

FACEY CONNECT

LEADING, INSPIRING, SUPPORTING AND CHALLENGING
OUR LOCAL FARMING COMMUNITY



SUMMER 2024



**INTERNATIONAL
WHEAT
CONFERENCE**

**SMART WATER
SOLUTIONS**

**END OF YEAR
HIGHLIGHTS
WEBINAR SERIES**

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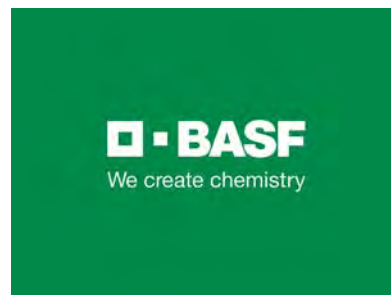
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The Facey Group would like to acknowledge and thank our valued sponsors Agrimaster, Australian Grain Technologies, Australian Wool Innovation, Bailiwick Legal, CRISP Wireless, CSBP, Elders Insurance, Elders Wickepin, Ewen Rural Supplies, FMC, GrainGrowers, Great Southern Fuels, Origo.Farm, Patmore Feeds, Planfarm, and Tincurrin Rural Services.

A Note from the CEO

2024 has been a year of transition for Facey Group. With Kaitlyn leaving for the US to further her studies and me stepping into the CEO role, we welcomed two new Agricultural Research and Extension Coordinators to the team - Ravi and Franco. Both have thrown themselves into the community and their roles and have been doing a fantastic job of their first harvest. I want to thank the entire Facey Group team, Bronwyn, Maree, Katrina, Melissa, Franco, and Ravi, for their professionalism and dedication during this period of change.

This year, Facey Group has made it a priority to connect with our membership. We've been conducting phone calls and face-to-face harvester chats, and I'd like to extend my thanks to everyone who took the time to engage with us. Your feedback is invaluable as we continuously look for ways to improve. Understanding the needs and wants of our members is key to our continued success, and it has been heartening to see some great yields rolling off the paddocks despite the dry start to the season. Good luck to everyone in completing harvest safely and in good time.



Tina Astbury, Facey Group Chief Executive Officer

November has been a busy grant application season, with several GRDC grants completed as well as the second round of Future Drought Funding for Long-Term Trials of Drought Resilient Farming Practices. As such, we have been asked to join and extend various projects. We are excited about the possibilities of all the projects; however, we acknowledge not all of them will be fortunate enough to receive funding. Facey Group was invited to join various research consortia with a range of prestigious research institutions. It is a tribute to our reputation within the industry for delivering high-quality relevant research.

Facey Group enjoyed a renewed Research and Development process through the committee meetings this year. Each committee meeting discusses various projects, opportunities and challenges in agriculture in our region. The range of experience around the table and the complexity of the questions and answers is inspiring. The Committee directly supports the Facey Group team in seeking the right funding, establishing projects, and guiding the direction of current projects. If you are interested in becoming more involved or joining our committee, give me a call. In 2025, the Facey Group committee will work together to revise our 5-year strategic plan, so this would be a great year to join.

On behalf of the Facey Group team, we wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. We look forward to seeing you all again after some well-deserved rest and relaxation over the summer holiday period.



Photo: Tina out in the field, contract harvesting at the Wickepin site of the GRDC NGN Deep Sown Oats Project



FACEY GROUP



Shaping the Future

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
21 DECEMBER 2024 & reopen on
6 JANUARY 2025





Annual General Meeting & 2024 Christmas Party

Join us at the 2024 Facey Group
Annual General Meeting &
Christmas Party!

The AGM will commence at 5pm
after which, family-friendly
christmas celebrations will kick off
including dinner & drinks thanks to
Summit Fertilizers.

Once the sun sets, you will be
treated to an exciting drone light
show, thanks to Squadrone.



RSVP by
9th Dec
Scan to Register

Wednesday 18th Dec - 5pm
Wickepin Community Centre








Kids Drone Workshop

Calling all Facey Group Kids

Join us for a **1 Hour Drone Coding Adventure** thanks to Squadrone!

Where you will learn:

- Drone safety and CASA rules
- Learn the Basics of Drone Coding
- Hands-On Experience Flying a Real Drone
- Finish with a Spectacular Mini-Drone Light Show

 Perfect for Beginners |  BYO iPad, tablet or laptop |  Age 8+ | Fun & Educational

Don't miss out on this unique STEM experience

Younger participants can join in with an adult as support.

Limited spaces available - Register ASAP!

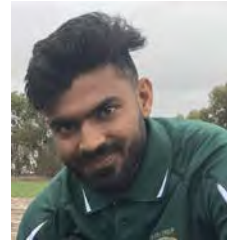


**Wednesday,
18th December**
5:00pm - 6:00pm

Workshop will be held during the AGM

AgREC Update

By Franco Renteria & Ravi Parmar - Facey Group AgREC Team



Facey Group AgREC Team in Harvest Season

The 2024 harvest is in full swing, and the Facey Group AgREC team has their boots firmly on the ground.

The team has observed many trucks on the road and headers going up and back as clear signs of success—proof that, even after a long dry spell following seeding, the crops are yielding well, and harvest is progressing positively.

We are grateful to see so many smiles—both on the faces of the farmers and the AgREC team, as the year unfolds with promise and seems to be shaping up well.

The AgREC team acknowledges that harvest culminates a year's hard work and decision-making for farmers. It's a time when they see the results of their efforts and if they will be paid for the risks taken. Farming is the one occupation where people stake their livelihoods under the open sky year after year. The AgREC team feels the same responsibilities regarding our trial program and wishes all our members the best with their remaining harvest for 2024.

As we move through the season, the team have completed majority of the Facey Group trial harvest, and we're hopeful the rest will be wrapped up soon.

One of our team's main highlights of harvest season is the chance to join our members on headers and chat with growers. These conversations give us an overview of the season, providing insight into their challenges and what they've learned along the way. It's always interesting to hear their insights, and we appreciate the opportunity to share their experiences. These header chats help us better understand the season and support Facey Group in designing and seeking research opportunities that align with our members' needs.

Wishing you all a safe and prosperous harvest and festive season!

From the Facey Group AgREC Team

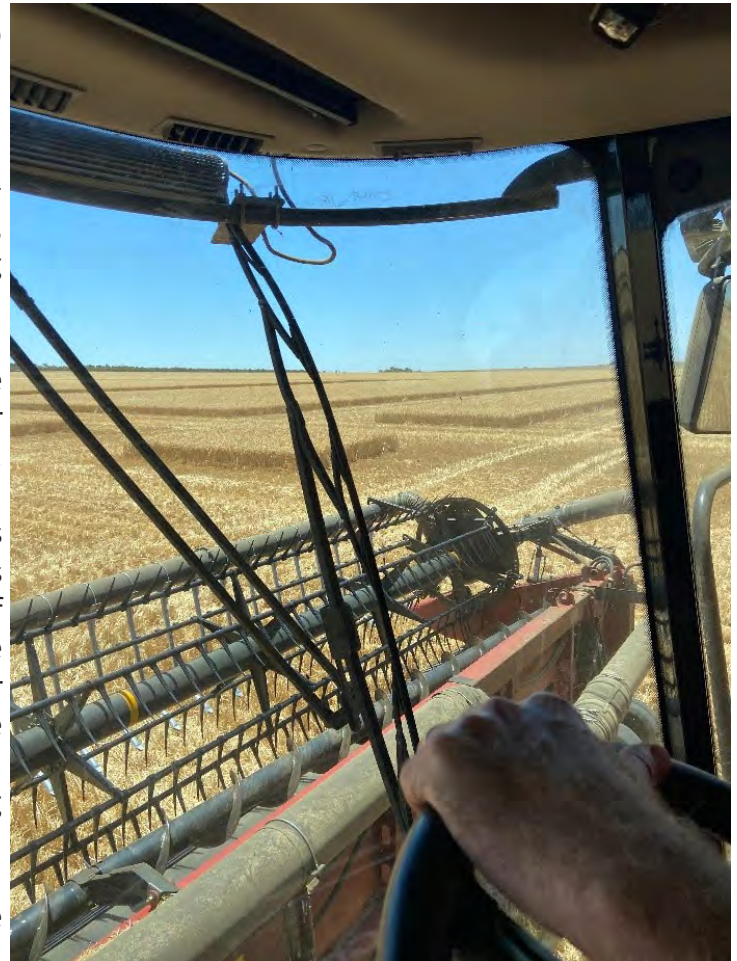


Image Above: Alan Manton supporting the AgREC team by validating our harvest assessments with his harvester.

AgREC NEWS

By Ravi Parmar, Facey Group Agricultural Research & Extension Coordinator



2024 Agronomy Conference

Facey Group had the opportunity to attend the 2024 Agronomy Conference held in Albany from October 21st to 24th, which brought together leading agricultural experts from across Australia. The conference offered an exceptional platform for knowledge exchange and networking within the agricultural community.

The event began with a highly insightful morning session featuring a distinguished lineup of speakers who addressed critical topics in contemporary agronomy. Key discussions included Nitrogen (N) Management, Risk Management Strategies, and Soil Reengineering Techniques—all of which are vital to enhancing the sustainability and productivity of agricultural systems. These sessions provided valuable insights into optimising resource use and addressing emerging challenges in crop production.

The conference organisers facilitated a Masterclass for Early Career Researchers and Agronomists in the afternoon. This session was particularly beneficial for improving professional communication and enhancing practical skills in field management. The masterclass provided an in-depth look at effective strategies for delivering clear and impactful paddock presentations, and it offered actionable advice on how to excel in agronomy and achieve professional excellence.



Professor James Hunt, an agronomist and crop physiologist from the University of Melbourne, shared some fascinating findings from an 8-year study on the effects of sheep grazing on crop stubble. The research, conducted near Temora, NSW, aimed to better understand how grazing stubble after harvest could impact subsequent crop yields. The study focused on a canola-wheat-wheat rotation, testing various combinations of stubble grazing and burning treatments. Overall, they found that grazing stubble led to an average increase in grain yield of 0.1 t/ha across all phase years, though this effect varied depending on the specific phase year and whether burning was also applied.

Interestingly, the yield increase was most noticeable in years where there was a higher level of soil mineral nitrogen (N) measured before sowing—on average, 21 kg/ha more. In some years, the grazing, combined with burning, also reduced frost-induced sterility by about 19%. Professor Hunt hypothesizes that grazing stubble increases soil mineral nitrogen by cycling nutrients from the stubble through the animals' excreta and by reducing carbon inputs to the soil at the start of the summer fallow, which limits nitrogen immobilization. However, it's important to note that this benefit might come at the cost of reduced soil organic matter and increased CO₂ emissions. This research highlights the potential agronomic benefits of stubble grazing but also raises questions about long-term soil health and carbon dynamics.

AgREC NEWS

By Franco Renteria & Ravi Parmar - Facey Group AgREC Team & Tina Astbury - Facey Group CEO



International Wheat Conference

Wheat is one of the most widely consumed staple grains globally, second to rice. As part of the research team in the Wheatbelt region, Facey Group had the privilege of participating in the recent *3rd International Wheat Congress (IWC 2024)*, organised by Murdoch University at the Perth Convention Centre.

Western Australia is a major contributor to Australia's wheat production, as one of the leading agricultural regions, it serves as a hub for scientific expertise and innovative farming practices. The integration of cutting-edge research with practical farming knowledge can significantly enhance not only the profitability of growers but also contribute to the nation's agricultural economy.

