

FACEY CONNECT

LEADING, INSPIRING, SUPPORTING AND CHALLENGING
OUR LOCAL FARMING COMMUNITY



SUMMER 2023



**DUMBLEYUNG
WATERSMART
FARMS
DESALINATION
PROJECT**

**WAARC:
PIONEERING A NEW
ERA IN WA AG**

**2023 PHOTO
COMPETITION
WINNERS**

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The Facey Group would like to acknowledge and thank our valued sponsors Agrimaster, Australian Grain Technologies, AWI, Bailiwick Legal, Carbon Sync, CRISP Wireless, CSBP, Elders Insurance, Elders Wickepin, Ewen Rural Supplies, Farm Weekly, FMC, Origo.Farm, Planfarm, and Tincurrin Rural Services.

A Note from the CEO

Welcome to the final newsletter for 2023.

This year has been of mixed fortune for our members, with uncertainty around sheep prices, and one of the earliest finishes for many years for some. Overall, whilst yields are down slightly, commodity prices are generally up. I believe the ability to extract productivity in such a variable year has been due to the innovation of our growers and their curiosity where they challenge their thinking continuously. This continual improvement approach to farm business management, productivity, and sustainability will continue to drive world-class outcomes.

This year has been an extremely productive year for Facey Group. Thanks to the committee; its leadership and former CEO, Dr Kelly Pearce – whose hallmark will be felt for some time – and most importantly, the staff that diligently make the organisation tick.

The group has now finished a full year with a larger staff capacity; has more project income than ever, and is cementing itself as a major grower group earning the respect of the grower group community for its excellence, yet proudly still community and grower focused.

There are so many highlights for Facey Group this year. The projects for next year are plentiful, and well collaborated with other groups and organisations. We have several new major projects that we are working on, which are locally relevant and will build resilience into the organisation. The GRDC Risk-WiSe projects are multi-state, multi-grower group, multi-faceted trials and will be a major focus of the group over the next 5 years. Ultimately, it is about helping growers make the best decisions for the seasons that present themselves, which we know is a complex process.

On behalf of the staff and the Facey Group Committee, I wish you all a very Merry Christmas, filled with love and laughter, and a prosperous, exciting New Year ahead. I look forward to meeting you throughout the year to discuss how Facey Group can continue to be a vital cog in your business and community.



Chris Wyhoon, Facey Group Chief Executive Officer

All the Staff & Committee at Facey Group would like to
wish everyone a very

Merry Christmas
& a Safe & Prosperous New Year!

Please note, our office will be CLOSED from
22 DECEMBER 2023 & reopen on
2 JANUARY 2024



AgREC Update

By Claire Wilcocks, Kaitlyn Anderson & Tina Astbury - Facey Group AGREC Team

Like most farmers in our region, Facey Group has been busy with harvest. In the absence of large machinery and with our drive to get accurate, relevant data for our members, the AGREC team has been busy getting hand-cut grain harvest yields from our trials.



This year we will harvest and process over 200 grain samples ready for quality testing by our valued sponsor, CBH. We have been impressed by the yield on many of the trials and look forward to revealing how the trials have gone at our annual Trials Review Event, to be held in March 2024.

Our AGREC team was newly formed in 2023 with Tina Astbury, Senior Project Coordinator, and Kaitlyn Anderson, and Claire Willcocks, both Agricultural Research & Extension Coordinators, joining Facey Group. This year has been busy, and we are excited to see a full season to completion. A field trial involves careful research and planning, then boots-on-the-ground effort to deliver, and the AGREC team has worked hard to get the job done!

Facey Group Harvest Conversations



Picture: Ken Martin harvesting and catching up with Facey Group's Tina Astbury recently.

In preparation for 2024, the Facey Group Team is reaching out to all our members to have a chat.

We have a range of questions, some we must ask for various projects, and others seeking your input and advice about where the Facey Group is headed.

We understand this is a busy time of year, so we will try to make this as painless and efficient as possible.

We will text or call over the next few weeks and appreciate all members who take the time to assist us with our quest for relevant information and feedback.

Your continued support ensures Facey Group can continue to deliver value to its members.

AgREC Update Cont.

Spring Cover Crop

The Spring Cover Crop project is a part of RiskWi\$e, a National Risk Management Initiative. It is a 5-year initiative by GRDC and CSIRO that will run from 2023 to 2028. This project aims to investigate if spring-sown leguminous summer crops will result in higher winter crop yields and improved soil N compared to a fallow period over summer in the local Wickiepin region. This trial will provide further understanding of how summer cover crops can benefit soil health and function and what the consequences may be for the growth and yields of subsequent winter crops.

The trial was sown on the 3rd of October and had minimal rain weeks following seeding. The following treatments have been established.

Number	Crop Variety	Treatment
1	Cowpea <u>LabLab</u>	Multispecies nitrogen fixing
2	Sudan Grass Sunflower	Non-nitrogen fixing
3	Cowpea	Nitrogen mono species
4	Cowpea Sudan Grass	50% Nitrogen fixing 50% not nitrogen fixing
5	Control	Following farmer practice - Sprayed out September 2023
6	Summer Mix	Multispecies crop
7	<u>LabLab</u>	Nitrogen mono species
8	<u>Sunhemp</u>	Nitrogen mono species

We are extremely impressed with the germination of the crop considering the hot and dry conditions that the site has experienced. All treatments have germinated well, and the team will continue to monitor survival rates over the summer period.

We have been lucky enough to work with a group of knowledgeable farmers and experts on the project and have some key tips for establishing spring-sown cover crops.

Key tips for establishing spring-sown cover crops:

- Don't be afraid to sow deep and chase soil moisture.
- Increase tyne spacing, which may involve removing tynes from the seeder.
- Recommended seeding rate for varieties should be evaluated. Many recommendations seem quite high and could be reduced to allow for the dry WA conditions.



Picture: Treatment 2, Sunflowers and Sudan Grass seeded at 8.5kg/ha

Long Coleoptile Trial Harvest

The AgREC team harvested the Long Coleoptile Trial on the 16th of November. The contracted harvest team from Kalyx also arrived to harvest the site on the 25th of November. This CSIRO project is funded through the Federal Government's Future Drought Fund and looks at the advantages of sowing at depth with a range of wheat varieties, legumes, and oats.

AgREC Update Cont.

Facey Group found that during plant establishment wheat varieties that are bred for a longer coleoptile length had a 70-80% emergence when sown at depth (120mm) compared to more typical sowing depths of 40mm. However, now we have come to harvest the differences in yield are less pronounced. The yield of Yipti, Valient, Cutlass, Mace18, and even Sceptre to some extent, performed better at depth. Only a few varieties were better when sown shallow, such as Duel. Perhaps the deeper root system of the deep-sown varieties allowed the plants better access to deeper moisture as the season began drying off.

This harvest data is still to be statistically analysed and the grain will be submitted to CBH for quality testing. We look forward to working with CSIRO scientist and Project Lead, Dr Sarah Rich, to share the main findings from this project at our 2024 Trials Presentation Event.



Picture: Kalyx harvesting the Long Coleoptile site on the 25th of November.

Natural Capital Accounting Field Day

For producers in the Facey Group region to be on the front foot regarding upcoming opportunities in Natural Capital Accounting, Chris Wyhoon, CEO, Claire Willcocks, AGREC and Tina Astbury, Senior Project Coordinator attended a Natural Capital Accounting Field Day at Muresk on Wednesday, 22nd of November. This event was hosted by WA Regenerative Livestock Producers, Landcare Farming and Perth NRM. The process of natural capital accounting followed the guidelines outlined by the not-for-profit organisation, Accounting for Nature (AfN). This group has worked with the Wentworth Group of scientists who will also be involved in shaping the federal framework.

Assessing, quantifying and potentially monetising natural systems in a systematic way to preserve and improve them is a current focus of the United Nations ([System of Environmental Economic Accounting](#)). The Australian Federal Government is working within the UN framework to establish a common national approach to Environmental-Economic Accounting (<https://eea.environment.gov.au>), which aims to value in monetary terms, improvements in natural capital that are fundamental to sustainable agricultural systems, such as soil, trees, water, landscape health and biodiversity.

AgREC Update Cont.

