# U.S. Wheat & Barley Scab Initiative

## POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

**Last Revised: 7/24/01**

A. 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.

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

a. Steering Committee (SC).

i. Members.

1. Length of Term – 3 years. Approximately one-third of the SC shall rotate off each year. Members may be re-elected.
2. Number of Members – 30-36
3. Committee Positions - Co-Chairs (Researcher and Grower)
4. Committee Composition

The steering committee shall have at least one member, but no more than 5, 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 Station (ESCOP)
- Consumer Group
- Research Area Committee Chairs

ii. Meetings.

The Steering Committee shall meet a minimum of twice a year, including one spring meeting and one meeting at the annual forum.

iii. Voting Procedures.

1. Quorum.
   a. A quorum shall consist of more than 50% of the current members. This also pertains to voting by e-mail.
2. Meetings.

   Any subject may be brought to the SC 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 SC if there are SC members not present during the meeting.
3. Proxies.

   If a member cannot attend a meeting, and represents an organization, the organization may send a proxy.

4. Mail.
    a. 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 EC.
    b. Every effort will be made to ensure all members receive information regarding the matter under consideration.
5. Results.
    a. Voting outcome shall be determined by a simple majority of votes cast.

iv. Responsibilities.

Along with providing direction and guidance to the Initiative, the Steering Committee is responsible to:

1. Review and approve research area program descriptions and research priorities.
2. Review and approve the request for pre-proposals (RFP) process.
3. Review and approve the agenda and location of the annual forum.
4. Review and approve the USWBSI recommended budget.
5. Review and approve the structure and composition of the Steering Committee, Executive Committee and Research Area Committees.

v. Election of Members and Filling of Vacancies.

Nominations for positions on the steering committee will be solicited prior to each annual Forum (or when warranted) via the Scab list server. Members of the SC will vote upon nominees.

b. Executive Committee (EC).

i. Members.

1. Committee Positions - Co-Chairs (Same as SC Co-Chairs).
2. Length of Term – 4 years. Approximately one-quarter of the EC shall rotate off each year. Members may be re-elected.
3. In addition to the Co-chairs, members shall consist of the following: two shall represent barley, two shall represent spring wheat, two shall represent winter wheat, and one shall represent durum. Members should also represent the diversity of disciplines and interest areas specified under the section on committee composition of the Steering Committee.
4. Election of Members and Filling of Vacancies.

    Vacant positions on the EC shall be filled through election by the Steering Committee. Representatives on the Steering Committee shall nominate candidates, and the steering committee shall vote on the nominees.
5. EC members shall not serve concurrently as Research Area Committee members.

ii. Meetings.

1. EC will meet as needed.
2. Procedures - Same as SC.

iii. Responsibilities.

1. Review program descriptions and research priorities.
2. Review draft of Request for Pre-proposal (RFP) Application Kit developed by the Networking & Facilitation Office.
3. Develop the process for evaluating pre-proposals
4. Review and recommend pre-proposals for funding.

5. Develop the agenda for the annual forum in conjunction with the Research Area Committees Chairs.
6. Review and approve the budget for educational meetings organized by Research Area Committees.
7. Monitor terms of RAC members.
8. Review and approve policy and procedures for the Networking & Facilitation Office.
9. Draft annual calendar/timetable of Initiative's activities.
10. Keep SC informed of all actions, decisions, and meetings.

iv. Voting Procedures.

Same as SC voting procedures.

c. Research Area Committees (RAC).

i. Members.

1. Committee Positions - Chair and Vice-Chair.
2. Length of Term.
   i. Chair – 2 years (An individual shall not serve two consecutive terms.)
   ii. Members – 4 years. Members may be re-elected.
3. Number of Members – 4 minimum.
4. Committee Composition.
   i. To the extent possible, members should represent different aspects of the research area.
   ii. No two members should represent a single institution.
5. Appointment of Members and Filling of Vacancies.
   i. Members shall be appointed by the Steering Committee. Committee positions (Chair/Vice-chair) shall be nominated by the steering committee members and voted on by the Steering Committee.
   ii. If the Steering Committee is unable to fill a position due to time constraints, the Executive Committee has the power to do so.

ii. Responsibilities.

1. Draft program descriptions and recommend research priorities.
2. Review and provide recommendation for funding of pre-proposals to the Executive Committee
3. Propose speakers for the relevant sessions for the annual Forum.
4. RAC chairs (not Vice-chairs) shall serve as members of the Steering Committee

d. Networking and Facilitation Office (NFO).

i. Purpose.

The purpose of the NFO is to act as the administrative and communication headquarters for the USWBSI.

ii. Personnel.

1. Director
2. Office Manager

iii. Responsibilities.

1. Facilitate Communication.
    a. Administrative support for SC and EC.
        i. Organize SC meetings and EC conference calls.
        ii. Record and distribute minutes.
        iii. Keep EC informed of NFO activities.
        iv. Keep SC informed of EC actions, meetings, etc.
        v. Facilitate communication between SC, EC and RACs.
    b. Act as liaison between USWBSI and USDA-ARS.
    c. Manage the Initiative's Web site.
    d. Oversee production and distribution of Scab Newsletters and press releases.
    e. Maintain list servers.
    f. Act as a rapid clearing-house of Scab related questions.
2. Conference Management.
    a. Annual National Fusarium Head Blight Forum.
        i. Select conference center location and lodging in city selected by the SC.
        ii. Coordinate all facets of conference arrangements including:
            1. Pre-registration and Conference Check-in.
            2. Coordinate layout for Poster Display.
            3. Compile and produce Forum proceedings.
            4. Secure sponsor donations.
3. Request for Pre-Proposal (RFP) Process.
    a. Draft RFP Application kit in conjunction with EC and RAC chairs.
    b. Distribute the RFP Application Kit.
    c. Facilitate review process for pre-proposals.
    d. Notify applicants of funding recommendations.
    e. Forward USWBSI's funding recommendation (grant proposals) to USDA-ARS.
4. Resource Management/Accountability Center.
    a. Maintain records on all pre-proposals, projects, and grants submitted and funded by the USWBSI.
    b. Generate and process progress-reporting forms.
    c. Oversee production and development of the web database inclusion of information pertaining to research and administrative aspects of the USWBSI.
    d. Manage data loaded into database and web site.
    e. Maintain records of all committee activities and actions.
    f. Generate reports requested by committees.