This year's conference brought together a diverse group of 970 experts from 52 countries. One of the event's central themes was the concept of **GEM**—an integrated approach to improving wheat production through **Genetics, Environment, and Management**. All three factors are equally pivotal and interconnected, emphasizing that advancements cannot be achieved by focusing solely on one aspect, such as breeding or agronomical practices. Instead, a holistic approach, optimizing each of these elements in tandem, is necessary to achieve substantial increases in wheat yield and sustainability.



The global food security challenge, especially in the face of climate change, has sparked calls for transformative changes in food production through technological breakthroughs. However, most proposed solutions focus on individual technologies, like genetically modified crops or new fertilisers, often overlooking how these innovations work together within farming systems. History shows that significant productivity increases have come from combining old and new technologies in a way that addresses the whole system, not just one part. For example, Australia's renowned wheat breeder, William Farrer, emphasized not only improving the wheat plant but also maintaining soil fertility and understanding the farmer's needs.

AgREC NEWS

International Wheat Conference - Cont.

Today, agricultural research is often divided into specialized fields, with multi-disciplinary approaches sometimes overlooked in favour of breakthrough science. However, initiatives like the Expert Working Group in Agronomy of the Global Wheat Initiative are working to bridge the gap between genetic advancements and on-farm productivity. Examples from wheat farming systems in Australia, Canada, and the USA show how combining new genetics with modern agronomy can significantly increase productivity. In Australia, agronomic packages have improved yields by adapting wheat to different climates, while in Canada and the US, innovative practices like ultra-early sowing and targeted nutrient management are boosting yields and stability. These efforts highlight the importance of integrating genetics, agronomy, and farming practices to meet future agricultural challenges.

In dryland farming, leftover crop residues like stems, leaves, and roots can be helpful for soil health and crop yields. Research by Siddique and his team has shown that keeping these residues in the field can improve water infiltration, reduce evaporation, prevent erosion, and increase soil organic matter, all of which support long-term yields. However, not all farmers want to leave the residues behind, as they're often needed for livestock feed or other uses. The decision depends on factors like soil type, rainfall, and local farming practices. In some areas, farmers focus on short-term benefits rather than long-term soil health. While residue retention can improve soil moisture and fertility, it doesn't always lead to higher yields, as weather and other conditions, like the risk of frost from high stubble loads, also play a role. Researchers are working to find the right balance between addressing immediate needs and implementing sustainable farming practices that consider both the benefits and potential risks.

A Long History of Wheat Breeding in Action at the IWC

By Tina Astbury, CEO

I laughed when I first heard the term 'gene jockey' to reference a wheat breeder, but it underlines the complexity of the modern process. Wheat is one of humanity's first domesticated crops, and practices that date back to the dawn of agriculture still influence wheat breeding today.

The following web page links are for the many presentations, workshops, and posters presented at the IWC conference. I will refer to each presentation in this review of wheat breeding below.

[International Wheat Conference 2024 Presentations](#)

Wild Wheat

Bread Wheat (*Triticum aestivum*) formed 8,500-9000 years ago when wild wheat (*Aegilops tauschii*) was bred with an unknown donor. A recent study indicates this unknown genetic donor was based near the Caspian Sea. Understanding this wild relative may provide an untapped gene pool for new traits in wheat varieties.

IWC2024 Oral Presentations - Abstracts, Page 41

An example of the untapped potential is the discovery of a highly salt-tolerant variety of the wild wheat *Thinopyrum elongatum*, and work is currently being done at the University of Adelaide to breed this wild wheat into desirable bread wheat lines to create a more salt-tolerant wheat variety. A range of researchers

AgREC NEWS

International Wheat Conference - Cont.

presented work that shows wild wheats have traits ranging from disease resistance to a better capacity to cope with various abiotic stresses that may be invaluable to the future of wheat breeding.

IWC2024 Poster Presentations - Abstracts, Page 316

Hybrid Challenges

Hybrid seed production has been a traditional plant breeding method to produce offspring with a combination of traits from two parent lines. The drawback is that the seeds from the next generation are either infertile or highly variable. We purchase hybrid canola seeds regularly; however, the promise of hybrid breeding wheat has challenges. Wheat is self-pollinated so generating hybrid lines will require breeding wheat for floral structures that are better at cross-pollinating. This will create a better seed set when breeding hybrid lines and create cost-effective seed that can bring the benefits of hybridisation to wheat.

IWC2024 Workshop Presentations - Abstracts, Page 169

The Rise of Big Data

The genome for wheat was first published in 2014. Now, the value of high-resolution wheat genomic sequences is being made available to the wheat breeding community through several multi-national projects. This data can be used to better understand which genes are linked to complex traits such as drought stress.

IWC2024 Oral Presentations - Abstracts, Page 37

The capacity to manipulate large amounts of data and trace genetic markers has also been used to better identify genes involved in traits such as rust resistance. This will provide clearer goals for future wheat breeders to work towards.

IWC2024 Oral Presentations - Abstracts, Page 37

This large amount of data is now being used in conjunction with AI to better identify and select potential new lines in breeding programs.

IWC2024 Oral Presentations - Abstracts, Page 23

Genetic Modification

This leads us to the current point of controversy in wheat breeding. Wheat is hexaploid which means it has 6 sets of chromosomes. This can challenge traditional breeding methods as all 6 genes often need to match before a favourable trait is expressed. Genetic modification can use traits from wild types of wheat with precision. It can also use advances in understanding the genomic sequence and the capacity to link genes to physical traits using big data and AI to help.

This approach is being used to lead to rust resistance understanding but can only be translated to varieties with acceptance of GM wheat. For now, this information can only be used to guide breeding programs better.

IWC2024 Oral Presentations - Abstracts, Page 68

AgREC NEWS

International Wheat Conference - Cont.

The Real World

In practice, the IWC demonstrated that the future of breeding this globally influential crop is in the hands of a phenomenally clever and diverse international community. Wheat breeding will leverage substantial gains for producers, locally and internationally. We watch with interest, in this small region of WA, as this research is transformed into new varieties.



Image 1: Tina, Franco and Ravi enjoying the research at the IWC2024



Image 2: IWC2024 Welcome to Country

Wheat Conference Economic Review: The world stage opportunities

By Franco Renteria, AgREC

The International Wheat Conference brought together global experts to discuss wheat production systems and market developments, highlighting key opportunities for Australian wheat producers. Delegates from Africa, South America, and Europe shared valuable insights into evolving trade dynamics.

Western Australia (WA) focuses on white wheat, with Southeast Asia—primarily the Philippines and Indonesia—accounting for 40% of its wheat exports. As demand rises, WA growers have a clear opportunity to increase production and secure a larger share of this expanding market. Meanwhile, wheat production in the U.S. is on the decline, driven by a 40% shift to corn, alongside research and development focused on soybeans. Drought, water scarcity, and reduced domestic demand for low-carb products further hinder U.S. wheat output, creating an opportunity for WA to capture a bigger slice of the global market, particularly as white wheat makes up 16% of global consumption.

In Europe, the EU produces roughly 50% of its wheat, primarily durum and other varieties. However, challenges such as climate change, severe droughts, and pesticide risks are limiting production. The EU is moving toward organic farming, which creates a niche market. WA's conventional wheat could fill the gap as EU production declines. South Africa presents a growing opportunity due to its increasing population and

AgREC NEWS

International Wheat Conference - Cont.

stagnating wheat yields, driving higher import demand. In Ethiopia, yield improvements over the last 40 years have helped meet 80% of its domestic demand, positioning it as a competitor for Australian exports. South America accounts for 4% of global wheat production, with imports rising due to the lower quality of local wheat. The region imports 20 million tonnes annually, valued at \$4 billion USD, and Russia has recently captured 15% of the market. Despite rising competition from Russia and the Baltic Sea, WA's premium wheat, particularly Soft Red Winter wheat, can meet the growing demand.

China's wheat production, which fluctuated in the 90s, has been outpaced by domestic demand for quality wheat. Despite a 20% reduction in global wheat imports for 2024, China remains a critical market for Australia, importing 34% of its wheat from WA. This provides an ongoing opportunity for WA growers to expand their presence by focusing on high-quality wheat production tailored to China's specific needs.

The global wheat market is shifting, with new opportunities emerging in Southeast Asia, South Africa, and South America, while challenges in the US, EU, and China open gaps for WA wheat producers. To capitalize on these opportunities, WA growers should focus on improving yields, maintaining high-quality production, and building strong trade relationships to meet the growing global demand.

Other supporting material:

Overview of Australia's wheat export and market perspectives

<https://www.argusmedia.com/en/news-and-insights/market-insight-papers/australian-wheat-seeks-to-capitalise-on-export-markets-shift>

GRDC Grain price outlook for harvest 2024

<https://grdc.com.au/events/past-events/2024/10/grdc-farm-business-update,-online-grain-price-outlook-for-harvest-2024>

Prof Kadambot Siddique, Director of the UWA Institute of Agriculture (Australia) explains why wheat keeps growing in WA

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eRrn7VyDZIA>



Image Left: Luxiang Liu from the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Science CAAS presenting an overview of China's wheat production and trading

AgREC NEWS

By Ravi Parmar, Facey Group Agricultural Research & Extension Coordinator



Dale Frost Research Day

A day spent in the paddock with industry experts is always an exciting opportunity to expand my knowledge and bring valuable insights back to our members. Recently, I had the privilege of attending a field day hosted by the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD), focused on the impact of frost on crops in our region.

Frost is a significant environmental stressor, and ongoing research in this area is shedding light on its complex effects on crop growth and yield. The field day provided a comprehensive overview of the latest findings regarding frost damage, with a particular focus on its influence on various crops commonly grown in our region.

Over the past 20 years, frost incidents and their severity have significantly increased, costing Australian growers up to \$410 million annually. To help manage this risk, experts like Dr. Brenton Leske from DPIRD emphasise the importance of long-term trial sites to better understand and mitigate frost damage to crops. The Dale Frost Research site, established in 2016 near Beverley, has become a crucial facility for screening and researching frost tolerance in various grain crops, particularly wheat. This fully serviced 40-hectare site, with irrigation and a carefully managed environment, has allowed for over 1,200 wheat germplasm screenings and has been instrumental in developing strategies to reduce frost impact on crops.

Dr. Leske points out that the site's location, with its uniform soil and surrounding undulating topography, maximises frost occurrences, providing a valuable environment for research. Key findings from the trials include the varying susceptibility of different crops—wheat being the most vulnerable, followed by barley and oats and the role of high stubble loads in exacerbating frost severity. Current research at the site is focused on identifying plant traits and secondary compounds in wheat that could improve frost tolerance, a crucial aspect of breeding frost-resistant varieties. With climate change expected to increase environmental stresses, the ongoing work at Dale will be vital in helping growers adapt to and manage the growing frost risk.



Project UPDATE

Understanding Brome Grass and Its Impact on Agriculture

Harmohinder Dhammu, Dave Nicholson and Catherine Borger, Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD), Northam WA.

Brome grass has become quite a headache for farmers in Australia. It's now the fourth most troublesome weed when it comes to how much land it infests, along with the yield and revenue losses it causes in grain crops. What's particularly concerning is how competitive brome grass is—it's tougher to deal with than other weeds like barley grass or annual ryegrass. In fact, if brome grass gets out of control, it can slash wheat yields by up to 95% and lupin yields by 60%!