The potential monetisation of natural capital, where agrifood systems will reward farms that measure, monitor and improve natural capital, is estimated to be worth over \$6 trillion in Australia. Establishing a balance sheet for non-cash assets facilitates external investment to reward landholders.

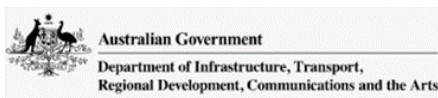
Current processes for AfN through this organisation look at various environmental factors separately and use a range of methods, many of which are freely available through their website, to quantify vegetation, soil, water, or even biodiversity. Once field data is collected in a standardised way this information generates an 'Econd' score from 0-100, reflecting a degraded environment or one in a completely natural state. Tracking 'Econd' scores across several years can support environmental projects, either on-farm or in public areas, to ensure that the environmental project is working towards the improvement of the natural environment.

Such changes are slow and can be subtle so the rigor of a standardised process for monitoring the environment and quantifying changes can assure other stakeholders that the project is achieving suitable results. These environmental accounting efforts can be independently certified or verified through AfN and reported to the public.

The capacity to demonstrate environmental stewardship will support producers in the future through better access to finance and markets. It will support producers to maintain a social licence in a society that is becoming increasingly concerned about our natural environment. It will also help producers by ensuring that the environmental projects they are conducting have an appreciable, measurable improvement on the environment. This improves our capacity to farm for future generations.



Picture: Claire Willcocks, Facey Group AGREC, at the Natural Capital Accounting Field Day.



On Farm Connectivity Program

The Australian Government's On-Farm Connectivity Program is providing \$30 million over 2 years to enable primary producers in agriculture, forestry and/or fisheries to take advantage of connected machinery and sensor technology.

The objectives of the program are to:

- Extend digital connectivity and enable Primary Producers to take advantage of advanced farming technology.
- Enhance a Primary Producer's ability to implement digital agribusiness solutions through improved connectivity.
- Capitalise on the agricultural sector's productivity and growth.
- Support access to new communications equipment and services by offsetting some of the cost.

The Regional Tech Hub of the National Farmers Federation has a webinar (<https://regionaltechhub.org.au/home/on-farm-connectivity-program/>) that will support producers to understand if they are eligible for funding. Producers must not be hobby farmers and have an average annual gross income between \$40,000 and \$2 million (i.e. total revenue before expenses and tax) over 3 previous full financial years. The list of eligible suppliers and other key documents is listed here (<https://business.gov.au/grants-and-programs/on-farm-connectivity-program#key-documents>).

The Regional Tech Hub of the National Farmers Federation also has free one-on-one advice regarding technology and connectivity solutions that are eligible for this funding. They suggest starting with the problems that worry you or keep you up at night. They have fact sheets, guides, and case studies on their website. Reach out to them at 1300 081 029 or visit <https://regionaltechhub.org.au>.

AgREC Update Cont.

Mouse Surveillance Project

The final run of the Farmanco, GRDC and CSIRO Mouse Surveillance Project was completed in October. This last observation trip saw low levels of mouse activity across the region and the other sites that were monitored over the WA grain belt. The low activity could be a result of a combination of events such as effective baiting strategies across the year in conjunction with seasonal and conditional events. Despite the drop-in activity this season, growers are urged to keep an eye out for signs of mice activity over the summer period, with the predicted yields around certain areas, there will likely be high availability of feed from grain loss while moisture and shelter will be other factors to consider too.

From lovely Autumn weather to cold wet winter days, the AGREC team were out in the field collecting data to detect mouse activity. Over the year, moderate to low activity from mice was identified which is great news, and baiting strategies are prompt and effective in mitigating the damage that could be caused by mice. Facey Group would like to thank all host farmers for their participation in the 2023 Mouse Surveillance Project. We would also like to thank GRDC, CSIRO and Farmanco for the opportunity to participate in the project. This was an important project for growers so that prompt responses to mice activity could be implemented.

Confinement Feeding - Boost Crop Area and Flock Health

There is much exploration happening into confinement feeding systems. AgPro Management “Which Set Up?” commenced in 2022 and addresses some of the setup and management concerns farmers face when implementing a system. AgPro Management PDS host, Mark Zadow, based in Kojonup, WA runs a small paddock confinement system. Paddocks are roughly 500 square meters and hold 500 sheep each. Mark has seen more late and false breaks with more summer rainfall, which has driven him to adopt confinement-feeding ewes before lambing. While confinement feeding has allowed Mark to establish better feed in lambing paddocks, it has also allowed him to increase his cropping area from 20% to 45%.

Mark enforces that confinement feeding systems do not need to be complicated or fancy and suggests keeping it simple. You can read the full article on Mark Zadow’s confinement feeding setup [HERE](#).

Facey Group continues to analysing the data from this year’s Confinement Feeding and Deferred Grazing Project. Preliminary results show promising outcomes from confinement feeding with decreased ewe deaths and increased pasture availability during lambing.



Picture: Confinement Feeding set up at Tom Wittwer’s property.

And that’s a wrap! The AGREC team would like to wish all our members and sponsors a wonderful festive season, and we look forward to bringing you all the results from our trials in the new year. Once again, thank you to all our trial host growers for your support and guidance.

Member NEWS

By Claire Wilcocks - Facey Group AGREC



Visit to the Dumbleyung WaterSmart Farms Desalination Project

At the end of October, Facey Group's Tina Astbury, Senior Project Coordinator, and Claire Willcocks, Agricultural Research & Extension Coordinator, along with Shire of Wickepin's Acting Chief Executive Officer, Tim Clynch and Community Events Development Officer, Olivia Melville-Mann, attended a site visit and presentation by Dr. Richard George, a Senior Principal Research Scientist at DPIRD at the Dumbleyung Desalination Project. This project is funded through the State Government's WaterSmart Farm program, which is delivered through a partnership between the Shire of Dumbleyung, DPRID, Murdoch University, and the Water Corporation.

There has been a dramatic decline in rainfall over 50-60 years in the Wheatbelt, making it increasingly important to discover other ways of sourcing water. The desalination plant uses reverse osmosis to produce 'clean' non-potable water. The supply of water is being pumped from an existing saline-producing bore by a solar-powered pump and the hypersaline 'rejected' water is being pumped to an evaporation dam. This evaporation dam is regularly monitored to ensure there is no impact on the surrounding native vegetation.

The 'clean' water produced from the desal process is stored in tanks and can be used for community purposes such as fire control or town watering. The project aims to boost drought resilience by ensuring water availability does not become a constraint to future population and economic growth in the Wheatbelt. This project prototype is being used to demonstrate the economic and environmental cost and benefits of desalination of grey water. If successful, such desalination plants may provide a suitable secondary water source for a range of isolated towns and communities.



Picture: Prototype reverse osmosis desalination plant operating in Dumbleyung townsite.

Member NEWS Cont.



Picture: Dr. Richard George a Senior Principal Research Scientist answering questions regarding the prototype plant's operation and waste discharge processes.

Effectively harnessing water resources, both on-farm and within communities, is part of effective land stewardship. DPIRD has provided the following two resources to support landholders and other stakeholders to better understand the water resources available to them.

Surface Water and Dams Interactive Map:

DPIRD produces this interactive map as a guide to locating potential sites for new farm dams. It also provides information to help determine where existing dams may be at risk from dryland salinity. Access this map [HERE](#).

Producers may also find this interactive [groundwater and salinity map](#) provides an interesting overview of groundwater trends and risks of dryland salinity for their farms and surrounds.

Member NEWS

WAARC: Pioneering a New Era in Western Australian Agriculture

Since her departure from the Facey Group, Dr Kelly Pearce has settled into her new role as Director of the Western Australian Agricultural Research Collaboration (WAARC). Kelly hit the ground running, implementing new initiatives and projects through WAARC so we reached out to her for an update on what's been keeping her busy!



Stepping into the Director role at the Western Australian Agricultural Research Collaboration (WAARC) this past August has been an all-hands-on-deck experience. WAARC represents a coalition of key partners - public universities, CSIRO, Grower Group Alliance, and DPIRD - united in advancing agricultural R&D in Western Australia. Our core mission is to work with Research and Development Corporations (RDCs) and various investors to promote innovative, collaborative agricultural projects.

