

Minutes of the Technical Committee held on Thursday 11th January 2018 at NFU Stoneleigh, Warwickshire.



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1. Apologies:

Adlam, John
Bragg, Neil
Braime, Howard
Canales-Prati, Pablo
Fuller, Andrew
Key, Georgina(AHDB)
Lisher, James
Lloyd, Luke
MacMillan, Ewan (Chair)
McPherson, Martin
Pearson, Simon
Swain, Jon (FEC)
Woodcock, Russ

Present:

Brough, Wayne (AHDB)
Edwards, Graeme (Vice Chair – chairing this meeting)
England, Jill (ADAS)
Gray, Amy (NFU)
Kitchener, Harry
Mason, Lyndon
Need, Chris
Opperman, Ollie
Richardson, Fay
Satterthwaite, Jamie
Shove, Caroline (co-opted BPPC)
Smith, Michael
Smith, David (Bulrush Ltd– Guest)
Davenport, Simon (Sec)

Approval of the minutes and matters arising: In order to simplify matters it was agreed that minutes would be circulated in draft following the meeting; 4 weeks ahead of the meeting notice to be distributed; 2 weeks ahead papers to be requested; all papers and minutes of the previous meeting to be sent at least one week prior to the meeting. An amendment from Martin McPherson was agreed. Neil Bragg raised the following: *“Ref the previous minutes- We have now had a positive response from Minister of state George Eustace, ref the call for a quinquennial review. He is prepared to meet us and discuss our concerns. I will therefore pull together a group and see if we can get a date for a meeting.”*

ACTION

HK to report on air movement progress for the next meeting.

2. With these changes the minutes were approved and posted to the homegrownplants.org.uk website. Harry Kitchener’s action on air movement was re-minuted for the next meeting. All other action points were covered.

ACTION

NB to liaise with members regarding a meeting with the Minister of State.

3. Topics of interest:

- a. **P&D** WB announced that there will be a new factsheet on Leaf and Bud Nematode (last edition 1997) issued shortly. Jude Bennison is working on application techniques including lance and overhead spray. Problems with caterpillar on Primrose and aphid on Senetti have been noted. LM commented that the Fusarium trials using biocontrols in Column Stocks have been ineffective. OO noted that when they have experienced thrip problems with P.obconica, later potting (after w39) have resulted in the complete resolution of the difficulty.
- b. Andrew Fuller supplied the following notes as he was unable to be present:

“Topics of interest/research work –

- a. Nothing specific to report on ‘my’ area of shelf-life - other than I am awaiting/interested in next week’s report on poinsettia shelf-life and effect of water deficit plants (if any)*
- b. From business perspective (cut tulips- the issue with BVB plus has been interesting one – no doubt Lyndon/George can enlighten more if required)*
- c. Pesticide residues appear to be moving up the agenda with retailers – recent discussion on florists handling flowers which potentially have residues on them – and then there is the neonic debate. I apologise for my ignorance, but I would like to know as a grower/business – what neonics are currently*

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legal, what other control/pesticide options exist for aphid control – and the potential gaps/increased risks to growing without neonics

d. Water disinfection and options. We spoke about this at the last TC meeting. Although I feel I have a lot of information about potential options – slow sand filtration, ozone, chlorine dioxide, UV, peroxide etc – but is there guidance on what system works best for different growing techniques – be it capillary matting/run off vs ebb/flow and recirculated system?

e. Water deficit work – poinsettias, will be discussed, presume by Harry but I would like to run a crop next season using the sensors to control the irrigation events as project continuation

f. I attach an email from a grower who attended the open day, and who is not in a position to use ‘water deficit’ but has highlighted the option of growing cooler – something that has been explored previously but would be good to remind growers is an option. The photos of his plants look great – but in my view may have had wider spacing’s than commercially we tend to operate?

