

SCF Focus

STIRLINGS TO COAST FARMERS

AUTUMN 2021 NEWSLETTER

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STIRLINGS TO COAST



FARMERS



JOTTINGS FROM THE CHAIR

Ken Drummond, SCF Chair

Hello SCF members

Here we go again rolling in to 2021, it seems like it's coming on fast. Just a reflection on 2020 as far as production goes. Our longer season south of the hills highlighted our ability to recover from an incredibly dry first half of the year. There were some mixed results, too much social distancing in some Canola, also swapping some Barley out for Wheat was not such a good idea in some cases. Our modern farming practises give us confidence that we can adapt to changing and challenging situations. We are also growing more varieties that are suited to our conditions. Farming is very sexy at the moment!

The work that SCF has been undertaking has made a big difference to its members' bottom line.

Nathan and staff have been doing a fantastic job, members can be confident their work is world class. SCF engaged Peter Cooke to do a strategic plan, some of you were surveyed, some non-members were canvassed as well. Peer learning and networking are highly valued. I encourage members to get involved in the planning days coming up, you can have a significant impact on the future direction of SCF. Peter facilitated our first Strategic Plan when we started, it is fantastic that he is involved again.

We are extremely fortunate Rebecca Willis is Chairing the Finance Committee. Rebecca has put in a huge effort along with board members Mark Preston and Jon Beasley along with our finance officer Taryn Graham (who loves numbers). I cannot thank them enough; we seem to have the right people at the right time stepping up.

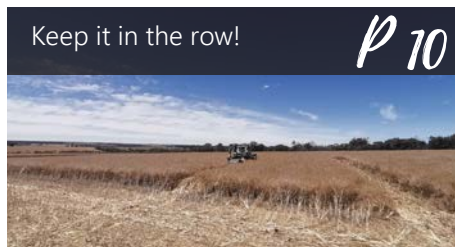
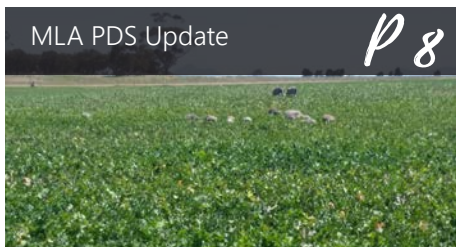
I have always said SCF is not just its membership base but also associated Ag service businesses. Sponsorship plays a big part in having more involvement from industry. Any suggestions on finding new sponsors is very welcome, there may be businesses you are involved with that would be keen to support us so please give it some thought and don't assume someone else has it covered.

To my Peers I encourage you to get the next generation involved in SCF, it is a wonderful place to gain experience.

Congratulations to Jon Beasley for taking on the Chairman's position, also Alaina Smith who is Deputy Chair. SCF is in excellent hands, please support them as much as you can.

Happy Farming

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CEO REPORT

Nathan Dovey, SCF CEO

Happy new year, everyone. Let us hope 2021 can be as profitable as 2020 with a little less drama. Although the Covid-19 pandemic is far from over, there does appear to be light at the end of the tunnel. I think the current aim is to have all Australians vaccinated by the end of October. In WA, we have been fortunate compared to most, but the recent 5-day lockdown showed how quickly the situation could turn nasty.

At SCF, just like our members, we have continued to soldier on and worry about the things we can control. Just recently, the R & D team received some excellent news. We successfully obtained two National Landcare Grants:

1. Optimised Pasture Management- Managing Pastures to their full potential. Tools & Technologies to help maximise ground cover and sustainably improve total farm productivity
2. Subsoil Manuring poorly structured clays in the high rainfall zone of south-western Australia.

The Pasture Management project allows us to complete more livestock research and combine it with Phil Honey's agricultural technology expertise. Phillip Mackie wrote the grant on subsoil manuring, looking at deep ripping and injecting high rates of products like compost, lime, gypsum into the subsoil to complete a semi-permanent change to the soil fertility. It is a high cost and high reward scenario that has been researched in Victoria's western districts.

I want to thank the members & sponsors that recently completed a survey with Peter Cooke and Nicol Taylor (Agknowledge) as part of the SCF strategic planning process. The team at Agknowledge has made the somewhat daunting process of completing a 5-year strategic plan quite simple. The information generated from the anonymous surveys has been a useful tool for me to direct SCF resources now and in the future. Recently, the board, invited members and SCF staff met at Motel LeGrande to discuss the group's progress against our previous strategic plan and look to the future to discuss where we want to be in five years.

If you have been wondering why you haven't heard about the annual SCF trials review day in 2021, this is because we will not be running it in its usual format. The group has decided to create short videos on our research projects where a staff member will go through the key results and lessons learnt. The videos will be available through YouTube, and links will be sent to members and sponsors as well as being published on our website. If you like this form of communication, please watch the videos and give us some feedback! We don't expect to do this every year, but short videos are something we can do more often to talk about research projects so you can keep up to date without having to leave the farm.

Along the same lines, we have made some significant upgrades to the board room to include a large TV and camera overlooking the board table. The idea is that we can now run a meeting for our various committees online and in-person simultaneously. We understand that travelling to Albany can make a 2-hour session take half a day for some of you. The new set-up will allow people to Zoom in and contribute as if they were there in person. It will also allow us to contact sponsors who might like to contribute to the various committee meetings from Perth or further away. I want to invite all members to consider joining the R & D committee, Commodities Committee or the Livestock & Technology Committee. For those interested please give me a call (0429 468 030) or call the office on 9842 6653.

I want to end my column with a special thank you to Phillip Mackie, who is leaving SCF to return to the family farm in Mt Barker. Phillip has been with us for the last year and has been a tremendous asset to the group. He will be sorely missed since he achieved a lot in a short amount of time. He won't be lost to us entirely because I'm sure he will be an active SCF member hosting trials and joining committees.

Finally, I would like to offer my condolences to the friends and families of Penny Moir, Jim Bailey and Danny Herbert, who have recently passed away. All three were well known and well-loved in the local community.

I wish everyone the best of luck for the upcoming growing season, and I hope our COVID-19 situation only gets better from here on.

Improving the conversation by improving the tech!

SCF is now fully equipped for Zoom/teleconferencing meetings!

