

VOLUME 30 | ISSUE 4 | NOVEMBER 2024



LIEBE GROUP NEWS



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

MEASURING LOSSES AT
HARVEST

DBM IN A WARM YEAR:
CANOLA IN HOT OIL?

FRINGE BENEFITS TAX: A GUIDE
FOR PRIMARY PRODUCERS

The Liebe Group mission is to facilitate grower prioritised research, development and extension to support our members to be profitable and sustainable.

LIEBE'S LEADERSHIP 2024

R&D COMMITTEE

Chair: Casey Shaw

WOMEN'S COMMITTEE

Chair: Amanda Nixon

BOARD

Chair: Brad McIlroy

Vice-Chair: Rebecca Wallis

Secretary: Chris O'Callaghan

Treasurer: Sophie Carlshausen

BOARD MEMBERS

Boyd Carter

Dylan Hirsch

Wendy Sawyer

Emma Pearse

Blayn Carlshausen

Gavin Carter

Alex Keamy

LIEBE GROUP PARTNERS

Liebe Group Partners are an integral facet of the success of the group. Since our inception the group has developed long and valuable relationships with organisations who have mutual interests to the Liebe Group. These strong partnerships have given the group diversity, a level of security and the capacity to build a sustainable and healthy future.

These partnering organisations are high profile agribusinesses with a keen interest in the healthy future of agriculture. They see the relationship with the group as a meaningful way to stay in close contact with the grass roots innovators of the industry and a way to invest resources into a group which is focusing on research and development for future agricultural sustainability.

DIAMOND PARTNERS



GOLD PARTNERS



SILVER PARTNERS

Agrimaster
Australian Grain Technologies
Bayer
Pioneer Seeds
FMC

Summit Fertilizers
Intergrain
McIntosh & Son
Nufarm
Watheroo Minerals Group

Nutrien Ag Solutions
Refuel Australia
Syngenta
Spraytec Australia

FROM THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Welcome to the latest Liebe Group newsletter.

Firstly, I would like to thank all the presenters, members and Liebe Group industry partners and supporters for coming along to the Spring Field Day in September. The day was very successful with a crowd of around 140 people in attendance and some really interesting and visual trials at the site for everyone to inspect. I would like to congratulate our R&D Co-ordinator Daenia and the Liebe team on running another professional and polished field event! Also a huge thank you to our host farmers, Brendon, Chris, Tracy and Brian McAlpine for hosting a great site! Our attention now turns to collection of the final measurements from across our trial program including weed counts, yields and post-harvest soil moisture and nutrition.

The group is also looking forward into 2025 and is happy to announce that the Main Trial Site will be located on the Cail's property, near Peterson Road, Nugadong. Close to the site hosted by the Butchers in 2016, the proposed site is a sandy loam/sand over gravel and is currently in fallow for the 2024 season. Soil testing is underway and given there is no crop on the site, trial partners will be able to inspect and start planning the site at any time. We thank the Cail's for committing the site for 2025.

The Liebe Group, in conjunction with GRDC and GIWA, will be hosting a Regional Grains Research Updates again in 2025, with the location this year being in Coorow on the 11th of March. This is a great opportunity to bring the updates event to a new location and we thank the Liebe members that have volunteered their time to be involved in the planning committee. The group will also be running a separate Harvest Review event for members which will be held on the 13th of February at the Liebe Office. Similar but different to previous trial review days, this event will be a shorter and sharper event held later in the afternoon and provide a quick look at all the Liebe trial results, before they are released in the R&D Book. Stay tuned for

updates on both these events over the coming months.

This month we sadly bid farewell to our project officer Aeneva, who along with Tristan are heading back to the farm in Bolgart and taking on the challenge of farming! We are very grateful to have had Aeneva involved in the Liebe Group over the last 2 years, having started as an administration assistant and quickly moving up into the project officer role which she has performed with much enthusiasm and professionalism. We thank Aeneva for her dedication to her work over this time as well as Tristan for his expertise on the Liebe Group R&D committee and ongoing commitment to the Liebe Group/Elders partnership. We wish them both all the best.

In terms of the group's staffing going forward our existing staff will step into the project officer roles, with our current casual project support officer Amber now having a good handle on all the project trials and can seamlessly continue on with the project field work going forward. We will also draw on the experience of Rebecca Wallis further in the project management space. As is the case in the world of grower groups and R&D, projects start and finish so the group may look to recruit early in the New Year depending on the success of our project pipeline going forward.

Currently the group is investigating opportunities with the future drought fund, with rounds that will be looking at Long Term Trial work and Resilient Landscapes open at the moment. As always, the group welcomes ideas on R&D from the membership that we can feed into our trial and project programs going forward.

Finally, I wish everyone a safe and smooth harvest and a great festive break.

Chris O'Callaghan,
Executive Officer



UPCOMING LIEBE EVENTS

Harvest Review (members only)	13 th February 2025	Liebe Office, Dalwallinu
AGM/Season Launch	5 th March 2025	Liebe Office, Dalwallinu
GRDC Research Updates	13 th March 2025	Coorow Town Hall
Women's Field Day	10 th June 2025	Dalwallinu Recreation Centre
Post Seeding Field Walk	July 2025	Main Trial Site, Nugadong
Spring Field Day	11 th September 2025	Main Trial Site, Nugadong

CONTENTS

MEMBER NEWS

The mechanics of farm financials: Building financial confidence in your farming business	5
Liebe Group weather station update	6
Measuring losses at harvest	9
Out and About in the Liebe Region	12

AGRONOMIC UPDATES

DBM in a warm year: canola in hot oil?	14
Applying super and potash products on crops	17
Getting the best out of Terrad'or	18
Assessing the performance of multiple herbicide additives on the efficacy of clethodim based in-crop canola mixes at crop establishment	20
New udon noodle developments from Intergrain	23

BUSINESS UPDATES

Fringe benefits tax (FBT): A guide for primary producers on ATO's focus areas	24
Australian pulses racing towards a strong harvest	26

OTHER UPDATES

Rural landholder social benchmarking report 2021	28
Visiting your GP - tips for the average bloke	32
2024 Photo Competition Winners	33
Resource corner	34
Do you know your local fire control officer?	35

THE MECHANICS OF FARM FINANCIALS: BUILDING FINANCIAL CONFIDENCE IN YOUR FARMING BUSINESS

By Rebecca Wallis, The Liebe Group

Liebe members who are stepping into a financial role in their farm now have the opportunity to attend a 1:1 session to understand the foundations of the financial side of a farming business.

The format of these sessions give participants the opportunity to ask questions and move through the session at their own pace, increasing understanding in the financial side of farming, and giving confidence to become a part of the business conversation.

Through funding from the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, Holly McFarlane has delivered eight financial micro sessions to Liebe members from August to October this year.

The sessions are for individuals, family members and/or couples, and have been attended by couples learning together about the farm budgeting process.

Holly works through a farm budget step by step to help attendees understand the business cashflow budget, adjusted profit and loss and statement of position, as well as ratios & benchmarks. The sessions empower participants with an understanding of where the numbers are coming from and how they fit together, as well as what to expect during meetings with consultants and farm advisors.

The sessions have received great feedback, and the opportunity to attend a micro session will be available again post harvest. If you or a family member is stepping into the financial side of your farming business, contact the Liebe Group to register your interest.

TESTIMONIALS

"Today was great, it went at my pace with plenty of opportunities to ask questions and go over the bits that didn't click the first time. As someone who

finds spreadsheets and maths very off putting I was pleasantly surprised that I was actually able to grasp it by the end and understand the terminology which itself has been a barrier to being able to engage in discussions. It helped to cement where the numbers in the cashflow were coming from and gave everything context."

"The mini session with Holly was such a valuable experience, especially as I am becoming more involved in our farming business. It was great to be able to go at my own pace and feel confident to ask questions. I really enjoyed the one on one format, and putting the pencil to paper was super helpful to understand how budgets come together with all the different inputs, tables and figures. I am now looking forward to our next meeting with our consultant to put the knowledge into action."

"It was very valuable to have time for both of us to just sit down and nut out where it all starts and how figures eventuate. You made it seem achievable and I/we feel a lot more informed to make decisions going forward."

Contact the Liebe Group or Holly on 0409 118 847 to book your session.



This initiative is supported by the Grower Group Alliance, through funding from the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development.



Department of
Primary Industries and
Regional Development



**GROWER
GROUP
ALLIANCE**
Together we grow

LIEBE GROUP WEATHER STATION UPDATE

By Rebecca Wallis, The Liebe Group

Liebe Group weather station network has been internally funded by the Liebe Group for 2024, with the investment also covering a 12-month trial of the Pairtree platform, aimed at enhancing data integration and presentation.

Initiated in 2021 with project funding and support from the National Landcare Program, the network comprises of 13 weather stations and soil probes, along with an additional 10 standalone rain gauges. Over the last four years, the data from the network has been available to all Liebe members through the Wildeye app.

The data from these devices has promoted a lot of discussion about factors such as stored soil water throughout the season, rainfall patterns across the district, understanding optimal spraying conditions, frost mapping and seasonal decision making for seeding and nitrogen applications.

After feedback from the host growers of these devices, it was proposed that exploring a more user friendly dashboard to display the data would

be beneficial. The relationship with Pairtree was initiated in July and is now available to all Liebe members to view.

Pairtree is a universal computer dashboard to centralise all farm data into a single log in space. You can view, navigate and analyse all data, no matter the source or device type, across a farm operation, or in Liebe's case, a district network.

To access the Liebe Group network on [Pairtree](#) use the QR code with the password details below.