Even if there are only a few plants around, they can still impact crop productivity. Plus, their seeds can contaminate harvested grain, leading to costly penalties if the contamination exceeds set limits.



Department of
Primary Industries and
Regional Development

Controlling brome grass isn't easy either. The current herbicides available don't provide complete control, and the seeds can linger in the soil for three to four years, making long-term management strategies essential.

Project Goals

To tackle this issue, the GRDC project 'Manipulating crop rotation to enhance brome grass management' and led by the University of Adelaide has kicked off with the aim of finding effective management plans to prevent brome grass from setting seed over three seasons. The findings from these trials will also help update the Brome RIM (Ryegrass Integrated Management) model, which is used for managing this weed. The project involves collaboration with DPIRD, Ag Innovation and Research Air Peninsula, Birchip Cropping Group, Hart Field Site Group, the Liebe Group, Facey Group and WANTFA.

2024 Trial Insights

This year marks the beginning of a four-year rotational trial at a property owned by Sam Horley. The trial uses a randomised block design and features seven different treatments to see how various crop rotations affect brome grass management and overall profits.

The treatments range from traditional continuous wheat cropping, to rotations that involve one, two, or even three-year breaks. These rotations are compared to understand their effects on managing brome grass and the financial outcomes for farmers.

Herbicide Use

The trial employs both low and high herbicide input strategies. Low input rotations use either pre- or post-emergent herbicides, while high input rotations combine both types along with other methods like crop topping and harvest weed seed control.

Early on, to manage brome grass and other weeds, glyphosate and tiafenacil were applied. Pre-seeding treatments happened just before sowing, and post-emergent herbicides were applied four to six weeks later.

Project UPDATE

Understanding Brome Grass and Its Impact on Agriculture

Harmohinder Dhammu, Dave Nicholson and Catherine Borger, Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD), Northam WA.

Results So Far

- **Brome Grass Seed Bank:** At the trial site, researchers found about 3,750 brome grass seeds per square meter in the top 10 cm of soil, with a 68% germination rate. Interestingly, the seed distribution wasn't even across the treatments.
- **Crop Establishment:** Both wheat and barley crops exceeded the target plant density, achieving around 196 plants per square meter.
- **Herbicide Effectiveness:** Some herbicide combinations did affect crop establishment, but generally, the density still met targets. Notably, Aggressor® significantly reduced brome grass density compared to other treatments, while Intervix® was particularly effective when used with pre-emergent treatments.



Department of
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Regional Development

Acknowledgments

A big thank you goes out to GRDC for funding this important project on brome grass management, and to Sam Horley for providing the trial site. Special thanks also to the DPIRD Field Research Operations team for their hard work in supporting the trials.



Image Above: Harmohinder Dhammu (DPIRD) & his technician, David Allen, with Alison Horley looking for brome grass in pasture paddocks.



Image Right: David Allen & Harmohinder Dhammu from DPIRD looking for brome grass with Graeme Manton.

Project UPDATE

By Franco Renteria, Facey Group Agricultural Research & Extension Coordinator



Smart Water Solutions: Tools to Empower Farming Systems

At Facey Group, we're committed to enhancing water security for our farming community. Recently, we touched base with the state-funded WaterSmart Farms project, led by Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD), which focuses on driving the adoption of advanced water technologies across WA's Wheatbelt and Great Southern regions.

This project tackles the critical challenge of water scarcity by evaluating reverse osmosis (RO) desalination to transform brackish groundwater into reliable water supplies for livestock, crops, and agribusinesses. Alongside its technical goals, WaterSmart Farms supports farmers by examining the costs, maintenance, and operational considerations of on-farm RO units as well as exploring best practices for managing saline reject water responsibly.

To maximise its impact, WaterSmart Farms collaborates with Murdoch University to study 31 farm sites and four key community locations—Wongutha, Katanning, Dumbleyung, and Merredin. The project not only aims to assess technical and economic viability of RO desalination but also seeks to build local capacity by engaging stakeholders, from farmers and shires to agribusinesses. From this collaboration, the project has developed a series of practical resources to help farmers make informed decisions about water management.

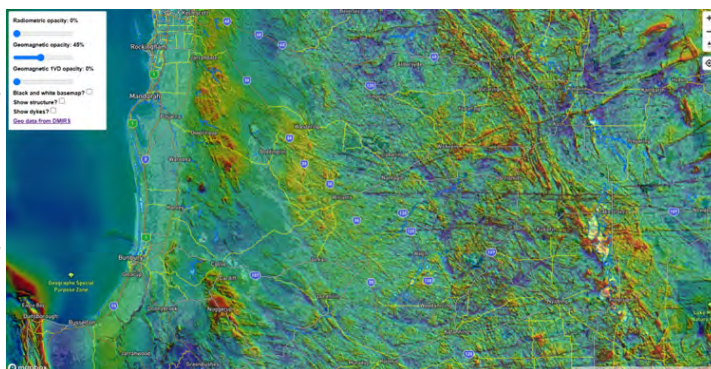
Regulations for Groundwater Desalination and Farm Water Supply

Groundwater desalination is a new water supply option for broadacre Western Australian farmers, but it comes with important regulatory responsibilities. Under the Soil and Land Conservation Act 1945, landholders are required to notify the Commissioner of Soil and Land Conservation before discharging saline reject water from desalination plants. This ensures the discharge is carefully managed to prevent environmental harm. By submitting a Notice of Intent to Drain (NOID), landholders can ensure that any saline water discharge complies with environmental protection standards, reducing the risks of soil and water contamination. These regulations are essential for balancing farm water security with sustainable land management practices.

Link: [Desalination and regulation for farm water supply in Western Australia](#)

GeoMap

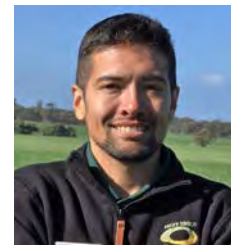
GeoMap empowers you to make informed land management decisions with ease. This user-friendly platform integrates geological and geophysical maps, offering essential data on your farms underlying geology and soils. Accessible on tablets and smartphones, GeoMap helps you identify natural features that may influence access to usable groundwater, areas of low salinity water and explain areas of saltland. By leveraging this tool with local knowledge or additional surveys, you can improve the chance of locating useable water, as well as understand your farm.



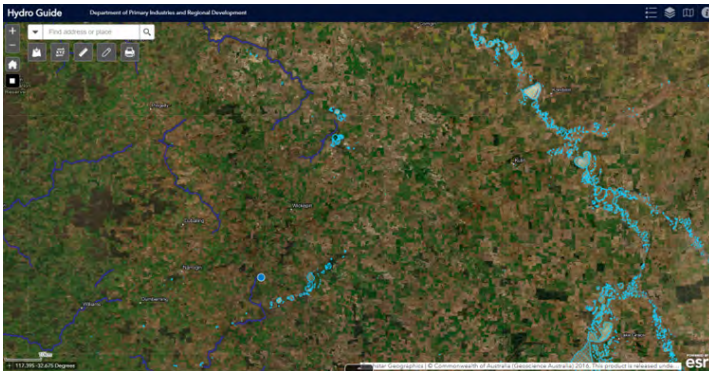
Link: [GeoMap](#)

AgREC NEWS

By Franco Renteria, Facey Group Agricultural Research & Extension Coordinator



Smart Water Solutions: Tools to Empower Farming Systems CONT.



Hydroguide

The Hydroguide map is a helpful resource for farming in southwest WA. It supports the location of new farm dam sites and helps assess salinity risks. Featuring modelled surface-water flow, farm dam locations, terrain slopes, and potential inundation areas, the tool assists with effective water management. By visualising flood risks and integrating location-specific data, Hydroguide helps ensure more sustainable farming practices.

Link: [Hydroguide map](#)

Groundwater and Salinity Map

For effective farm planning, understanding groundwater trends and salinity is crucial. The Groundwater and Salinity Map offers insights through over 8,000 groundwater monitoring bores, regional groundwater trends, and satellite-mapped salinity data. This tool allows you to assess groundwater conditions, flow paths, and salinity risk, providing valuable information for managing water resources and minimising land degradation.



Link: [Ground and Salinity Map](#)

Looking Ahead

The WaterSmart Farms project has consistently delivered value to the farming community, with its final stage planned for 2025. At Facey Group, we are committed to strengthening this collaboration, supporting further initiatives in water management, and bridging the gap in access to reliable, high-quality water for farming communities. By continuing to bring knowledge and resources to the forefront, we aim to empower our farmers to thrive in a changing climate.

For more insights and tools, visit the following links:

[WaterSmart Farms – Water Security and Resilience in a Drying Climate](#)

[WaterSmart Dams – Making Dams Work Again](#)

[Hydroguide – Interactive Surface Water Map](#)

[Guide to Understanding the Groundwater and Salinity Map](#)

Current Activities

<p>Survey Results</p>	<p>Dam Technology Gallery</p>	<p>Demonstration Sites</p>	<p>Project Follower Sign Up</p>
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Project UPDATE

By Tina Astbury, Facey Group Chief Executive Officer



Exploring De-risking Strategies in Agriculture: Facey Group's Latest Projects

Facey Group was excited to participate in the Federal Drought Funded, De-risking the Seeding Program. This Australia-wide research program aims to improve the adoption of key management practices to achieve the success of dry and early sown crops. Facey Group consulted with a range of producers, the R&D Committee and various researchers then focused on two opportunities to provide further options for dry and early sowing. Long-season barley and a new lupin variety.

Long-Season Barley Trial

Barley is a crucial crop for the Facey Group region due to its resilience to frost and salt. Recent studies from eastern Australia suggest that planting longer-season barley varieties earlier can lead to significant yield increases by utilising optimal growing conditions. In response, the Facey Group began testing this strategy by sowing barley varieties on April 26th.

The Trial: The Group tested various barley varieties, including Newton (a winter variety), Laperouse (a long-season spring variety), and IGB21130 (a pre-release longer-season variety). They capitalised on available moisture by sowing early, enabling faster growth than later-planted varieties. Grazing pressures were simulated over several months to assess resilience, and despite the stress, the early-sown varieties demonstrated strong recovery and high biomass production.

Results: Early sowing emerged as a key strategy for maximising barley yields, especially in challenging environments. This approach could serve as an alternative option for barley production, and at the Spring Field Day on September 3rd, attendees showed great interest in the biomass as a potential grazing opportunity, particularly given the difficulties in establishing pastures that season.

Lupin Variety Comparison

Lupins play a crucial role in the region, not only for improving soil health through nitrogen fixation but also as an important break crop in cereal rotations. With AGT's new variety, Rosemont, set for release in 2024, it is important to compare its performance against the commonly grown Jurien variety.

The Trial: The Facey Group tested Rosemont and Jurien on key factors such as establishment, nodulation, and yield. Additionally, they investigated the use of wetters when dry sowing lupins to improve seed-soil contact and enhance germination in dry conditions. Some plots were treated with wetters, while others were left untreated for comparison.

Results: The trial aims to provide valuable insights into the performance of Rosemont and the economic benefits of using wetters in dry sowing. Observations at the August 26th field day revealed both varieties were flowering, with Rosemont showing a slightly delayed flowering. Both crops exhibited high biomass, which is correlated with nitrogen fixation. An agronomist inspected both varieties for signs of phomosis, but none were found.

Project UPDATE

By Tina Astbury, Facey Group Chief Executive Officer



Exploring De-risking Strategies in Agriculture: Facey Group's Latest Projects - Cont.