The past week has seen the install of some great technology at the SCF offices to enable members to 'Zoom' into meetings and presentations. If you have considered joining one of our sub-committees but the time to drive into town for meetings has put you off, we can now offer you the ability to attend from the comfort of your own home (or tractor, sprayer, ute etc)! If you are interested in joining one of our committees, please get in touch with Nathan at ceo@scfarmers.org.au or 0429 468 030 or chat to one of the existing members (see the back of the newsletter). It's now easier than ever to have your say on the direction of your group.

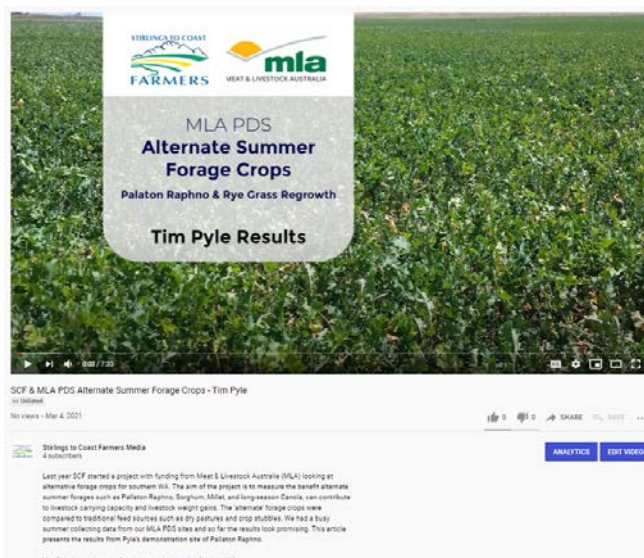


We're doing the Trials Review Day a little different this year.

In 2021 we thought we would tackle our Trials Review Day a little differently. We will still be producing and distributing our Review booklet but instead of the traditional Trials day we are going to offer the results and discussions through a series of videos.

Each video will focus on an individual trial which will include the data analysis, discussions and commentary from the farmers that hosted the trials. These videos will be circulated throughout social media, eNews, our website etc to allow a broader reach of our research.

We cannot wait to share these with you all and hope you find the content engaging and interactive. Keep an eye out for the videos in the coming weeks.



EVENTS NOTICEBOARD

FARMANCO/STIRLINGS TO COAST FARMERS CROP SEQUENCE MODELLING WORKSHOPS

Tuesday 30th March
Wellstead Hall
12:30pm - 5:30pm
including afternoon tea and sundowner

Wednesday 31st March
Gilbert's Winery (Kendenu) (sic)
1:00pm - 6:00pm
including afternoon tea and sundowner

Both days include:

Crop Sequence Modelling

WHO: Ben Curtis & Brent Pritchard (Farmanco):

WHAT: What is the most profitable crop rotation on your farm? What will adding a pulse to the cropping rotation do my long-term profits? Should my pasture phase be two or three years? These questions and more will be answered by Farmanco agronomist Ben Curtis who will use Farmanco Crop Sequence Model to analyse different rotations' profitability.

WHEN:

Wellstead Hall - 12:30pm to 3:00pm

Gilbert's Winery (Kendenu) - 3:30pm to 6:00pm

CONFINEMENT FEEDING

WHO: Michael Wilkes (Thomas Elder Consulting), Pip Houghton (Thomas Elder Consulting),

WHAT: What are the benefits of confinement feeding sheep in the autumn?

WHEN:

Wellstead Hall - 3:30pm to 5:30pm

Gilbert's Winery (Kendenu) - 1:00pm to 3:00pm

You are welcome to attend one or both of the sessions on each day.

LATER IN THE YEAR...

June 23rd

Summary of local Herbicide Resistance results.

Peter Newman (AHRI)

10th September

Stirlings to Coast Farmers AGM, SCF Office

17th September

FAR Hyper Yielding Crops Field Day,
Frankland/Tenterden Region

22nd September

Stirlings to Coast Farmers Annual Spring Field Day



meet the new Chair of the Board

Jon Beasley

Region: Frankland River

Farm name: Westfield

Size of farm: I manage Westfield T/as Frankland River Grazing, purchased by the Roche family in 1948.

Year joined SCF: 2008

Type of enterprise: Over that area we have a 50/50 split for cropping and livestock, with 10,000 breeding ewes and 5,000 ewe hoggets & 300 Shorthorn breeders. On the cropping side we continually crop with a canola, cereal rotation, which we have been doing for 15 years.

What are some of your biggest passions and why?

To run an efficient and sustainable farming system which is always trying to push the boundaries of production.

As a family we enjoy traveling together, exploring the more isolated areas of the north.

What are some of the most significant constraints to achieve higher productivity on your farm?

We have tried to address as many of our constraints as possible however waterlogging, property salinity and disease levels are some of the issues that can hold back our productivity in some seasons. We have gone down the line of higher inputs to improve yield and are very conscious of managing our soil acidity with this approach.

Is there anything that you do on-farm that is slightly different to the so called 'norm' that is interesting?

Over the past 20 years we have run a high production program and have pushed the limitations on using high inputs. We use a lot of lime on both crops and pastures to make sure that soil acidity is not becoming an issue. We have also focused on keeping full stubble retention for the past 20 years with no burning, as a means of improving soil nutrition. To assist in keeping weeds under control we purchased a seed destructor when they first came on the market.

What technologies are you using on-farm? If so what is it and how has it shaped your farm?

Whilst there are a lot of technologies out there to invest in, we have focussed on items that can show a return such as section control on our seeding box which gave us a 15% saving in fertilizer, GPS, and controlled trafficking. Yield mapping is being collected and we aim to make further technological improvements.

Are you currently trialling anything yourself?

When we first arrived, we carried out extensive soil testing and fertiliser rate trials, to prove that what we wanted to achieve (high inputs/high yields) was feasible. Since then, we have continued to improve on this by adjusting rates, fertiliser mix, and stubble retention and being far more focussed on crop disease.

We also have an ongoing program to improve our self-replacing merino flock and shorthorn herd.

What do you think the next big thing in agriculture will be in 5 to 10 years?

Some of the big things that will affect agriculture in the next 5- 10 years –

- the industry's carbon footprint. If this is ever going to become a reality it will be about taking a more sustainable approach to our farming practices.
- The growing issue of food security and its quality is also an important factor for the industry.
- The management of disease and weed resistance.
- The implementation and our responsibilities towards OH&S on farm

Where do you see SCF in the next 5 to 10 years?