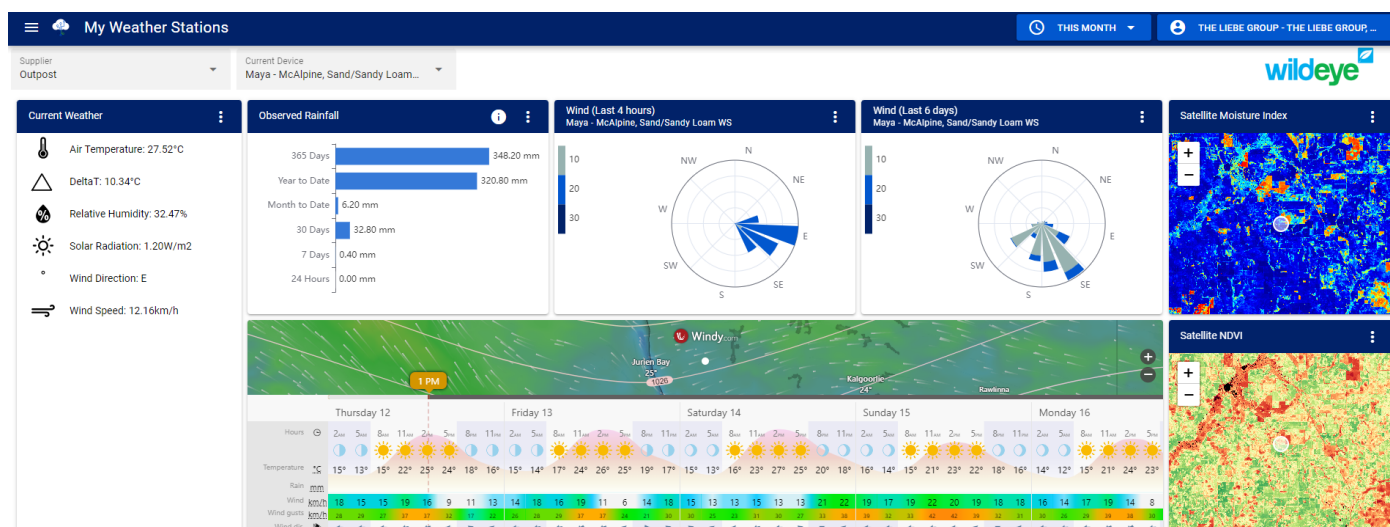
USERNAME:
liebegroup24@pairtree.co

PASSWORD:
liebegroup2024



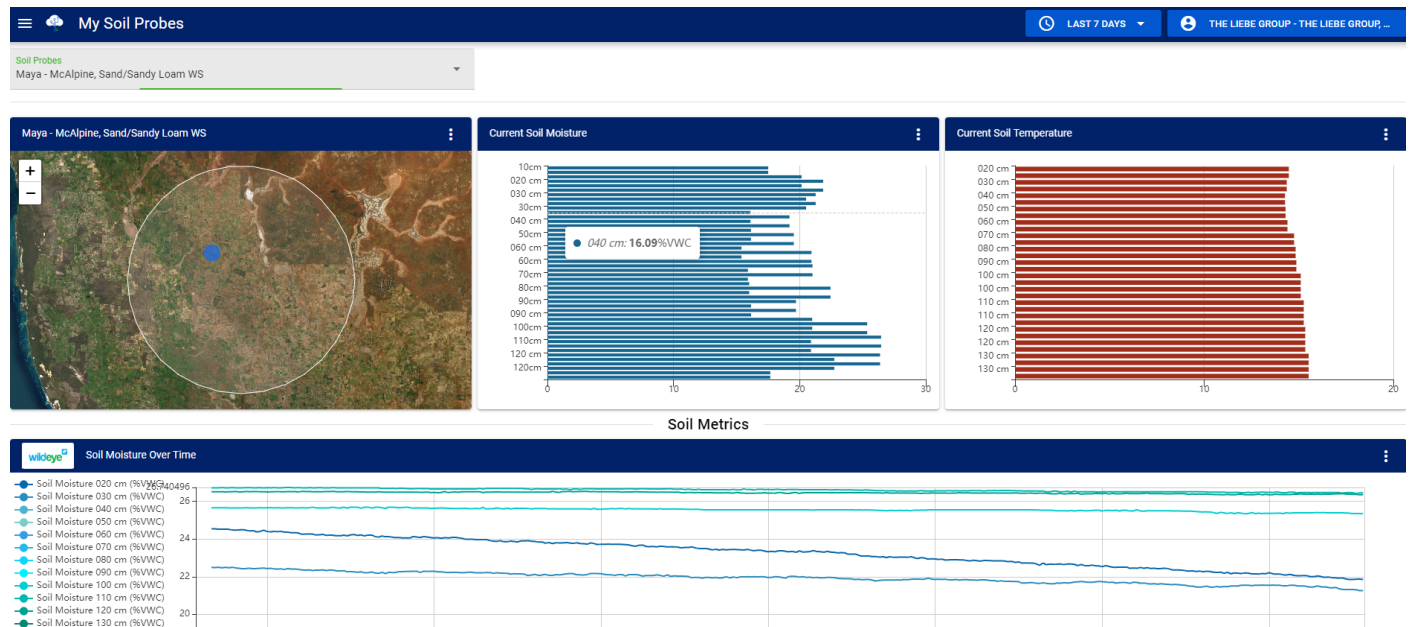
Some of the key pages for you to investigate are shown with some screenshots below.

My Weather Stations – This page allows you to select an individual station to integrate the data. All DPIRD/BOM stations in the district are also available from the drop down menu on the left.

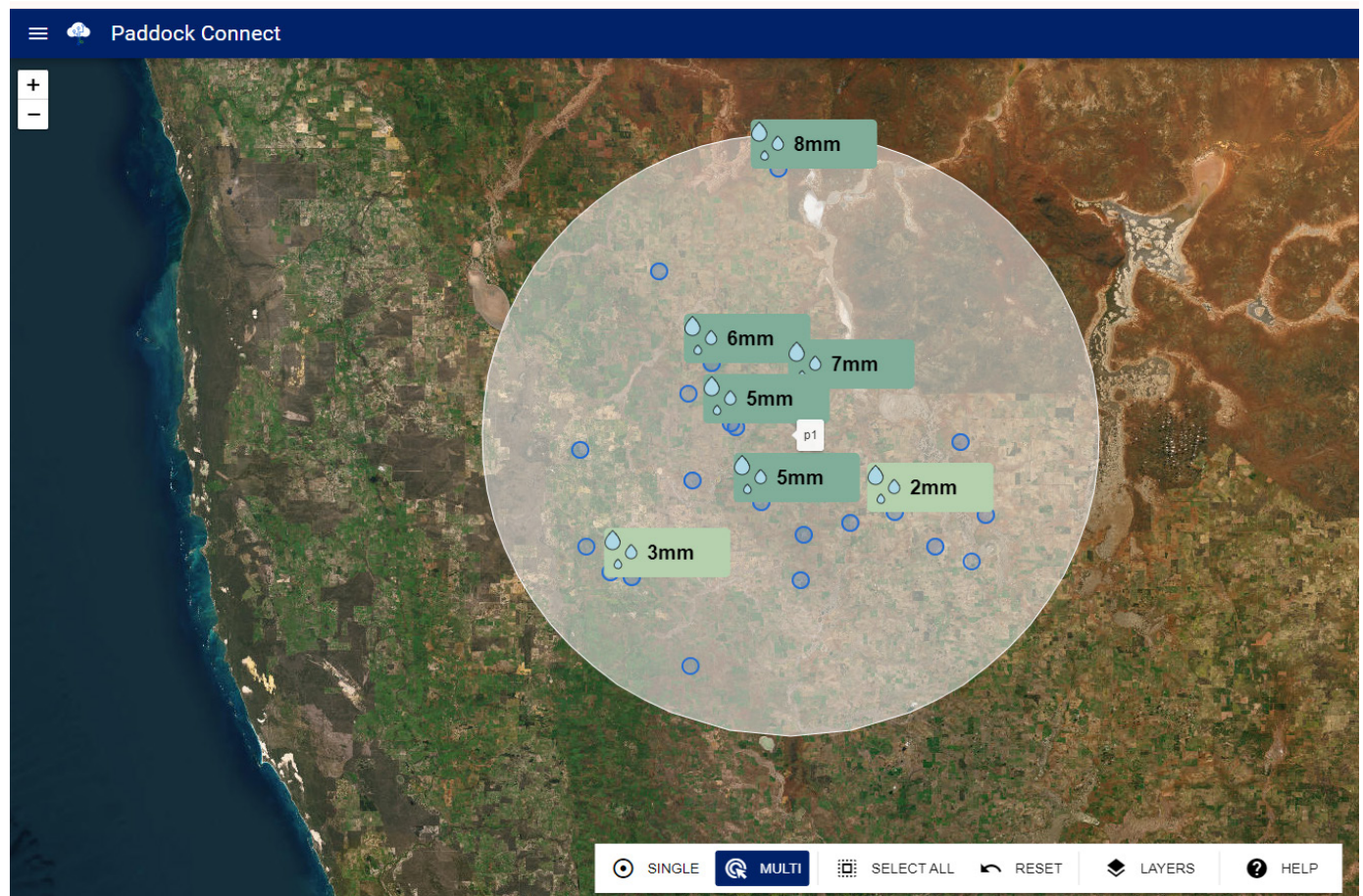




My Soil Probes – Similar to the weather station page, you can individual select a probe site to view the data.



Paddock Connect – A map view of all devices with ability to select layers to display different weather parameters.





The Liebe Group team have also been exploring other programs that link with the weather stations network. One of these is the Janes Weather platform, which is an AI forecasting model that uses the data directly from the local weather stations, alongside the international models, to provide local micro-climate forecasting. The host

growers of the Liebe Group weather stations have had the opportunity to trial the program.

If you are interested in more information about how this might be useful for your farm business contact Rebecca Wallis on 0400 681 054.



MEASURING LOSSES AT HARVEST

By Rebecca Wallis and Chris O'Callaghan, The Liebe Group

From 2021 – 2023, the Liebe Group were involved in a collaborative GRDC project measuring harvester grain losses. The aim of the project was to work with growers to maximise harvester throughput capacity with acceptable losses. It was led by the Grower Group Alliance, alongside Facey Group, Stirlings to Coast Farmers, Primary Sales and Ben White.

During the project, 156 harvest loss samples were measured in 65 paddocks for 8 crop species.

Harvest losses in the 2022/23 season were generally in excess of acceptable thresholds for all crop species except wheat but closely reflected the results achieved in 2021/22 with an estimated \$320m of grain losses estimated for the Western Region. Front losses exceeded machine losses for all crop species except barley and oats and losses from stripper fronts were often far higher than for other front styles. Harvest losses for grain legumes,

particularly lupins, continue to exceed those of cereals and canola.

Front losses continued to be a significant contributing factor to losses in the harvesting process. Stripper fronts have demonstrated significantly higher levels of loss which could be partly offset by the increased capacity of the harvester.

Steps to reducing these losses start with harvester operator loss quantification and subsequent loss sensor calibration. Growers that measured losses with drop trays as part of their harvesting operations had lower loss figures for high value crops.

When optimising harvester performance, best practice is to iteratively change one machine setting or make one adjustment in isolation before retesting to evaluate the impact of that change.