In just a brief period, WAARC has kick-started several initiatives spanning various agricultural areas. Our projects range from boosting lupin disease resistance to innovative rotations of

legumes and leveraging by-products from cotton and horticulture to enhance the northern beef industry. We're committed to amplifying R&D in Northern WA, a region with a lot of untapped potential. Integral to our approach is the requirement that each project is a collaborative effort involving at least three partners, ensuring multidisciplinary solutions. I'm also placing a strong emphasis on developing mechanisms for more effective co-design between academia and grower groups. Grower groups are crucial in aligning research with practical agricultural needs.

A key element of our strategy is the WAARC Postgraduate Program, which is set to cultivate a new generation of agricultural innovators and researchers, thereby expanding R&D capacity in the state. We're offering competitive PhD scholarships that rival industry graduate salaries, attracting a broad spectrum of disciplines, not limited to agricultural science. If you know someone considering a career in research or pursuing a PhD, I encourage you to reach out. We're excited about creating internship opportunities and collaborations between students and grower groups, fostering strong connections that will enrich both academia and the agricultural community.

As Director, my focus is to build upon our initial progress and continue propelling forward-thinking agricultural research. WAARC is more than a funding body; we're here to create lasting growth and lead ground-breaking research in the agricultural sector.

Dr. Kelly Pearce
Director
WAARC

Future Drought Fund - SW Drought HUB

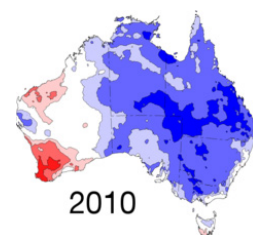
By Kaitlyn Anderson - Facey Group AGREC

Have you got a plan?



South-West WA
Drought Resilience Adopter
and Innovation Hub

Facey Group members and growers are familiar with tough seasons in the Wheatbelt. For example, the region saw a poor season in 2010 and 2019 with a decile 1 rainfall record, as per the [BOM mapping](#). So, let's reflect on some information from those times to refresh what we already know.



A common theme in every report is early decision-making! Being proactive and making decisions early is strongly recommended. As summer arrives, instead of praying to the rain gods, let's be proactive and be prepared for a potential dry season.

Here are some great resources to refresh what can be done.

Managing Sheep In Dry Seasons

Ashley Herbert, a Farm Management Consultant with Agrarian Management gives insights into having a clear plan and lists some key dates developed through 'The Sheep's Back' producer network through the Australian Wool Industry. Ashley highlights, it's normal to feel panic or stress when things don't go according to plan. However, it's important to move past the panic and make logical decisions instead of emotional ones. If you find yourself getting stuck in the panic stage don't hesitate to ask for help. The team at the Facey Group is more than happy to provide support and point you to some information that might be able to help.

Maintenance feeding in confinement

	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Total
Ewees (hd)	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
% Ration	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
g/hd/d	519	519	519	519	519	519	519	519	519	519	519	519
Tonnes	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	17 tonnes
Rams	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
% Ration	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
g/hd/d	630	630	630	630	630	630	630	630	630	630	630	630
Tonnes	0.026	0.026	0.026	0.026	0.026	0.026	0.026	0.026	0.026	0.026	0.026	0.31 tonnes
kg/hd month	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16
Cumulative tonnes	2	3	5	8	8	10	11	13	14	16	17	17 tonnes
Cumulative kg/hd	10	31	47	62	78	94	109	125	140	156	172	172 kg/hd
Cumulative cost	\$654	\$1,109	\$1,663	\$2,217	\$2,772	\$3,326	\$3,881	\$4,435	\$4,989	\$5,544	\$6,098	\$60 net

Lupins - \$350/t
Ewe - 7.0 MJ ME/hd/d
Ram - 8.5 MJ ME/hd/d



Ashley Herbert's full presentation on 'Managing Sheep in a Dry Season' can be found [here](#). Although this presentation is from 2017, we feel it is still incredibly relevant with some great information. You can also source more up-to-date economic numbers in the latest [Livestock Management in 2023-2024](#) document recently published by DPIRD.

Facey Group Regional Node Update Cont.

Have you got a plan?

The NSW Drought Hub has put together a 3 step [Livestock Drought Plan Template](#).

A written drought plan can remind you of what you need to do and when you need to do it. Looking ahead and focusing on the factors you can change, or influence, is an essential key to managing dry times effectively. Planning helps you to spot opportunities that otherwise could be easily missed and take proactive action to limit your losses.

Step 1

Livestock on hand Date: _____

Class of stock	On hand	Value (\$)	To sell	Sale date	Keep and feed	Feed cost (\$)
Woolsheds						
Cows and calves						
Dry cows						
Bulls						
Woolshed lambing ewes						
Woolshed lambing ewes						
1-2 year old ewes						
3-4 year old ewes						
Wethers						
Other						
Total cattle						
Total sheep						
Total other						

Fodder on hand

Date	Fodder	Quantity	Value

Water

Estimated total available water	Mk/Yr

Stock water requirement per day for current stock numbers: _____ Mk/day @ _____

Days of stock water available: _____ Days

Step 2

Fodder on hand will last until: _____

Water available will last until: _____

Set trigger points

Trigger points are predetermined points where a decision must be made.

Estimate of trigger points include:

- Water available to purchase feed will be less than _____
- Fodder requirements exceed supply
- Fodder costs reach a certain point
- Fodder available to purchase feed will be less than _____
- Stocking a field will no longer be crop or pasture efficient

Action	Planned date	Number of progress	Completed
1. Check water requirement			<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Check water availability			<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Check water cost			<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Check water quality			<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Check water availability			<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Check water cost			<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Check water quality			<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Check water availability			<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Check water cost			<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Check water quality			<input type="checkbox"/>

Financial resources:

Know your numbers. Your financial position will be a major determining factor regarding the options you have available and the decisions you need to make. Keep financial records up to date on your regular expenses and how they impact on overall financial position and compare a 12 month cash flow projection to forecast the impact of the drought on your financial situation. Rural financial counsellors provide free and confidential assistance with helping you assess your financial position.

Step 3

Implement your plan

Review and act on the critical dates you have identified. Continue to stay informed.

At each point look for support advice and information through these contacts:

- NSW Drought Hub
- Local and National Research Officers and Scientists staff
- Livestock agents
- Rural financial counsellors

Remember to look after your most important asset - you and your people!

It is essential to take other people into account so that you can all agree when to continue to monitor your business performance and adjust and make decisions in a timely manner as the season progresses.

Use your own resources to keep yourself informed of the most recent regional news on the regular news and information sites. Take proactive steps to actively manage stress and keep your mental health.

Consider how you might be able to have a break. Building and using support networks in your community will mean you have someone to help you through the most difficult times.

Seeking help when you need it from various support services will see you in the best shape possible to minimise losses and recover quickly when things calm.

For more information, advice and help:

NSW Drought Hub
www.nswdrought.com.au
 1800 081 000

Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines
www.aawsg.com.au

We acknowledge being in drought is a highly stressful and emotional situation. It is best to seek support from your local unit being as you manage concerning decisions on the farm and at home. Talking to someone can help ease some of your concerns.

Please consider talking to your GP or other mental health professional, who will be able to provide you with strategies to help you cope.


If you're concerned about your own or someone else's mental health, you can contact:

NSW Mental Health Line
 1800 087 087 for advice
 13 14 77

Support Unit
 1800 234 626
 9:00am-5:00pm AEST

National Centre for Farmer Health
 1800 087 087

Rural Aboriginal Mental Health Program
 1800 087 087



Cropping Systems in Dry Seasons



To reduce the risk of a dry season in cropping systems there are many strategies that farmers can utilise such as early and deep sowing. Facey Group continues to explore these practices with leading research such as the [Long Coleoptile and Deep Sowing Project](#) in partnership with CSIRO this year. In 2019 GRDC, as a part of the Regional Cropping Solutions Network Initiative released “[Maximising Crop Potential in Drying Environment](#)” booklet to provide WA producers with information on how to improve cropping establishment in drying profiles and different soil types. The booklet covers, sowing depth, fertiliser strategies, time of sowing, row spacing, long coleoptiles, water-repellent soils and seeding systems.

Dry Season Responses - Drought Hub Podcast

The Grower Group Alliance’s South-West WA Drought Resilience Adoption and Innovation Hub is dedicated to sharing information that supports growers in preparing for, and responding to, dry seasons. In this podcast series, hear from growers and industry experts on managing dry seasons. These range from early planning to tactical decision-making as the season changes throughout the year, and then setting up for the following season. We have included links to the first three episodes below, and all episodes are available [here](#).