2. AHDB Panel – *I do sit on this now and the next meeting is Mid-April which I promise to attend. I will require clear notes from your meeting today to ensure I relay these properly to the Panel (along with others). From my guest attendance at the last panel meeting it is heavily dominated by the cut flower representatives. I'm not sure of the funding cycle for the Pot & Bedding Plant Centre?*

3. Pot & Bedding Centre work

a. PGR work – my comments from quick visit to last year’s trials on packs – would suggest using single colour nots mixed (in view plot sizes are small) and ideally try and make the plot sizes bigger – not to add cost in terms of recording but when it comes to open days there is possibly more ‘impact’ of the trials. Obviously if space is limited this is not possible, but just my observation

The treatment proposed on plugs – 2 days before transplant, is an interesting one and would hope for some explanation – which specific crops in mind?

b. Are materials (compost/trays etc) being sponsored/provided for and recognised on open days? If not could they be.

c. Like the plan to investigate effect of pH on spray effectiveness

d. Like the idea to have (YouTube) video to feedback results

e. Are there photos of the hellebore – variety and treatment comparison that I can have? Andrew”

c. Automation– no report as Simon Pearson absent.

d. Nutrition– no report

e. Growing Media– Neil Bragg was not present and sent this report:

“Growing media audit scheme: update on the audit scheme P4-responsible sourcing calculator, central to the audit scheme.

The GMA through the HTA are now going ahead and pulling the scheme together as they have found or allocated monies for the scheme to be drawn up, This will probably sit alongside BOPP./ Basically Wayne and the AHDB team are just completing the final edits to the growing media review.

If Wayne is present he will give a better update with regard to publication date. I think it would be good to request extra BPOA. Copies for the technical committee.

Just before Christmas there was a GMA meeting at which it appears the Sec of State Michael Gove wishes to review the industry progress in England towards peat replacement, the review we have is therefore very timely. I think we must be prepared to present our case and stand our ground as well.

As regards substrate work, we used three different mixes for the poinsettia water deficit trial this last season at Neame Lea. The results of monitoring



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will be presented on the 16th at the university of Lincoln Holbeach campus meeting.”

- f. **Grow Save:** Jamie mentioned that there was interest in newly installed Tesla battery systems for green energy storage. He also referred to the large scale use of vertical air movement fans in Canada which he understands can only produce cold spots/ dry spots.
- g. **Pesticides-** no report as Russ was unwell but sent in the following (received after the meeting): *“Re the crop protection update I'm a little alarmed to see Stabilan EAMU was refused, I believed this was approved and we were ok to use it? unless this application is for higher/more applications please could Bolette clarify? Also powdery mildew is something I think we will struggle with this season following the loss of systhane. Trying to push the lunar sensation approval through asap may help. Have we a realistic time frame on this?”*
- h. **News & Views:** Caroline raised the ongoing issue of downy mildew research which shows that the disease can be affected by light level and quality. HK noted that there was old research from Manchester and some from Scandinavia which confirmed the affects of UV light. There was a discussion on the demand for residue testing from certain buyers and the feeling that this may become more widespread. CN identified the potential need for research into the pesticide levels in imported propagation material, what can be found at the end of a crop, the possibility of cross-referencing the levels with plant suppliers and dealing with retailers’ requests that plants be neonicotinoid free. It was suggested that Bolette be invited to the next committee meeting to comment on this issue and Richard Glass (Eurofins) to advise on the use of residue testing.
- i. **PAMS :** FR and JE agree that despite some new findings, there was nothing new to report.
- j. **Propagation:** Mike said that he had found the Grower Talks webinars on choosing media and rooting in oasis, useful.
- k. **BPOA Strategy:** No report as Georgina Key absent.
- l. **Niche & novel crops:** Ollie asked if there was interest in research to use LED lighting to manipulate plant height? His company used white film in cyclamen production and found positive effects on plant speed to maturity; could there be more work on using reflective films to modify quality/ plant speed etc? (Also use of LED in combination with plastic films to attract pests and subsequently control them.) Can we invite Phil Davies to speak to a later meeting to update the committee on current work? It was also mentioned that Carl-Otto Ottosen, Århus, was also working on LED & plant growth responses and might be interested in talking to us about his work.
- m. **PGR:** As Ewan was absent Wayne raised the matter of the EAMU on Terpal which restricts operator exposure as they may increase exposure to uncovered skin with treated plant material. Does the committee believe that the restriction of use to pot& bedding plants/ container plant production would be acceptable in order to facilitate an EAMU application- All agreed and WB said that he would pass on this information to Bolette to find out if this would help. OO also asked if there could be more trials on PGR helpers/ adjuvants with poinsettia culture in 2018—JE to reply.
- n. **Cut Flower Centre:** LM confirmed that the programme for the next 5 years was currently being studied and he was hopeful of receiving approval shortly.
- o. **Poinsettia:** Graeme distributed trials information from American trials with the selections of varieties that they are using at present.
- p. **Spectral filters:** no report from Luke but CN noted that we should consider the comments of OO in relation to the effects on growth of the films used in floor coverings.
- q. **Statistics:** Although this is not a primary object of the committee, SD reported that the discussions with DEFRA and AHDB have continued and they are both unable to help us currently. Any development in the



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ACTION

Invite Bolette Palle Neve and Richard Glass to attend the June meeting. SD

ACTION

Invite Phil Davies to attend a meeting and speak to the committee. SD

ACTION

HK to discover if Carl-Otto would be available to talk to a meeting.