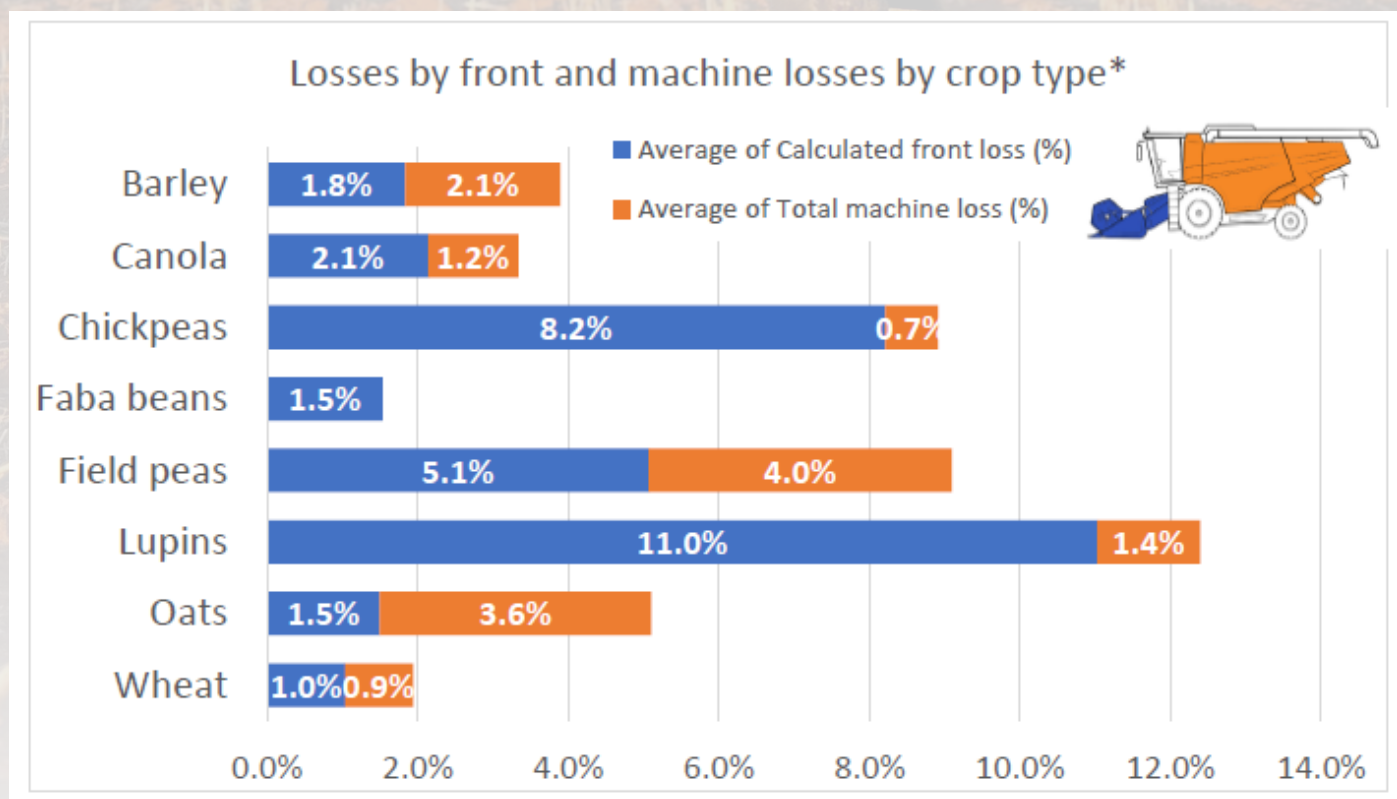


Figure 1. Identifies heavy front losses for pulse grains, with loss measurements in cereals also significant for both front and machine measurements. These figures represent 156 samples taken across all WA port zones.

Legumes are traditionally more difficult to harvest with low levels of losses. Front losses through pod shattering which can be reduced by ensuring the knife and guards are in good operating condition. Accessory sweeps over the knife or guard adaptations or extensions can also pull material into the front over the knife. Solutions can vary in

their effectiveness by season, ambient conditions and by crop variety.

Samples taken by the Liebe Group represented nearly half of the total project tests (76) with the results closely reflecting the larger dataset.

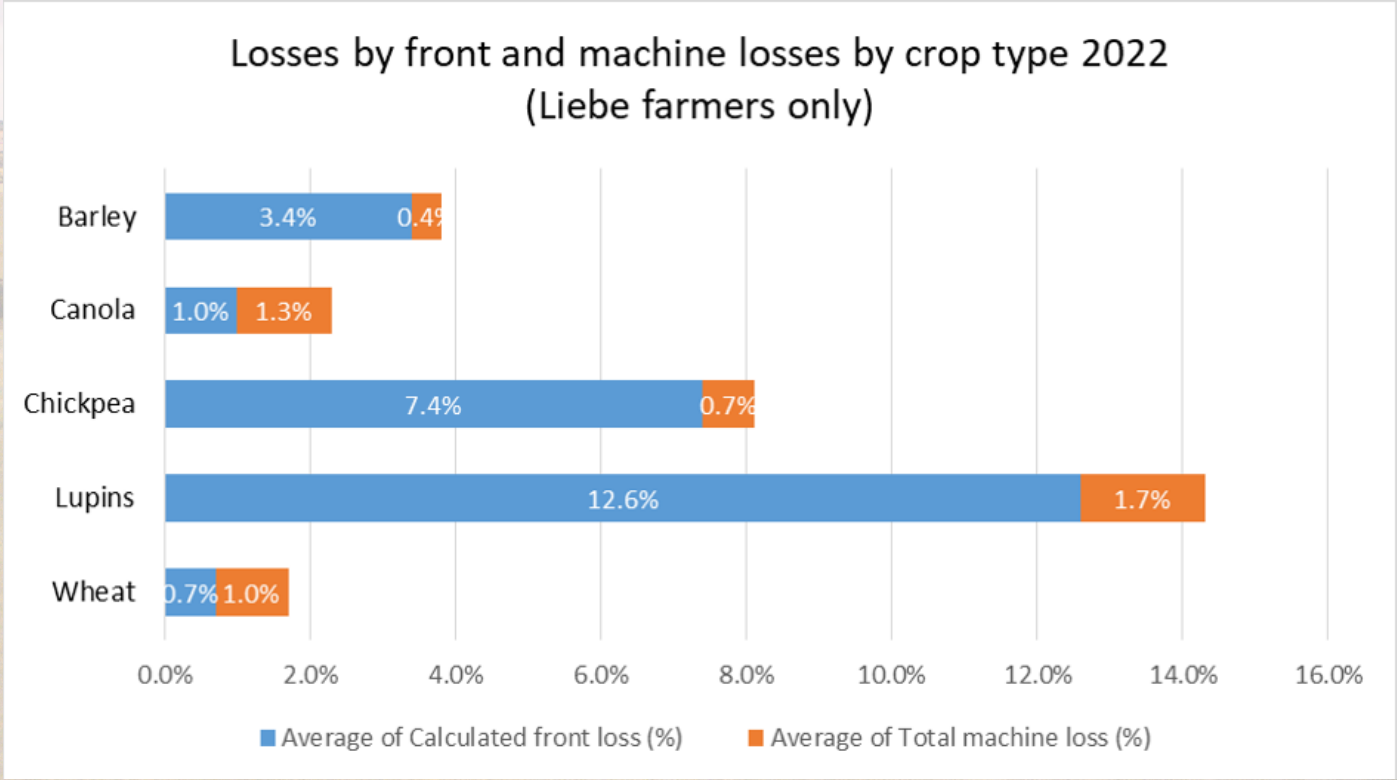


Figure 2. Data from Liebe farms made up almost half of the total data set.

The target of <1% losses is a good rule of thumb but some of the exceptions include:

Table 1: Achievable grain loss targets for selected crop types.

Crop type	Preferred goal	Real life conditions	Comment
Canola and small grain	<1%	2-3%	Grain loss of in excess of 10% has been measured in the field by growers. Growers were unaware they were losing this much until they measured with a drop tray.
Cereal grain	<1%	<1%	In good harvest conditions - <0.5% loss is achievable.
Pulse crops	<1%	0.5-1%	In pulse crops, header front loss is responsible for most grain loss and as such is the primary concern for growers.

NB: Targets are for harvester machine loss only, does not include header front losses.

Target grain losses stated in Table 1 are achievable goals, but growers also need to consider the cost of compromises to harvest capacity, and accept the balance between the cost of harvest loss/ha and the cost of harvest capacity (ha/hr or T/ha), because crawling/harvesting slowly to achieve 0% harvest loss decreases efficiency.

We need to keep in mind the simple equation of:
Total cost of harvest = cost of harvest (harvester + chaser bin) + harvest losses.

If you are interested in measuring your losses this harvest, the Liebe Group have two drop trays available for use by members this harvest. Contact the office via admin@liebegroup.org.au or calling 08 9661 1907.

HARVEST LOSS RESOURCES

GRDC HARVEST LOSS CALCULATOR



GRDC HARVESTER SET UP GUIDE



OUT AND ABOUT

PINOT IN THE Paddock

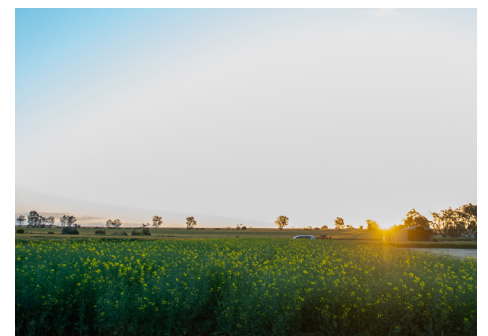


SPRING FIELD DAY



IN THE LIEBE REGION

SPRING FIELD DAY



DBM IN A WARM YEAR: CANOLA IN HOT OIL?

By Amber Balfour-Cunningham, PhD Student, University of WA

KEY POINTS

Warmer temperatures in 2024 have boosted both pest DBM and beneficial insect activity, and it is important to preserve natural enemies and preventing secondary pest flare-ups by avoiding broad-spectrum insecticides.

DBM infestations can build up rapidly. Monitoring by sweep netting, and considering pheromone traps, is crucial for effective management and timely action.

Pre-season summer Brassica weeds, like wild radish and volunteer canola, increase DBM populations in canola sown nearby. Controlling these weeds at least 4 weeks before canola germination can reduce DBM risks.

Temperature is only one of many key factors impacting the population growth of Diamondback moth (DBM) and increasing the risk of DBM outbreaks. Other variables that increase the risk of high DBM numbers include fewer rainfall events, application of broad-spectrum insecticides that cause high mortality of beneficial insects and presence of nearby Brassica weeds from canola germination.

Higher temperatures speed up the life cycle of DBM. At a constant 10°C in a controlled environment it takes around 68 days for a DBM egg to become a moth, at 15°C it takes 32 days and at 20°C it takes 17 days. DBM female moths can mate and lay more than 140 eggs one day after hatching.

All DBM life stages - eggs, larvae (caterpillars), pupae (cocoon), and adult moths - are present in the crop simultaneously.

However, the activity of beneficial insect natural enemies also increases with warmer temperatures. In addition, in wet or humid conditions, warm temperatures can increase the spread of beneficial caterpillar fungal diseases that may contribute to DBM population crashes. Even in milder conditions, rainfall helps reduce DBM populations by dislodging caterpillars from plants, disrupting moth flying and reproductive behaviours, and further promoting insect fungal disease outbreaks.

DBM YIELD IMPACTS IN THE FIELD

The most vulnerable stages of canola to Diamondback moth (DBM) are pre-flowering stem extension and flowering, when caterpillars chew on developing buds, flowers, and small pods, which can lead to yield loss. Once pods are larger and ripening, DBM is less likely to cause damage, only grazing the outside of pods, but continued sweep net monitoring for native budworm caterpillars, which will chew into canola pods and seeds, is still essential.

Yield loss from DBM chewing at the leaf development or rosette stage canola is rare, as canola can compensate well for leaf damage, and damaged plants also increase root growth to support recovery. When temperatures decline



Image 1: Sweep netting canola for Diamondback moth caterpillars.

and rainfall increases in autumn and winter, DBM activity in canola decreases significantly. During the early leaf development stages, sweep netting may not work well for detecting DBM. An alternative is to use the “bashing” method i.e., pull plants and bash into a plastic box, dislodging insects to check for DBM.

Young DBM caterpillars start by mining leaves, then mature to create “windowing” or small “shot holes” on leaves, which expand and become larger holes as leaves grow. It’s important to assess caterpillar presence rather than just visible damage, as damage may have occurred earlier, and caterpillar numbers may have since declined. Monitor a few different locations within at least one high risk paddock fortnightly prior to pre-flowering stem extension.

