

# LIEBE GROUP NEWS

April 2021

Volume 24

Issue 3



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**Liebe Group 2021  
Main Trial Site  
Program**



**Global Grains  
Prices Supported  
Through Volatile  
Times**



**Women's Field Day  
2021**



**Seeding with a  
Fresh Look at  
Safety**



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

## From the Cover

Installation of soil moisture probe and weather station at Casey Shaw's property in Perenjori.

### DIAMOND PARTNERS



**Rabobank**



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# FROM THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER

KATRINA VENTICINQUE

To say this year is flying by is an understatement! With May almost upon us, our farming community has seen an early start to seeding thanks to the recent pre-season rain events (and cyclone!). I can honestly say that in moving to Dalwallinu 6 years ago, the possibility of being hit by a cyclone had never once crossed my mind.

Just one week on, the community is still recovering from the trail of damage and debris that was left throughout paddocks and house yards in the wake of Tropical Cyclone Seroja. Liebe Group has gathered a range of information to help support cyclone-affected farmers, so please get in touch if you need any assistance.

The Main Trial Site has seen a bustle of activity in the last two weeks. Several trials are in the ground and many more pegged to be implemented by the end of May. Check out page 4 for a breakdown of the 20 trials and demonstrations that will be hosted on the site this season, including the Liebe Group funded trial investigating the opportunity cost of herbicide residue effects across various crop types (also known as the IMI residue trial) and CSBP's capturing early sowing opportunities with long season wheat varieties and the impact of nitrogen rates and placement trial.

On another great note, the Liebe Group's NLP-funded Soil Moisture Probe and Weather Station Network is under construction! 14 stations have been installed and work is happening alongside IoT provider Wildeye to get the network user interface up and running for wider access. Watch this space!

The Women's Committee has finalized the agenda for the upcoming Women's Field Day on 15th June, only a short 8 weeks away. Thanks to funding from FRRR ANZ Seeds for Renewal the supporting this year's event (on the back of the cancellation of the 2020 Women's Field Day due to COVID-19) it is planned to be an inspiring and informative forum bringing together rural women throughout the wheatbelt. The flyer with more details can be found on page 11. Please spread the word with your family and friends.

2021 also marks the final year of the previous Strategic Plan that was developed in 2017. Caroline Robinson from 150Square has been brought on board to assist in the facilitation and review of the plan to help determine the focus and priorities for the next five years of the Liebe Group. We will be conducting various consultation throughout the next few months so please get involved and provide your thoughts on how we can continue operating as of the leading grower groups in Australia.

With no newsletter until June, the Liebe Group team wish you all a safe and successful seeding!



## GOLD PARTNERS



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Agribusiness accounting software



## SILVER PARTNERS

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Australian Grain Technologies

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McIntosh & Son

FMC

# THE LIEBE GROUP'S 2021 MAIN TRIAL SITE PROGRAM

THE Liebe Group team have been busy over the past few months designing the 2021 Main Trial Site that is being hosted on Harry, Jane & Matthew Hyde's property in Dalwallinu.

Working alongside valued industry partners and research organisations, the site will be host to 20 trials covering topics of weed and disease management, plant nutrition, soil amelioration, cereals, canola, pulses and more!

With the recent rainfall, the program is in full swing with many trials already in the ground.

### Trial Spotlight

#### **The opportunity cost of herbicide residue effects across various crop types (IMI residue trial) – Liebe Group**

This trial was conceptualised by the Liebe Group R&D Committee in April 2020. Following a consultation period with Liebe Group partners to design comprehensive trial outcomes, the site was pegged out and sprayed in September.

The trial includes 11 herbicide treatments that are known to have residual effects on successive year's crops. Active ingredients including Imazamox, Imazapyr, Imazapic, Metsulfuron, Sulfosulfuron and Clopyralid were sprayed out across a matrix that includes CI tolerant and non-CI tolerant varieties of wheat, barley and canola as well as lupins.

