

MINUTES OF THE SEEDLING GROWERS ASSOCIATION RESEARCH COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON FRIDAY 06 NOVEMBER 2009 VIA CONFERENCE CALL AT 10.30 AM.

1. PRESENT / QUORUM

Damien Naidu	DN - Chairman
Andrew Dominy	AD
Kobus Serfontein	KS
John Bower	JB
Mike Kruger	MK
Rob Osborne	RO
Jacqui Wallis	JW
Tracy Vermaak	TV
Viv Quin	VQ

2. APOLOGIES

Adrian Chaning Pearce	ACP
Ken Leisegang	KL
Flic Blakeway	FB

3 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

#	Matter	By whom	By when
3.1	<p>Changes to the minutes of the meeting held on 17th July 2009 were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2nd Paragraph on page 4 re bacterial wilt is not applicable and should be deleted. • The rest of the minutes were taken as read and accepted. 	<p>VQ</p> <p>PROP: KS SECOND: MK</p>	<p>Immed.</p>

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM JUNE MINUTES

#	Matter	By whom	By when
4.1	<p><u>Seed Vigor table</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There has been no feedback from Albert Modi regarding the seed vigour table. • MK has not collected the unit from Mondi yet. MK to collect the table shortly. • Regulating the humidity control will be sorted out. MK to contact ZR developments. • The UKZN-PMB Science workshop are able to sort out the relative humidity control but they are too busy therefore it would take too long to be rectified. 	<p>MK</p> <p>MK</p> <p>JB</p>	
4.2	<p><u>Training Course</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • James Ballantyne (JaB) sent AD a draft power point module on irrigation as a starting point for the training material. Further modules could include: 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tray cleaning - Medium preparation - Tray filling - Dibbling - Seeding - Manual seeding - Germination - Water availability - Spraying of fungicides - Thinning - Popping - Pulling - Storage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The power point presentation was sent to the research committee electronically and the meeting went through the module. The committee agreed that JaB was on the right track with the power point training and he has highlighted some good points. They felt that each point could be expanded on as JaB would not be there when it is presented to nursery staff. Although each nursery could expand on points during their presentation to make it applicable to their nursery. • The presentation includes pictures to make it visually appealing. The committee discussed whether the voice over should include the 11 languages or just be in English. To put it into 11 languages would be expensive. The target market should be identified. The committee decided that it would not be problematic to keep the presentation in English only as it is a very visual presentation and each nursery could use an interpreter. If the presentation is in English, it is marketable beyond SA. • Training material could include the role of the supervisor. This training material will be a great tool for nurseries. AD to discuss the procedure from here and get pricing structure to progress further. • SGASA needs to get a schedule of courses that JaB is offering as he offers valuable courses. It would be beneficial if a SGASA representative could be at some of the courses. JaB must be asked to submit a table of courses to be offered within a quarter to be published in The Leaflet indicating the date by which one needs to book. 	AD VQ	
4.3	<u>Registration on minor use products</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AD has not much to report. There is a new supervisor in the 		

	<p>department of agriculture. Dr Schroder had asked AD not to submit the letter to motivate and highlight the importance and necessity of the legislation of minor use chemicals until all the changes in the department have taken place. Now that this has happened, AD can submit the letter.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AD needs list of commonly used chemicals in seedling nurseries. AD asked KS for a list of diseases and related chemicals for inclusion in the letter he is writing. Nurseries can also help submitting a list of chemicals. MK to ask Richard Parker. There is a problem using Benlate for <i>Fusarium</i>. There is a new chemical on the market called CELEST®. KS reported that it is registered for <i>Fusarium</i> in forestry. Keith Hartley has been in contact with ACP and reported that the ISASA are willing to work with SGASA motivating for the registration of minor use chemicals. Petrus Langenhoven has been in contact with AD. ISASA will submit a letter to the Department of Agriculture as well. ISASA are also prepared to fund some research. Derek Askew (DA) had previously been working on this and ISASA believed that DA was still working with this. There has been no news from DA. No formal research has been done on minor use chemicals. AD will try to contact DA and will continue to talk to ISASA. 	<p>AD</p> <p>KS</p> <p>MK</p> <p>AD</p>	
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5. NEW FIELDS OF RESEARCH