DON'T BUG YOUR BENEFICIALS

No single insecticide application will completely eliminate Diamondback moth due to the simultaneous presence of all life stages in the crop, making it difficult to disrupt their life cycle. DBM eggs are more frequently laid on the underside of leaves, with a protective shell that resists insecticides. Caterpillars present underneath or inside leaves and buds may also be shielded. Pupae do not feed and are often in sheltered areas of the canopy, and adult DBM moths are mobile, do not feed, and spend limited time on treated plant surfaces.

Using broad-spectrum insecticides harms beneficial insects, leading to secondary outbreaks of DBM due to the loss of natural enemies that were actively hunting in the crop and decreasing numbers of all DBM life stages. Therefore, avoiding synthetic pyrethroids and organophosphates when DBM are present in crops is economical, as these insecticides are ineffective against DBM due to high levels of resistance and are harmful to beneficial insects. There are online beneficial toxicity tables that can help decision-making when control using insecticides is required.

Insecticides registered for DBM that cause lower toxicity to beneficial insects include cyantraniliprole (Exirel), spinetoram (Success Neo), emamectin (e.g., Affirm, Titan Emamectin 17, Warlock, Warrior), and *Bacillus thuringiensis* biological insecticide (e.g., DiPel, Delfin). If DBM populations reach economic thresholds and an

insecticide is applied, continue monitoring weekly using sweep netting to detect newly hatched or surviving caterpillars. In high population years, a second spray with a different mode of action may be needed within seven days for effective control. Refer to GRDC’s 2017 Resistance Management Strategy for DBM in Australian Canola for further information.

BE FRIENDS WITH YOUR NATURAL ENEMIES

Beneficial natural enemies, including predators and parasitoids, have been shown to contribute significantly to the control of caterpillar pests in broadacre environments such as DBM populations in Canadian canola and Cotton bollworm caterpillars in Australian cotton. The activity of many natural enemy species can be challenging to monitor in the field due to their fast movement, small size, camouflage, or diversity.

Natural enemies can disrupt all DBM life stages, compared to insecticides which have limited effect on DBM eggs and adults. Predatory insects such as ladybird beetles, hoverflies, lacewings, and their juvenile stages feed on DBM eggs and caterpillars, while small parasitoid wasp species hunt and ultimately kill DBM eggs, caterpillars, and pupae by laying eggs inside or on their bodies that hatch and consume the living host. Spiders, hanging scorpionflies and some other insect predators’ prey on DBM adult moths.

Research by University of WA PhD student Amber Balfour-Cunningham, with investment from UWA, Grains Research and Development Corporation (GRDC), and the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD), is investigating the best monitoring methods to use for parasitoids and other natural enemies on DBM in WA canola. In 2024, this project found DBM caterpillar parasitoid wasps in canola at sites including Carnamah, Watercarrin, and Northam. In addition to the direct effects of parasitism killing DBM, controlled environment trials in this project in 2023 showed that indirect effects of parasitoids on DBM, such as stress-induced escape behaviours, led to higher DBM mortality and decreased time spent chewing on canola. Indirect effects of natural enemies on insect pests such as increased avoidance behaviours can be difficult to monitor in field conditions but are important to consider, to understand the full impact of natural enemies.

GREEN BRIDGING GAPS IN DBM KNOWLEDGE IN WA

Initial results from a five-year study on DBM establishment in WA canola, led by Dr. Dustin Severtson (DPIRD) with GRDC investment, found that nearby pre-season Brassica “green bridge” weeds, like wild radish and volunteer canola, are linked to increased DBM populations in winter and spring canola. Between 2019 and 2023, a significant relationship was observed between these summer weeds and higher DBM populations in nearby canola paddocks. Additional findings included that pheromone DBM moth trap counts were generally a good predictor of subsequent DBM caterpillar infestations (**Image 2**), especially in the Geraldton and Esperance port zones. Moth counts from traps provided an early warning for DBM caterpillars that were found in crops two weeks later. However, regular sweep netting is still recommended, as moth counts alone are not always reliable.

TURNIP THE PRESSURE ON BRASSICA WEEDS

To reduce the risk of DBM carrying over across summer, control wild radish, volunteer canola, wild turnip, lincoln weed and other Brassica weeds at least 4 weeks before canola germination to “starve out” DBM. Wild radish is persistent due to its ability to germinate year-round, produce many seeds, and grow rapidly. Controlling Brassica weeds also removes other pests, like cabbage centre grub and weed web moth, and reduces the risk of weeds competing with winter crops. Monitor paddocks, fence lines, drains, roadsides, and other areas where Brassica weeds may occur to determine appropriate management strategies. In WA, wild radish has developed resistance to several herbicide groups, with Group 2 being the most common. Maintaining low populations of wild radish is crucial to prevent seed buildup in the soil, reduce herbicide resistance risk, and decrease the likelihood of green bridge-mediated pests and diseases.



Image 2: Changing a Diamondback moth pheromone Delta trap sticky paper and lure.

REFERENCES

1. Australian Bureau of Meteorology. (2024). Western Australia seasonal climate summaries. Bureau of Meteorology.
2. Wang, L., Etebari, K., Zhao, Z., Walter, G. H., & Furlong, M. J. (2022). Differential temperature responses between *Plutella xylostella* and parasitoid *Diadegma semiclausum*. *Insect Science*, 29(3), 855–64. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1744-7917.12967>.
3. McHugh, J. J., & Foster, R. E. (1995). Reduction of diamondback moth infestation in cabbage by overhead irrigation. *Journal of Economic Entomology*, 88(1), 162–168.
4. Baker, G., et al. (2017). Science behind resistance management for diamondback moth in Australian canola.
5. Furlong, M. J., et al. (2008). Ecology of diamondback moth in Australian canola: Landscape perspectives and implications. *Australian Journal of Experimental Agriculture*, 48(12), 1494–1505. <https://doi.org/10.1071/EA07413>.
6. Knapp, R., et al. (2023). Impact of insecticides on beneficial insects in Australian grain crops.
7. Severtson, D. (2024, March). Protecting WA crops: Issue 37. Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, WA.
8. Borger, C. (2024). Wild radish management in crops. Biosecurity factsheets. Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, WA.



APPLYING SUPER AND POTASH PRODUCTS ON CROPS

By James Easton, CSBP Senior Agronomist

Traditionally, super and potash products have been considered fertilisers best used for topdressing pastures. However, these fertilisers should also be considered for cropping programs.

Topdressing super and potash products before seeding crops can:

- Boost potassium (K), sulfur (S) and trace element supply in deficient paddocks.
- Reduce the risk of fertiliser toxicity in sensitive crops such as canola and lupins.
- Improve logistics by reducing the need for fertiliser at seeding and during the season.

POTASSIUM, POTASSIUM AND SULFUR CROP REQUIREMENTS

Crops require a lot more K than phosphorus (P), but NPK fertilisers may not supply all the K and S crops need—especially in high-yielding environments, such as over 4 t/ha for cereals and over 3 t/ha for canola. Topdressing a Super and Potash product before seeding can be an effective strategy for supplying maintenance P and boosting K and S supply in deficient paddocks.

Drilling high rates of K can be toxic to sensitive crops such as canola and lupins, and the risk is much higher if seed and fertiliser separation is poor. Topdressing a super and potash product before seeding reduces this toxicity risk and can improve establishment.

SUPER AS A SULFUR SOURCE

Super is an excellent source of S for canola and can often supply enough to meet crop requirements. Super doesn't have the acidifying properties of sulfate of ammonia, and it is less prone to leaching than gypsum.

TEKPhos contains Super, copper (Cu), zinc (Zn), and potash. Copper and Zn are highly immobile in soils; mixing them into the soil increases their availability to plants. Topdressing TEKPhos before spading, ploughing or speed tilling is a good opportunity to boost the supply and availability of trace elements to following crops.

Finally, topdressing Super, Super and Potash, Super Copper Zinc or TEKPhos before seeding can greatly simplify logistics by reducing the need for fertiliser at seeding, as well as the need for S and K top-ups during the season.

Speak to your local [CSBP](#) account manager to discuss your requirements and determine whether super and potash products are the right fit for you.



GETTING THE BEST OUT OF TERRAD'OR

By Nufarm

Nufarm's Terrad'or was launched in 2021 and has provided growers with a Group 14 herbicide option for notoriously hard-to-kill weeds like marshmallow, sow thistle, wild radish and even annual ryegrass.

GETTING THE BEST OUT OF TERRAD'OR

Broadleaf weeds form a waxy cuticle on the leaf surface that creates a water permeability barrier preventing evaporation of water from the leaf surface. The more "lipophilic" (fat friendly) the Group 14 (G) herbicide is, the faster and better the penetration through the waxy cuticle.

Group 14 (G) herbicides that are not very "lipophilic" (Nufarm Terrad'or) are more reliant on oil adjuvants to assist with the solution getting through the cuticle waxes. Once through the cuticle wax, these less "lipophilic" herbicides can move

through and around the cells better and often give better efficacy.

Nufarm Field Development Officer, Mitch Allen has undertaken numerous trials with Terrad'or over the years. "Terrad'or's chemical properties dictate that it will struggle to penetrate the waxy cuticle on a leaf in its own right. It needs a good quality oil to get it across the cuticle of the leaf and into the weed where it works, other adjuvants just won't cut it," he said.

Using a surfactant instead of a high-quality oil/surfactant blend such as Nufarm CanDo will compromise efficacy. This can be seen clearly in the diagram below which shows control of Sow Thistle with Nufarm Terrad'or @ 40g/ha + Nufarm CanDo 0.5% v/v and Nufarm Terrad'or 40g/ha with Nufarm Activator.

Nufarm Terrad'or 40 g/ha - Oil v Surfactant Sow Thistle (8 days after application)



**Nufarm Terrad'or 40 g/ha +
Nufarm CanDo 0.5% v/v (Oil Adjuvant)**



**Nufarm Terrad'or 40 g/ha +
Nufarm Activator 0.125% v/v
(Wetter / Surfactant)**



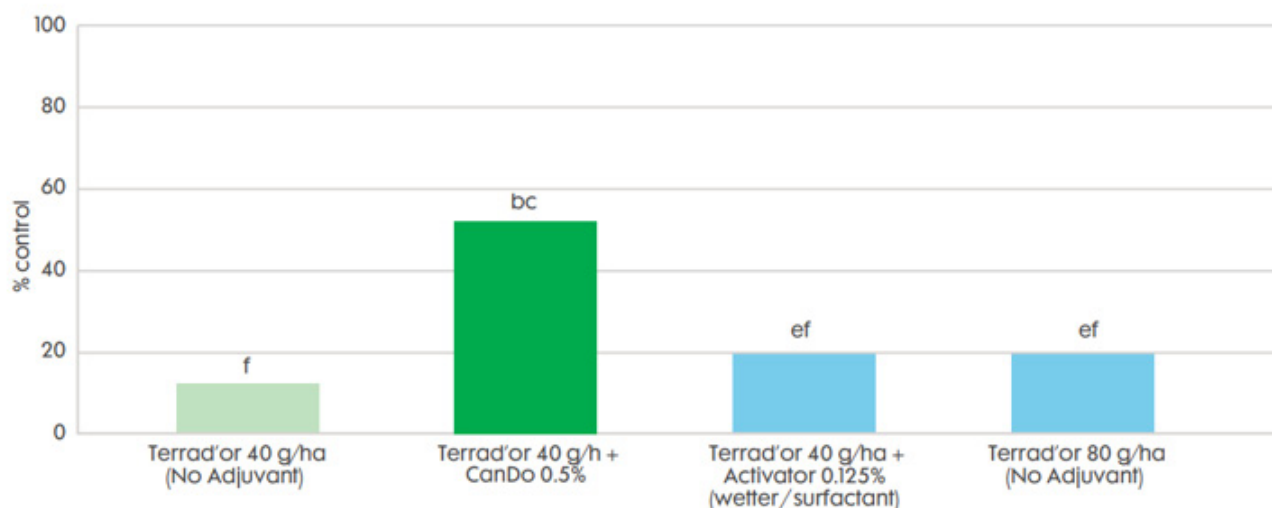


The efficacy of Terrad'or is dependent on the use of a high-quality oil adjuvant. As can be seen below, using an alternative adjuvant or even doubling the rate of Terrad'or did not significantly improve the efficacy.