C. Request for Pre-Proposal (RFP) Process.

a. Development of Program Descriptions/Research Priorities.

i. RAC chairs, in consultation with their committee members and Vice-chairs, shall draft program descriptions. The first drafts are reviewed and commented upon by the RAC and members of the EC (the Networking & Facilitation Office (NFO) shall facilitate this through the Initiative's web site). Feedback from other RACs and the EC shall be incorporated into a second draft.

ii. The second draft shall be posted on the web for feedback from the SC and the community at large. Drafts continue to evolve as input is acquired.

iii. Final drafts are submitted to the EC and SC for approval at the spring steering committee meeting.

b. Development of the Request for Pre-proposal (RFP) Application Kit.

i. The Networking & Facilitation Office shall draft the RFP Application Kit in conjunction with the RAC chairs and the EC.

1. Pre-proposals are confidential documents that include all information required to persuade the RACs of the value of the project.
2. PIs who received funding in the previous year are encouraged to attach prior year Final Performance Reports.

ii. The RFP Application Kit shall be submitted to the SC for final approval at the spring steering committee meeting.

c. Distribution and Advertisement of Request for Pre-proposals Application Kit.

i. To the extent possible, hard copies of the USWBSI Pre-Proposal Application Kit shall be distributed to the following:

a. Current and former USWBSI researchers.
b. Non-funded researchers who previously submitted pre-proposals.
c. Items above will be crossed-checked with lists of participants (university and ARS researchers) of previous National Fusarium Head Blight Forums.

ii. Electronic notices shall be sent to the following:

a. Scab list server
b. Agricultural Experiment Station Directors
c. Cooperative Extension Directors
d. Administrative Heads
e. Academic Heads
f. USDA/ARS/NPS
g. Grain Genes list server
h. 1890 Institutions
i. 1994 Land Grant Institutions
j. Hispanic Serving Institutions

iii. Electronic versions shall be posted on the Initiative's website.

d. Review Process.
    i. Setting of Funding Caps.
        1. Steering Committee will be provided with relevant information from previous year's funding allocation (e.g. funding requested/approved, projects recommended outside of funding cap, etc.).
        2. Steering Committee will submit recommendation for percentage of allocation for each research area.
        3. A summary of the SC's recommendation will be forwarded to the EC along with other pertinent information.
        4. The EC will develop recommended caps, and provide them to the SC for final approval.
    ii. Once pre-proposals are received by the NFO, they will be sorted by research area, and copies will be sent to the appropriate RAC(s), as well as the EC, along with review guidelines and funding caps. In cases where pre-proposals require review by more than one committee, the NFO will work with the RAC chairs to coordinate the review process.
    iii. All RAC members shall review each pre-proposal and complete a review sheet. Each RAC Chair shall collect their committee's review sheets and in conjunction with the Vice-chair, create and sign (both Chair and Vice-chair) a summary of reviewers' ratings, so as to make a recommendation for funding to the EC.
    iv. The EC shall then meet with each of the RAC Chairs and Vice-Chairs to discuss their recommendations.
e. Funding Recommendation.
    i. Once the EC has received the RACs' recommendation regarding submitted pre-proposals, the EC shall reconcile the recommendations with the available funds.
    ii. The EC shall then present a proposed funding allocation to the SC for recommendations and approval.
    iii. Once the SC approves the budget allocation, the NFO shall send written notification to all researchers who submitted a pre-proposal.
    iv. The RAC 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 NFO as aggregate single PI grants (i.e. may contain multiple projects).
    v. The NFO will forward the grant proposals as a comprehensive recommendation to USDA-ARS.
        1. All Research Grant Agreements (RGAs) that are recommended by the USWBSI are a one-year award.
        2. Grant proposals are confidential documents.
        3. PIs shall submit electronically one non-technical abstract for each USWBSI recommended project that will be made public through the Initiative's website.

D. Reporting of Progress.

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

a. Purpose.
   i. Accountability.
   ii. Real-time communication among scientist.
b. Process.
   i. Principal Investigators (PIs) are required to submit Final Performance Reports for each single year RGA.
      1. No-cost Extensions.
         a. PIs who receive no-cost extensions shall submit "Preliminary Final Performance Reports" at the same time as all other PIs.
         b. Final Performance Reports shall be submitted when the no-cost extension terminates.
   ii. The NFO, working with the EC and ARS, will generate the Final Performance Reports forms. The FPRs will be sent to the PIs in May. PIs shall complete the report and return two signed copies and one electronic version to the NFO by July 15th. The NFO shall then forward one copy of each FPR in a single mailing to USDA-ARS.
   iii. USDA-ARS requires Final Performance Reports be accessible to the public. Therefore, the FPRs shall be made available through the Scab website.

E. Annual Forum.

a. Site Selection.
   i. Members of the SC may nominate sites.
   ii. The SC shall select a site by vote.
b. Development of Agenda.
   i. The EC in conjunction with the RAC chairs shall draft the agenda.
   ii. The EC shall present the draft agenda to the SC for approval at the spring steering committee meeting.
   iii. The EC in conjunction with the RAC shall then finalize the Forum agenda by August 1st.