



2017 ANNUAL MEETING SUMMARY

by Dave Green, Executive Vice President

The Wheat Quality Council (WQC) held its annual meeting, forum and technical review sessions February 21-23, 2017 at the KCI Embassy Suites Hotel in Kansas City, MO with more than 150 industry participants in attendance.

The WQC is the only industry-wide organization that brings together all wheat interests from breeders and producers to millers, processors and bakers. These participants are provided information on the milling and baking qualities of wheat varieties that will be released, grown and processed in the next few years.

The wheat breeders have an opportunity to network with the industry to determine what quality characteristics the millers and bakers would like to see in new wheat varieties.

Board of Trustees

The meeting began with the Executive Committee session, then the full Board of Trustees meeting following. A full slate of new officers and Board members are listed on our website. The Council is in sound financial condition and the Trustees thanked Ben Handcock for his tireless service to the Council over the last 25 years.

Technical Board Meetings

The Soft wheat part of our group is holding a separate meeting in early May. We will have updates from them when they conclude. The Hard Winter Wheat group discussed some exciting changes they plan to make with their growout process to better compare checks and cultivars across environments. Those changes are expected to begin with this fall's planting season with results to present in February 2019. The Spring Wheat Board discussed their work on quality and agronomic data with a goal of finding the next check variety to replace Glenn, our long term quality standard.

Speakers Forum

Ron Sterk from Sosland Publications led the group through bakery and wheat flour trends affecting our industry. Chandler Goule, CEO of the National Association of Wheat Growers presented on the newly developed Wheat Action Plan to help reverse the decline in wheat acreage in the US. We then had an industry panel discussion regarding innovation underway across the sectors of our industry. The panel was moderated by Tim O'Conner, President of the Wheat Foods Council. Representing the growers was Kansas farmer and NAWG VP David Schemm. The milling industry panelist was well represented by Brian Walker of Miller Milling from Minneapolis. Charlie Moon, VP of R&D with Flowers Foods spoke for the baking industry. Brett Carver, winter wheat plant breeder and professor from Oklahoma State University rounded out the panel. Our forums are always well attended and a highlight of our meeting. At our dinner that night we spent the evening "Reminiscing" by telling stories of Ben's long and appreciated career.

Evaluation of new lines

In the spring wheat region, we had six experimental lines grown in five locations against two check varieties this year. The lines were milled at NDSU-ARS laboratory and the flour was evaluated by twelve cooperating partners representing our industry. Both experimental lines and newly released varieties were included this year for quality testing. North Dakota State, South Dakota State and the University of Minnesota represented the public breeding programs, while Westbred and Syngenta entered lines from their private breeding programs. Results can be looked at in detail on our website. For the winter wheat program, the cooperators looked at 16 new lines and their associated checks representing the current offerings of seven breeding programs. Public breeders submitting were from two locations in Kansas, (Manhattan and Hays). The public breeding programs of Nebraska and Oklahoma also submitted new lines this year. On the private breeder side, we had lines from Limagrain, Syngenta and Monsanto. Seventeen co-operators were involved in the quality evaluations this year.

Summary

I am both excited and humbled to begin directing the Wheat Quality Council. The Council has been a big part of my life during my entire career. The group of people dedicated to improving the wheat industry are the best people I have ever known. Their dedication to the work is inspiring. I have always believed that we make a difference, and am very much looking forward to the future.