For further information, a comprehensive technical guide for Terrad'or is available on the [Nufarm website](#) - scan QR code below.



Annual Ryegrass Control (27 Days after application)



Trial Reference: CanDo-WIN-ADJ-18-NSW





ASSESSING THE PERFORMANCE OF MULTIPLE HERBICIDE ADDITIVES ON THE EFFICACY OF CLETHODIM BASED IN-CROP CANOLA MIXES AT CROP ESTABLISHMENT

By Jeremy Samson, Research Agronomist, Spraytec

KEY POINTS

- It is not recommended to apply clethodim late in the canola growth stage. For the purpose of this trial, clethodim was applied during stem elongation to early flowering to observe phytotoxicity and assess whether zinc could help the plants recover.
- Phytotoxic damage was less in plots treated with clethodim alone compared to those treated with clethodim + glyphosate.
- Treatments with Spraytec's additives still showed phytotoxicity; however, less damage was observed in treatments with TOPZinc in clethodim standalone applications, with slight recovery observed in treatments with clethodim + glyphosate.
- Harvest data is to be collected to validate visual observations.

In modern agriculture, effective weed management post-seeding is crucial, particularly during the crop establishment phase of canola. Clethodim has become a key herbicide for controlling annual ryegrass, a notorious weed that poses significant threats to canola yields. However, the continuous use of clethodim over time has led to the development of resistance in annual ryegrass. To address this issue, clethodim is often combined with other herbicides such as haloxyfop, glyphosate, or even butroxydim in forming a more comprehensive strategy for weed control. This combination has proven effective in managing resistant populations of annual ryegrass and enhancing overall weed management practices (Busi et al., 2023).

This trial at the Liebe Group Main Trial Site in Maya is focusing on evaluating the performance of clethodim when mixed with Spraytec's additives, Fulltec Max and TopZinc Max. These additives offer multiple benefits, including improved spray droplet coverage, better water quality, and enhanced herbicide penetration, all of which are critical to ensuring clethodim's effectiveness. Additionally, Fulltec Max and TopZinc Max provide chelated nutrients that may aid in better crop establishment, making them practical and valuable for growers. This comprehensive approach aims to boost weed control efficiency while supporting canola crop health and productivity.

The trial was sprayed on the 24th of July although weed pressure was low due to poor ryegrass establishment at the canola trial site. Despite this, the decision was made to proceed with the trial to focus on crop phytotoxicity and recovery, as zinc in Spraytec's TOPZinc Max additive is known to alleviate crop stress caused by chemicals (phytotoxicity), frost, moisture stress, etc. The timing was ideal, as 30-40% of the crops were beginning to flower—a crop stage where Group 1 herbicides are known to cause damage to canola—while the remaining 60-70% were in the late stem elongation phase.

The trial involved applications of clethodim standalone and clethodim + glyphosate on EMU canola sown by a Horcsh Tiger. Phytotoxicity and biomass assessments were conducted 8, 22, and 32 days after treatment. Statistical analyses were



performed using non-transformed data with ANOVA Type II (RCBD) and Fisher's LSD for mean comparisons. Harvest data is yet to be gathered to confirm any yield recovery resulting from the use of TOPZinc Max in the application.

RESULTS

Phytotoxicity

Phytotoxicity was observed on all plots but plots across the trial with darker coloured cupped leaves with slight scorching. On more advanced plants, flower damage and abortion on some plants were observed in the treated plots which became more evident as the crops continued to mature.

Ratings were done visually comparing treated plots against the untreated control.

Clethodim Standalone:

- Less damage was observed in plots with clethodim treatments as a standalone compared to plots treated with clethodim + glyphosate
- Damage was still observed in treatments with TOPZinc Max but numerically less compared to the other treatments.

Clethodim + Glyphosate:

- Greater damage was observed in plots treated with clethodim + glyphosate as seen in the graphs below.
- Slight phytotoxic recovery was observed for plots treated with TOPZinc Max in the latter assessments of the trial.

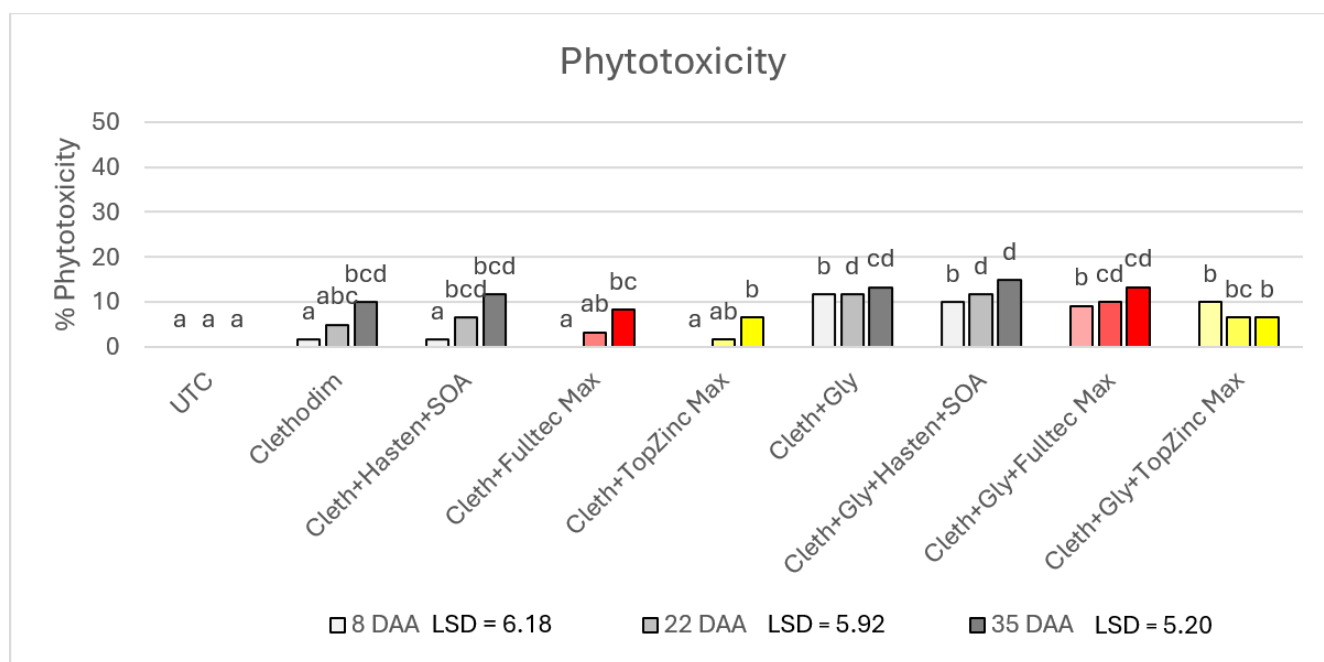


Figure 1: Mean Percent Crop Phytotoxicity ratings per plot.

BIOMASS

No significant biomass differences were observed among the treatments across the trial. Biomass ratings were assessed visually by comparing treated plots to the untreated control plot's biomass at the time of assessment, taking the

replicates into account.

Greater biomass reductions were observed in treatments with clethodim + glyphosate compared to treatments with clethodim as a standalone treatment.

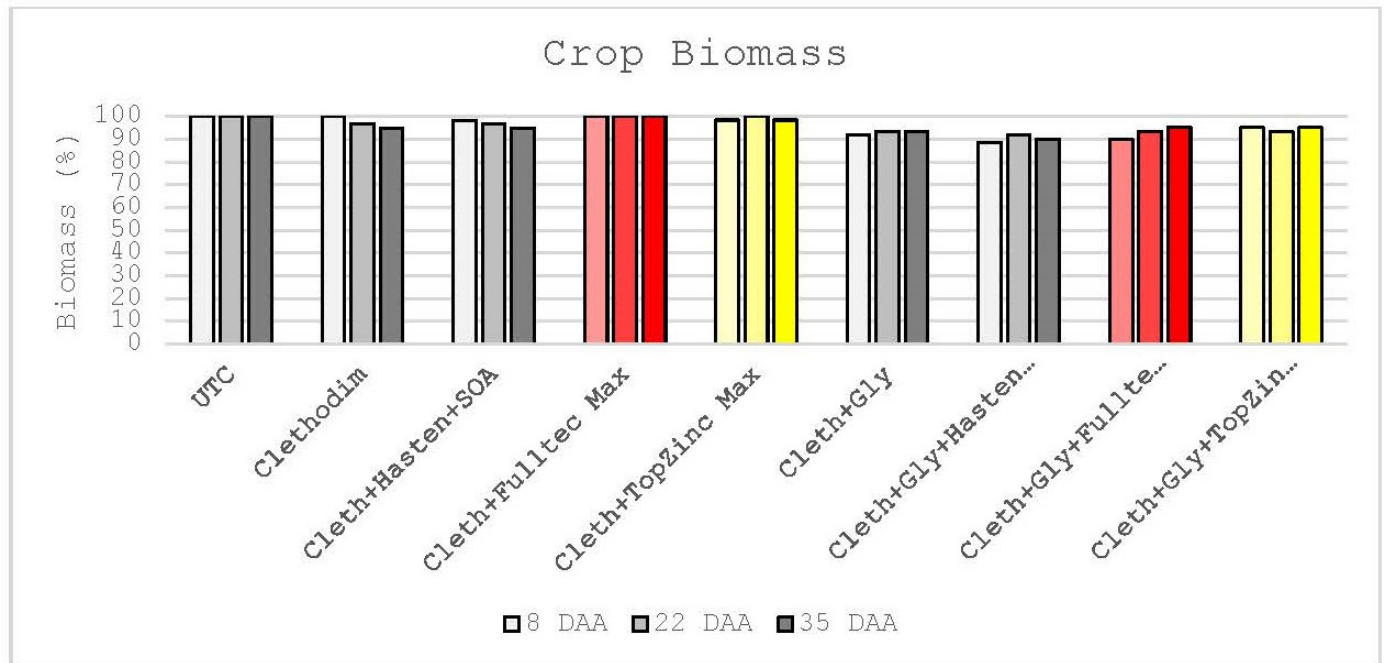


Figure 2. Mean Percent Crop Biomass ratings per plot.

YIELD

Yield assessments are to be gathered at the end of the season to validate whether the visually observed phytotoxicity recovery translates into

yield recovery. Yield differences will also serve to confirm the biomass differences observed.