Facey Group Regional Node Update Cont.

Upcoming Grants

Helping Regional Communities Prepare for Drought Initiative – Small Network Grants

Small Network Grants are now available to community organisations in regional and rural Australia to develop and deliver one-off events or initiatives to strengthen community networks and capabilities that build drought preparedness.

Through this initiative, with the support of the Australian Government, we are investing in the future by enabling agriculture-dependent communities to identify and act on their drought preparedness priorities at a grassroots level and in ways that best suit their communities.

The Small Network Grants will fund networks, community events, training initiatives, community infrastructure, development, and learning initiatives that assist local people and communities in strengthening social capital and capability to prepare for future droughts.

Two streams of grants are available via two rounds:

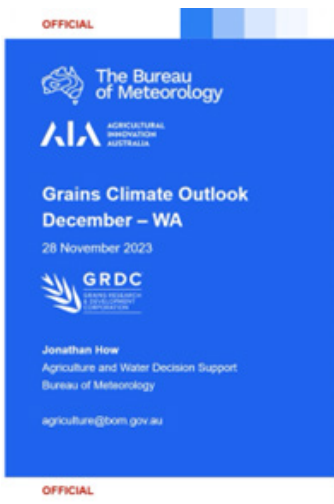
- Up to a maximum of \$20,000; or
- Up to a maximum of \$50,000 (dependent on location).

Round one has now closed, but round two will open on the 13th of February.

<https://frrr.org.au/funding/disaster-resilience-and-climate-solutions/small-networks-grants/>



BOM Grains Climate Outlook



Trust in reliable and relevant weather data continues to be a concern for local farmers. The Bureau of Meteorology has started to tackle these concerns by providing monthly weather updates for the grain-growing region of Western Australia through its YouTube channel.

This monthly review looks back at the month that was to assess the accuracy of the forecast while giving predictions out to March 2024 to help support on-farm decisions. They are open to feedback about the format of this report. Feel free to email them at - agriculture@bom.gov.au

The December outlook is now available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3jREZzP2lPQ>



Current Season Resources
2023 season: Information for WA farmers



Need some support?

There is always some who can help.

Rural Aid – 1300 327 624

Rural West – 1800 612 004

Regional Men's Health - (08) 6314 1436

Innovation Update

By Maree Dougall - Facey Group Innovation Coordinator

Livestock water testing service offered by Narrogin's Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development Office



Narrogin's Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) offers livestock water testing services to ensure quality drinking water in summer. Different species and classes of livestock vary in salinity tolerance, making regular water quality assessment crucial. Producers should check water sources regularly for any changes. Visit [DPIRD's Water quality for livestock webpage](#) for more details.

At Narrogin's DPIRD office, costs for testing 3 water samples for pH and salinity is \$19.36. Contact the Narrogin DPIRD office on +61 9881 0222 for more details.

When collecting water samples, gather from both the surface and bottom of dams to account for denser salt settling at the bottom.

Note: Narrogin DPIRD's office will be closed for Christmas from Friday 22 December 2023 to Monday 8 January 2024.

If you suspect that livestock are being poisoned by blue-green algae, isolate the livestock from the contaminated water and mail water samples to the department's [Diagnostic Laboratory Services – Animal Pathology](#) in South Perth for microscopic identification. For more information, refer to [DPIRD's Managing blue-green algae](#) on farms in WA and [Sampling procedure for toxic algae](#) webpages.

If you have any other concerns regarding the health of your livestock, call your private veterinarian or [DPIRD field veterinary officer](#). Disease-related concerns can be phoned to the Emergency Animal Disease hotline on 1800 675 888.

A broad range of seasonally relevant information is also available on [DPIRD's Season 2023](#) webpages.

2024 WA Crop Sowing Guide

The Crop Sowing Guide for Western Australia aims to provide information to support growers with decisions on the best choice of variety for each of the major crops for the upcoming season. Some management tips for cereals are also provided. The pulse section includes an 'agronomy and herbicide guide' to support the management of these high-value crops. Variety snapshots (or quick references) are included for wheat, barley and oats.

View the Sowing Guide [HERE](#)



Department of
**Primary Industries and
Regional Development**

Media release

8 November 2023

Summer skeleton weed campaign gets underway

The 2023 summer search campaign for the plant pest skeleton weed is set to kick off across Western Australia's grain growing region.

The annual campaign involves paddock searches covering more than 800 properties across more than 400,000 hectares.

The declared weed – with its striking yellow flower and skeleton-like stems – competes with crops for nitrogen and soil moisture, impacting yields and quality.

The summer searching program is led by the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) in collaboration with seven Local Action Groups.

DPIRD project manager Martin Atwell said the program focused on known infested properties and would be complemented by additional targeted surveillance, aimed at finding new infestations that landholders may not be aware of.

"The targeted surveillance program will look to search 46,000 hectares, through a combination of ground searching and drones," Mr Atwell said.

"Landholders in targeted areas will be able to participate in surveillance but we remind all farmers to be vigilant.

"Early detection of skeleton weed provides growers with much better scope for eradication.

"Harvest is a good time to be on the lookout for this weed. Skeleton weed has upright and usually leafless stems, which gives the appearance of the skeleton of a plant.

"It is most recognisable when flowering during summer and autumn, when it has distinctive bright yellow daisy flowers."

The Skeleton Weed Program's activities are funded by growers through the Grains, Seeds and Hay Industry Funding Scheme.

Initiatives include the skeleton weed management guide, which has been recently updated to give growers the latest information to manage and eradicate skeleton weed infestations on their properties.

Funds are also directed to research investments to help reduce overall skeleton weed infestations, including pollen monitoring and an ongoing initiative examining biocontrol options.

The program's work also includes projects on herbicide trials, precision mapping and historical data analysis.

For more information on the Skeleton Weed Program, including the management guide and the annual report, visit www.agric.wa.gov.au/skeletonweed.

Any suspect skeleton weed plants should be reported to DPIRD using the MyPestGuide Reporter app or the department's Pest and Disease Information Service on (08) 9368 3080 or padis@dpiird.wa.gov.au.

Picture captions: *Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development biosecurity officers Tequita Macdonald and Kelly Manning, with skeleton weed plants.*

Media contacts:

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Jodie Thomson/Megan Broad, media liaison

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Industry NEWS

App helps optimise harvest profitability

A simple \$22 app can save grain growers tens of thousands of dollars each year by optimising the efficiency and productivity of all makes and models of combine harvesters.

HarvestCalc quickly measures grain loss and determines its economic impact based on crop yield, prices, operating speed and operating costs. Operators can use this information to adjust and test the threshing and separation settings on their combine harvester.

HarvestCalc is said to offer the ability to monitor grain loss, calculate its economic impact and then “tweak” the settings of the combine harvester.

Read full article [HERE](#)

WA AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH COLLABORATION: Grains projects get off the ground for research collaboration

The five-year Lupin Disease Resistance and four-year Harvestable Annual Legume Options (HALO) projects are the first to be announced under the Collaboration’s Grains Transformation program.

Grains Transformation is one of six key program themes developed by the Collaboration, which also include Northern Agriculture, Climate Resilience, Agricultural Technologies, Aboriginal Participation, and Capacity Building and Extension.

Lupin Disease Resistance is focused on boosting lupin resistance to its four major diseases, while the HALO project is exploring harvestable annual legumes cultivars that can be used in rotation to reduce synthetic nitrogen fertilisers.

Read the full media release [HERE](#)

Electric weed control trials create a buzz

Australian-first trials of a device that uses electricity to kill weeds are yielding promising results, particularly for combating herbicide-resistant weeds.

The project, now in its second year, aims to assist farmers and community land managers develop sustainable, non-chemical weed control solutions.

The Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) is leading the project in association with AGXTEND, a brand of CNH Industrial, testing the XPower machine, powered by Zasso™, under Australian conditions.

Read full Media Release [HERE](#)

Live sheep export ban could cost WA economy \$128m

There are fears the planned phase out of live sheep exports could cost the West Australian economy between \$39 million and \$128 million over 20 years. A report commissioned by the North Eastern Wheatbelt Region of Councils (NEWROC), which represents seven local government areas, has been released to coincide with a visit by a delegation of councillors to Canberra.

