

**Interim Report on Grant No. BB/C510591/1.**  
**Integration and Co-ordination of UK Research on the Genomics, Genetics and**  
**Improvement of Small grain Cereals (SGC).**  
**Activities 1/01.05-31/12/05**

The small grain cereals network was established to improve communication between researchers in order to improve the dissemination of new techniques, increase the sharing of resources and exploit synergies in research on wheat, barley and oats. In addition work on grasses was included to reflect their close relationship to cultivated cereals. To achieve this, a website was created and a six-monthly newsletter was started. A workshop was held for over 60 scientists and four researchers were awarded financial support for laboratory exchange visits.

1. Steering group.

The steering group was expanded to include two young scientists (Donal O'Sullivan, NIAB and Gordon Simpson, Dundee) and Tina Barsby (Biogemma, Cambridge) to represent the cereal industry.

2. Workshop in Dundee, 9<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> of March 2005

The first workshop funded by the grant was held at Dundee, hosted by Robbie Waugh and colleagues at SCRI.

There were 61 participants, 9 of whom were from industry and 17 young scientists. Five speakers from outside the UK were invited. The topics covered were genetic analysis, gene identification, functional genomics, the use of model plants, GM technology and the importance of public/private sector collaborations in SGC research. A list of workshop attendees and the workshop programme are attached.

3. Newsletter

The first six monthly newsletter introduced members to the SGC project and informed them about its activities, including exchange visits, the workshop and the availability of detailed information on current SGC research on the website. Information was also provided on the Defra BRAC T cereal transformation project and on the WGIN TILLING platform for wheat. Relevant scientific meetings were noted and projects funded under the EU FP6 framework were noted. A copy of the newsletter is attached. The second newsletter will be published early in the new year.

4. Website

The website (<http://www.smallgraincereals.org>) aims to keep researchers up to date on meetings and important contacts within the field and provides an in-depth coverage of SGC meetings as well as information on the how to apply for participation in SRG funded activities. The site was established in 2005 and will be expanded in 2006.

### 5. Exchange visits

Four exchange visits with the purpose of learning new techniques took place in 2005. For details see the table below:

Participating researcher	Institute visited	Date of visit	Purpose of visit
Dr. Hai-Chun Jing, Postdoc at RRes	JIC, Norwich	08/05/2005 to 20/05/2005	To learn a new technique (NSB profiling) and to generate genotypic diversity data on a <i>Monococcum sp.</i>
Anne Medhurst, student at the University of Nottingham	SCRI, Dundee	18 days in Sept/Oct 2005	To learn a new technique (Licor gel system for mutation screening) and to perform screening and gene mapping on barley
Helen Appleyard, student at NIAB, Cambridge	JIC, Norwich	03/10/2005 to 14/10/2005	To learn several new research and data analysis techniques (e.g. SSCP, Paragon EMS mutant population creation)
Dr. Kostya Kanyuka, scientist at RRes	SCRI, Dundee	30/11/2005 to 02/12/2005	To learn a new technique (virus-induced gene silencing)

A brief notice was placed in the December 2005 issue of GARNish (“would you like to learn about cereals”) inviting applications from scientists currently working with *Arabidopsis* to visit cereal laboratories for training.

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