Fulltec® and Fulltec Max® are fertilisers currently awaiting APVMA adjuvant registration approval estimated for completion in 2024. TopZinc Max® is a foliar fertilizer with fulltec max technology guaranteed analysis – 2.75% zinc

NEW UDON NOODLE DEVELOPMENTS FROM INTERGRAIN

By Richard Marsland, Intergrain Territory Manager, Northern WA

InterGrain, Western Australia's leading noodle wheat breeder, has introduced two new varieties to the udon noodle space: Splendid and Firefly. These varieties, offering different maturities, are set to replace older varieties like Ninja, Zen, and Calingiri, delivering both higher yields and improved disease resistance.

Splendid (trialled as IGW8220) is a quick-mid maturing noodle wheat, and was introduced at the Mingenew Irwin Group Sandplain Field Day as a Ninja replacement. It offers a yield improvement of 5% over Ninja and 3% over Scepter (InterGrain 2019-2023 national long-term trials), with strong resistance to powdery mildew, yellow leaf spot and leaf rust. Splendid's broad adaptability makes it suitable for planting in mid-May, meeting the needs of growers with later planting windows.

Firefly (trialled as IGW8192), a mid-slow maturing variety, was released in spring 2023. It offers a yield advantage of up to 5% over Zen, 10% over Calingiri and 3% over Scepter (InterGrain 2019-2023 national long-term trials), making it a compelling choice for early sowing. Like Splendid, Firefly also boasts a strong disease resistance profile and excellent end-use qualities, ensuring its appeal to both growers and udon noodle processors.

InterGrain has been the cornerstone of noodle wheat breeding in WA for decades, consistently delivering varieties tailored to the preferences

of Japanese and Korean udon noodle markets. InterGrain's strong relationships with processors and scientists in Japan and South Korea allows them to breed wheat varieties to meet specific quality requirements for noodle colour and texture. Both Splendid and Firefly have received positive feedback from these key international markets, reinforcing WA's global reputation for high-quality noodle wheat.

Seed for both Splendid and Firefly for the 2025 season is available through InterGrain Seedclub Members and resellers.

For enquiries, please contact:

Richie Marsland – northern WA Territory Manager – 0483 311 901

Georgia Trainor – southern WA Territory Manager – 0439 093 166



FRINGE BENEFITS TAX (FBT): A GUIDE FOR PRIMARY PRODUCERS ON ATO'S FOCUS AREAS RSM

By Kathy Scrooby and Reagan Manns, RSM

UNDERSTANDING FRINGE BENEFITS TAX (FBT):

Fringe Benefits Tax (FBT) is a tax that employers must pay on certain benefits they provide to their employees or their employees' family or associates. These benefits can take many forms, including the use of a company car, discounted loans, or even covering private expenses. FBT ensures that these non-cash benefits, which are additional to an employee's salary, are also subject to taxation. There are however some exemptions for primary producers and regional business operators.

FBT ON PRIVATE USE OF VEHICLES: A KEY FOCUS FOR THE ATO

One of the key focus areas for the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) has been the private use of vehicles purchased by businesses. Providing a vehicle to an employee is considered a fringe benefit when the vehicle is used, or made available for use, for private purposes. This includes instances where the vehicle is taken home by the employee, even if not used outside of work hours. The tax implications depend on the extent of private use and how the vehicle's value is calculated.

WHAT IS THE ATO FOCUSING ON?

1. **Private Use of Business Vehicles:** The ATO has observed that some businesses, do not accurately report the private use of vehicles by employees. This often occurs when vehicles, ostensibly for business use only, are used for private purposes without proper documentation.

2. **Workhorse Vehicles:** There are special exemptions available for load carrying vehicles like utes or panel vans, which can mean that under certain conditions they are exempt from FBT. The ATO is undertaking spot reviews to ensure that this exemption is applied correctly, especially when private use of these vehicles is more than 'minor, infrequent, and irregular.' Businesses can benefit from properly documenting and justifying the use

of these vehicles to maintain their exempt status.

3. **Logbook Requirements:** To correctly calculate the taxable value of a vehicle fringe benefit, businesses must maintain accurate logbooks that track the business and private use of the vehicle. The ATO has seen that many businesses either do not have logbooks or maintain them inadequately, leading to incorrect FBT calculations. Without a proper logbook, it is likely the entire vehicle use could be taxed, not just the private portion. It is also important to remember that logbooks are only valid for 5 years and if the usage of the vehicle materially changes, they must be updated.

OTHER FBT CONSIDERATIONS FOR PRIMARY PRODUCERS

Beyond vehicles, primary producers should be aware of other FBT planning opportunities that might apply to their operations:

1. **Housing Benefits:** In rural and remote areas, it is common for employers to provide housing for employees. This would generally be considered a taxable fringe benefit for most metro-based businesses, however the ATO do provide exemptions where housing provided in remote areas. This can give regional businesses with an opportunity to offer attractive salary package that include housing to employees. It is however important that the way the housing is provided to the employee complies with the requirements of the remote area FBT exemption which are quite specific.

2. **Living-Away-From-Home Allowances (LAFHA):** There are some exemptions from FBT where employees are required to temporarily live away from their usual place of residence for work purposes. This could be a planning opportunity for primary producers who might have seasonal workers travelling away from their homes to help with seeding and harvest. By utilising a LAFHA, an

employer might be able to provide an allowance or reimbursement for accommodation, meals, and incidental expenses. However, to ensure the allowance is exempt from FBT, appropriate documentation and agreements between employer and employees must be put in place.

3. Employee Loans: If your business offers interest-free or low-interest loans to employees, including family members working on the farm, this can be considered a fringe benefit. The difference between the interest charged and the statutory interest rate is taxable under FBT.

4. Entertainment and Meal Allowances: Providing meals or entertainment to employees, such as during on-farm events or social gatherings, can also attract FBT. However, certain exemptions and concessions may apply, such as minor benefits exemptions, depending on the circumstances.

DEEMED EMPLOYEES IN TRUSTS AND COMPANIES

Another crucial aspect of FBT that primary producers need to be aware of is the treatment of deemed employees within trusts and companies. The ATO has specific guidelines on when an individual, such as a beneficiary of a trust or a director of a company, might be considered an employee for FBT purposes.

1. Trust Beneficiaries and Company Directors: In many primary production businesses, it's common for family members to be beneficiaries of trusts or directors of companies that operate the farm. Even if these individuals do not receive a regular salary, they may still be considered employees for FBT purposes if they receive non-cash benefits like the use of a vehicle, housing, or other perks.

2. Non-Cash Benefits as Salary: The ATO treats non-cash benefits provided to beneficiaries or directors similarly to those provided to regular employees. If these individuals are provided with benefits like vehicles, housing, or entertainment, these must be reported and taxed as fringe benefits.

3. Employee vs. Contractor: The ATO has recently updated its guidelines to clarify when an individual is considered an employee versus an independent

contractor for FBT purposes. This is important because non-cash benefits provided to someone classified as a contractor might still be subject to FBT if they are deemed an employee under these guidelines. This can be particularly relevant in primary production businesses that engage contractors for various tasks.

WHAT CAN PRIMARY PRODUCERS DO?

1. Review Employment Structures: Ensure that your business's employment structures are correctly set up and that individuals who might be deemed employees are properly identified and reported.

2. Maintain Proper Records: Whether for vehicle use, housing, or other benefits, maintaining detailed records is crucial for complying with FBT obligations. This includes keeping logbooks, documenting housing arrangements, and ensuring that all benefits provided to deemed employees are recorded and reported accurately.

3. Consult a Tax Professional: Given the complexities of FBT, especially with recent ATO focus areas, it may be beneficial to consult with a tax professional who can help ensure your business remains compliant and identify opportunities to legally minimise your FBT liability and provide attractive salary packages to employees in a competitive labour market.

CONCLUSION

As the ATO continues to scrutinise FBT compliance, particularly in areas like vehicle use and deemed employees, it is crucial for primary producers to stay informed and vigilant. By understanding your obligations, maintaining accurate records, and seeking professional advice, you can avoid the pitfalls of FBT non-compliance and ensure that your business operates within the law whilst taking advantage of potential planning opportunities available to regional businesses.

For more detailed information or specific advice tailored to your circumstances, please reach out to your local RSM office who can put you in touch with an FBT expert.

AUSTRALIAN PULSES RACING TOWARDS A STRONG HARVEST



Rabobank

By Stefan Vogel, General Manager RaboResearch

Australian pulse production is expected to reach historically-high levels this season, as growers capitalise on strong international demand, particularly from India – a major consumer of chickpeas and lentils, according to agribusiness specialist Rabobank.

Speaking on the podcast *Racing pulses* in Australian and global markets, RaboResearch general manager Australia and New Zealand Stefan Vogel said the 2024/25 Australian pulse harvest – including chickpeas, lentils, faba and mung beans, lupins and field peas – is expected to exceed last year's volumes, due to a higher area planted and despite dry seasonal conditions in some growing areas.

“Until the September frost events in southern growing areas, Australia was poised to deliver the second-highest pulse harvest on record, at just under 4.5 million tonnes,” he said. “Harvest yields will be down as a result of the frosts, but there is hopefully still time for post-frost regrowth and recovery in production.”

Mr Vogel said chickpeas were the key driver of this increased Australian production – with a notable lift in acreage planted.

CHICKPEAS

Globally, approximately 16 million tonnes of chickpeas are grown annually – with India usually accounting for roughly 11-12 million tonnes of that total. But this year, Mr Vogel said, India's crop is likely to be only 10-11 million tonnes.

Mr Vogel said Australia holds the second place in this international production ranking.

“And Canada, traditionally the third-largest producer of chickpeas, is recovering from back-to-back dry years. But a rather aggressive newcomer, Russia, re-entered the chickpea market over the last four years, quadrupling its production during that time to levels not far off from Australia's almost record high crop in 2024/25,” he said.

Mr Vogel said India, traditionally, has been

producing around 70 per cent of the world's chickpeas.

“However, this season, Indian farmers are faced with delivering one of the lowest crops grown in the last five years,” he said.

Mr Vogel said in countries that are big producers, and also big importers – such as India – there can be political pressures that impact the market.

“Imports hurt local farmer margins, and there is a large farming population in India. At times of oversupply and low prices, the government has stepped in and tried to support the farmers, introducing import tariffs,” he said.

“However, as chickpeas are a food staple in India and, with the reduced local production forecast, the Indian government has recently removed its chickpea import tariff. At times of poor local production volumes and high prices, the government tries to protect consumers by allowing imports.”

Mr Vogel said this tariff removal is “good news” for Australian farmers, with an expectation of continued good prices.

“Right now, prices are at record levels in India for chickpeas. And the outlook for the next 12 months is for India to continue to import sizable volumes,” he said.

Other major markets for Australian chickpeas include Bangladesh, the United Arab Emirates and Pakistan, Mr Vogel said.

LENTILS

For lentils, Australian farmers are expecting to see a small production increase for the upcoming 2024/25 harvest, assuming the post-frost regrowth in southern regions will be able to deliver some production, Mr Vogel said.

“Another major lentil producer, Canada, is also expecting to see increased production volumes this season – following recent dry years that

negatively impacted harvests,” he said. “And Australian farmers and exporters can expect to face more competition from Canada in international lentil markets.”