“We’re meeting with members of parliament on all sides so that we can share the study and the impact of this policy,” NEWROC representative Caroline Robinson, who is also a sheep exporter, told AAP.

Read full article [HERE](#)

WA electronic tag discount scheme extended

WESTERN Australia’s Tag Incentive Payment scheme, which offers sheep and goat electronic identification (eID) tags to producers at a discounted rate, has been extended until the end of next year.

Over 2.2 million sky blue eID tags for sheep and goats born in 2023 have been sold under the WA government’s \$1.8 million Tag Incentive Payment scheme, which offers a 75 cent discount per tag.

The scheme, which aims to help producers adapt to the new eID requirements, has now be extended to black eID tags sold up until 31 December 2024.

The WA government has also announced new funding available to sheep and goat supply chain operators, to assist them in transitioning to the national eID system.

Read the full article [HERE](#)

Striking the balance of strategic stock management

Managing livestock in the variable environment of the NSW rangelands presents unique challenges for producers. One of the greatest hurdles is making strategic decisions about how and when to destock, especially in the lead-up to dry periods.

The Rangelands Living Skin (RLS) project – led by the NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI) and funded by MLA – maps how the on-property strategies of producers benefit soil, plants, animals and people.

Here, several of the core RLS producers share how they approach strategic stock management as a critical part of maintaining landscape health and business profitability. [Read more HERE](#)

Industry NEWS Cont.

Funding boost paves way for better rural roads

The National Farmers' Federation has welcomed news the Federal Government will double the Roads to Recovery funding program, providing a much needed shot in the arm to dilapidated regional roads.

Minister Catherine King said the Government would gradually increase funding for the Roads to Recovery program from \$500 million to a \$1 billion program over the next four years.

NFF President David Jochinke said this increased funding would provide key resources to local government to maintain local road networks.

Read full article [HERE](#)

Grower groups take affirmative action on spray drift

Australia's peak national grain producer groups are calling for increased vigilance on spray drift prevention to safeguard the industry's high productivity and strong performance.

With summer weed spraying coming into focus, Grain Producers Australia and GrainGrowers have urged members to brush up on best practice and make use of available resources. GrainGrowers will soon launch a grower-focussed online hub, which seeks to provide growers with easy access to up-to-date resources on spray drift management, including a new video training series.

GrainGrowers CEO Shona Gawel said the grains industry was committed to meeting the challenge and minimising issues by ensuring best practice is always followed.

Read full article [HERE](#)

Visitors to farms

A visit by family or friends to your working farm can be a welcome break for many, but it's also important to remember that many farms continue to operate as workplaces.

Remind visitors to stay clear of farm vehicles and equipment, and keep an eye on children, family and friends, especially near dams, silos, stockyards and chemical stores. Never allow children under 16 to operate or be carried as passengers on adult-sized quad bikes.

More information can be found [HERE](#)

MLA - Sheep and lamb market 2023: the year in review

The sheep and lamb industry faced unprecedented challenges during 2023 and market confidence was shaken at various points, creating substantial movements in indicator pricing throughout the year. The market outlook is heavily impacted by producer confidence, weather forecasts and prices. In previous years, favourable weather conditions had contributed to record high prices as producers expressed confidence in the market.

Read full report [HERE](#)



GRDC are again delivering their National Grower Network 'Summer Sesh Forums' in 2024. These forums provide a perfect opportunity for those involved in the grains industry to discuss constraints affecting grower productivity & profitability and will identify opportunities for local GRDC research, development & extension support.

The Summer Sesh events will be held from 4pm to 7pm on the following dates and locations:

- January 9, Shelter Brewing Co, 11 Foreshore Parade, Busselton
- January 16, Bremer Bay Sports Club, 142 Frantom Way, Bremer Bay
- January 23, Dunsborough Country Club, 40 Gifford Road, Dunsborough

For more information or to register, please head over to <https://grdc.com.au/events/list?region=west>

Some incredible photos submitted to our 2023 Photo Competition this month ...



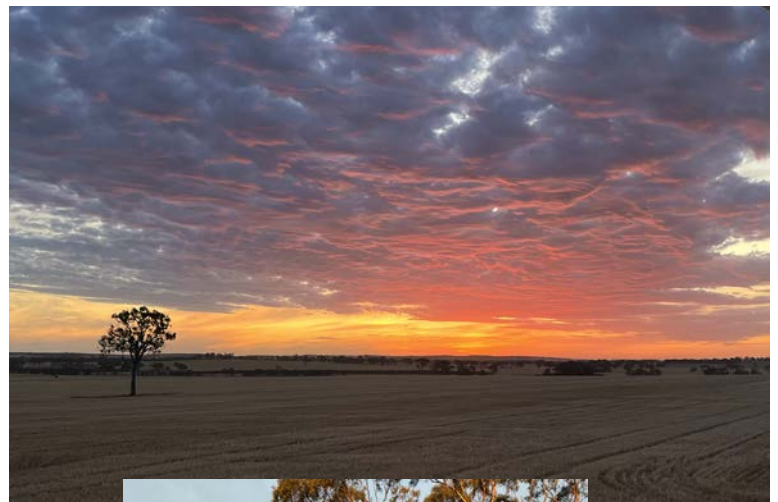
Deb Cristinelli



Kristy Prescott



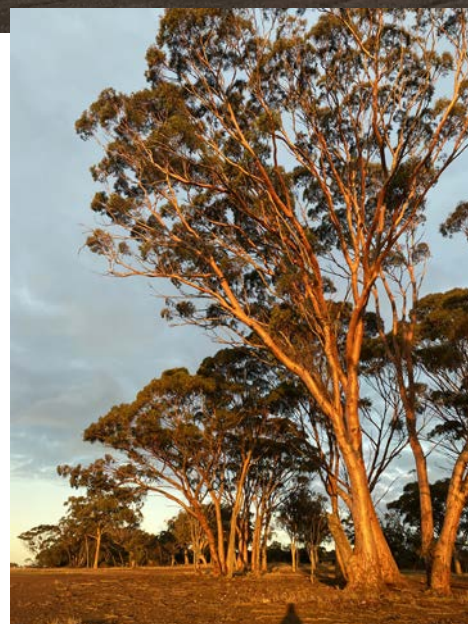
Lauren Martin



Eliza Murray



Sarah Martin



AND THE WINNERS ARE

2023 PHOTO COMPETITION DECEMBER WINNERS



Kristy Prescott

Sarah Martin



Thank you to everyone who has submitted photos throughout the year.

Podcasts of the Month



GRDC Podcast Interpreting Weather Forecasts

At a meeting of the Esperance Port Zone, Regional Cropping Solutions Network, mid way through 2019 a decision was made to help grain growers better understand weather forecasts and rain deciles.

What was wanted was advice on how to interpret this vital information so better on-farm crop management decisions could be made.

For this GRDC podcast Debra Bishop went to the Bureau of Meteorology head office in Western Australia and spoke with the Bureau's Media and Communications Manager Neil Bennett.

[Listen HERE](#)



FULL STORY How to Avoid Burnout

Many Australians feel overworked and overwhelmed at this time of year. Impending deadlines, cost-of-living pressures and the lead-up to the holiday season can combine to cause burnout. Jane Lee speaks to clinical psychologist and the Modern Mind columnist Gaynor Parkin about what you – and your boss – can do to help protect your physical and mental health.

[Listen HERE](#)



GRDC Podcast Genetic gains in wheat

A trial near Bolgart in WA is showcasing historic wheat varieties, allowing growers to look back in time to measure yield and genetic gains that wheat breeders have achieved over the past 50 years. The trial site features 48 varieties starting from the late 60s, up to the most recent varieties of two to three years ago, including bread wheat, Clearfield-tolerant wheat, and udon wheat varieties.

The different varieties see improved grain size, disease resistance, weight, and crop height, bringing with them harvesting changes over the years. GRDC has a long history in wheat breeding and pre-breeding, including partnerships with wheat breeding companies.

[Listen HERE](#)

NEWS from Our Partners

Resetting the bearings after the storm

It is clear the ebbs and flows of global energy markets – and their impact on feedstocks for the manufacture of inputs – will lead to varying farm inputs costs in the 2024 season. The question is how to put the puzzle of all the inputs together to support the budget decision-making process ahead of farmers, especially with constant volatility around markets.

