – 2 years (An individual shall not serve two consecutive terms.)
         (2) Members – 4 years. Members may be reappointed.
         (3) Terms begin January 1 and end December 31
      c) Number of Members – 4 minimum.
      d) Committee Composition.
         (1) To the extent possible, members should represent different aspects of the research area.
         (2) No two members should represent a single institution.
         (3) At least one member should be someone who does not receive funding through the USWBSI, or at the very least, through the research area for which he/she is a committee member. If this is not feasible, then an external reviewer will be added to the Research Area Committee for the review of the pre-proposals.
   2. Election of Members and Filling of Vacancies.
      a) Volunteers will be solicited via the Scab list server as well as other distribution lists each December for consideration of appointment to the Research Area Committees. The Steering Committee will vote upon volunteers using the Borda Election Method. Steering Committee members (voters) rank the candidates as first, second, third, etc. The first choice of each voter gets a number of points one less than the total number of candidates. Each subsequent choice then gets one less point than the preceding choice, until the last choice get no points at all. The points from each voter are added together to determine the winner. Voting Steering Committee members must rank all candidates; truncation is not allowed.
      b) Committee positions (Chair/Vice-chair) shall be nominated by the Executive Committee and voted on by the Steering Committee.
      c) If the Steering Committee is unable to fill a position due to time constraints, the Executive Committee has the power to do so.
      d) If a Research Area Committee member resigns mid-term, the Executive Committee will appoint an individual to complete the term.
   3. Responsibilities.
      a) Research Area Committee Members
         (1) Draft Program Descriptions and Research Priorities for the Request for Pre-Proposal process.
         (2) Annually review and provide recommendation for funding of pre-proposals to the Executive Committee.
      b) Research Area Committee Chairs
         (1) Act as liaison between the Executive Committee and the Networking & Facilitation Office and their respective Research Area Committees.
         (2) Serve as members of the Steering Committee.
         (3) Work with Research Area Committee members to draft annual Research Area Program Description-Research Priorities.
         (4) Draft and submit Research Area Workshop proposals to the Executive Committee for consideration.

(5) Facilitate Research Area Committee's review of submitted pre-proposals and develop recommendation of funding for consideration by the EC on an annual basis.
(6) Provide comments/suggestions on proposed recipients and non-recipients to be included in the notification of funding.
(7) Work with Research Area Committee members to draft agendas/secure speakers for research area session for the annual Forum.

D. Networking and Facilitation Office (NFO).
1. Purpose.
The purpose of the Networking & Facilitation Office is to act as the administrative and communication headquarters for the USWBSI.
2. Personnel.
a) Director
b) Office Manager
3. Responsibilities.
a) Facilitate Communication.
(1) Administrative support for Steering Committee and Executive Committee.
(a) Organize Steering Committee meetings and Executive committee conference calls.
(b) Record and distribute minutes.
(c) Inform Executive Committee of Networking & Facilitation Office activities.
(d) Inform Steering Committee of Executive Committee actions, meetings, etc.
(e) Facilitate communication between Steering Committee, Executive Committee and Research Area Committees.
(2) Act as liaison between USWBSI and U.S. Department of Agriculture-Agricultural Research Service (USDA-ARS).
(3) Manage the Initiative's Web site.
(4) Oversee production and distribution of Scab Newsletters and press releases.
(5) Maintain list servers.
(6) Act as a rapid clearing-house of scab related questions.
b) Conference Management.
(1) Annual National Fusarium Head Blight Forum.
(a) Select conference location and lodging in city selected by the Steering Committee.
(b) Coordinate all facets of conference arrangements including:
(i) Pre-registration and conference check-in.
(ii) Coordinate layout for poster display.
(iii) Compile and produce forum proceedings.
(iv) Secure sponsor donations.

c) Request for Pre-Proposal Process.
   (1) Draft Request for Pre-Proposal Application Kit in conjunction with Executive Committee and Research Area Committee chairs.
   (2) Distribute the Request for Pre-Proposal Application Kit.
   (3) Facilitate review process for pre-proposals.
   (4) Notify applicants of funding recommendations.
   (5) Forward USWBSI's funding recommendation (grant proposals) to USDA-ARS.

d) Resource Management/Accountability Center.
   (1) Maintain records on all pre-proposals, projects, and grants submitted and funded by the USWBSI.
   (2) Generate and process progress-reporting forms.
   (3) Oversee production and development of the Web database inclusion of information pertaining to research and administrative aspects of the USWBSI.
   (4) Manage data loaded into database and Web site.
   (5) Maintain records of all committee activities and actions.
   (6) Generate reports requested by committees.

IV. Research Plan and Budget Process (RPBP)

A. Development of Program Descriptions and Research Priorities.
   1. Research Area Committee chairs, in consultation with their committee members and Vice-chairs, shall draft program descriptions. Drafts shall be posted on the Web for feedback from the Steering Committee, Executive Committee and the community at large. Drafts continue to evolve as input is acquired.
   2. Final drafts are submitted to the Executive Committee and Steering Committee for approval at the spring Steering Committee meeting.