I see SCF continuing to grow as a leading provider of good research with quality outcomes for their farming members.



meet the members

Peter Gilmour

Region: Kalgan River

Farm name: Irongate Wagyu

Size of farm: We are a little over 1000 ha with three creek lines. Our soils are a mix sand over clay, silt area loams, gravel over clay.

Year joined SCF: 2018

Type of enterprise: Livestock/100% Fullblood Wagyu stud bull production and significant forage cropping, 1000 breeders, 1200 feeders. In continual herd growth phase.

What are some of your biggest passions and why?

Having patience to develop a tangible business. We are now vertically integrated, marketing and selling produce domestically and internationally by specific high value cuts to produce a satisfactory return on capital. Also making sure we have a heavy hedge position across various aspects such as water (new bores and dams), feed (silage pits), genetics (stored semen and embryos), equipment (back up for service/downtime). Ten years from now we will be a better operation as we are now from ten years ago.



What are some of the most significant constraints to achieve higher productivity on your farm?

Most likely capital, we don't particularly like long term debt in farming as the banks/debt providers never have a bad season! For us to go to the next level we need to set up irrigation solutions, mobile processing and shed feeding to expand our holding/turn off capacity.

Is there anything that you do on-farm that is slightly different to the so called 'norm' that is interesting?

Whole of life feeding by improving pastures to keep our feeder progeny on a consistent rising plain of nutrition. From in-utero all the way to processing, if wagyu are given an environmental check they will grab back all the intramuscular fat as an energy source.

What technologies are you using on-farm? If so what is it and how has it shaped your farm?

Data collection and its ongoing value and development is important and every week creating a small percentage improvement to add value. We have copious information available from data collection, hosting this in an efficient data warehouse and then applying an IoT and AI user interface that allows us to ask appropriate questions around improved production so we can deliver on the ultimate eating quality of our produce.

Are you currently trialling anything yourself?

Working on generic soil health and carbon capture with long rest rotational grazing, also deep ripping, ree-fining/kelly chain poor ironstone pastures, brassica production (Raphno), summer cropping, early silage harvesting.

Is there anything that you would like to test or trial in the next 2 years?

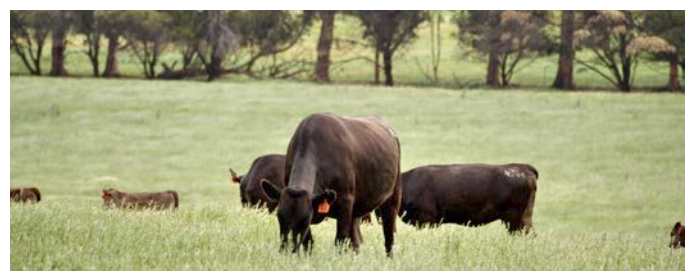
Irrigation, exclusion fencing, fertiliser nutrient replacement trial.

What do you think the next big thing in agriculture will be in 5 to 10 years?

Water management and utilising technology to farm more with less, rather than buying the farm next door for growth. Collaborative approach with neighbours.

Do you attend any agriculture field days other than SCF?

Yes as many as possible, particularly on east coast where the main fullblood wagyu herds are. Education is so important in Ag, learning small incremental changes and speaking with others so we are not too fixed in our opinions.





Alternate forage crops for Southern WA

Samantha Cullen, Memberships Officer, SCF

PYLE SITE:

Location - **Manypeaks North**

Soil Type - **Sand**

Control - **Ryegrass regrowth, 30ha**

- **360 crossbred lambs**

Variable - **Pallaton Raphno, 45ha**

- **1400 crossbred lambs**



Figure 1: Drone image of the Pyle's Pallaton Raphno crop on December 3rd, 2020.

KEY POINTS

- Pallaton Raphno had a higher nutritional value (NV) than the ryegrass control, with a higher crude protein, digestibility and metabolisable energy.
- Raphno and ryegrass had similar biomass of 3t/ha and 3.8t/ha respectively.
- Excellent weight gain was achieved on the Raphno with 62.5g/head/day more than the ryegrass regrowth.
- The ability of Raphno to grow under grazing pressure and produce leaf material allowed a much higher stocking density with 1400 lambs on 45ha, (31 lambs/ha), compared to 360 lambs on 30 hectares (12 lambs /ha).
- Lamb live-weight gain measured in kg/ha/day was a staggering 5.35kg/ha/day for the Raphno compared to 1.31kg/ha/day achieved on the ryegrass.

BACKGROUND

Last year SCF started a project with funding from Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA) looking at alternative forage crops for southern WA. The aim of the project is to measure the benefit alternate summer forages such as Pallaton Raphno, Sorghum, Millet, and long-season Canola, can contribute to livestock carrying capacity and livestock weight gains. The 'alternate' forage crops were compared to traditional feed sources such as dry pastures and crop stubbles. We had a busy summer collecting data from our MLA PDS sites and so far the results look promising. This article presents the results from Pyle's demonstration site of Pallaton Raphno.

RESULTS

The Pyle's Pallaton Raphno site was sown September 2, and was compared to a ryegrass regrowth paddock from a silage crop cut on the 15 October. Biomass cuts were done and lambs introduced on December 3 with average liveweights of 49kg and 42.5kg for the ryegrass and Raphno, respectively. Plant samples for nutritive value (NV) analysis and soil samples were taken on December 7 from the Raphno paddock and the neighbouring ryegrass regrowth. Interestingly the two paddocks had relatively similar biomass available with 3.01t/ha of ryegrass regrowth and 3.83t/ha of Raphno. However, the ability of Raphno to grow throughout summer and handle a higher grazing pressure allowed a much higher stocking rate of 31 lambs/ha to be carried compared to 12 lambs/ha on the ryegrass over the 30 days. Originally it was planned to remove stock once all Raphno leaf area had been removed however feed ran out in the ryegrass paddock first. NV analysis revealed the Raphno to be of a much higher feed quality, containing a higher digestibility, metabolisable energy nearly double and a crude protein value more than double that of the ryegrass (Table 2).



Figure 2: Left, photo of the Pyle's 30ha Ryegrass control on 7th Dec 2020. Right, the same crop 15th January 2021, after the lambs had been removed.