Undoubtedly, farm input costs are poised to be lower than in the past couple of years but with some caveats, mainly for wages and diesel.

From October 2022 to October 2023, national private-sector wages grew by four per cent, on the back of an extremely tight labour market, especially in rural areas.

And while diesel prices declined by seven per cent in the past 12 months, the forecast is bleak. The Q1 2024 projected price for diesel is \$1.95/litre (terminal gate), an increase of 8.5 per cent compared with Q1 2023, which was \$1.8/litre. Global geopolitical shocks are taking a toll and the lower Australian dollar is not helping. As of late November, the Australian currency is trading at 0.65 to the US dollar, a 3.7 per cent drop compared with January 2023, but back in early October the AUD touched USc 0.63, or 7.4 per cent lower.

The good news on inputs is coming from fertiliser and agrochemicals.

The latter has a good position in terms of stocks and supply. This is clear looking at Chinese prices, which dropped 43 per cent in the past 12 months across the different active ingredient categories. For instance, tebuconazole prices dropped 31 per cent and 2,4-D prices more than halved.

For fertilisers, price reductions range from 20 to 40 per cent from overseas producers. Despite the instabilities in natural gas markets, overall fertiliser supply is in better shape than last year.

Along with this greater supply, there is also weaker demand from key markets. For instance, Brazil's second corn season, which is the largest share of cereal production in the South American farming goliath, is set to have a substantial reduction in area. Brazilian farmers are not excited about corn prices – CBOT (Chicago



Vitor Pistoia, Analyst – Farm Inputs, Rabobank



Rabobank

NEWS from Our Partners

Resetting the bearings after the storm - Cont.

Board of Trade) corn has dropped 31 per cent since the beginning of the year – and are already facing a lack of good rainfall and soil moisture. Brazil imports roughly 17 per cent of the world's urea and 2023 numbers so far are lagging 11 per cent behind the five-year average.

There is also faltering demand for fertiliser imports in India after its government slashed subsidies. For instance, the subsidy on DAP in India – which is responsible for approximately 29 per cent of global DAP imports – is now 31 per cent lower, pushing margins into negative.

For Australia, the period between November and March is crucial to set fertiliser prices for the season ahead as the lead time to bring in inputs can be up to 10 weeks.

By comparing overseas producers' prices from November 2022-March 2023 with the November 2023-March 2024 forecast, there is the potential for urea be five per cent lower year on year, DAP 16 per cent lower and MOP down 36 per cent. These figures would be better for farmers if the Australian dollar had not lost as much value as it has, though the overall picture is better or at least clearer than the previous year. The 2024 outlook for farm input costs should see farmers maintaining farmer profitability.

To find out more about Rabobank, contact Rabobank's Narrogin team on (08) 9890 0600 or subscribe to RaboResearch Food & Agribusiness Australia & New Zealand on your podcast app.



Rabobank

NEWS from Our Partners

Reaping Results With Harvest Pools



Having notched up a recent record-breaking result and with proven performance over time, pools offer a great alternative grain marketing strategy for this season's harvest. Newly appointed Chief Marketing & Trading Officer at CBH, Paul Smith, explains why.

The latest results are in. The sustained strong performance of CBH pools continues to deliver value for WA grower participants.

Pools provide an easy and reliable alternative to diversify your grain marketing. When used consistently, pools are proven performers that stand the test of time.

The recently finalised CBH pool – the 2022/23 Wheat Harvest Pool – was a record. Returns of \$486.78 for APW1 Kwinana and \$451.66 for ASW1 Kwinana were generated. The pool outperformed the average cash price by \$68 to \$95 per tonne and the average harvest price by \$25 to over \$100 per tonne, depending on the grade and zone.

According to Paul, these results are in line with the consistent performance of CBH harvest pools over time, when compared to the best available cash prices.

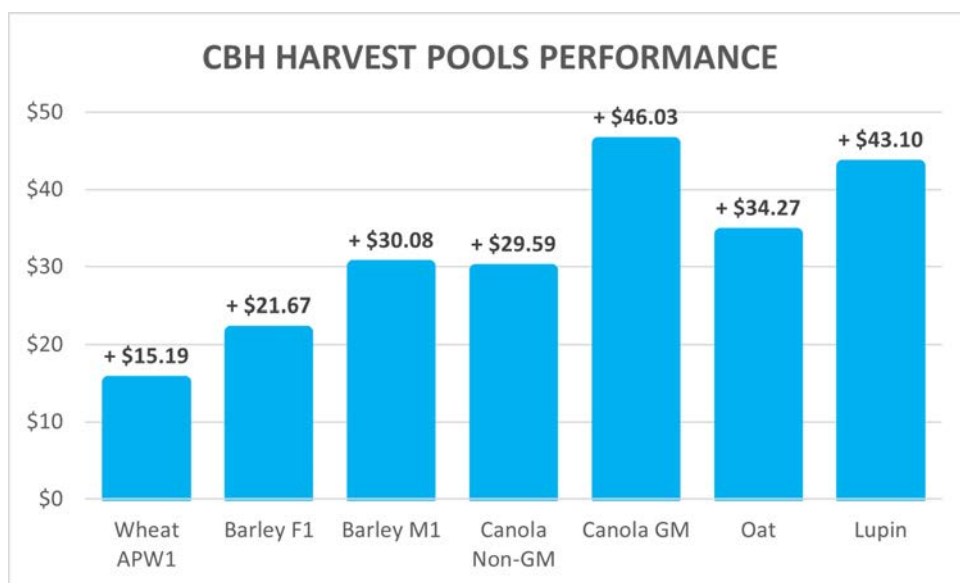


Chart: Values are for up to five seasons of finalised pools. These values reflect the average out-performance of the pool compared to the average of the best available cash prices over the pool lifecycle.

Benefits of pools

While every season is different, there are various levers CBH can exercise within the pool to maximise value for participants.

“As the grain merchant, CBH manages all supply chain activities to facilitate the physical movement of grain from the CBH system to the end-user destination,” Paul said.

“When you sell into a pool, you have access to the entire length of the supply chain, which presents multiple opportunities to derive value along the supply chain.”

NEWS from Our Partners

Reaping Results With Harvest Pools Cont.

For example, the pool takes advantage of the size and scale of CBH's position as the largest exporter out of WA, providing flexibility to seize opportunities as they arise, while minimising any supply-chain impacts.

Pools tap into premium markets worldwide, maximising potential value for you as the grower.

"We access and leverage our longstanding customer relationships to extract optimal value out of your grain."

"Pools also participate in post-harvest marketing windows, which enable value to be captured when grain origins globally are at key points in their production cycles."



New this season

This season's CBH harvest pool has opened for both Guaranteed Access Contracts and direct nominations. There is completely open access for all WA growers – you do not need to be a past user to sell into a pool.

Guaranteed Access Contracts feature multigrade options this season. These include specific contracts for noodle wheat, GM and non-GM canola, feed barley and malting barley.

"This change allows for improved risk management and decision making within the pool."

When it comes to payment, there is flexibility to choose what suits you. There are five payment methods to fit the needs of your farm business. You can view anticipated pool payments online with CBH's pool calculator online at cbh.com.au/pools

The pools' process is quick and simple via CBH LoadNet or by calling the Grower Service Centre on 1800 199 083.





Andrew Tasker
Grain Marketing Adviser
0408 848 123

It's great to be a part of the Planfarm team, albeit a baptism of fire with a mid-harvest start date!

I originally moved to WA to work in the grain industry in 2000 when producers were looking for assistance with a new hedging product called the AWB Basis Pool Contract. The domestic market had been deregulated but in WA had made a relatively small impact due to the proportion of exported grain, however the AWB Basis Pool Contract allowed grower participation in the AWB Pool and apart from basis, allowed increased control over their price.

Export de-regulation followed, giving growers full exposure to the cash market, a plethora of pool products and most notably,

price volatility. Other products followed such as cash basis contracts and OTC products appeared (commonly referred to as swaps) which were eventually offered by the major banks and even some merchants. All this change required a swift and steep learning curve for WA growers who, up until then, had spent all their farming careers delivering to a pool. However – WA growers were up for the challenge.