#	Matter	By whom	By when
5.1	<p><u>Trials using Biological products Cedara</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DN had a meeting with Maxwell Mkanathi (MM) who is the new assistant researcher at Cedara. He is very enthusiastic to assist with trials. Cedara is busy constructing tunnels and once this is complete he can begin trials. Other trials that MM is looking at include cover crops and hydroponics. He is doing work for the next hydroponic association of SA's conference. Cedara have tested a range of post transplant additives. The tests have revealed no clear trends of superiority of any of the products. RO should send the completed reports on trials performed to date to VQ. Before doing this, RO wants to discuss them with MK. They will be submitted to the Leaflet and then send to VQ. 	<p>RO</p> <p>RO, MK</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> December is a quiet month at Cedara so RO suggested the possibility of doing some work with Topcrop and Sunshine Seedlings. 	RO	Dec-09
5.2	<p><u>Research on Coco peat</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MM is keen to do some research for SGASA on Coco peat as a growing medium. RO has done a lot of work on this already. RO collected material from MK. Orinoco (the company in Mozambique producing coco peat) is changing their machinery to chop the fibres to a shorter length. The fibre is then separated from the dust. If the fibres are too long, they roll into little balls. Nurseries can purchase coco peat directly from Orinoco. The problem with the blocks of coco peat is that it is not that highly compacted. If nurseries want to use immediately they would need to mill it. MK reported that Top Crop doing this very successfully any extended a welcome for anyone who wants to see it. RO has tested samples of various different coco peats from Top Crop and Sunshine Seedlings. It was found that the expansion rate vary greatly. Some increase by 20 times in volume once it has been fluffed. MK reported that once the coco peat is fluffed with milling there is a higher expansion rate. RO found that air fill porosity readings also varied from 15 % AFP to 28 % AFP. All the coco peat was put through the salinity laboratory. All peat is quite saline from 250 – 300 mS. This is not a huge issue however. Once it is leached, the salinity goes quickly. It was then put in the oven to test water holding. The findings reveal that coco peat is fine for seedling use but it is not suitable for bag growing. It does not have a high enough AFP for cucumber and tomatoes growing in tunnels. RO made an arrangement to go to see MK to do germination and growing tests. MK has not experienced any germination problems from toxins. If the factory can achieve a product which is either 100% fibre or 100% dust customers can then choose what they want. Orinoco is close to getting the product right. The committee agreed that this is a good trial and it should continue. 	MK, RO	
5.3	<p><u>University of Pretoria Research on ZEBA</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Zeba research has been completed. The research revealed that except for seedling length (2 x rate yielded tallest plants) no significant differences were recorded compared to Stockabsorb or the control. 		
5.4	<p><u>P. capscici research with Kobus Serfontein</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suppliers were asked to supply trichoderma products for the trials. There has been no response from the suppliers. Some trichoderma products actually enhance the disease. This is possibly a reason why suppliers have been reticent to supply product. 		
5.5	<p><u>Benchmarking</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AD has nothing to add at this stage. This is a mammoth task. Not 		

	all nurseries have been evaluated each year. AD is trying to explore trends that are immerging. AD still finalizing it. AD requested that all the 2007 data be resent to him.	AD VQ	
5.6	<u>SGASA research presentation image</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DN sent the meeting a power point presentation. The presentation included deliverables and milestones. DN used this as an example of an image for the SGASA research presentations. A uniform template is needed. The committee agreed that this is a good idea. It would be necessary to include a disclaimer to protect the organization. 	VQ, DN	
5.7	<u>Student projects</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It seems that it is going to be difficult to get a student from Stellenbosch through Ben Du Toit. JB is sure that students will be available from UKZN. The research topics would be factor determining whether or not students would be available. • DN to approach OFS & UP for students. 	JB DN	
5.8	<u>Plant stress test</u> The following could be considered : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Drought and partial defoliation - Electrolyte leakage - Water potential - Chlorophyll fluorometer - The pH of the plant sap - Graeme Sait believes that low sap pH is an indicator of the plant being prone to bacterial diseases. Foliar sprays can affect the pH of the sap due to nutrients being absorbed through the leaf. A number of factors can affect pH and this is a possible area of research that can be considered. A student could consider this as a research topic. The student should consider the other options as well. A pilot study could be done first. However time would be a factor. If this is to be done as a 4th year project there would not be enough time. - JB will research the possibility of getting a student. 	JB	
5.9	Tomato bacterial speck/spot proposals – KS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The decision from the main committee is that SGASA can only fund ½ the trial. DN will take it to the next main committee meeting again. Speck and spot is becoming more of a problem. There are new chemicals on the market that need to be tested. It is important that SGASA keep informed and up dated with these. 	DN	

6. GENERAL

#	Matter	By whom	By when
6.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No matters arising under general 		

7. NEXT MEETING

#	Matter	By whom	By when
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• DN thanked the committee for their participation. DN will notify the committee with a date for the next meeting which will be in early March 2010.• The meeting ended at 12h05.	ALL	