Figure 3: Left, photo of the Pyle's 45ha Pallaton Raphno crop on the 7th Dec 2020. Right, the same crop 15th January 2021, after lambs the lambs had been removed.

Table 1: Summary of the rainfall since August 3, 2020 at a nearby GoannaAg digital rain gauge located at the Drawbin and Pfeiffer road T-junction.

Period	Rainfall (mm)
August 3 to September 2	129.8
September 2 to December 1	149.6
December 1 to January 3	9.4
Total rainfall	287.8

Table 2: Key nutritional value analysis of forages (full analysis published in trials review booklet)

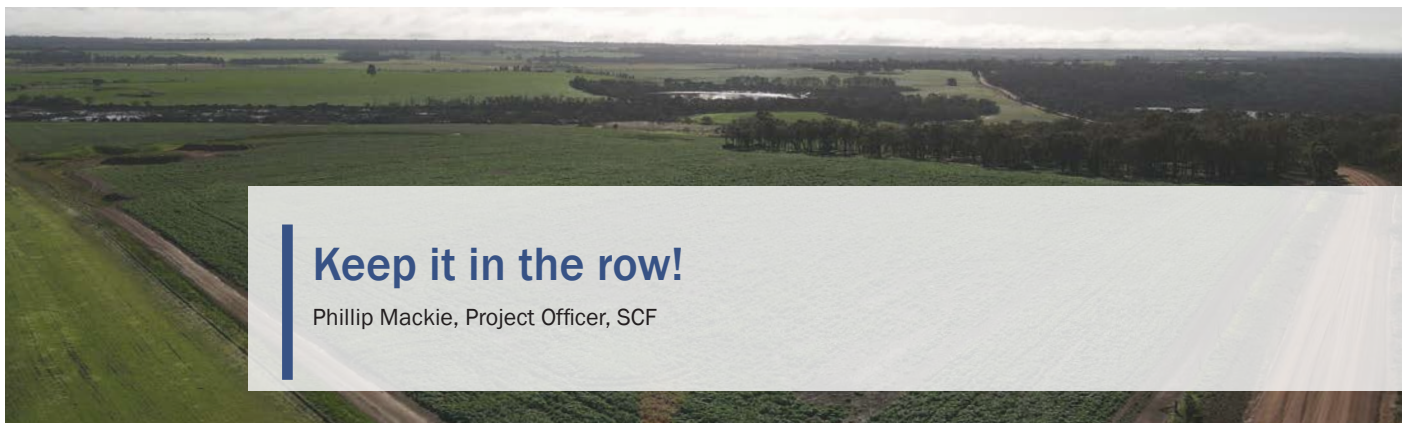
NV Analysis	Ryegrass regrowth	Pallaton Raphno
Dry Matter (DM %)	30.3	13.9
Moisture (%)	69.7	86.1
Crude Protein (% of DM)	7.9	16.4
Digestibility (DMD) (% of DM)	51.2	88.3
Est. Metabolisable Energy (MJ/kg DM)	7.2	13.6

Lambs were removed on January 4 when the ryegrass regrowth ran out however the Raphno paddock still had excess biomass, which indicated it could have supported a higher stocking rate than 31 lambs per hectare. Once weighed, lambs were found to have averaged 109.4g/hd/day on ryegrass and 171.9g/hd/day on Raphno. This resulted in an extra 62.5g/hd/day produced on the Raphno. Once the stocking rate had been accounted for it revealed an extra lamb weight gain of 4kg/ha/day on the Raphno compared to the ryegrass.

For a more in-depth analysis and results from our other MLA PDS sites look out for our Trials Review Booklet coming soon.

Table 3. The Average lamb weights recorded on the 3rd Dec and the 4th Jan, and their average gain across the 30 days.

Forage	Weigh In (Avg kg)	Weigh Out (Avg kg)	Weight gain (Avg kg)	Avg weight gain (g/hd/day)	Weight gain (kg/ha/day)
Ryegrass	49	52.5	3.5	109.38	1.31
Raphno	42.5	48	5.5	171.88	5.35



Keep it in the row!

Phillip Mackie, Project Officer, SCF

With challenging starts for the past couple of seasons, many growers have experienced issues in crop germination due to soil water repellence. SCF looked into this issue using soil wetters as a mitigation tactic for farmers to apply when they see fit as a low-cost alternative to soil amelioration methods. There was a range of treatments applied to determine the best placement and rate of soil wetters to best improve crop germination.

It was found that the best placement of SE14 is in the seed contact zone behind the seed boot which significantly increased both crop germination and early biomass growth compared to the control. Increasing the rate of SE14 from 2 L/ha to 4 L/ha in all treatments, except directly on the seed, did not give significant benefits. The higher rate directly on the seed reduced both crop germination and early biomass growth, mostly likely due to uneven seed spacings and incorrect seeding rate from tackiness when sowing.



We also found that seeding near or on last year's furrow significantly increased early biomass growth when compared to completely off row. However, when it came to the end of the season there was no benefit in any treatments for grain yield with the untreated control yielding the highest. This is not uncommon for canola because of its ability to compensate. Research suggests that canola needs only 10 plants per square meter to yield 1.5 t/ha. The yield differences seen could be attributed to the high spatial variability over the trial site. However, we think the higher biomass treatments had higher nutrition & moisture requirements during grain fill, which they didn't receive when the topsoil was drying out, therefore, the poor season finish did not allow the higher biomass plots to reach their true yield potential.

We recommend for growers to seed as close as possible to last year's furrow and use soil wetters in the seed contact zone for best returns. For full results from the trial site look for the summary in our review booklet due out later in April.