Asian markets are the major importers of Australian lentils, Mr Vogel told the podcast.

In 2023/24, he said, Australian exporters had shipped roughly half the lentil crop to China, “with Bangladesh taking almost a quarter, while Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Egypt each took less than 10 per cent”.

“And India is a really important market for Australian lentil growers. While chickpea prices remain high in India – we will see consumers become more flexible and switch somewhat between chickpeas, lentils and other pulses in an attempt to limit the impact of those high chickpea prices on household budgets.”

This increased Indian demand is well timed, Mr Vogel said. “We need that extra Indian demand to support Australian prices going into harvest, as both Australia and Canada are forecast to deliver bigger crops this season,” he said.

FIELD PEAS

For the international field pea market, China is the dominant import player, Mr Vogel said. And Canada has traditionally produced the majority of the field pea volume shipped to China. “But Russia’s exports to China have increased quickly since 2023, once phytosanitary issues were resolved and China allowed for the import of Russian peas,” he said.

“Chinese buyers use the field pea starch in the making of noodles. And as a by-product, you are left with quite a bit of protein, resulting in China being one of the largest pea protein producers in the world, which can be used as a foundation for building alternative meat. As a quite cheap and competitive producer of pea protein, China is supplying alternative protein manufacturers around the world.”

Compared with Russian and Canadian pea production volumes, Australia is a “rather small” producer, Mr Vogel said. “China last season imported around 40 per cent of the Australian field pea exports, with South East Asian nations

importing most of the rest,” he told the podcast.

Mr Vogel said as the Chinese market is dominated by Russian and Canadian field pea imports, Australian exporters need to continue to look to other Asian countries, such as Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, to take up some of the volume.

GLOBAL FREIGHT CHALLENGES

While, traditionally, Australian pulses have been exported in containers, “sky high” container freight rates due to supply chain disruptions during the COVID years had seen a pivot to bulk shipping, Mr Vogel said.

“As container freight rates increased by up to eight times, pulse exporters swapped to bulk shipping to destination markets,” he said.

“While container rates had eased from those historic highs, the Houthi attacks in the Red Sea put pressure on the global shipping sector in 2024 and container freight rates have risen to very high levels again.”

In addition to the increased costs, Mr Vogel said, exporters have been struggling to access the required number of containers and manage time delays.

“As bulk freight rates have barely moved, we can expect Australian pulses to continue to be exported this way for at least the next 12 months,” he said. To find out more about other Rabobank research, contact Rabobank’s local team in Moora and Dalwallinu on (08) 9690 8500 or subscribe to RaboResearch Food & Agribusiness Australia & New Zealand on your podcast app.

RaboResearch Disclaimer: Please refer to our Australian RaboResearch disclaimer online at www.rabobank.com.au/knowledge/disclaimer/

Rabobank Australia & New Zealand Group is a part of the international Rabobank Group, the world’s leading specialist in food and agribusiness banking. Rabobank has more than 125 years’ experience providing customised banking and finance solutions to businesses involved in all aspects of food and agribusiness. Rabobank is structured as a cooperative and operates in 38 countries, servicing the needs of more than nine million clients worldwide through a network of more than 1000 offices and branches. Rabobank Australia & New Zealand Group is one of Australasia’s leading agricultural lenders and a significant provider of business and corporate banking and financial services to the region’s food and agribusiness sector. The bank has 90 branches throughout Australia and New Zealand.

Stefan Vogel,
General Manager RaboResearch



RURAL LANDHOLDER SOCIAL BENCHMARKING REPORT 2021

By Hanabeth Luke, Southern Cross University and Soil Cooperative Research Centre

The Soil CRC national survey project, Surveying On-Farm Practices, was initiated in 2019 to implement surveys in all six states, in partnership with local farming organisations. The regions were selected to represent a range of different farming systems and bioregions, with a major factor being the willingness of local groups to partner with the survey team to develop the survey and support its implementation. The purpose of the survey was to gain a broad understanding of the drivers of on-farm decision making across, and in-depth understanding within, Australian farming systems.

The 2020 Northern Wheatbelt social benchmarking survey is part of this national Soil CRC project led by Dr Hanabeth Luke of Southern Cross University (SCU), jointly funded by the Soil CRC, and the West Midlands Group. Data gathered will contribute to wider Soil CRC research efforts.

This research employed a survey of all rural landholders in the Northern Wheatbelt with a land holding greater than 10 hectares. Soil CRC researchers from Southern Cross University partnered with local groups WANTFA, West Midlands Group, Wheatbelt NRM and the Liebe Group to develop and undertake the survey. The analysis was focussed on areas highlighted as being of particular importance to our local research partners.

There was a total of 136 respondents to the survey.

PROFILE OF FARMING IN THE NORTHERN WHEATBELT

The Northern Wheatbelt was confirmed to be a primarily agricultural landscape, dominated by full and part-time farmers. Survey participants self-identified into one of four groups based on their engagement with farming:

- Full-time farmers: 72%
- Part-time-farmers: 10%
- Hobby farmers: 8%
- Non-farming land holders: 10%

The most common land use was for cereal cropping (73%), pastures (54%), legumes (46%), and sheep for wool (45%) and meat (45%).

VALUES

The Northern Wheatbelt encompasses landholders with a range of intersecting values, some of which are intrinsic or 'held', while others relate to their landholding. When looking across the whole sample, there is a fairly even spread among the top four ways in which the property is valued by landholders. These were the property representing the ability to pass on a healthier environment to future generations (84%), as an asset that is an important part of family wealth (83%), a great place to raise a family (82%), and the property as a source of accomplishment from building and maintaining a viable business (82%). When looking at intrinsic values that guide landholders' lives, there was a strong dominance of the principle 'Looking after my family /loved-ones and their needs' across all landholder types' (99%), representing a strong focus on the family unit.

Key attributes of the survey sample are summarised in Table A.





Table A: Key attributes summary table 2020 (n=116 to 176)	For all respondents 2020 (median unless indicated)
Property size (area owned)	3227ha (mean 4712ha)
Bought additional land in region in past 20 years	56%
Subdivided or sold part of property past 20 years	27%
Property leased, share farmed or agisted by others (mean)	Median 225.8ha (mean 27.5ha)
Property leased, share farmed or agisted from others (mean)	1500ha
Age of respondent	60 years (mean 70 years)
Farmer by occupation (i.e. Full-time Farmer)	72%
Gender of respondent (n=142)	8% female
Resident on property	83%
Length of family ownership	55 years (mean 90 years)
Other family members working on property	73%
Paid off-property work last 12 months (n=121) mean score	47 days (mean 20 Days)
Hours work on-property per week (n= 160)	46 hours (mean 46 hours)
Income from agriculture in Wheatbelt region 2018/19	89%
% all survey respondents net profit from agriculture >\$50k	74%
Received net off-property income 2018/19	2% primary respondent 34% spouse 23% both
% all survey respondents net income from off-property >\$50k	42%
WANTFA member	9% (16% was)
Regional NRM group member	14% (11% was)
West Midlands member	18% (6% was)
Liebe member	18% (8% was)
Completed short course related to property management past 5 years	19% primary respondent 3% partner 10% both
Property management or whole farm plan	47%
Attended a field day/farm walk/ demonstration on soil health last 12 months	55% yes
Proportion of land lost to production due to soil problems	55% yes Area: 310ha



FARMER ENGAGEMENT

Survey respondents were asked what their top sources of information were in regards to topics related to the management of their property. Field days and magazines were the most nominated way of sourcing information (both 59%), with Farm Weekly nominated as a popular publication. The most popular source of knowledge was other farmers (76%), followed by independent advisors such as agronomists and agricultural consultants (60%).

More than half of farmers (54%) agree that grower groups are the best way to drive and direct local research, development and extension. 66% of full-time farmers and 40% of part-time farmers had attended field days/farm walks/demonstrations focused on soil health and productivity in the past 12 months.

DATA MANAGEMENT AND USE

The majority of farmers agreed that data is an important part of farm management yet more than half (51%) reported internet connectivity to be a barrier to using on-farm data more effectively. 71% of farmers agreed that decision-making needs to be strongly influenced by data and 61% reported to already having good systems in place to manage farm data. Soil testing was perceived as an integral part of data gathering, with 92% of farmers agreeing that it is an essential step in understanding soil condition.

On-farm management was reported to be largely collaborative, with 79% of farmers including another person or people in their management decisions. Most often, this was a spouse/partner, family or an advisor such as an agronomist.

FARMING PRACTICES, RISK AND RESILIENCE

Soil testing stands out as the most common best-management practice in the reported period 2015 – 2020, at a rate of 82%. This was followed by the application of lime (76%), and the planting of legumes or pulses (70%). While some topics had a sound level of self-reported knowledge,

particularly *‘strategies to maintain ground cover to minimize erosion in this area’*, many other topics have low reported knowledge levels.

REGIONAL AND ON-FARM CHALLENGES

On the regional scale, items seen as relating to climate change featured in the top five issues across all landholder types. Given the dominance of full-time farmers in the sample, particularly when combined with part-time farmers, it is useful to look across these two groups as the dominant group of landholders. When combined, the top three issues for the region were changes in weather patterns (86%), water security (77%), and public support/opposition for agricultural practices (77%).

At the property-scale, soil issues represented less than half of the most important issues for farmers. The top two issues relate to productivity and profitability concerns, in particular the impacts of temperature extremes on farm productivity (74%), and the impact of uncertain or low returns on their capacity to invest in the property (73%).

RISK AND OPENNESS TO CHANGE

Overall there was a very high level of openness to new ideas, with 91% of all respondents agreeing that they were open to new ideas about farming and land management. However, this was complicated by low levels of agreement on other measures, such as *‘Financially, I can afford to take a few risks and experiment with new ideas’* (45%), *‘I am usually an early adopter of new agricultural practices and technologies’* (44%), and *‘I have sufficient time available to consider changing my practices’* (38%). This suggests that whilst farmers have an open mindset, there are financial and time constraints upon adoption.

BELIEFS ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE

Changes in weather patterns emerged as the number one issue across all landholder types, and water security was in the top four issues. When asked what the biggest challenge and/or opportunity might be over the next ten years, the



most common answer was climate change and weather variability. Together, this demonstrates strong concern in relation to the lived impacts of climate change. There is strong data that both records and predicts increasing impacts of climate change in the Wheatbelt region. Survey respondents appeared to be largely cognisant of these risks, with only 11% of respondents disagreeing that climate change poses a risk to the region, with 70% agreeing and 19% unsure. 61% of all respondents agreed that human activities are influencing changes in climate and 57% agreed that landholders in the region should do all they can to reduce carbon emissions. More than half (55%) of all respondents agreed that if nothing is done, climate change will have dire consequences. There was a high level of confidence that local landholders in the region can adapt to changes in weather patterns (67%), yet less than half of respondents (47%) agreed that fundamental changes are required to make the region's farming systems sustainable.

THE FUTURE OF FARMING IN THE NORTHERN WHEATBELT

The responses from full-time and part-time farmers was initially broken down into three age categories, as determined by established definitions of generations: Generation Y (born 1981-1996), Generation X (born 1965-1980) and Baby Boomer and older (born prior to 1965, referred to as Baby Boomer+). However, there were not enough of the youngest age group to allow for analysis (n=8), reflecting the broader age demographics of the respondents, so the groups were amalgamated into two groups, with Generation Y and Generation X combined into one group (aged 56 years and below), with the Baby Boomer and older generation (57 years and above) retained.