B. Development of the Request for Pre-proposal (Request for Pre-Proposal) Application Kit.
   1. The Networking & Facilitation Office shall draft the Request for Pre-Proposal Application Kit in conjunction with the Executive Committee and Research Area Committee chairs.
      a) Pre-proposals are confidential documents that include all information required to persuade the Research Area Committees of the value of the project.
      b) The Request for Pre-Proposal Application Kit shall be submitted to the Executive Committee for final approval.

C. Distribution and Advertisement of Request for Pre-Proposals Application Kit.
   1. To the extent possible, electronic copies of the USWBSI RFPP Application Kit shall be distributed to the following:
      a) Current and former USWBSI researchers.
         (1) Non-funded researchers who previously submitted pre-proposals.
         (2) Previous attendees of the National Fusarium Head Blight Forums.

b) Electronic notices shall be sent to the following:
   (1) Scab list server
   (2) Agricultural Experiment Station Directors
   (3) Extension Service Directors
   (4) Administrative Heads
   (5) Academic Heads
   (6) USDA/ARS/National Program Staff (NPS)
   (7) GrainGenes list server
   (8) 1890 Land Grant Institutions
   (9) 1994 Land Grant Institutions
   (10) Hispanic Serving Institutions
c) Electronic versions shall be posted on the Initiative's Web site.
d) Hard copies will be distributed by request only.

D. Review Process.

1. Setting of Working Caps (WC).
   a) The Steering Committee will be provided with relevant information from previous year's funding allocation (e.g. funding requested/approved, projects recommended outside of the working cap, etc.).
   b) Steering Committee members will then submit their individual recommendation for percentage of allocation for each research area.
   c) A summary of the Steering Committee's recommendation will be forwarded to the Executive Committee along with other pertinent information.
   d) The Executive Committee will develop recommended working caps, and provide them to the Steering Committee for final approval. Once pre-proposals are received by the Networking & Facilitation Office, they will be sorted by research area, and copies will be sent to the appropriate Research Area Committee(s), as well as the Executive Committee, along with review guidelines and working caps. (In cases where pre-proposals require review by more than one committee, the Research Area Committee chairs shall work through the Networking & Facilitation Office to coordinate the review.)
2. All Research Area Committee members shall review each pre-proposal for their area and complete a review summary. Each Research Area Committee Chair shall collect their committee's review summaries and in conjunction with the Vice-Chair, create and sign (both Chair and Vice-Chair) an overall summary of reviewers' ratings, so as to make a recommendation for funding to the Executive Committee. Research Area Committee chairs will then forward the original review summaries (individual and overall) to the Networking & Facilitation Office, prior to the annual forum.
3. The Executive Committee shall meet with each of the Research Area Committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs to discuss their recommendations.

E. Funding Recommendation.
   1. Once the Executive Committee has received the Research Area Committees' recommendation regarding submitted pre-proposals, the Executive Committee shall reconcile the recommendations with the available funds.
   2. The Executive Committee shall then present a proposed funding allocation to the Steering Committee for recommendations and approval.
   3. Once the Steering Committee approves the budget allocation, the Networking & Facilitation Office shall send written notification to all researchers who submitted a pre-proposal.
   4. The Research Area Committee chairs shall provide comments and recommendations to be included in the letter of notification. The instructions for resubmitting final proposals shall be included for those researchers awarded funding. Final proposals are submitted to the Networking & Facilitation Office as aggregate single PI grants (i.e. may contain multiple projects).
   5. The Networking & Facilitation Office will forward the grant proposals as a comprehensive recommendation to USDA-ARS.
      a) All Research Grant Agreements that are recommended by the USWBSI are a one-year award.
      b) Grant proposals are confidential documents.
      c) PIs shall submit electronically one non-technical abstract for each USWBSI recommended project that will be made public through the Initiative's Web site.

V. Reporting of Progress.

ARS contractually requires a Final Performance Report (FPR) for all Research Grant Agreements (RGA).

A. Purpose.
   1. Accountability.
   2. Real-time communication among scientists.

B. Process.
   1. Principal Investigators (PIs) are required to submit Final Performance Reports for each single year Research Grant Agreements.
      a) No-Cost Extensions (NCE)
         (1) Principal Investigators who receive a No Cost Extension shall submit a "Preliminary Final Performance Report" at the same time as all other Principal Investigators.
         (2) Final Performance Reports shall be submitted when the no-cost extension ends.
   2. The Networking & Facilitation Office, working with the Executive Committee and ARS, will generate the FPR forms. The Final Performance Reports will be sent to the Principal Investigators in May. Principal Investigators shall complete the report and return two signed copies and one electronic version to the Networking & Facilitation Office by mid-July. The Networking & Facilitation Office shall then forward one copy of each Final Performance Report in a single mailing to USDA-ARS.
   3. USDA-ARS requires Final Performance Reports be accessible to the public. Therefore, the Final Performance Reports shall be made available through the Scab Web site.