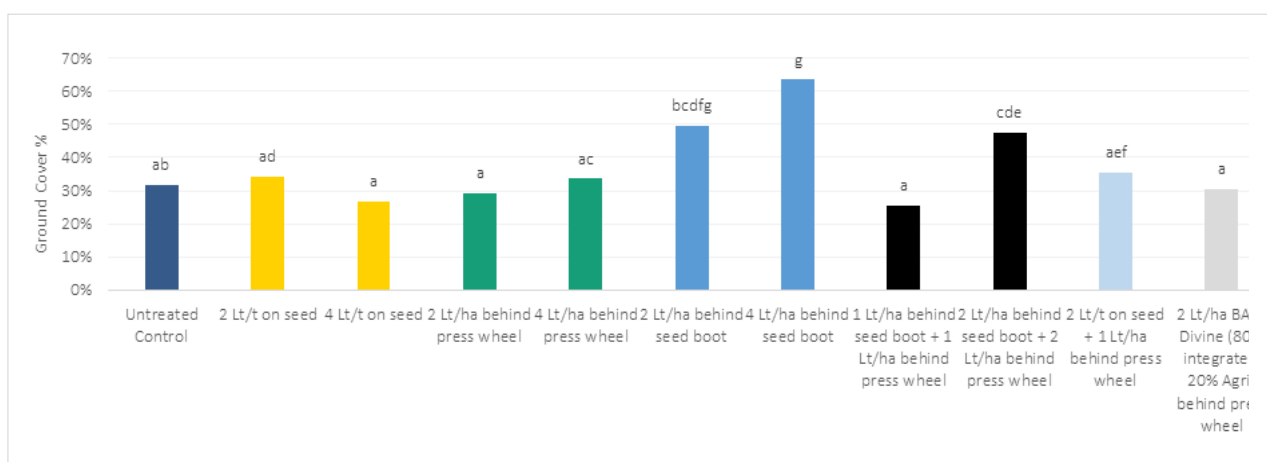


Figure 1: Ground Cover for different placements and rates of the soil wetters, SE14 and BASF Divine in a forest gravel at Tenterden WA. Percentages determined through calculations with drone imagery on the 28/7/2020. Treatments with common letters are not significantly different from one another.





Nitrogen Efficiencies from Mid-row Banding (MRB)

Phillip Mackie, Project Officer, SCF

Previous research has indicated only 42% of the fertiliser you apply is utilised by the crop with the remaining leached, volatilised or washed away. Mid-row banding of N may prove a more efficient method of applying N. Benefits from mid-row banding include the same or higher yields from 20-30% less nitrogen being applied, improved nitrogen use efficiency and reduced acidification rates with the main aim of improving profitability.

In 2020, SCF investigated the use of mid-row banding to determine if this application method improved nitrogen use efficiencies. One of the trials we had implemented was a small plot experiment in South Stirlings with different top dressed and mid-row banded treatments. Thanks again to Direct Seeding and Harvest for their help at seeding time. Also, thanks to CSBP for applying the in-season mid-row banding treatments with their specialist trial machine. Treatments consisted of a combination of either nil, top dressed (125kh/Ha area) or mid row banded urea (125 kg/Ha) at seeding and top dressed, or mid row banded Flexi-N (100 L/Ha) at tillering.

All treatments yielded significantly more than the control treatment of nil urea at seeding and top-dressed Flexi-N at tillering. Combining one top dressing and one mid-row banding application was not significantly different to each other. However, the combination of mid-row banding and top-dressed urea yielded significantly more than the other treatments. The combinations of two top dressings or two mid-row bandings were statistically equivalent. For a comprehensive breakdown of the trial site, method, and results, look out for this trial in our 2020 trials review booklet due out in April.



Figure 1: Close up of CSBP's trial mid-row banding machine. Wheat Tillering in a plot trial located in South Stirlings (29/7/2020).



Figure 3: Minimal damage that is inflicted by running the mid-row banding disc directly over the plant row (29/7/2020).

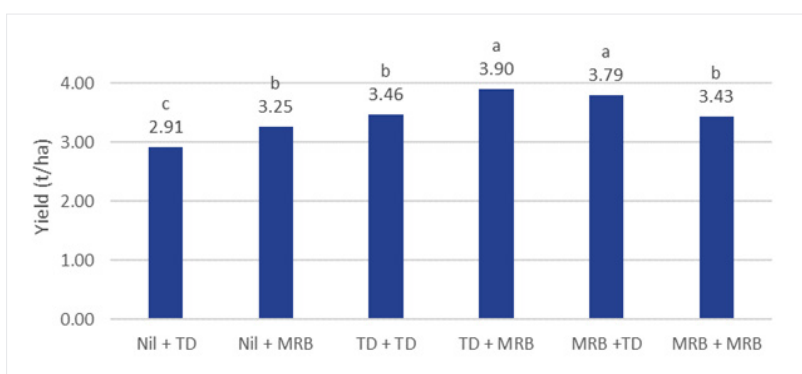


Figure 2: Grain yield results from a combination of top dressing (TD) and mid-row banding (MRB) at seeding and tillering in a plot trial located in South Stirlings.





High Rainfall Zone farming systems

Phillip Mackie, Project Officer, SCF

The High Rainfall Zone System project is a sister project to the Hyper Yielding Crops and focuses on expanding research results from the Hyper Yielding Crop Focus Centre into broadacre trials on farm. With no results or recommendations from the Focus Centre for the first season of the project a trial design was created in consultation with SEPWA and DPIRD that included treatments of deep ripping, time of sowing and variety. There were two sites implemented, one in South Stirlings and the other in West Cranbrook.

At the Cranbrook site there were two ripped and unripped strips, two times of sowing, two wheat varieties and a barley treatment. Ripping occurred on the 14 April to 450mm with sowing on the 20 April and 13 May. The first time of sowing included Scepter and Illabo treatments while the second sowing included another Scepter and a Planet barley treatment.

The later sown Scepter and early sown Illabo yielded significantly higher than the early April sown Scepter treatments with an average increase in yield of 0.88 t/ha. This indicates that an early sowing time does work in the region but it needs to be with a longer season variety to achieve the same yields as Scepter length cultivars sown in May. Longer season varieties sown early can better utilise subsoil moisture and reduce waterlogging; and if needed grazed as a dual-purpose crop.

Long-season wheats can be sown before April 20, with minimal frost risk, yet still yield the same as scepter sown in mid to late May.

There were no significant differences in yields for any varieties or times of sowing after being ripped, indicating that soil compaction was not a constraint that limited yield at this site. For a full result breakdown from this trial and the South Stirling site, our trials review booklet will be out shortly.