Conclusion

Through these trials, Facey Group aims to help farmers optimise their practices, whether through early sowing of barley or testing new lupin varieties and sowing techniques. The insights gathered from these projects will support farmers in making more informed decisions, ultimately enhancing productivity and profitability across the Wheatbelt region.



Photo Left: Facey Group AgREC, Ravi Parmar, simulated grazing pressure on long-season barley.

Photo Right: Great nodulation occurring in the lupin variety comparison paddock



Project UPDATE

By Tina Astbury, Facey Group Chief Executive Officer



OATSP0 and the Facey Group GRDC NGN Deep Sown Oats Project

Facey Group along with several other researchers and producers attended the sold-out Oatspo Field Walk at Ashley Weisse's Highbury farm on September 10. The Oatspo Agronomic Showcase was funded by the state government and industry-led by the Processed Oat Partnership (POP). Oats have been gaining interest as a potential option in crop rotation due to historically high prices from 2019 to 2020 (CEIC Economic Database).

To meet growing global demand producers will require a good understanding of a range of decisions throughout the growing season. Including variety selection, nutrition strategies, seeding practices (rates/depths) pre and post-emergent weed and disease control options, canopy management strategies and harvest tips to maximise grain quality.

InterGrain leads the Australian grain and oaten hay breeding programs. They have increased the breeding program significantly and think considerable improvements are available with grain, hay, and dual-purpose varieties. They have demonstrated that oats are a great option for early and dry sowing with the plots at Oatspo being sown dry on the 18th to 22nd of April and receiving a germinating rain event of 20 mm on the 2nd of May.

New varieties that InterGrain suggests looking out for are Goldie, which can be used as a Bannister replacement, Minnie, a mid-maturity, high-yielding, short-stature variety, and 15175-56, which is a short-stature, quick-maturity variety with a higher grain protein. Blakely Paynter, a senior research scientist with DPIRD, summarised the advantages of some new varieties compared to Bannister if you are interested in trying them.

Goldie

- Yield improvement below 5 t/ha.
- Higher OAT1 receival %.
- Increased lodging risk, similar disease risk.
- Suitable for milling and export hay.

Koala

- Yield improvement above 5 t/ha.
- Similar OAT1 receival %.
- Increased lodging risk, similar disease risk.
- Suitable for milling and export hay.

Minnie

- Yield improvement below 4 t/ha.
- Plumper grain but lower test weight. Possibly similar OAT1 receival %.
- Lower lodging risk with a similar disease profile.
- Suitable for milling, unlikely to meet export hay requirements.

Facey Group was honourably mentioned in the breeding trials as new variety Minnie was trialled at the GRDC NGN Deep Sown Oats Project, which Facey Group is leading. These trial sites were also sown early and demonstrated that oats emerge well from deeper sowing depths (80 mm). Oats may be a good early sowing option when moisture is available lower in the soil profile due to their reduced frost sensitivity and capacity to emerge from depth.



Photo Left: Dr Allan Rattey, InterGrain National Oat Breeder launching Minnie at OATSP0.

Photo Right: Reviewing the Wickein trial site of the GRDC NGN Deep Sown Oat project at the spring field day.



Project UPDATE

By Franco Renteria, Facey Group Agricultural Research & Extension Coordinator



Keep Up With Mouse Surveillance



With three rounds of 2024 surveillance completed as a part of the GRDC-funded CSIRO Mouse Monitoring and Surveillance project, mouse numbers remain low across most regions of Australia. Still, moderate activity has surfaced in the Queensland Darling Downs and parts of central and northern NSW. The patchy distribution between paddocks makes it essential to monitor multiple fields, especially barley or crops prone to head loss.

In WA, Farmanco lead the mouse surveillance and Facey Group tracked mouse activity in this region. Albany, Geraldton, and Kwinana East report little to no movement, while Kwinana West and Esperance have low to moderate activity at a few sites. October surveillance confirmed this downward trend from April and July. Notably, in our region (Kwinana West), previously high activity during Round 2, saw a decline in Round 3. Chew card assessments indicate minimal overall impact, but ongoing monitoring is key as conditions change.

Dry summer conditions and a late seasonal break limited early breeding opportunities, with low moisture and feed hindering population growth through autumn and spring. However, activity is expected to rise into autumn 2025 as conditions improve.

CSIRO credits the drop in numbers between Rounds 2 and 3 to cooler temperatures and limited food. Still, sites with moderate to high activity should be monitored closely over summer, as post-harvest feed could boost breeding. Early action will be crucial to maintaining low numbers and protecting crops.

		PORT ZONE: KWINANA WEST														
		Northam	Harvey	Perth	Mandurah	Bullfinch	Manjim	Highbury	KIM BICK	Yallock	Wagait	Conran	Karri	Blair	Blair West	Geog Bick
		Cereals	Cereals	Cereals	Wheat	Cereals	Wheat	Oats	Oats	Cereals	Cereals	Cereals	Barley	Cereals	Cereals	Barley
		9-Apr	9-Apr	9-Apr	9-Apr	9-Apr	9-Apr	9-Apr	9-Apr	9-Apr	15-Apr	15-Apr	15-Apr	15-Apr	15-Apr	
ROUND 1	ACTIVE BURROW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	
	BAIT CARD	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	
	Avg Active Burrow	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	Est Mice / Ha	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	
ROUND 2	DATE	4-Jul	7-Jul	6-Jul	4-Jul	4-Jul	9-Jul	4-Jul	4-Jul	4-Jul	4-Jul	11-Jul	16-Jul	13-Jul	16-Jul	
	ACTIVE BURROW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	HIGH	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	
	BAIT CARD	MCB	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	HIGH	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	
	Bait Card Chewed %	12.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	91.8%	0.0%	1.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.3%	0.0%	
ROUND 3	DATE	11-Oct	11-Oct	11-Oct	11-Oct	11-Oct	11-Oct	11-Oct	11-Oct	11-Oct	16-Oct	17-Oct	17-Oct	17-Oct		
	ACTIVE BURROW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW		
	BAIT CARD	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	MCB	HIGH	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW		
	Bait Card Chewed %	0.0%	1.0%	0.0%	0.0%	88.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%		

Figure 1. Mouse surveillance results for 2024 first, second, and third rounds in Kwinana West area

Other relevant information:

GRDC Mouse Control website:

<https://grdc.com.au/resources-and-publications/resources/mouse-management>

MouseAlert (hosted by FeralScan): <https://www.feralscan.org.au/mousealert/>

Dept of Ag., Fisheries & Forestry (DAFF):

<https://www.agriculture.gov.au/biosecurity-trade/pests-diseases-weeds/mouse-infestation>

CSIRO rodent management: <https://research.csiro.au/rm/>



CASE STUDY

AgriFutures – Producer Technology Uptake Program

PROJECT BACKGROUND

With support from AgriFutures, the Facey Group has installed a network of weather stations covering over 370,000 hectares. This includes three 6-meter weather stations and eight 2-meter weather stations, primarily located near a Facey Group on-farm trial with the ability to easily move the 2m stations each year in location to farming system trials.

These stations provide real-time measurements, with temperature and humidity recorded at 1.5 meters, and wind and rainfall monitored at 2 meters. Additional data, such as Delta-T and fire index, can be accessed anytime through the service provider's online dashboard.

The installation has proven valuable for on-farm decision-making and in-season monitoring. Furthermore, it has enhanced fire preparedness in the region, with local fire control officers eager to utilise the information during critical fire risk periods. This comprehensive weather data aids in making informed decisions over a large area. The initiative is also being expanded to neighbouring shires, leveraging on-farm weather stations for mutual benefits with the potential of linking all networks together in the future a real possibility.

AW LYNEHAM & SON - POPANYINNING WA

Mixed farming inclusive of pig enterprise.

The Lyneham family's investment in technology for their agricultural operations near Popanyinning in Western Australia has proven to be highly beneficial, yielding a return on investment within 12 to 18 months. Their initial outlay of approximately \$30,000 for weather stations, tank-level sensors, and remote pump control has not only streamlined water management for their pig operation but also enhanced efficiency significantly. By enabling remote monitoring and control, they save 1 to 1.5 hours daily, reducing the risks associated with water leaks and minimizing potential losses whilst maintaining animal health and comfort.



Steve Lyneham, Owner
Image courtesy of Professional Pig Community

In the 2024 season, the Lyneham's expanded their farming operation by leasing cropping farmland over 60 km away from the main farm. With the support of Facey Group and the AgriFutures PTUP Progression Grant, the installation of a weather station that provides critical data on temperature, humidity, wind, and rain was installed on this lease farm next to a small plot trial which was hosted on this property. This technology has allowed them to monitor weather conditions remotely, providing peace of mind and ensuring they can make informed decisions even from a distance. Thankfully for 2024, major weather events like frost haven't occurred.

Looking ahead, the Lyneham's plan to further enhance their operations by adding more weather stations across their properties and installing additional technology items such as flow meter monitors on fuel storage. These additions will improve security and operational efficiency, solidifying their commitment to leveraging technology for better farm management.

NEXT STEPS

Facey Group plans to further develop this project, expanding the weather station network and integrating various on-farm IoT devices. This will enhance connectivity and efficiency for farming operations while also serving as a vital resource for community preparedness and awareness during peak fire seasons.



Picture Above Left: 6m Weather Station Rain Gauge.
Picture Above Right: 6m Weather Station on farm install at Harrismith
Picture Below: On Farm water asset monitoring



FREE ONLINE WEBINAR

End of Year Highlights: Drought Resilience in Action

Join us to take a closer look at the year's SW Drought Hub and Future Drought Fund Projects and their progress!

Episode 3: Innovative Applications for Improving Crop Health

Facey Group, Node of the South-West WA Drought Resilience Adoption and Innovation Hub, founded by the Australian Government's Future Drought Fund, are excited to host our End-of-Year Highlights webinar series.

In our final episode of the series, we welcome two esteemed guests who are making significant strides in agricultural innovation.

First, Samantha Viljoen, a Ph.D. student with the Bioplastic Innovation Hub and SoilsWest at Murdoch University, will provide valuable insights and updates on the innovative SMART SPRAYS biodegradable polymer spray designed to enhance crop water retention and improve soil health.

Next, Tona Sanchez-Palacios, Lecturer and Research Fellow at the School of Agricultural Sciences at the Food Futures Institute of Murdoch University, will present on agronomic biofortification of wheat with zinc, focusing on foliar fertilisers' effectiveness in enhancing grain quality for food and animal feed.

Tune in where ever you are ... harvester, chaser, grain bin line up or at home with a cuppa. Have questions you want answered? Email them through to agrec@faceygroup.org.au for our hosts to consider prior to the webinar!

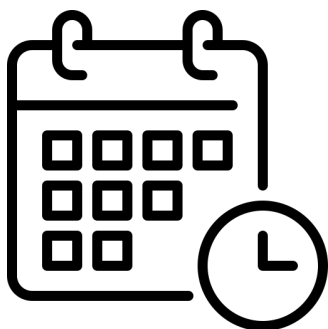
FACEY GROUP



Samantha Viljoen
Ph.D. Student, Bioplastic
Innovation Hub
MU Murdoch University



Tona Sanchez-Palacios
Lecturer & Research
Fellow Scientist
MU Murdoch University



Thursday, 12 December 3pm

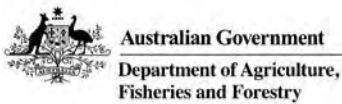


REGISTER NOW

Future Drought Fund - SW Drought HUB



By Franco Renteria - Facey Group Agricultural Research & Extension Coordinator



South-West WA
Drought Resilience Adoption
and Innovation Hub

Facey Group at the vanguard of Drought Resilience: Learnings from 2024

At Facey Group, collaboration has always been at the heart of our mission to support local farming communities. This commitment has been significantly strengthened through our partnership with the Drought Hub Project, which has expanded our ability to share insights, initiatives, and opportunities aimed at enhancing drought resilience across Western Australia. By connecting with a diverse network of stakeholders, we are better equipping our growers to thrive in an increasingly challenging climate.