This trial aims to compare the yield penalty from planting the CI tolerant varieties and the yield penalty from planting the non-CI tolerant variety into a herbicide residue. The results will provide insight into assessing the risk potentials when sowing into herbicide residues.

### Trial Spotlight

#### **Capturing early sowing opportunities with long season wheat varieties and the impact of nitrogen rates and placement - CSBP**

CSBP implemented their trial on 08/04/2021. This timing was an advantageous decision as the site then received 28mm of rainfall over the following weekend due to Tropical Cyclone Seroja.

The trial includes three wheat varieties Illabo, Denison and Rockstar. The opportunity to utilise stored summer moisture by sowing early in the season can reduce the reliance on a traditional May break to get crops established. However traditional spring wheat varieties that are sown early develop too quickly in the season exposing the flowering crop to the risk of frost.

This frost risk or yield penalty may outweigh the benefits of early sowing and what the extra soil moisture provides. The introduction of new long spring and winter wheat varieties allow for early sowing with the more typical crop development stages falling ideally outside of the frost window and before late heat stress.





## Main Trial Site Program 2021

#	Lead Organisation	Trial
1	West Midlands Group	Increasing the profitability of the double break rotation in the MRZ or WA Wheatbelt through incorporation of an early sown high value pulse
2	Living Farm	DPI Chickpea
3	Living Farm	Lentil NVT
4	Living Farm	Field Pea NVT
5	Living Farm	Chickpea NVT
6	DPIRD	Comparison of chickpea inoculant placement and the interaction with seed-applied fungicide
7	Liebe Group	Herbicide Residue Effect by Crop Types (Imi Residue Trial)
8	DPIRD	Clean seed and fungicidal seed dressing – an essential first step to managing chickpea ascochyta
9	AGT	Impacts of deep sowing long coleoptile wheat
10	Living Farm	Wheat NVT
11	Bayer	Pre-Emergent and EPE Control of Annual Ryegrass in Wheat
12	Elders & ADAMA	Knockdown control and crop safety matrix
13	Imtrade	Investigation into the efficacy and Host Crop Safety of Edge and Edge Unify when applied PSPE and Post Emergent in Pulses.
14	Imtrade	Investigation into the efficacy and Host Crop Safety of Edge and Edge Unify when applied PSPE and Post Emergent in Canola.
15	CSBP	Capturing early sowing opportunities with long season wheat varieties and the impact of nitrogen rates and placement
16	Grower Group Alliance	Soil Pathogen Trial
17	Elders Scholz Rural	Pre-emergent soil throw effects when sown interrow, edge row and on row.
18	AFGRI	Comparison of Tine and Disc Seeder Implements in a Minimum Till application
19	Liebe Group	Gen Y Paddock Challenge: the effectivity of soil wetters
20	DPIRD	Broadleaf weed control in chickpeas

## Showcase of site in 2021

These trials will be available to be viewed at two annual events, the Post Seeding Field Walk on the 21<sup>st</sup> of July and the Spring Field Day on the 9<sup>th</sup> September. The trials will also be reported on in the Liebe Group Research and Development book that is published at the end of the season for members.

To find out more or if you have any queries please contact the Liebe Group on (08) 9661 1907.



Imtrade assisting with the application of Liebe's opportunity cost of herbicide residue effects across crop types trial, September 2020.

### WORK EXPERIENCE PROVIDES DEEP UNDERSTANDING OF BROADACRE FARMING

**Shaun Kent**  
Student  
Murdoch University



AS a 33-year-old in the midst of changing careers, I sat patiently waiting in my car outside Liebe Group, ready to begin my first day's work experience. I found myself excited to face new challenges while pondering what I may be part of during my week-long work experience. The honest truth is that I ended up getting far more than I could have ever envisioned that morning; I was about to receive a week's worth of priceless experiences and exposure to a world I had never got the chance to know practically.