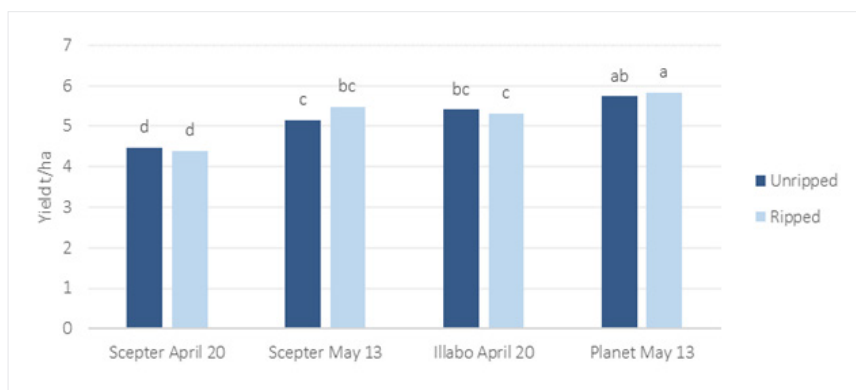


Figure 1: Grain yield results of ripped and unripped strips for Scepter, Illabo and Planet sown over two times of sowing. Site location at West Cranbrook, WA.



It's a ripper article.

Phillip Mackie, Project Officer, SCF

The Kojaneerup ripper gauge site was managed by Josh Goad for the third & final year in 2020. The paddock was duplex sand which had been clayed and incorporated at the start of the year. To determine the benefit of deep ripping, this paddock had three 50mx50m squares marked by GPS across the paddock. Due to the soil variation across the paddock one replicate was placed on a shallow duplex to gravel, another a medium depth duplex and the third over a deep sand duplex. For simplicity of measurements SCF used satellite NDVI with an accuracy of 3m to determine crop health over the season and used yield mapping of the individual squares and the area directly around the respective squares to determine the yield increase from ripping.

Ripping at this site happened in late April to an approximate depth of 500 mm. The paddock was sown to barley and received an estimated 372 mm of growing season rainfall. On average the ripping resulted in a 1.3 t/ha increase in yield over the three duplexes with the greatest difference coming from the medium duplex. The ripping also resulted in a significant increase in the NDVI value of between 0.03-0.1 over the entire growing season. Full results on this trial site will be in our trials review booklet, out in April.

RIPPER GAUGE VARIATION IN 2021-22

2020 was the last year of the ripper gauge project. However as some of you may recall the Kojaneerup site in 2018 suffered significant wind erosion. Unfortunately, this was not an uncommon occurrence for ripper gauge sites in the project. To target this issue, the GRDC is funding SCF and other grower groups to investigate the option of deep ripping post-seeding. This would result in higher soil moisture and less risk of wind erosion for farmers; however, the downside is the damage to plants and their establishment and the subsequent impact on yield.

SCF will manage one trial site in 2021, there will be three different post-seeding ripping treatments compared to ripping pre-seeding. Members who attended the 2018 spring field day may recall Andrew Fowler from Esperance describing how they effectively deep rip post-seeding in their farming system. The objectives of the demonstrations will be to quantify the loss of yield (if any) at the three different post-seeding times and evaluate the logistics of deep ripping at this time in the growing

season. Deep ripping after seeding could be a viable option for fragile, erosion-prone soils in our region.

SCF have funding to complete one site in 2021, and we will also monitor the results for the following season. If you are interested in hosting this trial research, please contact Nathan Dovey at SCF to discuss.

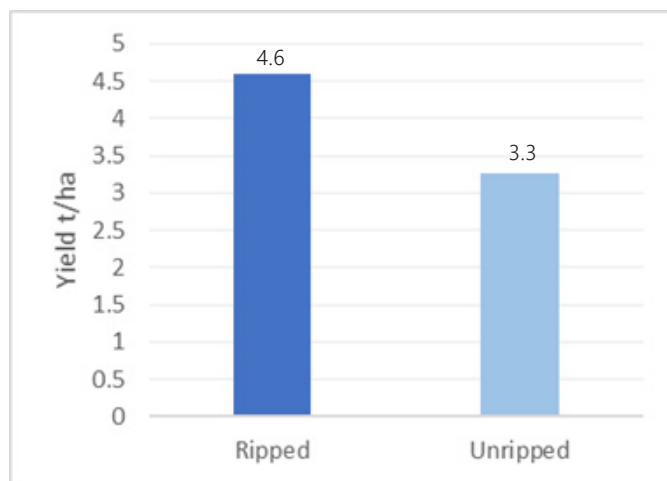


Figure 1: Average yield results from ripped and unripped replicates on a clayed sandy duplex in Kojaneerup.



Figure 2: Image of Nufab deep ripper used to achieve an approximate 500mm deep amelioration.





SCF Drainage Day

Philip Honey, Smart Farms Co-ordinator, SCF

On the back of the SCF/FAR Hyper Yielding West Focus Group meeting last month, SCF members had the opportunity to inspect the newly formed GRDC Sub Surface Drainage Demonstration Site at the Preston family farm in West Cranbrook.

The day attracted 35 farmers and advisors, who all had the opportunity to learn more about the SCF Sub Surface Drainage Project aims and some of the many things to consider when implementing sub-surface drainage solutions. A clear highlight of the day was the live installation demonstration and Q&A with drainage contractors Drainage Down Under. Paul Hooper & Dan Smith (the team from Drainage Down Under) led the crowd through some of the drainage design considerations, estimated installation costings and most importantly, how the machine works.

Throughout the next three years, Stirlings to Coast will be undertaking a wide range of monitoring activities at the demonstration site to measure the efficacy of the drainage solution. Ultimately, we want to be able to help growers determine whether it is economically feasible to implement sub-surface drainage solutions and estimate the potential payback period.

We will also be implementing a wide range of digital technologies including soil-moisture probes, weather-stations, automatic water level and water quality sensors throughout the drainage site to get a better understanding of both rainfall and water-flow dynamics. A wide range of interactive workshops & demonstration days, fact sheets and videos will also be produced and compiled throughout the project's life and will be made publicly available through the "Projects" section of the SCF website. Stay tuned for an upcoming field-walk in-season to see the drainage working in action!



SCF would love to hear your thoughts and experiences in water-management on your farm.

To share your experiences and to stay in the loop on the project's news and future planned activities, simply visit <https://bit.ly/GRDCdrain>, the Projects section on the SCF website, or contact Philip Honey on 0428 768 589 to register your interest.



Project Acknowledgements: The development of the SCF Sub Surface Drainage Demonstration Site was made possible through investment from the Grains Research & Development Corporation, demonstration site support from Preston Farms & installation by Drainage Down Under. SCF are also collaborating with South Coast NRM who are running a similar trial in Esperance.