Off to a good start!

At our Trials Night in March, we were privileged to have Hayley Norman from CSIRO present the results of the Saltbush and Novel Legumes Understorey project, highlighting its potential to enhance sheep productivity. This research showcased an innovative approach to bridging the feed gap, leveraging the improved Anameka™ saltbush alongside nitrogen-fixing legumes such as Serradella and Lucerne. By integrating these species, both saltbush and pasture performance can be optimised, particularly during challenging seasons. The success of this system has led to the project's extension through the Evergreen grant, fostering a growing community of practice and reinforcing its viability in our region.

Hay and Silage Workshop

In July, Facey Group co-hosted a Hay and Silage Workshop at the WA College of Agriculture in Narrogin, with Western Beef Association. The workshop went beyond technical guidance, providing growers with actionable strategies to enhance feed quality through forage testing and efficient silage management. Attendees also gained access to the practical resource Successful Silage, a comprehensive guide packed with tips and insights to refine hay and silage practices. For those who couldn't attend, a hard copy is available at Facey Group's office, offering ongoing support to ensure livestock productivity during challenging seasons.



Optimising Pasture for Profit

During AgPro's Management's August Field Day in Wagin, growers gained valuable insights into forward-thinking strategies that directly enhance pasture performance and livestock efficiency. Discussions on the economic advantages of grazing lupins highlighted their profitability, driven by their nitrogen-fixing capabilities, making them a cost-effective alternative to traditional cereal options. The session on eID technology introduced flexible and affordable solutions for livestock tracking, offering improved management opportunities. Additionally, pasture trials reinforced Serradella's potential as a resilient option for the region, sparking interest in further benchmarking its performance to strengthen pasture diversity.

Future Drought Fund - SW Drought HUB Update Cont.

Unlocking Natural Capital for Long-term Gains

In September, our participation in the Wheatbelt Natural Capital Workshop in Northam brought fresh opportunities for members interested in landscape restoration and carbon farming. Our collaboration with University of Western Australia (UWA)'s research teams has already initiated conversations on future projects in carbon sequestration and saline land rehabilitation—both critical for increasing on-farm resilience. This means potential access to funding and expertise in transforming marginal lands into productive assets, which could significantly boost farm profitability while improving the landscape in our region.

Driving Innovation through Drought Preparedness

November's Preparing for Drought Workshop in Boyup Brook allowed us to share member-driven insights into confinement feeding practices, sparking broader discussions on farm management innovations. Through this platform, our members gained access to initiatives like WaterSmart Farms, focusing on desalination and water quality improvements, and new data science applications with Edith Cowan University (ECU). These insights laid the groundwork for future trials and highlighted how precision farming tools can help manage water resources more effectively.



Natural Capital Production Landscape Example: Desalination & Circular Economy

But what about the salt/brine waste?

Process developed at MIT could turn concentrated brine into useful chemicals, making desalination more efficient.

Circular economy – Altech Batteries - sodium chloride grid storage battery

Commodities	
Lact	Mg(OH) ₂
NaCl	Cl ₂
CaCO ₃	NaOH
Br/Br ₂	Br

Our webinar series, “End of Year Highlights: Drought Resilience in Action,” builds on these discussions, providing members with cutting-edge research on crop nutrition (Zn biofortification) and water retention techniques to improve soil resilience. If you missed tuning in to these webinars, recordings will be available on our website.

Moving forward ...

As we move into 2025, the focus will be on expanding these valuable connections and delivering more member-centric trials and projects. Every workshop, field day, and partnership we engage in is designed to ensure our members have the latest research, practical tools, and expert guidance to thrive. Whether it's through improved pastures, better livestock tracking, or access to carbon farming initiatives, our members stand to gain real advantages from these efforts, ensuring that resilience is not just a concept but a measurable outcome on their farms.

Future Drought Fund - SW Drought HUB Update Cont.

My Climate View: A Tool for Planning and Adapting to Future Climate Challenges

My Climate View is a free digital tool designed to help Australian farmers make informed decisions and build long-term climate resilience. By providing climate projections for up to 50 years, it offers valuable insights tailored to your specific farm, commodity, and local climate.

It allows exploration of historical and future climate data for 20 different farm commodities, including key crops like wheat, barley, and canola. The tool helps you understand how factors such as seasonal rainfall timing and intensity may change in your region, allowing you to adjust your farming practices accordingly.

Developed by CSIRO in partnership with the Bureau of Meteorology and funded by the Australian Government's Future Drought Fund (FDF), My Climate View aims to reduce the impact of climate change on Australian agriculture and support planning strategies for upcoming seasons. The tool is regularly updated, featuring growing seasons and non-seasonal rainfall, frost at flowering, heat damage at flowering, soil moisture at sowing, and average rainfall, temperature, and evapotranspiration data.

By using My Climate View, you can stay ahead of climate trends and better prepare your farm for future challenges, ensuring sustainable production for years to come.



Image: Past and projected future growing season rainfall in Wickopin location

Sources:

- [My Climate View Tool](#)
- [ABOUT My Climate Tool](#)

Effective Strategies for Sheep Management in Tough Seasons

Managing sheep during challenging seasons requires proactive planning and timely decision-making to ensure both animal welfare and your farm's financial health. Recognising key triggers, such as the absence of rain by late May, can help you adjust strategies early and maximise available opportunities. Two main strategies stand out for managing poor seasons: increasing your carrying capacity by producing more feed to sustain your stock and reducing feed demand by adjusting stock numbers to match available resources.

Future Drought Fund - SW Drought HUB Update Cont.

Understanding which phase your enterprise is in will help you prioritise actions more effectively. Depending on the situation, the following tactics can either enhance carrying capacity or reduce feed demand:

Tactics to Increase Carrying Capacity	Outcomes
Supplementary feeding	Maintains stock condition and flock productivity.
Using containment areas	Protects soil, ground cover, and pasture growth.
Rotational or strip grazing	Boosts winter and spring pasture yields.
Grazing crops	Reduces supplementary feeding needs.

Tactics to Reduce Feed Demand	
Early stock sales	Preserves resources for the core flock.
Adjusting stock off-farm	Maintains flock size while reducing local pressure.

In challenging conditions, prioritising which sheep to feed is essential for maintaining a healthy flock. The core flock for reproduction—mature ewes aged 2.5 to 3.5 years—should always take priority. Rising maidens, which represent the future potential of your flock, also need attention. Older ewes (4.5 years and older) have a lower reproductive value and can be fed less intensively. Weaners and wethers, unless feed is abundant, are typically the lowest priority for feeding.

When paddock feed becomes scarce, supplementary feeding is critical in sustaining the flock. Energy-rich diets are essential for maintaining ewe condition, particularly during lactation. Combining grains like lupins with roughage helps meet nutritional needs. Regularly assessing stock conditions and adjusting feed rations ensures all animals receive proper nutrition. Grains should be introduced gradually to avoid acidosis, with cereal grain quantities increasing slowly over time.

Effective feed planning not only supports the flock's health but also helps with financial efficiency. For example, feeding 100 ewes in confinement during a poor season requires around 17 tonnes of lupins, costing about \$60 per head. By adjusting tactics, such as early offloading, you can reduce costs and better manage limited resources. Proactive planning is also important in managing risks such as grain poisoning and acidosis. Gradually introducing grains can prevent these issues, and if symptoms arise, it's crucial to consult a veterinarian immediately for proper intervention.

In dry seasons, low rainfall often severely limits pasture production, making early planning crucial for managing feed and stock. Farmers should make decisions early, monitoring stock condition and adjusting strategies as needed. Consulting with advisors, such as livestock consultants and financial planners, can provide valuable guidance tailored to specific farm situations. Managing feed efficiently is essential; starting supplementary feeding early helps maintain sheep weight, which is cheaper than attempting to regain lost weight later. Confinement feeding can also reduce energy expenditure, as sheep will expend less energy walking when feed is scarce. Prioritise feeding mature ewes (2.5 to 3.5 years) and healthy weaners while considering selling wethers and less critical stock first. Separating ewes by condition score and feeding accordingly can minimise the amount of supplementary feed required.

Future Drought Fund - SW Drought HUB Update Cont.

Lastly, it's important to consider mental health during tough seasons. Seeking support and advice from trusted networks can help you navigate both personal and business challenges. Planning early and utilising resources like feed budgets will help manage dry conditions effectively, ensuring both the welfare of your flock and the financial resilience of your farm.

For detailed strategies and resources, visit:

- [Supplementary Feeding and Feed Budgeting of Sheep](#)
- [Grain Overload in Stock](#)
- [Feed Cost Calculator](#)
- [Lambing Planner](#)
- [Key points - managing sheep in the poor season](#)
- [Strategies and tactics for sheep producers in a poor season](#)

Feed cost calculator

This tool can be used to work out the lowest cost of a number of different sheep feeds. It can also be used to work out the feed value of a chosen mix of feed in terms of its energy and protein value and provide a cost per tonne, per megajoule of energy and per kilo of protein.

Help

Feed 1

Feed name: mature grass hay

Cost on farm (\$/t):

Feed 2

Dry Matter (%): 88

Energy (MJ/kg DM): 8

Crude Protein (%): 8

Feed 3

(default values are provided for the selected feeds - please replace with feed test results where available)

Mature grass hay

Energy:	7.040MJ/t as fed
Energy Cost:	\$/MJ as fed
Protein:	7% as fed
Protein Cost:	\$/kg

Composition and Cost of Feed Mix

Help

■ 100% Mature grass hay
■ 8%
■ 0%

Results

Energy (MJ/kg) as fed:	7 MJ/kg
Energy (MJ/t DM):	7.040 MJ/t DM
Protein % as fed:	7%
Energy (\$/MJ DM):	0.00 \$/MJ DM
Dry Matter of mix (%):	88%
Total Cost (\$/t):	0.00 \$/t
Not all costs are included as data missing	
Protein (\$/kg protein):	0.00

Sheep Details: Pasture availability, Feed 1, Feed 2, Feed 3

Class of Sheep: Dry Sheep, 4-600mm

Start Month: January, Pasture Growth: average

Frame Size: medium (30-40kg)

Composition of Feed Mix: 100% (100% lupine, 0% barley, 0% wheat)

Dry Sheep

Month	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Total
Energy intake (MJD/head)	5.2	5.5	6.0	5.8	5.4	5.2	5.3	5.8	6.1	6.1	5.6	5.5	
Energy requirements (MJD/head)	6.0	4.5	4.3	4.3	4.1	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	
Energy for live feed (MJD/head)	5.1	4.6	4.7	4.4	4.0	3.8	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	
Feeds Required													
Lupine	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Barley	13.4	16.5	27.8	8.1	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	87.8
Wheat	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total kg per month	13.4	16.5	27.8	8.1	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	87.8
Total kg per day	0.4	0.5	0.7	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	
Cost of feed per day													
Cost of feed per month													
Cost of feed per month per sheep													



Image1: Feed Cost Calculator

Image2: Annual feed budget for sheep enterprises

Future Drought Fund - SW Drought HUB Update Cont.