Growing up in the city, my understanding of the work that goes into this field is still very much in its infancy. Remembering back to the beginning of my university studies in 2020, I found that I once had a very close minded approach by thinking "dirt is dirt" and "what could I learn from this subject?" The answer is a heck of a lot!

Coming from a combination of my studies at Murdoch University, work experience and exposure from the Liebe Group, I have garnered a huge appreciation into this field of work and the real world applications with results that have come from the forward thinking growers looking to improve the quality and amount of produce they grow.

With this symbiosis of information, I have continued to gain a deeper understanding about the requirements of growers. The multifaceted approach needed for any situation with specific considerations that come into the farmer's individual situation and the implications that come from every choice.

With Liebe Group being the interface between R&D and growers, I can see real world value in the work that has already been done. Looking at their portfolio you get a true appreciation of how they have already directly impacted growers' bottom dollar by helping them to utilise their resources best, and how having Liebe Group as a partner gives access to the latest and best information allowing growers to be ahead of the game in their respective fields.



Shaun Kent, Murdoch University, joined the Liebe Group for a week of work experience as part of his studies.

My journey with this team began learning about who and what Liebe Group is. I had the chance to read into its history, its apt naming, and learnt about a handful of the R&D projects that Liebe Group have spearheaded with the results that have transpired from these experiments. Any questions or queries I had were answered swiftly by the staff and members of the group. The flawlessness of the staff was amazing, I found them all to be kind and courteous while remaining professional and approachable, allowing me to get the most out of my time with them.

Working with a hectic schedule, and around the Easter holidays, I felt fortunate to be looked after so well. After the introductions to the company I got a chance to get hands on by taking part in soil sampling looking for pathogens, data entry for some of the ongoing research projects allowing me an idea of the scope of work undertaken, visits to the main trial site, and engagement with some of the local growers that would be taking part in those trials.

I would like to extend a heartfelt thank you towards Katrina, Judy, Danielle & Lisa-May for allowing me this opportunity to increase my knowledge from this experience with the Liebe Group. Besides being an incredible opportunity for myself to learn it was also great to see a healthy entourage of strong, passionate and talented women working together delivering these incredible results. It gives me great hope towards the future of production and your efforts can be the inspiration for others thinking along similar lines of work.

*The Liebe Group would like to thank CBH Group for providing accommodation for work experience students. Access to the self-contained facilities in Dalwallinu allow Liebe Group to foster the next generation of industry professionals.*



Assisting local growers with seeding.



Shaun assisting Judy with soil sampling for a soil pathogens project.



### MCINTOSH & SON A NEW SILVER PARTNER FOR THE LIEBE GROUP

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THE Liebe Group are pleased to welcome a new Silver Partner to the group this month with McIntosh & Son Moora.

Liebe Group partners are an integral facet of the success of the group and since our inception we have developed long and valuable relationships with a number of 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.

Established in 1955, McIntosh & Son is a leading Australian dealership group specialising in agricultural and construction machinery, incorporating sales, finance, service and parts. They are committed to providing customers with comprehensive and exceptional service.

With eleven locations Australia wide, the Moora branch prides themselves on providing its employees with a dynamic and supportive environment, a horizontal management structure and a family culture. This unique combination of opportunity and support has positioned them to become a preferred industry employer, boasting long employee tenure and commitment.

Our partners add value to the group through in-kind support, products or services and they see the relationship with the group as a meaningful way to stay in close contact with the grass roots innovators of the industry. We look forward to building an on-going relationship with our latest Silver Partner and thank them for their support towards the Liebe Group.



# LIEBE MEMBERS INSPIRED AT BIENNIAL SUMMIT

LAST month, Liebe Group administration and communications officer Danielle Hipwell attended the Rural Edge Inspire Summit in Perth, along with other members of the Liebe Group Women's Committee.



Members of the Liebe Group Women's Committee at the 2021 Inspire Summit.

Focusing on inspiring transformation and advancing business skills for WA's rural women, the two day event was well attended with over 230 women traveling from across the state to participate.

