



LIEBE GROUP MEDIA RELEASE – MONDAY 13th August 2018

A new home for the Liebe Group

Dreams, passion and a long-term vision were the keys to success for the Liebe Group in unveiling their new purpose built Agricultural Research and Education Facility in Dalwallinu last week.

The official opening, on Thursday 9 August, marked the completion of a 370 square meter office, research workshop and car park which was funded by the National Stronger Regions Fund, Regional Grants Scheme, GRDC Infrastructure Grant and the Liebe Group members, partners and supporters.

The land for the building was generously donated by Elma and Nod Southcott, and it was this donation, along with pledges from local farming businesses and partners that kick started the group's plans to attract funding to construct their own facility.

The Liebe Group are the first grower group in Western Australia to build their own facility which shows the strength and relevance of grower driven research, development and extension (R,D&E) in regional WA.

Hon Melissa Price MP, Federal Member for Durack spoke at the event on behalf of the Commonwealth Government who funded \$616,500 through the National Stronger Regions Fund. She noted the Federal Government's commitment to building strong resilient regional communities and importance of organisations like the Liebe Group.

"The new facility will boost the complexity and scale of the research, development and extension the organisation can conduct into the future," said Hon Melissa Price MP.

Following the success of the National Stronger Regions Fund the Liebe Group were fortunate to receive an additional \$200,000 funding for the construction and fit out of the facility through the WA State Government Royalties for Region's Regional Grants Scheme.

Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Hon Alannah MacTiernan MLC, acknowledged the strong and long-term partnership between the department and the Liebe Group in delivering locally relevant RD&E and highlighted the history of innovation of the group.

"The story of the Liebe Group is an incredible one, Gus Liebe made such a significant contribution to the landscape of the City of Perth and to farming in Western Australia. He had passion and inquiry for innovation, and it's great to see this group seek inspiration from him."

"We (the government) support the work you do and want to work with you to get the best possible R&D outcomes," said Minister MacTiernan.

The success of the National Stronger Regions Fund and Regional Grants Scheme provided the leverage to attract further funding through the Grains Research and Development Corporation (GRDC) Infrastructure Fund. This grant contributed \$95,000 for the construction of a Research Workshop at the rear of the facility which is a laboratory and home to the group's field equipment.

The research workshop will allow a greater range of plant and soil samples to be collected and processed, increased engagement between researchers and local growers, with longer visits to the area, and the ability for the facility to be a collaborative hub for R&D carried out in the Northern Agricultural Region.

Charlie Thorne, Senior Regional Manager GRDC West, said this facility will be a real launching pad for R&D in the region.

“The facility is a testament to the passion of growers in the region and the important role grower groups play in agricultural development and extension,” said Charlie.

The Shire of Dalwallinu President, Steve Carter also had the opportunity to congratulate the Liebe Group, recognising the importance of the facility for the region.

“It’s a great step forward for the Shire and the town in having a facility like this and we are happy and impressed that the Liebe Group got this project off the ground,” said Steve.

The Liebe Group Agricultural Research and Education Facility will be available for use and hire by other organisations for activities that contribute to supporting the profitability of farming businesses and sustainability of the region.

The Liebe Group is a dynamic, grower-driven, not for profit organisation servicing over 100 farming businesses within the Dalwallinu, Coorow, Perenjori and Wongan-Ballidu Shires, encompassing a land area of over 1,000,000ha.

Media Contact

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Photo Captions

Photo 1: Cutting of the ribbon by Liebe Group members; (left to right) Deb Metcalf, Jan Southcott, Merrie Carlshausen, Stuart McAlpine.

Photo 2: Official opening of the Liebe Group Agricultural Research and Education Facility; (left to right) Back Row - Deb Metcalf, Ross Fitzsimons, Middle Row – Hon Melissa Price MP, Jan Southcott, Merrie Carlshausen, Stuart McAlpine, Front Row - Charlie Thorne, Rebecca McGregor, Hon Alannah MacTiernan, Steve Carter.

Photo 3: Liebe Group members, partners, funders and supporters at the opening of the Agricultural Research and Education Facility.