MIFWA



BLENDED ONLINE MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID REGIONAL COURSE

**LEARN SKILLS AND GAIN CONFIDENCE
TO ASSIST PEOPLE EXPERIENCING
MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS.**

The Blended Online Mental Health First Aid Course for adults living in regional grain growing communities across WA teaches participants how to assist a friend, family member, or other members of the community who may be developing a mental health problem or experiencing a mental health crisis.

COURSE INFORMATION

SESSION DATES & TIMES

Stage 1 - Complete eLearning (5 to 7 hours self-paced)

Stage 2 - 8 June 2021, 9:30am to 12.00pm

ZOOM online

Stage 3 - 15 June 2021, 9:30am to 12:00pm

ZOOM online

This free training for regional grain growing communities across WA is proudly supported by CBH Group and MIFWA with thanks to the CBH Regional Mental Wellness Program.



To register: Contact Janine at janine.ripper@mifwa.org.au or call 08 9237 8900

Note: All components must be completed to qualify as an accredited Mental Health First Aider for three years.





RockStar by name and RockStar by nature in the Stirlings to Coast demo trials

RockStar wheat has delivered another 'rocking' performance in paddocks and trials across the state in 2020, particularly in the Albany Port Zone.

Across the state RockStar remained as the highest yielding mid-slow maturing wheat, averaging 108%* compared to Catapult at 102%*, LRPB Trojan 95%* and Magenta 93%*.

Heading closer to home, RockStar also featured in local trials with strips placed alongside the high rainfall soil constraint trials at Cranbrook. RockStar was the highest yielding wheat variety across both sowing times in ripped and unripped areas. In the first time of sowing on April 20, RockStar was marginally out yielded by RGT Planet, however still delivering a yield of 5.68 t/ha.

In the second time of sowing (May 13), RockStar out yielded both wheat and barley varieties yielding 6.34 t/ha. The variety's robust disease resistance profile, including good yellow spot (MRMS) and stripe rust (MRMS) resistances has also proven advantageous in south coast environments.

Variety & sowing time	Ripped (t/ha)	Unripped (t/ha)
RGT Planet May 13	5.83	5.74
Illabo April 20	5.32	5.41
Scepter May 13	5.48	5.15
Scepter April 20	4.40	4.48
Rockstar May 13		6.34
Rockstar April 20		5.68

RockStar's Cranbrook trial result coupled with its consistent NVT performance demonstrates its ability to perform across a range of sowing times. Additionally, our phenology scores over the last few seasons indicate that the variety continues to demonstrate a stable maturity across a range of sites providing greater confidence in estimating approximate spring flowering times.

For more information on RockStar don't hesitate to contact Georgia Trainor on 0439093166 or at gtrainor@intergrain.com

*2020 WA NVT Long-term Main Season MET % Yield Performance. Data used for comparison was accessed from the NVT Online website on 04/02/2020

**Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development 2021 Western Australian Crop Sowing Guide



RESEARCH+ AGRONOMY

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Pacific Seeds committed to supporting WA grower's success

When it comes to wheat and canola, Pacific Seeds has the high-performing varieties that Western Australian growers love.

Seed tested to local conditions - The Pacific Seeds technology development program works with growers, businesses, and institutions in Australia to continually trial and evaluate advances in crop management, ag-tech and agronomy.

Each year, dozens of trials are conducted across the cropping regions of Australia including Western Australia, testing existing commercial varieties and advanced experimental lines to provide insights into product performance under different environments and cropping scenarios.

The results are then gathered and using biometric analysis are compared and standardised by region and environment, providing confidence in how existing and new varieties will perform across Western Australia environments.

The highest quality and seed performance - Farmers can have confidence in the reliability and yield performance knowing that each seed lot has undergone multiple tests for key factors such as seed vigour, germination and physical purity before being released for sale meeting the highest quality industry

benchmarks.

In 2020, NSW farmer Peter Brooks set a new Australian canola yield record, and narrowly missed a new world record, with Hyola 970CL yielding 7.16t/ha beating the previous record of 6.17t/ha set in 2017 (also Hyola 970CL). In 2021, Western Australian canola growers will also have access to new hybrids and technology in Hyola 410XX, Hyola 540XC and Enforcer CT. On the wheat front, varieties such as Havoc continue to deliver competitive performance and excellent grain packages across the state.

Ongoing support and local advice - Real paddock experience, local knowledge and partnerships with industry experts, enable Pacific Seeds to provide real-world solutions to growers and industry. These solutions are provided freely to growers and industry through Pacific Seeds agronomy publications, field days, industry events and farm visits.

Talk to your local Pacific Seeds Territory Manager or visit the www.pacificseeds.com.au for more information.

Steve Lamb, TM Central and Northern WA, Ph: 0429 619 103
Dan McGrath, TM Southern WA, Ph: 0448 014 892

Could your crops be running low on Manganese?



Cereal crops and lupins can suffer from Manganese (Mn) deficiency and it's a nutrient issue that has made an unwanted return in recent years as soil pH levels improve due to extensive liming applications throughout the Great Southern.

Mn in the soil can take on various forms, with availability to plants dependent on oxidation state. Manganese sulphate (as supplied in Summit MAP & Mn) breaks down in the soil to release Mn²⁺ ions. Mn²⁺ is the only plant bio-available form of Mn and is readily transported into root cells. Oxidized forms are insoluble and unavailable. In any soil there will be a balance between soluble Mn²⁺ and insoluble Mn oxides. Growers should be aware what type of Mn is supplied within their fertilizer and not just rely on a high Mn nutrient level provided within some products.

Each year, Summit Area Managers soil sample over 1,100 sites in the Great Southern Region. When looking at the 2020-2021 inSITE Soil Analysis results (see illustration right), a considerable percentage of tests show Mn levels that are below the desired levels.

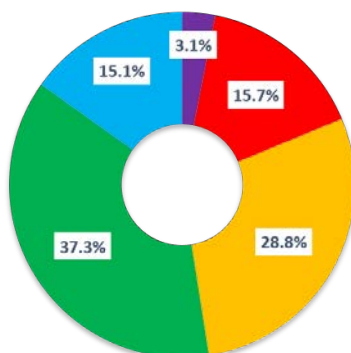
A problematic issue with soil testing for Mn however is the interpretation of soil test levels for fertilizer recommendations, in that it can be present in the soil and not always available to the plant. This is why plant tissue tests are always recommended to identify Mn deficiencies.