Andrew Horabin, author of Bullshift, engaged the audience with his presentation around transformative communication and how to get more openness, honesty and straight talk in the workplace and at home. His message was clear in that you need

to be open to communication in order to communicate effectively.

Panel discussions around building public support, and transforming our response to climate change filled the afternoon with speakers sharing their experiences and passions with the audience.

Finishing off the first day, participants were invited to use a simple character tool to identify personal strengths and the strengths of those around them. The interactive session had women out of their seats, sharing different experiences and learning how to use these traits to bring out the best of themselves and others in business, the home and in the community.

Starting day two with a look at global agricultural and food trends, Tim Hunt (Rabobank) shared insights into the impact COVID-19 has had on world barley exports, as well as how the future might look for Australian grain producers.

Kalannie grower and Liebe Group member Bob Nixon shared his past experiences with Nuffield as part of a panel around leadership courses and what is available to regional people, highlighting the importance of personal and professional development for those in regional communities.



Liebe Group member Bob Nixon sharing his experiences with Nuffield.

The remainder of day two consisted of presentations around transforming regional communities to be healthy, caring and resilient with Dr Jenny Brockis ending the day on a high with her presentation on taking time to thrive!

It was a fantastic event in which Liebe Group encourages members to attend in the future.





# LIEBE GROUP 2021 PHOTO COMPETITION

## BEHIND THE SCENES OF FARMING

**3 X LUCKY WINNERS EACH  
RECEIVE A \$150  
REFUEL AUSTRALIA FUEL CARD!**

## THE RULES

- Photos are to be submitted via [email](#) or [Dropbox](#)
- 5 photos may be entered into the competition per person but more can be shared via Facebook
- Judging will be completed by 3 members of the Liebe Group Management Committee
- Entry into the competition includes permission for the Liebe Group to use images in future publications and media
- Mobile phone images are welcome
- Winner will be announced at Spring Field Day, Thursday 9th September 2021

**ENTRIES CLOSE FRIDAY 27<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST**



Winning images from the 2020 photo competition (from top: Angela Mills, Helen Heinrich, Peter Waterhouse)

**PROUDLY SUPPORTED BY**





LIEBE GROUP PRESENTS THE 2021

# Women's Field Day



**TUESDAY 15<sup>TH</sup> JUNE | 8:30AM - 4:00PM**

**DALWALLINU RECREATION CENTRE | RSVP BY 6<sup>TH</sup> JUNE**

**KEY NOTE SPEAKER |** *Leonie Knipe, Avon Valley Toyota*



Originally from Toodyay, Leonie wears many hats including farmer's wife, mother of four sons, Western Australian Telstra Business Woman of the Year (2019) and Dealer Principal for Toyota and Nissan Northam.

She is passionate about supporting women, the regions and building her community while breaking down barriers by being an active member of the community and sporting groups, and being the Vice President of the Northam Chamber of Commerce.

As the only female Dealer Principal for Toyota and Nissan in WA, Leonie hopes her story will inspire others to succeed in business, have the confidence to step into a non-traditional role and that your dreams and goals can be achieved in the regions.

## ON THE AGENDA

- The real costs of machinery ownership
- Understanding farm safety and legislation
- Business diversity insights
- On-farm HR
- Crop insurance - the what & why
- New technologies in the ag space
- Build the best business structures
- Personal health and wellbeing

## TICKETS

Members	\$40
Non-members	\$75

## ENQUIRIES

Ph: 08 9661 1907  
E: [admin@liebegroup.org.au](mailto:admin@liebegroup.org.au)

## EVENT PARTNER



<https://tinyurl.com/LiebeWFD2021>

*The Liebe Group Women's Field Day is focused on increasing the management capacity of women to build a sustainable future for their family, farm business & the agricultural industry*

LIEBE GROUP PRESENTS

# UNDERSTANDING YOUR FARM FAMILY DYNAMICS

MYERS BRIGGS WORKSHOP



UTILISING THE MYERS BRIGGS TYPE INDICATOR TO  
GAIN INSIGHT INTO PERSONALITY TYPES, DECISION  
MAKING AND COMMUNICATION!