Pastures from Space™: Maximizing Pasture Insights

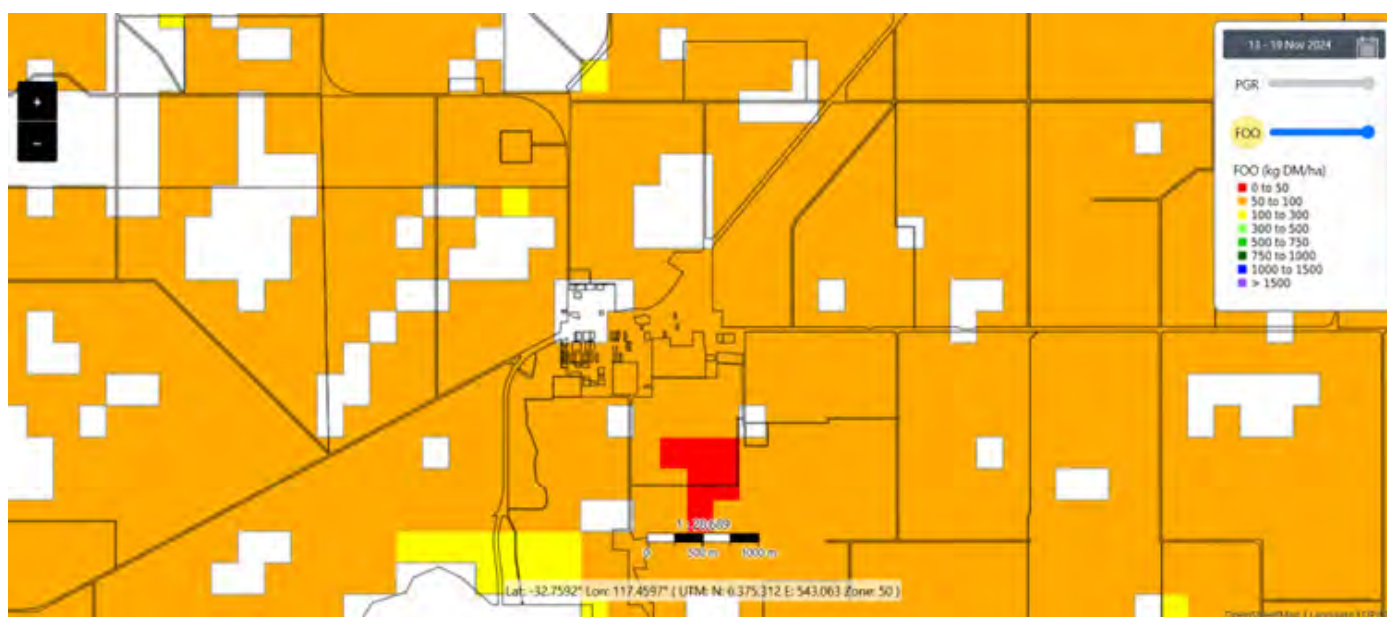
The Pastures from Space™ system combines satellite imagery and weather data to track pasture growth by modelling the effects of soil moisture, temperature, and sunlight. Adjustments for soil and landscape differences are made, assuming a general clover-grass pasture type. While not perfect, calibration studies confirm it accurately predicts 70–75% of pasture growth variations.

Developed by the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD), this satellite-based tool lets you benchmark pasture development in your area using either GPS coordinates or your Property Identification Code (PIC). It provides open access to comparative data on Pasture Growth Rates (PGR) and Food On Offer (FOO) from 2019 to the present. This historical data allows you to evaluate pasture performance across seasons and understand how seasonal variations have impacted food availability in paddocks.



Image Above: Pasture of Space layout around Wickiepin Town area

Image Below: Pasture of Space Food On Offer (FOO) performance around Wickiepin Town area



Future Drought Fund - SW Drought HUB Update Cont.

While highly useful, Pastures from Space™ performs best with biomass levels below 2000kg/ha. It may be less accurate for high-growth pastures or under conditions like cloud interference, soil variability, and plant structure changes. Predictions are most reliable during early growth phases when metabolisable energy and digestibility are at their peak. Focusing on these critical growth periods allows you to maximize the tool's value for informed pasture management to improve sheep nutrition under potentially difficult conditions.

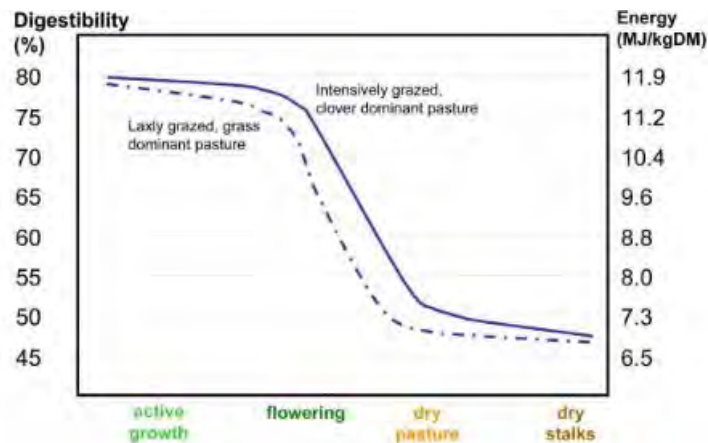


Image: Digestibility decline in annual grasses and clover in Mediterranean climate.

Useful information:

Pastures from Space™ Tool

Access the satellite-based platform to monitor pasture growth and benchmark development in your area. Visit [Pastures from Space™](#)

Annual Pasture Quantity and Quality

Learn about pasture performance and quality across the South West of WA to make informed decisions for your paddocks.

Explore [Annual Pasture Information](#)

Understanding Pastures from Space™

Dive deeper into how the tool works and its applications for sheep and livestock farmers in WA.

[Learn More About Pastures from Space™](#)

Future Drought Fund - SW Drought HUB

Collaborating for Resilience: Facey Group at the Drought Innovation Frontier

On October 23, 2024, Facey Group was proud to be part of the Preparing for Drought workshop at Rylington Park, Boyup Brook. This event, organized by South West Natural Resource Management (SW NRM), brought together experts from the South West Western Australia Drought and Innovation Hub, making vital knowledge accessible to local farmers. With 26 engaged participants—12 farmers and 14 industry specialists—we had the opportunity to share insights from our Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA) led Deferred Grazing and Confinement Feeding project and discuss essential strategies for drought resilience.



Image: Presentation panel and MCs (from left to right) – Franco Renteria (FG), Mary Hanson (ECU), Michael Wright (Rhodes Pastoral), Richard George (DPIRD), Tina Astbury (FG), Kerry Brown (ECU), Tom Picton-Warlow (MobileGlobal), and Peter Clifton (SW NRM)

Natural Capital for Profitability

Tomas Picton-Warlow spoke about the rising interest from investors, especially superannuation companies, in natural capital initiatives. These projects—ranging from biodiversity to ecosystem services—offer significant potential for growers, particularly through collaboration at the catchment level. By connecting with funding opportunities, we can help unlock financial benefits, reduce energy costs, and aid the revegetation of saline landscapes.

Confinement Feeding and Pasture Efficiency

Facey Group's presentation on confinement feeding showed its practical value during critical periods like lambing. Paired with deferred pastures, this system ensures livestock have consistent food, even during late-season breaks. These strategies are simple yet effective, helping farmers navigate challenging conditions and manage their livestock systems more efficiently.

Data-Driven Agriculture

Data science is quickly transforming farming practices. With collaborations, like those with ECU, data-driven

Future Drought Fund - SW Drought HUB

Collaborating for Resilience: Facey Group at the Drought Innovation Frontier - Cont.

approaches can help farmers make more precise, sustainable decisions. Integrating these innovations allows growers to optimise resources, enhance resilience, and stay ahead in a changing agricultural landscape.

Enhancing Water Use Efficiency

Richard George and Michael Wright shared invaluable strategies for improving water use efficiency. They focused on practical measures like better water retention, monitoring water sources, and ensuring sustainable usage during dry periods. These efforts strengthen drought resilience by optimising water systems and maintaining water quality for long-term farm productivity.

This workshop exemplifies Facey Group's ongoing commitment to innovation and resilience. By sharing actionable insights and fostering collaboration, we continue empowering farmers to thrive in an evolving climate. We look forward to continuing this journey together, unlocking new opportunities to support farming systems in our region.

Relevant Links:

Preparing for Drought workshop

<https://hub.gga.org.au/media-releases/hub-regional-node-hosts-workshop-to-help-producers-prepare-for-drought/>

Confinement Feeding and Deferred Grazing Project

<https://faceygroup.org.au/confinement-feeding-and-deferred-grazing/>

Transformational Project – Natural Capital Opportunities

<https://hub.gga.org.au/barriers-and-opportunities-for-agricultural-natural-capital-as-an-asset-class/>



Image: Tina Astbury and Franco Renteria MLA update presentation.

Industry NEWS

By Geoff Duddy, Principal Consultant, Sheep Solutions



The Future of Feedlotting Lambs in Western Australia

With potential legislative changes occurring in the Western Australian lamb industry, Facey Group contacted Geoff Duddy, Principal Consultant at Sheep Solutions in NSW, to gain his insights on the future viability of feedlotting lambs in Western Australia.

In 2017, the Department of Agriculture and Food, WA commissioned Sheep Solutions to investigate feedlotting lambs in Western Australia. The economic viability was found to be marginal under most conditions. However, recent market changes and a rise in sheep prices may present new opportunities.

Western Australia is well-suited for feedlotting for several reasons:

- **Abundant and affordable grain.**
- **Lower store lamb prices—store lambs generally account for about 60-65% of total feedlot costs.**
- **An increasing number of export-based processors.**

Nevertheless, the following limitations should be considered:

- **A relatively small number of processors and competition.**
- **A smaller domestic market compared to eastern states.**
- **Lower finished lamb values.**

Finished lamb prices in Western Australia are typically \$2-\$3 per kilo lower than those in eastern states. Currently, in Victoria, producers can expect reasonable profits from feedlotting, as low store lamb values and finished lamb contracts range from \$8.00 to \$8.50, with feed costs at \$350/t for grains and \$550-\$600/t for pulses.

As with any complex decision, a desktop analysis of the risks and rewards can help farm businesses determine whether feedlotting lambs will be profitable. Important considerations include the availability of contracts, seasonal variations in produce—which can be significant in WA—the relative difference in store lamb costs compared to finished lamb prices, and the availability and pricing of feed. The feedlot calculator below can assist in this analysis.



Photo: Tom Wittwer's spring lambs at weaning looking optimistic about the future of the sheep industry.

Future trends in lamb prices will depend on how many producers exit the sheep industry altogether. If sheep numbers significantly decrease, existing processors will compete for the reduced stock, likely driving up lamb prices and increasing the potential profitability of feedlotting.

Further Reading:

<https://www.feedinglivestock.vic.gov.au/2024/10/21/does-it-make-cents-to-finish-lambs/>

<https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/animals-and-livestock/nutrition/feeding-practices/feedlot-calculator.>

<https://www.agric.wa.gov.au/sites/gateway/files/Investor%20Ready%20Feedlot%20Report%20-%20Geoff%20Duddy.pdf>

Industry NEWS

Request a free disease sample kit if you have found dead rabbits recently!