In 2012 I moved to the US to work in markets and there is nothing like working in another part of the world to see your own backyard in a new light. Whilst agriculture in the US is in a lot of ways different, it's also very much the same. Generally, farmers are the same all around the world, it's just the crops and accents that differ. However, there are significant differences in the teachings throughout the US, European, South American Ag Colleges and Universities where marketing and hedging is a base subject. This translates the language of hedging and marketing to become second nature.

Most farmers commonly use a range of

methods to sell and hedge from the all-important cash market. No matter what fancy hedging structures you implement, at the end of the day, you have to physically sell the grain to products offered by the local elevator to trading directly on the board with futures and options as well as swaps like we have here in Australia.

So, are we missing out on anything by not being experienced in these marketing and hedging alternatives? I think yes and no (and before anyone says make up your mind for once), it depends on where you sit in your business with regards to 'marketing and hedging'. A helpful way to look at this is to consider how you are with other parts of your business. Are you someone that looks for an agronomic approach using tried and true packages and will change but only after the research results are in? OR are you the one that is looking for the new variety and will chuck in a paddock just to see how it goes, learning on the run? This can be applied to your grain marketing by looking at post-harvest cash or pool strategies or the use

of the forward cash market and swaps and options.

Either way a solid understanding of how the market works will prove beneficial and hold you in good stead towards making decisions while gaining an increased understanding of what's going on. The market's only role is to put a price on a commodity or product to equal out supply and demand. This is why we say "there are no cures for high prices like high prices etc" WA's record low wheat basis over the last two seasons is an excellent example of this.

A good example of a strategy relevant to our current market is the ability to hedge your production with participation in some (or all) of any market upside at a later stage for the cost of a premium. The principal being that the ideal hedging product allows you to set a minimum price with the choice to participate in any moves higher. This means that no matter how low prices go, you still achieve your hedged price but if price rises above your hedged price, you also take advantage of higher pricing. This also has the added benefit if yield is lower than expected, washout costs are minimized.

This raises the question 'is this strategy

suitable for you in your business?' and there are two parts to answering this this question. Firstly, what are the technical aspects of futures, basis and currency together with local and international cash markets (eg. know the market).

Secondly, how can this strategy be tailored to work for your individual business (eg. know yourself).

Market opportunities continue to present – after all, that's a market! We have the tools to explore these opportunities as they arise tailored to your business if you would like to see how this type of strategy could work for you I would be happy to work though some examples. We are planning on running some online seminars in the new year. If you are interested in participating, then register your interest with me. Alternatively, if you are in a grower group and would like us to present at your next event then just get in touch.

I'm looking forward to working with our Planfarm grower group complimenting grain marketing strategies with the knowledge I've gained through my time in a variety of international grain markets.



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5 CONSIDERATIONS WHEN BUYING OR SELLING A BUSINESS

Buying or selling a business can be a daunting process. There are many factors to be considered and often numerous parties to be included to successfully complete the transaction. Care should be exercised from the outset and well before a formal agreement has been entered into. We have outlined 5 matters below that should be considered when buying or selling a business.

1. What is being bought / sold?

Business sales may incorporate the transfer of some or all of the business assets. Some items that may be included in the sale are:

- business name;
- intellectual property;
- assets;
- liabilities; and
- customer database.

Alternatively, the seller may be selling the entire business by way of transferring the entity that operates the business (i.e. selling the shares in the company that operates the business).

The nature of the sale will have a significant impact on how the sale of the business is effected and what documents are required. It is therefore important for the parties to be sure of what exactly they're selling and buying.

2. Preparation, preparation, preparation

Being proactive prior to entering into the sale process will make the negotiation stage much more efficient. Prior to a business being purchased, a buyer will often undertake its own due diligence investigations. Typically this will involve the seller providing the buyer with documents for review, such as financial statements, material contracts with customers and other third parties, employment agreements and intellectual property registrations. This allows the buyer to consider all legal and financial factors before committing to purchasing the business, and identifies any issues that need to be dealt with by the parties. It may also highlight some areas that need to be addressed by the seller, such as any undocumented material contracts, deficient employment agreements or inadequate intellectual property protections.

The documents that are provided by the seller during this phase will often contain highly confidential information. Therefore it is quite common for the parties to enter into a 'non-disclosure agreement' prior to the exchange taking place to ensure that such information is kept confidential and cannot be used by any prospective buyer for their own benefit.

Another document that may help facilitate the sale process is a 'term sheet'. This outlines the terms and conditions of a proposed sale and operates as a starting point for detailed negotiations. Term sheets can be binding or non-binding and typically set out the purchase price, proposed sale date, manner of sale (i.e. assets only or entity) and any other important information. A clear and concise term sheet will:

- help the parties have an understanding of what is expected from each of them;
- limit misunderstandings and disputes down the line; and
- promote time and cost efficient negotiations.

5 CONSIDERATIONS WHEN BUYING OR SELLING A BUSINESS



3. Employees

Employees will either be transferred to the buyer or terminated upon settlement of the sale, depending on the agreement reached between the parties. Regardless, notice will need to be given to the employees of the sale and effect on their employment and consideration given to any entitlements that need to be transferred or paid out. A seller should ensure that all employment agreements are documented correctly and entitlements up-to-date to help make this process go smoothly.

4. The contract

As business sales can be quite complex, it is recommended that a professional be engaged to assist in the drafting of the contract for sale. If the agreement is drafted by a lawyer for the seller, the buyer should engage its own lawyer to review the contract on its behalf before signing the same.

In addition to the terms set out in the above paragraphs, the contract may also include clauses dealing with matters such as:

- providing certain conditions to be met before the sale goes ahead;
- restricting a seller from engaging in the same or a similar business; and
- providing a dispute resolution process to be followed in the event a dispute arises.

5. The aftermath

Once a sale is complete, there are often still steps that need to be taken by the parties to finalise the sale process. The seller should monitor its bank accounts and notify both the buyer and payer of any payments incorrectly made to the seller. If the entity that was operating the business is no longer functional, the seller will need to consider winding it up or deregistering it. If restraint provisions were included in the contract for sale, the seller should ensure it is aware of and complies with such conditions.

Selling a business is not without both risk and reward. However, if the right steps are taken to prepare for and negotiate the sale, and appropriate professionals engaged to assist (such as lawyers, accountants and business advisors), then risks may be mitigated and a more successful outcome achieved.

Article written by Danielle Edwards (Senior Associate). If you would like further information in relation to how the above matters may affect your business, please contact us on (08) 9321 5451 or by email at office@bailiwicklegal.com.au. For further information about our legal services, visit our website at <https://www.bailiwicklegal.com.au>.

The information provided is a summary and overview of the matters discussed. This publication does not constitute legal advice and you should seek legal or other professional advice before acting or relying on any of the content.

NEWS from Our Partners



ORIGO.ag
*Adding Value
to Agriculture*

Origo.ag : the Australian Agritech Platform

WHAT if on-farm work could be done off-farm, from anywhere in Australia, at the touch of a fingertip, right in the palm of a hand?

While it may sound far-fetched to some, Perth-based Origo.ag has developed a cutting-edge, totally integrated, real-time, remote control monitoring and data-gathering system to help farmers track and control key broadacre and livestock operations from afar.

It is the only Agritech platform that is made and controlled, end-to-end, by an Australian manufacturer and company.

Small and large scale farms can use the system to capture critical data about rainfall distribution and climate; remotely control their water sources and fertiliser; check on outdoor livestock pens and yards; and even automate feed storage bins.

On-farm weather, tank top and control stations feed information back into a dashboard and server, which can be accessed on a phone, tablet or computer.

The Origo.ag system is being used by many small and large farms, including several corporate and big farms and stations in Australia.

The company has the biggest networks of its kind in Australia, including a water management system covering station country and a broadacre climate monitoring system for the grain growing season across some of the biggest broadacre properties in WA and on the east coast. The Origo.ag customers now cover millions of hectares of cropping and livestock producers, and have become the go-to platform as Origo service model has been a great success.

Merivale, WA, farmer Rodney Locke installed remote water tank monitoring systems and a weather station at his Condingup property last year.

He runs 1800-head of Angus breeders and a mixed wheat, barley and canola cropping program.

He started with four of Origo.ag's tank monitors and one weather station, which he trialled during the summer months.

Last year, he decided to also implement it on his home farm, at Merivale, so tank water levels could be checked in the morning, before he had even left the house.