The Myers Briggs Type Indicator is the most widely  
used personality assessment in the world!

AgConsulting Co Director Jeanette Long will  
guide participants through various activities to  
understand the impacts of differences in team  
environments and effective communication in  
farming families.

THURSDAY 1<sup>ST</sup> -  
FRIDAY 2<sup>ND</sup> JULY

LIEBE GROUP  
OFFICE

\$120 per person  
\$100 for each subsequent person  
in the farm business

LIMITED SPACES!

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Australian Government

National  
Landcare  
Program



### CBH REGIONAL MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM

Amie Bolton  
Lead Corporate Affairs  
CBH Group



**THROUGH** consultation with the Mental Health Commission and a Regional Suicide Prevention Coordinator, 2019 saw CBH develop a new program that would diversify the spectrum of mental health intervention strategies and partners that CBH supports under our Regional Mental Health Program.

Three new partners joined with Black Dog Institute (BDI) to start delivering our new program in late 2020. The four partners are Lifeline, Youth Focus, Black Dog Institute and Mental Illness Fellowship of WA (MIFWA).

Our new program builds on from our partnership with BDI over the past five years.

The main aspects of the CBH Regional Mental Health Program include:

#### Prevention

Selective: Counseling, healthy relationship programs, crisis phone helplines and online support.

#### Intervention

Early treatment: Immediate counseling and peer support after loss by suicide.

#### Continuing Care

Intervention after a suicide to support individuals and communities impacted by the death and assist community recovery.

The new program also saw an increase in total funding for the Program from \$150,000 to up to \$200,000 per annum over three years.

Together we aim to empower growers to look after their mental health by reducing the severity and incidence of mental illness, lowering suicide rates, being innovative in our approach and making sure help is easy to access.

We know our communities have come a long way in improving the approach to mental illness. But we know there is more to be done.

The first six months of the program has been busy for our partners.

Lifeline has seen calls to 13 11 14 double during COVID. They have also provided video and telephone bereavement counseling in four grain growing communities and are in the process of finalising a Crisis Response Pack that will be available both electronically and in hard format.

Youth Focus has been able to expand their web and face to face counseling which is suitable for youth aged 12 – 25 years. To-date the program has enabled them to engage with 18 new clients.



## PARTNER UPDATES

The Black Dog Institute will be holding five training sessions between May and October for GP's and health professionals, with one session confirmed to be held in Northam.

Through the Program, the Mental Illness Fellowship of WA (MIFWA) have been able to expand their reach and dramatically increase training and workshops for youth and the community. To date nine courses have been held on Youth Mental Health First Aid, Teen Mental Health First Aid and SafeTalk, resulting in 26 adults and 101 teens participating in training.

### Further Resources

For information on training and workshops visit <https://www.mifwa.org.au/our-services/cbh-regional-mental-wellness-program/>

For bereavement counseling (which includes any form of loss) contact Lifeline WA on 08 9261 4444

To enquire about youth services for you, or someone you know, please call Youth Focus on (08) 6266 4333.

Additional resources and help can be found at <https://www.lifelinewa.org.au/Get-Help/CBH>

### TIGHT SUPPLIES AND STRONG DEMAND TO KEEP GLOBAL GRAINS PRICES SUPPORTED THROUGH VOLATILE TIMES

**Lisa Curtis**  
Assistant Marketing Manager  
Rabobank



**Rabobank**

THE long price surge that has been seen in global agri commodities markets subsided last month, as La Niña weather worries eased and advancing South American crops pushed frenzied speculators in the market to catch their breath according to Rabobank associate analyst Dennis Voznesenski.

However, Mr Voznesenski says the current tight global supply and demand situation remains and the coming US summer crop harvest will be the most consequential for global markets for the past eight years.