For more information about inSITE Soil and Plant Analysis as well as Summit's range of cropping fertilizers that include Mn in the plant available sulphate form, get in touch with your local Area Manager.

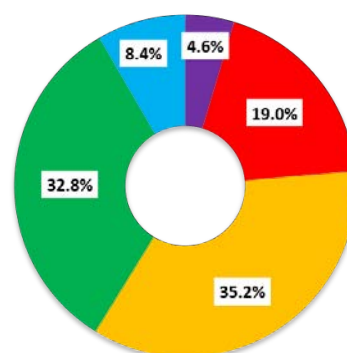
Andrew Wallace, Albany (East),
0427 083 820.

Mark Ladny, Albany (West),
0498 223 421.

2019-2020



2020-2021



Mn mg/kg (0-10 cm)	Color
0-1 (Deficient)	Purple
1-2 (Low)	Red
2-4 (Marginal)	Yellow
4-10 (Adequate)	Green
>10 (Luxury)	Blue





NEW CONTENT COMING SOON

CropCast

with
Craig White

CropCast is a podcast developed to deliver current broadacre agronomic news, product and application know-how and information from Bayer's Market Development Agronomy Team about the latest technologies.

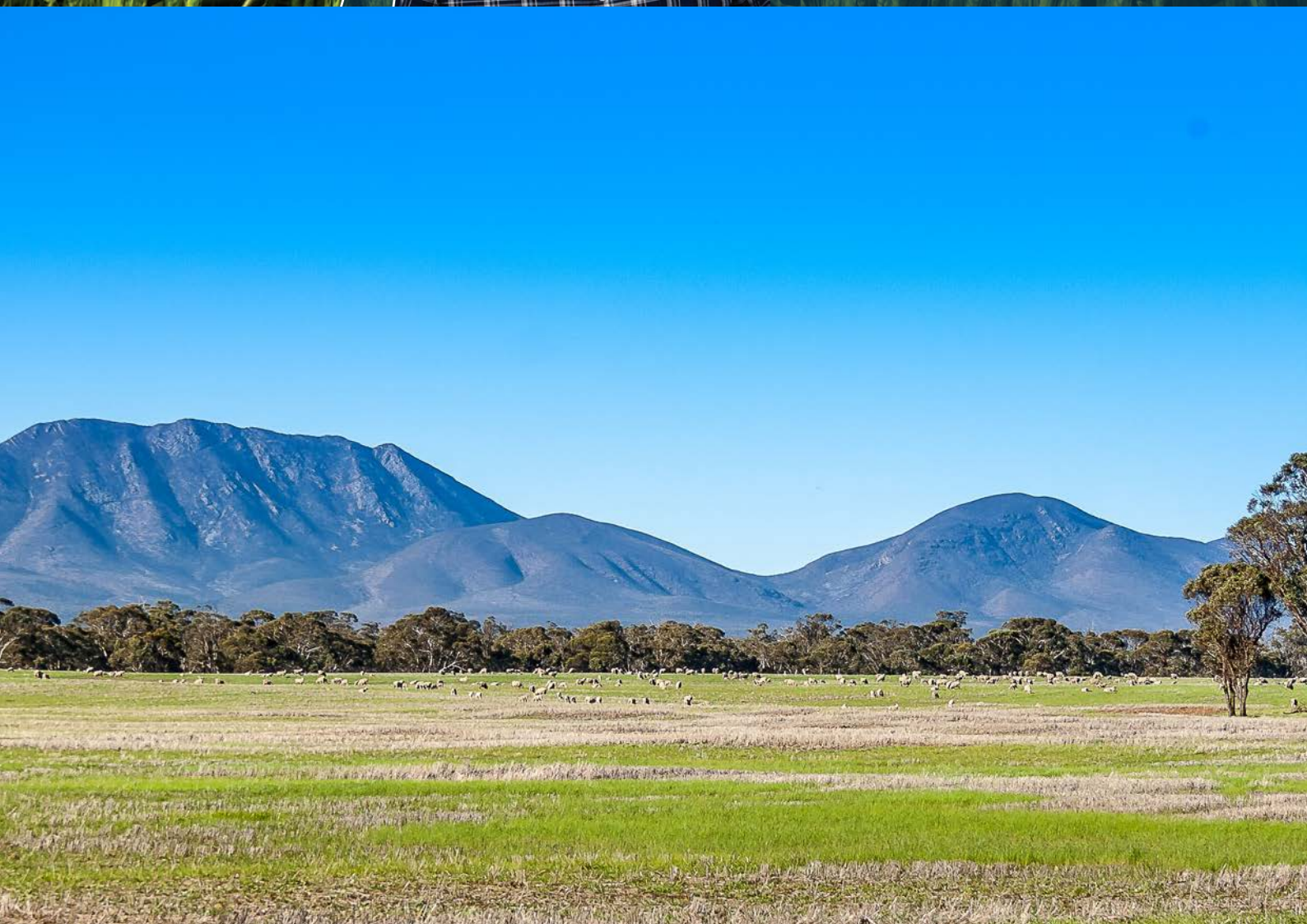
Produced and hosted by Craig White, Market Development Agronomist at Bayer Crop Science, CropCast is created for everyone with an interest in agriculture. With new episodes available covering seasonally relevant topics for broadacre crops, CropCast is essential listening to keep you up-to-date with what is going on in the world of broadacre farming.



Search CropCast or scan the QR code to listen to the latest episode.



Bayer CropScience Pty Ltd ABN 87 000 226 022 Level 1, 8 Redfern Road, Hawthorn East, Vic 3123
Technical Enquiries: 1800 804 479 enquiries.australia@bayer.com



SCF BEHIND THE SCENES

BOARD AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS 2020

Stirlings to Coast could not thrive without the amazing work of our various board and committee members. From SCF members to expert advisors, each one plays a key part in the development and growth of the SCF community.

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Mark Preston
Nathan Dovey (SCF CEO)
Taryn Graham (SCF)

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Samantha Jeffries, Marketing Officer	0422 332 212
Taryn Graham, Finance Officer	0417 179 175

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Staff can be contacted on 9842 6653 or admin@scfarmers.org.au

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