"Previously I would get in the ute and drive out to have a look," Mr Locke said.

"I'd go and check my troughs and find a problem.

"When it comes to the Condingup farm – it is a 130 kilometre round trip and now we don't have to do it for the sake of doing it.

"Even checking all the water at home would probably take four hours."

Mr Locke also uses Origo.ag's app to monitor trends – including when the stock is watering – and compares them to day-ago, week-ago and month-ago levels.

He said while water levels were expected to slightly drop at times, if there was a significant drop without recovery then it could prove costly.

"If that happens, you have a problem without it developing into a bigger problem - such as large numbers of cattle having no access to water," Mr Locke said.



Photos: Tank Monitoring, Inset Rodney Locke.

"This kind of technology quite often identifies problems unfolding before they even become problems."

Wongan Hills broadacre farmer Robert Sewell also uses Origo.ag's system and described it as a "game changer" – which took much of the guesswork out of farming.

For Mr Sewell it is quite simple – if you can't measure it, you can't manage it.



Photo: Rob Sewell, Wongan Hills

And he has found Origo.ag's technology helps to do both.

Mr Sewell said such technology would allow farmers to keep control of fertiliser stocks, control of grain in silos, levels of fuel and fertiliser tanks, flow rates of water in-and-out of tanks and weather conditions.

"While we have some of the technology already installed, we are moving forward with the areas of monitoring that will assist in better farm management," Mr Sewell said.

"The technology – including weather stations – has helped me get the most out of our cropping program by providing long-term, accurate results.



Photo: Left Origo.ag XPS2M two metre weather station, middle XPS6M 6-metre weather station, right XCS Remote Control Station, diesel pump. Inset: Rob Sewell.

"I use Origo.ag's dashboard to compare results, such as rainfall distribution, to previous years."

Origo.ag founder and managing director Annie Brox said the company aimed to add value to agriculture by creating an easy to use, maintain and replace system.



XDASH Webapp – Single & Multiple Farms

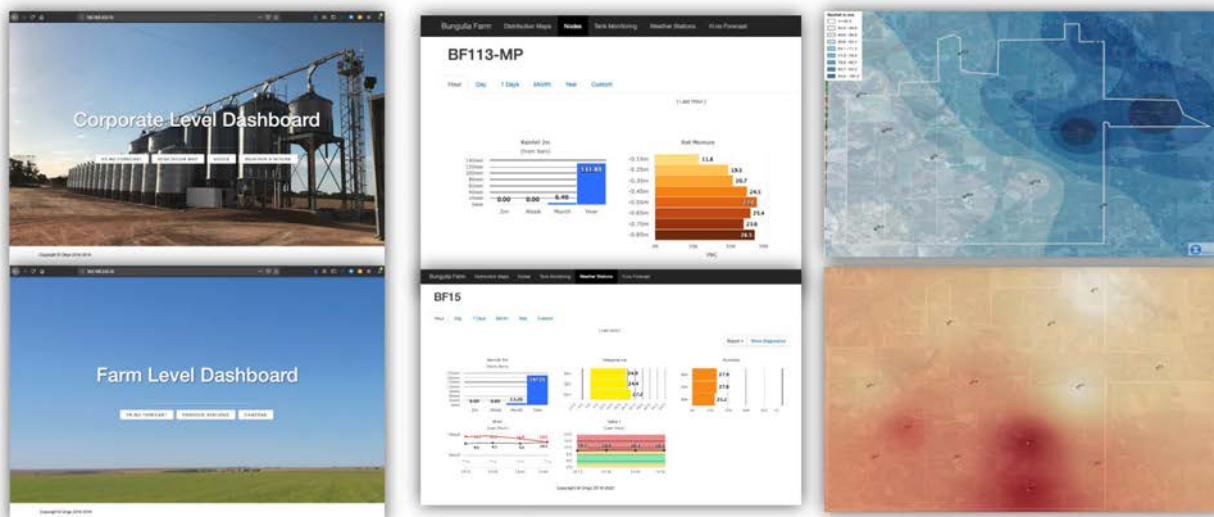


Illustration: Examples of Origo.ag XDASH dashboard.

"Farmers want to farm – they don't want to fiddle around with technology," Ms Brox said.

"That's where we step in.

"A lot of people have seen the benefits of technology.

"But if they install it and it stops working after a while, then what do they do?"

"We are there for the long-term, not only to provide a platform, but to also provide support in ensuring it continues to work. Our the Origo.ag Partner Network now covers WA and we are in process of completing our network of Service Partners in the Eastern States.

It also offers training to farm staff, which has proven particularly helpful for station owners.

Origo.ag is able to monitor every device within its network and, in some instances, can even detect when something has gone wrong with the technology.

"Then we can either fix it online or organise a call out, wherever they may be," Ms Brox said.

"All of that is in the Origo.ag Service Level Agreement.

"An important part of that is farmers get the software, the maintenance upgrades and the stored web data – the raw data is the farmer's property. We are now also launching a new addition to our XDASH Dashboard, Soil Analytics using Microsoft Power BI, it brings a new dimension to analysis where farmers can change the soil parameters to help understand water retention and plant availability better. It can be adapted to each individual farm an soil type."

"We manage and help capture the data, but they own it – it is a farm asset and is going to become more-and-more of an important asset as time goes by."

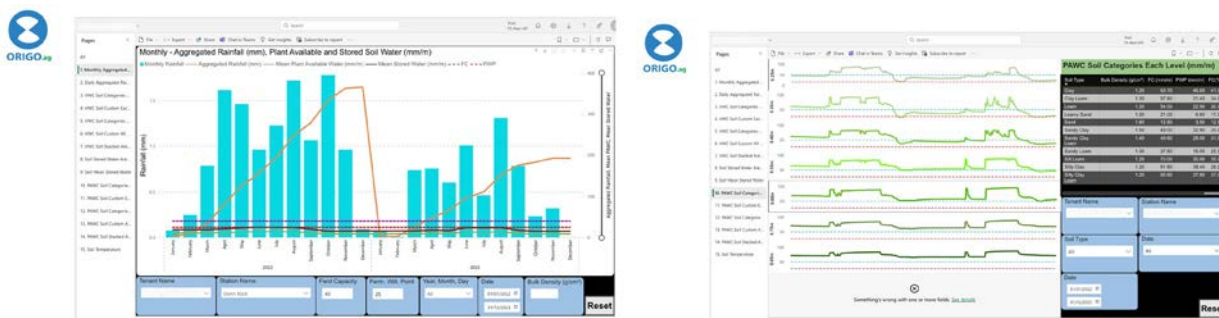
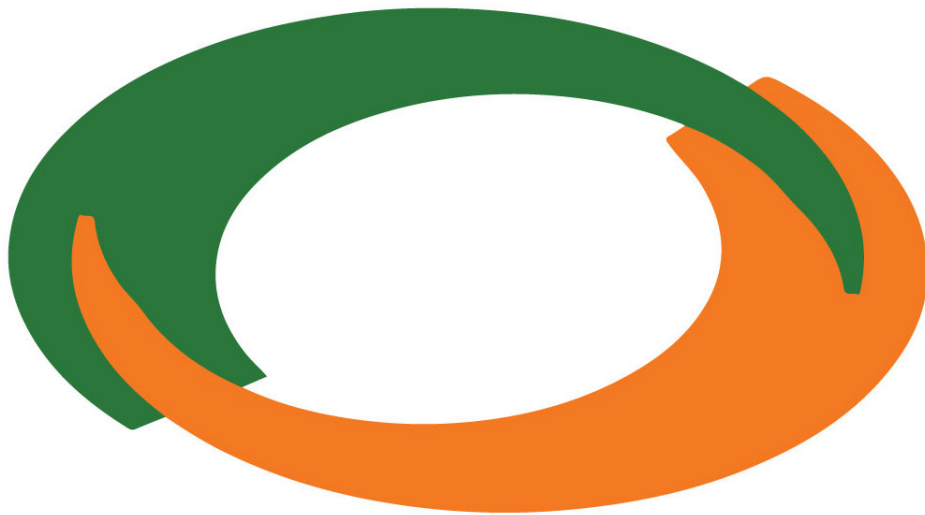


Illustration: Examples of Origo.ag XDASH Soil Analytics



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