Rabobank associate analyst Dennis Voznesenski

“The high bar for global grains and oilseeds supply renewal is even more daunting considering the low US corn and soy yields of the past two years and also some tail risks from late planting in South America,” he says.

As outlined in the bank’s recently-released Agri Commodity Markets Research Monthly report, prices are expected to remain elevated for grains and oilseeds on the back of low stocks in key exporting markets and strong demand.

“Wheat markets declined this month, with CBOT falling below the low end of its quarter one 2021 range,” Mr Voznesenski says.

“Although demand remains robust, improvements in US and Black Sea rainfall are enough to temper concerns over reduced Russian availability for now.”

The US Central Plains received good rainfall in the past month, he says, with more in the forecast. And this should help raise crop expectations, especially for Kansas, while improving or maintaining estimates for the surrounding states.

“Weather across Europe though has been mixed in the past month,” he says. “Good rainfall in eastern Europe and the Black Sea was offset by drier-than-normal weather in western Europe, with some concern in southern France – with official estimates of EU wheat production now slightly down.”

Looking ahead, Mr Voznesenski says he sees some positive drivers for wheat prices, especially increased Chinese wheat feed demand, which the USDA estimates at 35 million metric tonnes for 2020/21 – compared with 19 million metric tonnes in 2019/20. That said, northern hemisphere harvest pressure through to quarter three 2021 could temporarily lower prices before they likely rise again.

## PARTNER UPDATES

“Weather will be extremely important in determining the narrative through the coming months and is likely to cause volatility as stocks tighten, especially in Europe,” he says. “And the current outlook does include some localised dryness in the EU.

“That, coupled with increased speculative interest in agri commodities and high corn and soybean prices, leads us to believe any sell off in wheat will be limited.”

Locally, Mr Voznesenski says prices have followed offshore markets lower, but still remain largely above levels seen during the 2016/17 marketing year where we had a similarly-sized Australian winter crop harvest.

“Strong export demand for Australian grain will continue supporting prices above levels we saw in 2016/17, although price softening is likely as we move through the year into northern hemisphere harvest in June and July,” he says.

“High international freight rates will mean Australian grain exports will be competitive into Asian markets, although less competitive into markets further afield.”

Large upside price moves on the east coast, however, are expected to be limited by the likely above-average grain stocks still stored on farm from the recent bumper winter crop harvest, he says.

To find out more about other Rabobank research, contact Rabobank Dalwallinu and Moora branch manager Georgina Day on 08 9661 0900 or subscribe to RaboResearch Food & Agribusiness Australia & New Zealand on your podcast app.



### LETS CRUNCH SOME NUMBERS - FROM THE BEAN COUNTER!

Judy Snell  
Director  
RSM



**BANKS** have been in review mode; their annual check in; and analysis has been ratchet up a notch or two due to Royal Commission into Banking; it also provides a good opportunity to reflect on the last twelve months and review how the business has traveled; what areas we need to sharpen the pencil in and track how last year's has gone from previous years. A great tool to do this is with ratios. The banks utilise these tools as a way to a review your business and some critical data to calculate your credit rating for margins etc. within your bank facility.

#### Financial Ratios:

There are four or five financial ratios which give a powerful insight into your business.

##### Net Equity %

- Net equity = Net Assets – Net Debt
- Net Assets: total assets less the assets and funds that could be used to reduce debt
- Net Debt: total Debt less cash; FMD and outstanding grain on hand at market value
- It is often referred to as SOP – if less than 65% it is of concern; the average farm ratio has dropped from 85% to 73% in the last 14 years.

##### Security Ratio

- This in effect is the peak debt (maximum amount owing to the bank and financial institutions) divided by the value of the land the bank has security over.
- A critical range is over 70% and concerning if between 50-70%.

##### Peak Debt to Gross Receipts

- This ratio gives a good indication if there is the capacity to repay debt.
- The formula is: Peak Debt / Gross Business Receipts;
- If greater than 2 it is critical; between 2 to 1.5; the preferred area is 1.4-1.0.

