



U.S. Wheat & Barley  
Scab Initiative

## **FY09 USWBSI Recommended Funding Process**

### ***Summary of the Process used by the USWBSI to Generate a Comprehensive Research Plan and Budget Recommendation for Federal Fiscal Year 2009 (FY09)***

Each year, the U.S. Wheat & Barley Scab Initiative is charged with the task of developing a comprehensive research plan and budget recommendation that is aimed at achieving its primary mission: develop as quickly as possible effective control measures that minimize the threat of Fusarium head blight (scab), including the reduction of mycotoxins, to the producers, processors, and consumers of wheat and barley. The entire process followed to develop this research plan and budget is a product of deliberations overseen and approved by the USWBSI Steering Committee (SC). The composition of the SC is designed to give voice to all stakeholders in the operation of the USWBSI.

This year's review process was completed on December 4, immediately following to the final session of this year's 2009 National Fusarium Head Blight Forum. The USWBSI's Networking and Facilitation Office (NFO) orchestrated this process in close consultation with the Executive Committee (EC) and the Chairs of the Research Committees. A split process was used this year: 1) A call for and review of individual Research Area (RA) based pre-proposals; and 2) submission and review of Year 2 documentation for the Coordinated Projects.

Submission and Review of Individual RA Pre-Proposals. A total of 73 pre-proposals were received from 54 Principal Investigators (PIs) at 25 institutions including 24 Land Grant Universities, and the USDA-ARS, for the following research areas:

- FHB Management
- Food Safety, Toxicology and Utilization of Mycotoxin-contaminated Grain;
- Gene Discovery and Engineering Resistance; and
- Pathogen Biology and Genetics

Each pre-proposal was reviewed by one of the research area Review Panels (RPs), including external reviewers, and the Executive Committee (EC) with its nine members.

In short, each RP delivered to the EC a consensus summary review that classified each pre-proposal into one of three categories: 1) recommended for funding within the "working cap", 2) recommended for funding but not within the working cap, and 3) not recommended for funding. The working caps were derived from a process that involved the entire SC. For the "in-cap" category, the RPs identified their highest priority pre-proposals and adjusted their individual

award totals so their collective sum was equal to or less than the working cap. For the second category, the RPs identified pre-proposals they judged worthy of funding but none-the-less omitted from “in-cap” category. Pre-proposals in that category were assigned unique rankings (1 to n) by the RPs. The RPs evaluated all pre-proposals in the context of the Research Priorities and Program Descriptions developed in the summer of 2008. Program Descriptions are revisited annually in a web-based process that enables and welcomes input from all parties.

Submission and Review of Year 2 Documentation for Coordinated Projects: In FY08, two-year based research projects were funded under the following Coordinated Projects:

- Commodity-Based Coordinated Projects
  - Barley
  - Durum
  - Hard Winter Wheat
- Variety Development and Host Resistance Regional Nursery-based Coordinated Projects:
  - Spring Wheat
  - Northern Winter Wheat
  - Southern Winter Wheat

The year 2 documentation for the Coordinated Projects included 61 research projects by 44 PIs at 22 institutions including 20 Land Grant Universities, the USDA-ARS and CIMMYT. The review for the second year funding of the FY08 Coordinated Projects was handled by the nine-member Executive Committee.

The EC is charged with developing a draft of a comprehensive research plan and budget that is scientifically sound and minimizes imbalances among the tremendous range of geographical, commodity, institutional, business sector, and disciplinary interests held by the stakeholders who have made the USWBSI possible. After consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of each RP and Coordinated Project committee on December 1st, the EC constructed a comprehensive recommendation composed of 134 pre-proposals from 79 PIs. The sum of all recommended award amounts is exactly equal to the \$5,040,912 that was anticipated to be available to USDA-ARS for collaborative scab research for FY09.

On the afternoon of December 4, the EC plan and budget was presented to the SC for its consideration. The SC was briefed on the details of the entire process and allowed to study the EC’s draft of the comprehensive plan and budget. Subsequently, a motion to endorse the EC’s draft plan was passed by a unanimous vote of the SC. The draft plan consequently became the official USWBSI comprehensive research plan and budget recommendation for FY09. This plan is currently being translated into individual USDA-ARS **Grant Applications**, which will be submitted en mass as the USWBSI’s *recommendation* for how USDA-ARS could allocate the resources awarded it by the U.S. Congress.