ACTION

WB to ask Bolette to use this idea to further the EAMU application on Terpal.

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understanding of the scale of the industry can only come about with the cooperation of the growers/ members of the BPOA who can assist in cross referencing the statistics that are being collected to make them more meaningful. MS and CS both offered to supply the results (to be anonymised for this study) of their ADAS/DEFRA surveys to the secretary for further research.

6. **New Research work demands:** CN listed out some of the topics discussed:
 - PGR pelargonium/ poinsettia/ osteospermum/ dianthus/ cosmos
 - Water treatment- methods & demonstration
 - Air movement
 - Sensing technology (e.g. Priva)
 - Phalaenopsis 'pot worm' (interesting information on light traps on the Anthura website <https://www.anthura.nl/growing-advise/developments-pot-worm-control/?lang=en>)
 - LED lighting for pot roses and other pot plants.
 - Echinothrips
 - Pesticide Residue testing in ornamentals
 - Plastic films in floor coverings for specific growth effects
 - It was proposed that articles be published in newsletters/ newsbrief emails and the website that focussed on these topics.
5. **Management Committee feedback:** SD gave a brief report of the discussion at the November 30th meeting of the Management Committee: This had been convened, primarily, to discuss the Review action plan which will be presented at the AGM. As the meeting was inquorate, the only action was for Amy Gray to outline the proposals received to date. SD also distributed to TC members, a paper detailing another proposed structure for the committees to manage the time constraints on committee work whilst focussing on the pursuit of an active technical agenda and the goal of greater involvement of a wide range of growers in the regions.
6. Taken out of order under Topics of interest.
7. **Conference and Technical Seminar:** SD reported that this was now complete and published. The programme was well integrated and relevant to current, discussed issues and all members are encouraged to attend and bring their colleagues. Overall, there had been relatively little participation by the committee in formulating the agenda and this needs to be:
 - Discussed at an earlier meeting (June)
 - Given a more specific outline of issues to be considered
 - Overseen by a small organising group
8. **PO Panel Update:** There was none given on this occasion.
9. **Bedding and Pot Plant Centre update:** JE commented on the following issues:
 - Hellebore PGR discussed and JE will liaise with Josef Heuger on treatments that they are currently using.
 - Shelf life of flowers (Hellebore) HK recommends a temperature of 7°C.
 - Poinsettia PGR- Terpal treatments appear promising. Several growers are using low doses of Bonzi to control with predictable results. OO said that he was cautious about using Bonzi late in the crop or on late plantings.
 - There will be more work on PGR on bedding in 2018.
 - Trials on overwintered perennials are being grown on at Smith's Nurseries in Essex.
 - Provisional plans are being made for a study tour visit to the North West during September 2018.
10. **Pesticide Update:** JE has submitted a written report to this meeting.
11. **AHDB KE Workplan update:** WB submitted a written report and briefly ran through its contents.



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ACTION

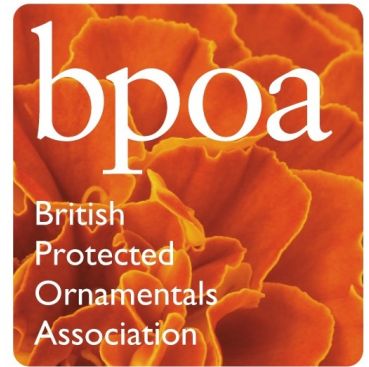
CN to edit list and explore potential project formulation.

12. **AOB** David Smith (Guest-Bulrush Horticulture) said that he would report this meeting to his colleagues.
13. **There was no closed session. The meeting closed at 13:37.**

**The next meeting will be on
Thursday 7th June 2018
at Stoneleigh and part of it will be set aside for a
visit to the BPPC at Baginton Nursery.**

(The final meeting of the year will be Tuesday October 9th Stoneleigh unless an alternative venue is agreed)

**AGM and Spring Conference 2019
Tuesday & Wednesday 15th-16th January**



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1. Thursday June 7th Stoneleigh
Tuesday October 9th Stoneleigh