##### Interest Coverage Ratio

- The Interest Coverage Ratio gives an indication of the ability of the business to meet ongoing interest bills and therefore service debt.

- Interest Cover = 
$$\frac{\text{Net Profit before Interest and Taxes (EBIT)}}{\text{Finance Expenses}}$$
- If the ratio is 1.5 or lower indicates there must be some weakness in cash flow which requires attention.

## PARTNER UPDATES

### Current or Quick Ratio

- The last Ratio I will mention is the Current or Quick Ratio:
- = Current Assets/Current Liabilities.
- As a rule of thumb, you want the current ratio to be 2 or more; in other words your assets should be at least double your liabilities. If you are growing the sales you will have a short operating cycle but as farming you are in a longer operating cycle and therefore the current ratio should be slightly higher.

In addition there are a number of calculations that can be quickly done; extracting figures from last twelve months actuals to look at your operating costs; fixed costs; capital and infrastructure cost and personal costs. If you calculate them against gross receipts they too can give a guide on how you are tracking and benchmark yourself to.

The detailed matrix below breaks down these costs and gives a guide on the percentages.

It is based on **Operating Costs as a % of your Business Receipts**.

Benchmark	Critical	Poor	Acceptable	Good
<b>Variable Costs</b>	<b>&gt;75%</b>	<b>75 - 66%</b>	<b>65 - 55%</b>	<b>&gt;55%</b>
<b>Fixed Costs</b>				
Fin & Lease Costs	>20%	20 - 16%	15 - 10%	>10%
Overheads	>12%	12 - 11%	10 - 8%	>8%
Machinery Capital	>15%	15 - 13%	12 - 8%	>8%
Infrastructure Capital	>5%	4 - 5%	2 - 3%	.2%
Personal Expense	>15%	15 - 12%	11 - 8%	>8%
<b>Total Fixed Costs</b>	<b>&gt;50%</b>	<b>50 - 46%</b>	<b>45 - 40%</b>	<b>&gt;37%</b>
<b>Trading Surplus</b>	<b>&gt;(5)%</b>	<b>(5) - 2%</b>	<b>2 - 8%</b>	<b>&gt;8%</b>

The take home message from all of this is to know your business. Understand the implications of a tight cash flow; manage your variable costs; manage your overheads and be comfortable you are able to meet your financial commitments.

### SEEDING WITH A FRESH LOOK AT SAFETY

Tom Sterle  
Health, Safety, Environmental  
and Quality Consultant  
ProcessWorx



WITH seeding about to commence, let's have a quick look at safety on your farm. Farm owners and managers are always balancing their time and resources across many different disciplines, including business administration, accounting, agronomy, mechanics, employees, markets, suppliers, safety and more. For this reason, knowing where to focus their efforts can be very important.

Of course, the list of hazards we could focus on is always growing, and farmers should seek assistance from safety consultants specific to their needs, but this article will provide some insights into two hazards that are particularly relevant for seeding: moving parts of machinery and hazardous chemicals.

Machinery and moving parts are a common source of injury on farms resulting in lacerations and crushed fingers. Before seeding is a good time to inspect the machinery that will be used to identify any potential moving parts or pinch points. Farms should ensure that guarding is in place to prevent personnel from accessing areas where there are moving parts that could cause injury. This may include reviewing and replacing existing guarding that has been damaged or removed.

Follow the manufacturer's instructions, including any pre-start checks that staff need to complete before each use. A simple way to assist this is to copy the pre-start checklist from the machine's manual, laminate it and attach it to the machine for operators to use as a guide. Safe machinery operation should be supported by staff training so that staff know the correct and safe way to use machinery.

Training can include demonstrating safe use of the machinery and identifying hazards and control measures, followed by a supervision period to ensure staff can operate machinery safely and correctly. It is a good idea to keep a record of training sessions as best practice and proof of compliance.

This can be recorded in a management diary or an induction checklist. Safe Work Australia's Model Code of Practice: Managing risks of plant in the workplace is a good resource for further information about machinery and guarding, and can be found on their website.