Did you know, RabbitScan offers a free disease testing service, in partnership with CSIRO and the Centre for Invasive Species Solutions (CISS)? Citizen science is playing a huge role in rabbit disease monitoring across Australia, and you can assist by reporting dead rabbits in your local area, or submitting rabbit samples for testing.



A recent surge in rabbit calicivirus (RHDV) and myxomatosis in rabbit populations is being noted amongst landholders and communities. **If you find dead rabbits in your local area and are willing to collect a sample for analysis, please request a free sample kit from RabbitScan.**

How do I request a sample kit?

1. Head to the [RabbitScan Biocontrol Tracker Map - click here](#)
2. After opening the map, find your location by zooming the Map to your local area.
3. Click 'Record Disease' on the top left corner and drop a pin on the Map at your location
4. Enter as much information as you can, ensuring you select '**Submit a Sample**', then enter your postal address and click '**Submit**'
5. We will send you a sampling kit (with instructions) and a reply paid envelope to submit your sample.
6. Once the sample has been tested, we will notify you of the results via email and display them on the [RabbitScan Biocontrol Tracker Map - click here](#)

What do I do with the animal in the meantime?

If possible, place the dead rabbit in a sealed and labelled plastic bag in the freezer until your kit arrives. If the entire rabbit cannot be stored, retaining only the liver or a hind-leg will be sufficient. *Remember to always wear gloves when handling animals, and wash your hands thoroughly afterwards.

Tips to identifying disease in rabbits

Rabbits that die from viral infection sometimes have obvious signs, including:

- RHDV infected animals often have their heads tilted back when deceased and may have a blood-stained nose.
- Myxomatosis infected animals often have inflamed lesions around their eyes and nose.

The role of citizen scientists is invaluable to understand how diseases behave in rabbit populations, and optimising the use of rabbit diseases to reduce rabbits and the damage they cause – We thank you in advance for your contribution and support! Read more about the CSIRO program, click here - [Rabbit disease detectives on the case for virus monitoring - CSIRO](#)

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us via e-mail feralscan@feralscan.org.au, or visit the [Contact Us](#) page on [RabbitScan](#)

Best regards

Peter West and the FeralScan Team

Industry NEWS

Animal rights activists again prove that they can't be taken seriously

WoolProducers Australia (WoolProducers) has responded strongly to a report titled "The Broken Promise" released by animal rights groups, including the Australian Alliance for Animals, Humane Society International, and Four Paws.

The report focuses on the term "live lamb cutting," a sensationalised label intended to replace the established terminology of mulesing.

WoolProducers CEO, Ms. Jo Hall, criticised the report, stating, "It's an interesting approach from groups who are purporting to be serious animal welfare experts and who are seeking a seat at the table with government in animal welfare discussions, to start making up terms."

Read full article [HERE](#)

Maximise your nitrogen use efficiency

Losing nitrogen to the environment can be costly, and the cost is higher than just the value of the nitrogen if grain yield is also compromised.

Nitrogen is an essential nutrient for dry matter production, shoot density and yield, so maximising nutrient use efficiency when applying nitrogen is critical.

When cereal crops begin to mature, nitrogen within the plant is redirected to developing grains then carbohydrates (from photosynthesis) are deposited within the grain. It is the level of carbohydrates that determines not just grain size and yield but the final grain protein level.

The first step in planning for nitrogen application is a simple budgeting process to assess nitrogen requirements.

Read full article [HERE](#)

Adding mineral mulch to soils in WA shows promising results

Novel research applying gravel mulch to challenging soils in Western Australia's grainbelt has delivered surprising results for researchers, with significant improvement in wheat yields observed.

Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) senior research scientist, Wayne Parker, delivered the trial results at the Australian Agronomy Conference, which ran from 21-24 October in Albany, WA.

Parker said crop production on alkaline-sodic-saline soils in WA often fluctuated between excellent productivity in years with above-average rainfall and poor production when rainfall was below average. "Ameliorating these soils requires improving water infiltration, reducing soil evaporation, leaching excess salts and removing compacted layers," Parker said.

Read full article [HERE](#)

Nutrien triples domestic manufacturing capacity

One of Australia's largest agricultural businesses has announced plans to expand its local manufacturing footprint to better serve Australian farmers and increase supply chain security.

Nutrien Ag Solutions has commenced work to establish a new plant nutrition, crop chemical and animal health manufacturing facility in Laverton, Victoria. The facility will have the capacity to produce critical farming inputs for growers on the east coast of Australia.

Nutrien Ag Solutions Managing Director Kelly Freeman said with increasingly volatile global supply chains, it made sense to expand the company's onshore manufacturing capability and inject more reliability in the local supply chain.

Read full article [HERE](#)

A brains trust to help you make profitable grazing decisions

Having the right tools and advice to inform and validate decisions has helped Paula Carroll endure the hard seasons and thrive in the good ones.

Paula runs 'Tirano Farms', a beef enterprise in WA, in partnership with her husband and in-laws. In 2023, she attended the MLA Profitable Grazing Systems (PGS) training program Grazing Matcher™. The group-based course is designed to improve outcomes for producers by teaching them to better match grazing pressure, fertiliser application, animal requirements and market demands.

The program was developed specifically for southern WA, where due to the mediterranean climate, around 60% of pastures growth occurs in spring. This means producers rely heavily on preserved fodder to fill the feed gap from late summer through to early winter.

Read full article [HERE](#)

Industry NEWS

Aussie Beef brand breaking through the Korean market

Aussie Beef has established a strong foothold in the Korean retail market, becoming one of the most trusted and recognisable brands among Korean consumers. Its branding as “Hoju Chung Jung Woo”, meaning “clean and safe Australian beef,” reflects its image in Korea as a high-quality product.

Korea’s country of origin labelling laws are designed to inform consumers about the origin of products, particularly food items, to ensure transparency, prevent misleading practices, and protect domestic industries. There are strict rules for meat, including beef. Sellers must clearly indicate whether the meat is domestic or imported, and the specific country of origin must be mentioned (e.g. US, Australia).

Read full article [HERE](#)

New platform to help in the fight against farm injury

As the agricultural sector aims for zero on-farm fatalities, the launch of the Ag Safety Data Net (ASDN) is aiming to reinforce the collective responsibility for farm safety. The ASDN project is an initiative of the Rural Safety and Health Alliance, funded by the Cotton Research and Development Corporation, Grains Research and Development Corporation, Australian Wool Innovation, Australian Pork Limited, and AgriFutures Australia.

The ASDN project will develop and implement an ongoing data system that will provide meaningful metrics for farm safety planning, and for the first time report at industry, regional, state and national levels. The project is co-ordinated by AgHealth Australia and will run through until June 2027.

Read full article [HERE](#)

Apple safety features that could save your life

We have all heard horror stories about people crashing vehicles on quiet country roads and not being found for hours, or in some cases, days. For many people living in rural and remote Australia these aren’t just tales about a friend of a friend, but something that has happened to someone they know.

And it isn’t just motor vehicle crashes that can leave people injured, alone and unable to call for help. On

farms, losing consciousness due to falls from height, becoming trapped, or sustaining a serious injury that leaves you unable to move, are other examples of scenarios which could become life threatening. The cold reality is, in some of these situations, people die waiting for help that never arrives.

In today’s modern world, technology can be a life saver when things go wrong, with Apple devices now offering several safety features that people living and working in rural areas ought to know about.

This article explores some of the safety features available in Australia on Apple iPhones and iWatches, including how to set them up and use them.

Read full article [HERE](#)

GRDC National Grower Network ‘Summer Sesh’ Forums

GRDC National Grower Network forums will provide growers, advisers, industry and researchers with a clear and transparent avenue to raise issues (constraints and opportunities that impact on their farm profitability) with GRDC to ensure they are well understood and help inform GRDC’s RD&E investments.

The NGN Forums provide an additional valuable opportunity for GRDC and its research partners to extend and ground-truth locally relevant research outcomes with growers who are seeking to adopt the latest research in their farming systems and to shape relevant and impactful RD&E outcomes.

Emu Point - 13 Jan 2025 - Register [HERE](#)

Dunsborough - 14 Jan 2025 - Register [HERE](#)

Cervantes - 16 Jan 2025 - Register [HERE](#)

**GRDC National Grower
Network Summer
Sesh Forums**



Podcasts of the Month



Secrets We Keep Podcast

Baghdad Nights - Episode 1 - The bloke with the gun

Award-winning journalist Richard Baker takes you inside Australia's biggest corruption scandal.

In the lead up to the Iraq War, the Australian Wheat Board (AWB), gave \$300 million in illicit funds to Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein. Journalist Richard Baker meets Trevor Flugge, the AWB's chairman who went on to be the poster boy for the corruption scandal, thanks to a leaked photo.

[Listen HERE](#)



Boots Off Log On!

Ep 55: The farming game with Bill Malcolm

In this episode, we are joined by Professor Bill Malcolm, a longstanding leader in Australian agricultural economics and education, and Professor at The University of Melbourne. Since the 1980s, Bill has played a pivotal role in shaping farm management thinking across the industry.

Bill is also co-author of the widely recognised textbook 'The Farming Game', which has become an essential resource for agribusiness students all across Australia.

[Listen HERE](#)

A Little Bit Agricultural



A Little Bit Agricultural

Life on the Land with Rebecca Keeley

Australia's very own ag show! Oscar is an agricultural scientist and motorbike enthusiast and Andrew is a TV fisherman (Hook, Line and Sinker) who doesn't know much about farming!

Together, they cross the continent exploring and learning about what takes place in Australia's agricultural sector.

They have fun, they have adventures, and they see and share some amazing stories. Come along for the ride.

[Watch HERE](#)

NEWS from Our Partners

How sustainable is wheat price recovery?

Wheat prices in Australia and globally recovered this month from four-year lows, driven up by weather and war concerns. RaboResearch General Manager Stefan Vogel posed the question – “so, have the bearish price drivers experienced through August – including harvest pressure in the northern hemisphere and an expected record US corn yield – now been overcome?”

“Looking at fundamentals,” Mr Vogel said, “the US Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) September World Agriculture Supply and Demand Estimates (WASDE) report didn’t bring any bearish news, but was actually marginally bullish. A small increase in the US corn yield estimate for 2024/25 – and resulting slight production increase – was more than offset by a lower beginning stock”.



Stefan Vogel, General Manager - RaboResearch

“In addition, Russian and European corn production volumes were cut slightly, due to heat and dry in the Black Sea region,” he said.

“To avoid the need for rationing of global corn demand in 2024/25, Brazil has to overcome dry conditions for its 2025 harvest and Argentina can’t afford the potential impact of significant dryness from a possibly-developing La Nina event on its harvest.

For wheat, global production and consumption is still seen by the USDA to be rising slightly year on year.”



Rabobank

Mr Vogel said the EU wheat harvest estimate was cut further, due to poor results in France and Germany following rain damage.

He said Ukraine’s estimated wheat production was lifted slightly by the USDA (to close to last year’s volumes), while Russia’s was left unchanged this month (at 10 per cent lower than last year). However, Mr Vogel said, this year’s production isn’t currently the key market driver – rather it is the attack on a vessel carrying Ukrainian grain outside of Ukrainian waters (allegedly by Russian strategic bombers) that is a major market concern, as in recent months about 80 per cent of Ukraine’s grain exports have left the country on vessels taking a similar route.

“In addition, expectations for sown area of winter grains like wheat, barley, and canola in Ukraine, Russia, and Romania are eyed closely, given dry conditions which might result in reduced planting for the 2025 harvest.”