As may be expected, there was clear evidence of trends toward extensification and/or intensification amongst the younger group, and slight trends of de-escalation amongst the older group. The younger cohort managed significantly

more land, with an average of 2166 hectares compared to the older cohort average of 968 hectares. 81% of the younger group had purchased additional land in the region in the previous 20 years (compared to 57% of older group), with the reverse being true for the older group, who had an average of 318 hectares managed by others (compared with 31 hectares of the younger group). The younger group reported to work an average of 56 hours per week on the farm, compared to 47 hours per week for the older group. The area in which the most differences emerged was in the levels of self-assessed knowledge between the groups, with the younger generation indicating a higher level of self-assessed knowledge across a number of knowledge topics.

Soil CRC will be conducting this survey again in 2025. Liebe Group will share information when available and greatly appreciate your involvement.

Scan QR Code below to view full report or click [here](#)



WARRIOR WELLBEING ARTICLE: VISITING YOUR GP - TIPS FOR THE AVERAGE BLOKE



By The Regional Mens Health Initiative

We often talk to blokes about the importance of visiting their GP for a routine service visit or check-up regardless of whether they feel unwell or not. These visits help you to stay health aware and if you do have specific risk factors, such as a family history of a certain disease, then regular check-ups may help your doctor pick up early warning signs. For example, high blood pressure may be an early warning sign of cardiovascular disease. For a lot of blokes this visit can be a bit daunting and at times a confusing process.



First and foremost there are a lot of benefits in having a regular GP and practice that you visit. It gives you the opportunity to build a relationship over time, to the point where you are more comfortable talking openly about things. Your GP gets to know you and will have a better understanding of your health needs and concerns. Your medical history also stays under the one roof making it easier to keep things up to date.

With the average GP consultation time being around 10 to 15 minutes it's important that you have a clear idea of what you want to talk about

(write a checklist starting with the most concerning issue). Usually for two or more health issues you will need to book a longer consultation time. Be prepared.

For a general health check, your doctor will want to talk to you about a range of stuff including your medical history, your family's history, your lifestyle, diet, weight and how much you exercise. Be honest about your health and your concerns and most of all, don't worry too much about being embarrassed. Doctors are usually very difficult people to shock and more than likely have seen or heard it all before.

We all need to take responsibility for our own health and wellbeing. A lot of guys have no idea of what their blood pressure is normally or what it means for that matter. You need to get to know your normal parameters and other things like cholesterol and PSA (Prostate Specific Antigen) blood tests so you can engage in conversation with your GP about them. It often helps to keep your own record of results and a list of any medications you may be on and what they are for.

As we get older, we inevitably encounter the increased risk of developing health concerns such as prostate issues (over 40 years). Most GPs are pretty good at prompting us when needed but we still need to be an active participant. Don't feel intimidated, you have the right to request certain tests and question things the doctor suggests. After all, this is about you and your GP working together.

We recommend that under the age of 50 you should have a routine service visit at least every two years and for those over 50 at least once a year.

When visiting your GP, be prepared (take your own checklist) and be involved, it's your health, you are the expert on you.

As always, remember...before it all gets too much... Talk to a Mate!

The Regional Men's Health Initiative
P: (08) 6314 1436
E: menshealth@4blokes.com.au

2024 PHOTO COMPETITION

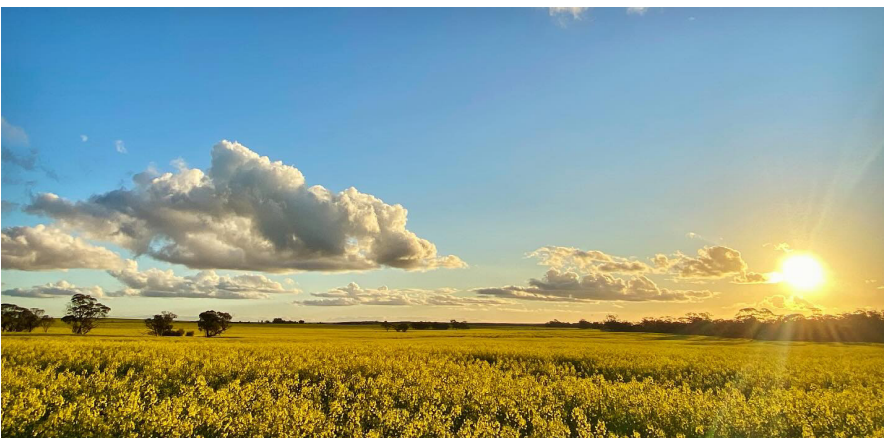
WINNING SUBMISSIONS



Noah McCreery



Tash Mills



Giulia Stangle

FARMING IN THE LIEBE REGION

Thank you to everyone who submitted photo's. Keep an eye out in future Liebe publications for these images of farming in our region.

**SUPPORTED BY REFUEL
AUSTRALIA**



SCAN [HERE](#) TO VIEW ALL
ENTRANTS



REDUCE RISK AT HARVEST

GRDC and fire safety experts are encouraging growers to implement practical measures to reduce the risk of harvester fires over the coming weeks.

[Click here](#) to see the 10 tips to reduce the risk of harvester fires this season!



TOOL BOX TALK - GRAIN AUGER OPERATION

Grain augers are common items of equipment used for transferring grain between silos, trucks, and feed carts. Grain augers play a crucial role in agricultural operations, but they come with inherent dangers.

Click [here](#) to view 'A Practical Guide - Grain Auger Operation'



Tractor and Header Exercises

1. **T**one your butt

You can tone the gluteus muscles almost anywhere by squeezing together your buttock muscles for 10 seconds and then releasing. Repeat 10 times.

2. **T**ighten your tummy

Flatten your stomach by breathing out and pulling your stomach in towards your back as far as possible. Hold for 6 seconds and release. Repeat 10 times.

3. **T**rim your thighs

Squeeze your thighs together as hard as you can. Hold for 10 seconds and release. Repeat 10 times. If this is too easy you can increase the toning effect by squeezing something like a ball or sweater between your legs.

4. **T**arget your shoulders

Keeping your arms and shoulders relaxed and holding lightly onto the steering wheel, lower your shoulders and pull back as far as you can moving your shoulder blades together. Hold for 10 seconds. Repeat 5 times.



***Tone, tighten, trim
and target your
health in the
tractor and header
this season***

DO YOU KNOW YOUR LOCAL FIRE CONTROL OFFICER?

WHO IS YOUR FIRE CONTROL OFFICER (FCO)?

Chief Fire Control Officer - Dalwallinu	Aaron Mills	0428 218 881
Chief Fire Control Officer - Wongan Hills	Ross Lane	0429 201 963
Chief Fire Control Officer - Coorow	Kelvin Bean	0428 521 103
Chief Fire Control Officer - Perenjori	Jason King	0427 734 005
Deputy Fire Control Officer - Wubin	Gareth Barnes	0427 311 584
Deputy Fire Control Officer - Dalwallinu	Paul Burrridge	0429 370 208
Fire Control Officer - Buntine	Michael Dodd	0427 642 078
Fire Control Officer - Buntine	Shaun Fitzsimons	0427 083 105
Fire Control Officer - Kalannie	Rowan McCreery	0408 845 711
Fire Control Officer - Kalannie	Bryce Hathway	0427 662 000
Fire Control Officer - Dalwallinu	James Butcher	0429 621 092
Fire Control Officer - Dalwallinu	Gary Butcher	0427 621 069
Fire Control Officer - Dalwallinu	Shannon Fry	0437 743 030

With the warmer months fast approaching, it is important to be prepared for the fire season, and to know who you need to contact in the event of a fire on farm.

CHECK YOUR EQUIPMENT

- Make sure your fire fighting equipment is servicable.
- Start and check the readiness of your fire fighting equipment periodically during harvest.
- Check starter rope, hoses for leaks, nozzle operation.
- Ensure your fire unit is properly secured to your vehicle.
- Have fire suppression foam onboard (available from Fire control Officers [FCO's]).
- Spare petrol for the pump.

CHECK YOUR PEOPLE

- Does everyone know how to operate the equipment?
- Do you have correct PPE available for your fire fighting personnel including uniform, boots, and leather gloves minimum.
- Does everyone know where the water supply on your property is?
- Run through the plan with all staff so everyone knows what they need to do.

WHAT TO DO WHEN A FIRE STARTS

- Report the fire and location with accurate directions on the Dalwallinu Fire Fighters WhatsApp group (contact Aaron Mills for this).
- Provide updates to the WhatsApp group when arriving at the fire ground.
- PPE comes first! The best 30 seconds of preparation can save you from months of rehabilitation or death.
- Think about what you are saving and what do you save first?
 - Yourself or others
 - Machinery
 - Infrastructure
 - Crop
 - Stubble or bushland
- Only work to your own capabilities.
- Drive safely and to the conditions
- Ensure lights and rotary beacons are ON
- Keep your 40 channel two way to channel 5 and regularly check it's working.
- Report in with the property owner or FCO when arriving on site.
- Provide updates when arriving at the fire ground:
 - Size & Location
- Keep hydrated.
- Report any injuries, vehicle damage or other concerns to FCO's.
- Try to attend the on fire ground debrief once the fire is out.

WHAT TO DO FOR COMBINE FIRES

- Be sure all extinguishers are charged and all operators have knowledge of how to use them.
- Keep your combine clean.
- Fire fighting equipment on your chaser bin is a good option as chaser bin operators are usually the first to spot a header fire.
- Investigate remote operation of fire nozzles on chaser bins - there are some great ideas around!
- When you finish at the fire ground, be sure to refill with water and have all equipment ready for the next fire.

**SCAN [HERE](#) TO
VIEW THE
REDUCING
HARVEST FIRES
GUIDE**



LIEBE GROUP TEAM

Executive Officer

Chris O'Callaghan
0429 446 515
chris@liebegroup.org.au

Finance Manager

Sophie Carlshausen
sophie@liebegroup.org.au

Research & Development Coordinator

Daenia Dundon
0448 476 925
research@liebegroup.org.au

Partnerships & Project Support Officer

Rebecca Wallis
0400 681 054
rebeccawallis01@gmail.com

Project Support Officer

Amber Martin
amber@liebegroup.org.au

Administration & Communications Officer

Tannyth Shackell
(08) 9661 1907
admin@liebegroup.org.au

CONTACT US

Liebe Group
17 Johnston St
PO Box 340, Dalwallinu WA 6609
(08) 9661 1907
admin@liebegroup.org.au
www.liebegroup.org.au



[LiebeGroup](https://www.facebook.com/LiebeGroup)



[LiebeGroup](https://twitter.com/LiebeGroup)



[liebegroup](https://www.instagram.com/liebegroup)



ON THE COVER:

Wheatbelt Sunset - Liebe Photo
Competition entrant
Photo Credit: Tash Mills

Views expressed are not necessarily those of the Liebe Group staff, Board or members.

Disclaimer: Mention of trade names does not imply endorsement or preference of any company's product by the Liebe Group, and any omission of trade names is unintentional. Farmer experience may not work for all.