## PARTNER UPDATES

Chemicals are an important part of broadacre farming. Before seeding is a perfect time to review how hazardous chemicals are handled on the farm. Farms should develop a hazardous chemical process specific to their farm with the assistance of safety specialists. However, some basic steps farms can take to begin with include:

- Developing a register of the farm's chemicals.
- Ensuring that farms have a safety data sheet (SDS) for each hazardous chemical. Farms need to have safety data sheets (dated within five years) available to their staff on the farm for each hazardous chemical. Chemical suppliers have a responsibility to make these available to farms.
- Conducting risk assessments for each chemical that is classified as hazardous. Section 2 of the SDS will specify if a chemical is hazardous or not. Safety specialists can assist farms with hazardous chemical risk assessments.



Safe Work Australia's Model Code of Practice: Managing risks of hazardous chemicals in the workplace is a good resource for further information about the management of hazardous chemicals and can be found on their website.

It is important to remember that safety has no "finish line", it is a continual process of identifying hazards, assessing risk, implementing control measures to eliminate or reduce the risk, and evaluating these control measures. The best starting point is to implement a safe system of work that is specific to your farm's needs. Safety consultants specialising in agriculture can assist farms with this.

## DON'T OMIT LADDERS WHEN ORDERING NEW GRAIN STORAGE INFRASTRUCTURE

Natalie Lee  
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**GRAIN** growers ordering new silos are encouraged to include ladders in their purchases to ensure safe access to storage systems.

Grains Research and Development Corporation (GRDC) grain storage extension specialists said many growers were tempted to save a few dollars by omitting the ladder from the order, but this could impact the functionality of the silo and make maintenance and monitoring more difficult.



Grain growers are encouraged not to omit ladders from their silo orders. Ladders meeting the Australian standard are required in order to safely conduct maintenance and monitor grain in the silo. Photo: GRDC

GRDC grain storage specialist Ben White said in some instances, manufacturers were encouraging growers not to fit ladders, citing health and safety risk exposure for the grower as well as ease of transport and construction.

“However, ladders are an essential silo feature allowing growers to inspect grain in 'the headspace' (between the top of the grain stack and the roof of the silo) where many grain storage problems are likely to first appear,” Mr White said.

“Insects are most prevalent in the warm grain in the headspace so regular inspection during grain storage is recommended.

“Access to the silo lid and inlet is also essential for maintenance of seals and lid mechanisms. Without a ladder, alternatives include expensive specialist high-level access equipment.”

Mr White said ladders should be constructed to the Australian standard which specifies cage requirements and intermediate platforms.



Ben White, Kondinin Group.

An alternative used on large flat-bottom silos is a spiral set of stairs, which are also required to have intermediate platforms according to an Australian standard.

Mr White said that as an important feature of any silo, growers were advised to compare the construction quality and design of ladders which could vary between brands.

As a further safety precaution, ladder access should be stowable or locked to prevent unwanted access by children or untrained personnel.

For multiple silos constructed in a straight line, a single ladder with a top platform to provide access along the line of silos may be a feasible and more cost-effective option worth exploring with the silo manufacturer.

Growers are advised to refer to the grain silo buyers guide produced by the GRDC Stored Grain Extension team: <https://storedgrain.com.au/silo-buyers-guide/>.

Growers can access expert advice and assistance on best practices when storing grain by calling the GRDC stored grain extension hotline: 1800 WEEVIL (1800 933 845).



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# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## LIEBE GROUP EVENTS 2021

AgChats	Thursday 3rd June	Liebe Group Office
Women's Field Day	Tuesday 15th June	Dalwallinu Recreation Centre
Myers Briggs Personality Type Workshop	Thursday 1st - Friday 2nd July	Liebe Group Office
Post Seeding Field Walk	Wednesday 21st July	Hyde Property, Dalwallinu
Spring Field Day	Thursday 9th September	Hyde Property, Dalwallinu

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