VI. Annual Forum.

A. Date and Site Selection.

1. Members of the Steering Committee may nominate possible dates and sites.
2. The Steering Committee shall select the dates and the site by a vote.

B. Development of Program.

1. The Steering Committee shall approve the Forum format at the spring Steering Committee meeting.
2. The Research Area Committee Chairs shall draft their research area programs (i.e. Speakers) and submit them to the Executive Committee for final approval.
3. Forum program should be finalized by mid-August.

APPENDIX A

Chronology of Updates to the Policies and Procedures

Section	Type of Change*	Date Updated
III,C,2,a-d	NP	12-13-03
I	NL	5-27-04
III,A,1,a	CL	5-27-04
III,A,1,d-e	NP	5-27-04
III,A,2,a-b	NP	5-27-04
III,A,3,a-e	NP	5-27-04
III,A,5	AP	5-27-04
III,B,1,a-d	CL	5-27-04
III,B,2,a	NP	5-27-04
III,B,3-4	CL	5-27-04
III,C,1,b,2	NP	5-27-04
III,C,1,d,3	NP	5-27-04
III,C,3,a-b	CL	5-27-04
IV,A-D	CL	5-27-04
IV,D,2	NP	5-27-04
VI,A	CL	5-27-04
VI,B	AP	5-27-04

*NP=New Policy or Procedure.
AP=Amendment to existing policy or procedure
NL=New Language.
CL=Clarification of language to existing policy or procedure.

APPENDIX B

Index of Commonly Used Abbreviations/Synonyms

ADODR - Authorized Departmental Officer's Designated Representative
AES – Agricultural Experiment Station
ARS – Agricultural Research Service
BIO – Biotechnology (Research Area)
CBC – Chemical & Biological Control (Research Area)
EC – Executive Committee
EDM – Epidemiology & Disease Management (Research Area)
ESCOP – Experiment Station Committee on Organization and Policy (Agricultural Experiment Station)
FHB – Fusarium head blight or scab
FPR – Final Performance Report
FSTU – Food Safety, Toxicology & Utilization (Research Area)
GIE – Germplasm Introduction & Disease Management (Research Area)
IG – Interest Group
NCE – No-Cost Extension
NCRA – North Central Regional Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors
NFO – Networking & Facilitation Office
NPS – National Program Staff
P&P – Policies and Procedures
PD-RP – Program Descriptions and Research Priorities
PI – Principal Investigator
RA – Research Area
RAC – Research Area Committee
PD-RP – Program Description and Research Priorities
RFPP – Request for Pre-Proposals
RGA – Research Grant Agreements (ARS awards)
RRPB – Recommended Research Plan & Budget
SAAESD – Southern Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors
SC – Steering Committee
USWBSI – U.S. Wheat & Barley Scab Initiative (or the ‘Scab Initiative’)
USDA – U.S. Department of Agriculture
VDUN – Variety Development & Uniform Nurseries (Research Area)
WC – Working Caps

APPENDIX C

Guidelines for Research Area Workshops
Last Revised: 2-3-04

In order to better facilitate the exchange of information, Research Area Committees are encouraged to develop workshops for their area. There is a line item in the budget of the Networking and Facilitation Office (NFO) to provide financial support for said workshops.

Guidelines for Submitting Proposals

- Workshop proposals are developed and submitted through the Research Area Committees for consideration by the Executive Committee (EC).
- Proposals must be received by the NFO by the first Tuesday of March for consideration by the EC for the upcoming fiscal year (begins in early May).
- All proposals received by this deadline will be considered simultaneously by the EC. In the event that budget resources are not fully employed, proposals received after the deadline and approved by the EC will be considered by the EC in the order in which they are received.
- A maximum of three workshops will be eligible for financial support each fiscal year.
- A research area can only submit one proposal per fiscal year.
- Proposals should contain the following:
    - Name of Workshop Coordinator (not necessarily the RAC chair)
    - Purpose/Description of Workshop
    - Relevance to the USWBSI
    - Detailed Budget

Workshop Participation

- EC approved workshops should be announced through the Scab Listserver with a stated deadline for receipt of application by interested parties. Physical and financial resources may limit the number of participants.
- Interested parties will be encouraged to contact the workshop coordinator, but may also work through the NFO.
- An appropriate broad based representation of scientists, growers, and industry for each workshop is encouraged.

Guidelines for Financial Support by the NFO

- Final allocation of resources will be decided by the NFO and the workshop coordinator as soon as possible after the application deadline.
- All participants will be notified prior to the workshop of the maximum amount of travel funds that will be available to them.
- Travel reimbursement will be managed through the NFO.

Sponsorship

Workshop organizers are encouraged to seek corporate sponsorship for research area workshops.

Final Report

The RAC Chair or Workshop Coordinator will submit a final report to the NFO following the conclusion of the workshop. Reports will be distributed to the Steering Committee and posted on the Initiative's Web site.