For Australia, Mr Vogel said the USDA increased the 2024/25 wheat production estimate by two million tonnes (from last month) to 32 million tonnes, or about 23 per cent higher than last year. “But while east and west coast conditions are good, dry conditions in South Australia and recent frosts in south-east Australia might not allow for this national production volume.

NEWS from Our Partners

How sustainable is wheat price recovery? - Cont.

“Canola markets, as expected, saw the USDA cutting the EU’s 2024 crop estimate to 17.7 million tonnes, down 12 per cent year on year, pushing forecast import needs well above 6.5 million tonnes and close to the 2022/23 record level. Almost half of those import volumes will likely come from Ukraine, but Ukraine’s export potential is down from last season and will soon run out of steam given the recent strong export pace.”

Mr Vogel said Australia could benefit from this, but Canada might become a much more aggressive exporter to the EU if China imposes import duties on Canadian canola in retaliation for Canada’s import duties on Chinese electric vehicles.

“In 2023,” he said “Canada exported well over half its canola to China and needs to gain market share elsewhere – including with major importers like Japan and Mexico. But, as Canada already holds well over 50 per cent share in these markets, it will likely also try to send more of its GM canola into the EU through aggressive pricing.”

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



Rabobank



Summit Fertilizers Narrogin Area Manager, David Hull at the Wandering Trial Site in June.

Enhanced Efficiency Fertilizers in Wandering

Current environmental awareness trends and the need to increase nitrogen use efficiency has seen Summit Fertilizers conduct a state-wide project investigating the application, use cases and benefits of our Enhanced Efficiency Fertilizer (EFF) product range; namely Urea N-Shield.

As part of this project, a trial was conducted near Wandering comparing Urea N-Shield NBPT & Urea N-Shield Dual to urea. N-Shield UAN HydroGuard was also compared against UAN, across three different rates of nitrogen.

Urea N-Shield NBPT is our urea coated product that is a green colour. NBPT is a compound that delays ammonia gas production by inhibiting urease activity in the soil. Ammonia gas is subject to volatilisation in certain conditions and is a contributor to nitrogen loss.



Urea N-Shield Dual, showing off it's blue colour

Urea N-Shield Dual is also coated on urea and will arrive on farm as a blue colour. Along with NBPT, it also contains DCD; a compound that delays the nitrification process, preventing nitrogen losses through leaching and de-nitrification.

N-Shield HydroGuard is mixed with UAN contains DCD, as well H2Optimise; a soil wetter and humectant with the ability to attract and retain moisture around it's position in the soil.

The site, a loamy gravel sand that experienced a decile 4 season, received 432mm of growing season rainfall.

75, 150 and 225 kgN/ha were each applied across 3 timings. These timings were included to assess if there was any interaction between different rates and the different inhibitor products used with them.

Full results from this trial will be available soon, so keep an eye out for them in a future edition of Facey Group's newsletter. For more information, please contact your Local Area Manager.

Proud Sponsors of the Facey Group



NEWS from Our Partners

Unlock more value this harvest with CBH Pools

As we head into another harvest season, now is the perfect time to explore how CBH Harvest Pools can enhance your grain marketing strategy. Whether you're dealing with a larger crop and lower cash prices or looking to capture more value throughout the marketing window, CBH pools offer a flexible and proven solution. Michael Buck, Head of Structured Products at CBH, shared why this year might be the ideal time to consider pools.

"In a season where grain prices aren't at their peak, CBH Harvest Pools give growers the ability to capture more value over time," said Michael.

"You're not tied to a fixed price at harvest, which means you can take advantage of price movements after the grain is in the bin."

Leverage global markets

CBH Harvest Pools provide growers with access to international markets, leveraging CBH's extensive relationships and global reach.

"We have long-standing relationships with key international customers who understand the value WA grain brings them," explained Michael.

"This global reach allows us to navigate a variety of markets, making sure your grain is positioned where demand is highest."

Adapt to market shifts

In an unpredictable and often volatile market, flexibility is key. CBH pools are designed to respond to sudden changes, whether it's shifts in global trade or unexpected market events.

"We've seen how quickly the market can change; CBH pools are set up to manage those shifts, so when opportunities arise – such as increased demand or market disruptions – we can act swiftly to maximise value for growers," said Michael.

A strategic diversification tool

By participating in CBH Harvest Pools, growers can diversify their marketing strategies and avoid being too reliant on spot prices at harvest. This risk management approach is crucial in forward planning, providing a steady and strategic alternative to selling grain in one go.

"Diversification is key," Michael said. "Pools offer another layer to your marketing strategy, spreading your risk and helping manage forward sales, especially in uncertain markets."

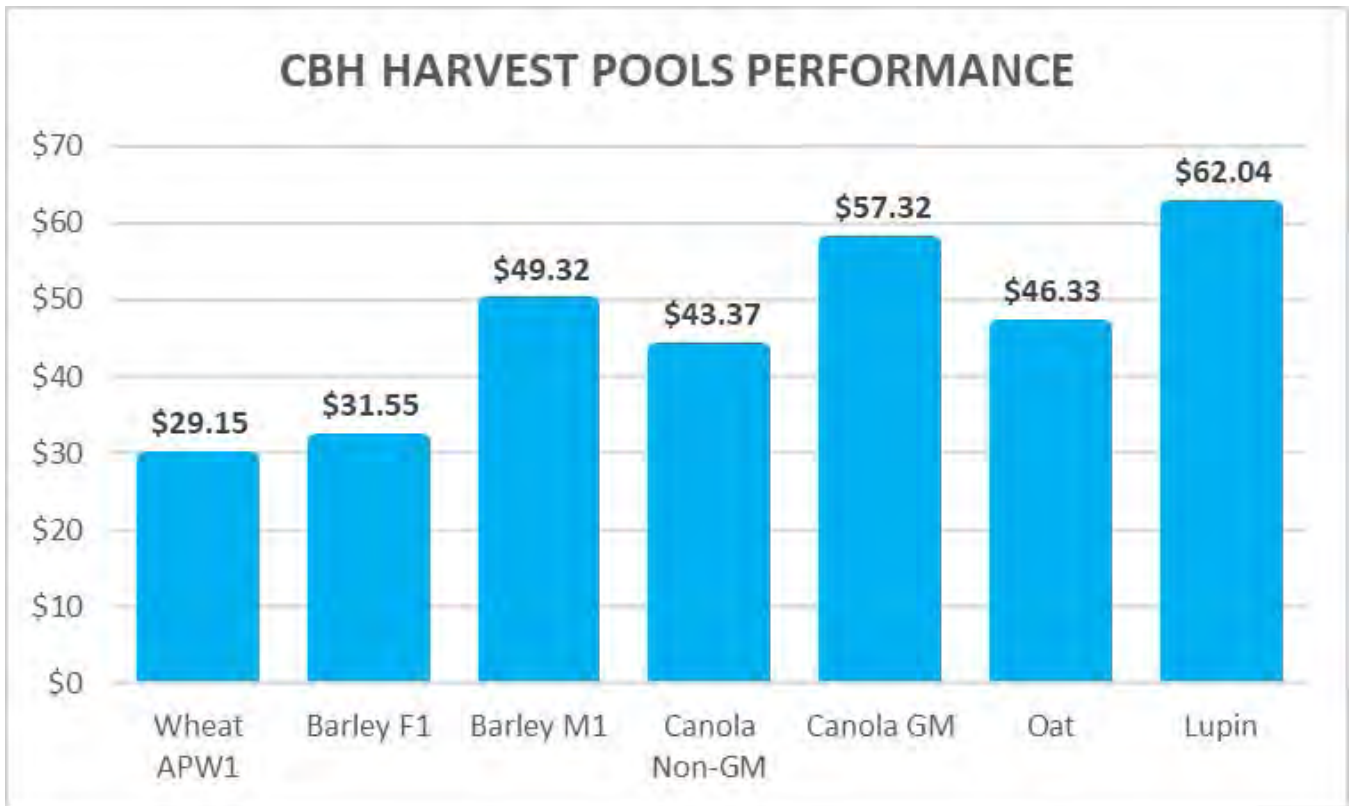
Consistent results

CBH Harvest Pools have a strong track record of delivering results. Over the past five seasons, they have delivered growers \$339m in value above average cash prices. This consistency shows that CBH pools are a reliable tool to add value over time.



NEWS from Our Partners

Unlock more value this harvest with CBH Pools - Cont.



Caption: Performance in dollar per tonne over the past 5 seasons. These values reflect the average out-performance of the pool compared to the average of the best available cash prices over the pool lifecycle.

Simple, streamlined process

Nominate your grain via CBH LoadNet or by contacting the Grower Service Centre on 1800 199 083. For those looking for a flexible, diversified, and high-value marketing option, CBH Harvest Pools are well-positioned to help you make the most of this harvest season.



NEWS from Our Partners

Extreme Weather

Unpredictable weather conditions are now commonplace in summer. Regular check-ins on your local weather patterns are a smart way to stay ahead of extreme weather patterns. Elders Weather is a great tool to assist. Bookmark it today! <https://www.eldersweather.com.au/>



**Learn about extreme and
unpredictable weather**

Are you prepared?



Insurance

NEWS from Our Partners

Insurance Review

It's important to consider the risks your farm business may face. Identify the type of risks you are exposed to, the chance of these occurring and their potential impact to your farm business. Contact our team at Elders Insurance Narrogin on 08 9820 8720 today to discuss your insurance needs and to book a free policy review. Consider the PDS and TMD to decide if the product is right for you.



**Think about
the risks
your farm
may face**



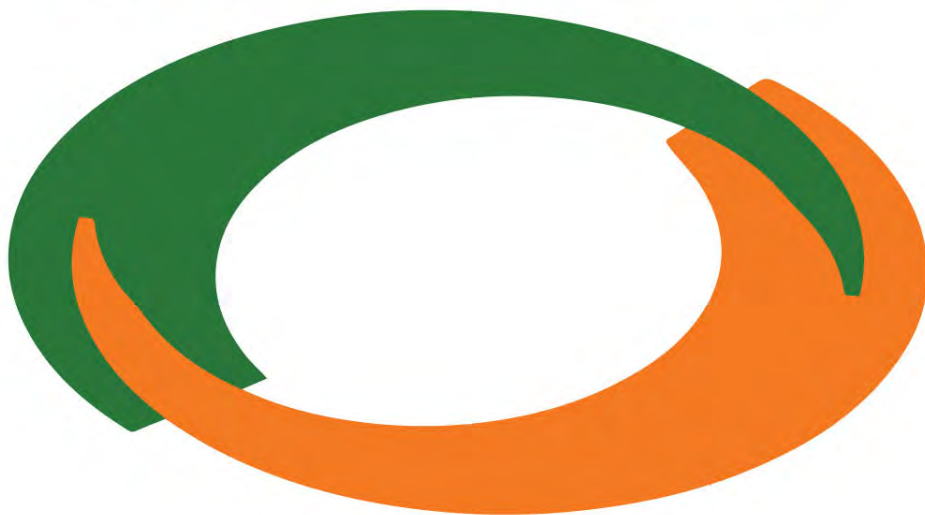
Great Southern Fuel Supplies

Would like to wish everyone
a Merry Christmas
and a safe and
prosperous New Year.



GREAT SOUTHERN
FUEL SUPPLIES

FACEY GROUP



Shaping the Future



'Facey Connect' Editor

Katrina Gray,
Communications & Engagement Coordinator