

the link

FarmLink Newsletter Summer 2016-2017



Three of the cutest future farmers in the district called into Temora Agricultural Innovation Centre in the mood for Christmas ... Darcy, Caitlin and Hugh Goesch, children of Alex and Lisa, fully decked out with Christmas bling, enjoyed visiting one of the TAIC pasture paddocks which have really thrived as a result of this year's rainfall.



3
Summer
Weed Control



4
Management
After Joining



11
Contractors
And Stubble

Catch up with CEO Cindy Cassidy

Looks like Santa will be driving the header across a lot of the region this year.

The long wet winter has slowly turned into summer. This has produced some great pastures but has also made harvest a slow moving affair.

Speaking of the long-wet winter that was our Spring, it would be remiss of me not to mention the FarmLink Open Day held on the 2nd September. Hailed as another huge success attracting 250 people even in the torrential rain. Thanks to the support of our members, partners, trade display exhibitors, local volunteer groups, board and staff, we made use of the sheds and facilities available at TAIC to pull together a great program. The program featured topics from a range of our research projects including – use of moisture probe data and modelling to manage ground cover and production, weed control (LandCare), deriving more profit through the management of crop nutrition (GRDC MPCN), crop rotations in stubble retained systems (GRDC Stubble Initiative), lamb production in mixed farming (MLA), on farm biosecurity management for livestock and cropping (Riverina LLS) and the use of technology and precision agriculture (Riverina LLS).

Feedback we have received both on, and since, the open day has been positive with the combination of presentations and interactive sessions really hitting the mark. It certainly helps that the line-up of presenters was top notch – so a big thank you to all our presenters as well! Remember, we are open to suggestions, so feel free to give us a call, or drop in at TAIC if there is a topic of speaker you would like to see on the program for 2017 (1st September – put it in your diary!).

The open day was just one event in what was a busy, busy 2016. The team at FarmLink has really enjoyed working with our collaborators on projects and activities that enable our farmers to be more profitable and sustainable. Thank you to our project partners.

Finally, a big thank you to all our members. During the year you have attended many of our events, participated in our member survey and many provided your written support for our tender to conduct the GRDC Grower Solutions Group project in SNSW. GRDC has since changed its strategy in relation to the Grower Solutions Group project resulting in the project not proceeding



Our Annual Open Day was a great success despite the wet weather

but the support of FarmLink members clearly demonstrated the value of the organisation to farmers in SNSW. Thank you. We hope to continue to repay your commitment.

In terms of exciting news for 2017 – a big ticket item is our ACIAR (Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research) project with CSU "Farmers without Fences". This project will see FarmLink coordinating an exchange program with farmers in Pakistan. In 2017 up to 10 pulse farmers from SNSW will travel to Pakistan to learn about markets for pulses and traditional production systems and will then host Pakistani farmers here to learn about Australian farming and farmer led research. If you are interested in participating, please make contact with our office. From the 6th -16th Dec this year I will be in Pakistan with the project team checking things out and setting up the project at the other end – so I can tell you more upon my return!

Wishing you all a wonderful Christmas. Keep safe. See you in 2017.

Regards,

Cindy

Board of Directors

Each member of the FarmLink Board of Directors brings their own unique skill set to the organisation, combining business, governance management and agricultural skills to ensure a positive direction into the future.



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Cindy Cassidy



Chair
Darryl Harper



Deputy Chair
Rob McColl



Director
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Director
Lisa Anderson



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Ron Heinrich



Director
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Summer weed control – what's it going to be?

After the high rainfall of 2016, land managers across the FarmLink region are considering their options to control what is expected to be an outstanding emergence of summer weeds.

This is simply another factor for farmers to consider as they managing climate variability to reduce the impact on profitability of their farming operation.

So what are you going to do to manage summer weeds?

Spray once after the first rain and hope they don't establish with an aim to conserve moisture? Spray numerous times to make sure they don't emerge? Or let them grow and put the sheep in to graze later in the summer?

And what strategy at what cost?

These are the questions being researched in a short-term project being conducted by FarmLink and funded by Riverina Local Land Services. Mitigation and Adaptation to Impacts of Climate Variability – Optimising Summer Weed Control, Preserving Soil Moisture and Reducing Impact of Variability in Growing Season Rainfall.

FarmLink proposed the project after research focusing on crop Water Use Efficiency (WUE) had demonstrated the importance of summer weed control in conserving soil moisture for subsequent crops. Growers are keen to maximise the yield potential of crops in an increasingly variable environment, and summer weed control brings with it questions related to the cost/benefit associated with timing and frequency of summer spraying, together with the trade-off between weed control for moisture conservation and summer stock feed. The project will investigate the costs and benefits of three different, commonly used strategies. Benefit will be described in terms of the differences in moisture retention and final soil nitrogen. Cost will be described in terms of the differential in input and management costs of each strategy.

The replicated field trial will be conducted at Temora Agricultural Innovation Centre following harvest 2016, established in the stubble of a previous crop in a paddock to be sown to crop in 2017.



The trial will consist of –

1. Control – no weed control
2. Treatment 1 – one application of herbicide 10 days after the first rain event
3. Treatment 2 – herbicide applications 10 days after the first rain event
4. Treatment 3 – grazing by sheep

Soil samples will be taken at commencement and completion and assessed for moisture and nitrogen, with results to be made available early in the new year via the FarmLink website and member publication, The Link.

Commonwealth Bank Agribusiness Team Members



In this issue of The Link, we continue introducing you to the people behind the Commonwealth Bank Agribusiness team, this time focussing on Griffith-based Business Development Executive, Lawrence Graham.

Lawrence's agricultural background began in Coleambally, where he grew up in a family of rice and mixed farmers. His first job, at

the age of 18, was working as a storeman in Hillston then a Stock and Station agent in Griffith, before moving in to banking when in his late 20s where he has worked in several roles since.

Now married with two children, Lawrence lives in Griffith with his family, but still calls Coleambally home.

What do you see as important in your role as a Business Development/Agribusiness Executive?

"It is very important to have knowledge or a broad range of industries and demographics. Also transparency and accountability to customers is very important. Working in the agri-financial industry it is also very important to act with empathy and understand the volatility of agriculture including seasonality and the cyclical nature of weather, asset values and commodity prices.

What is the most exciting thing about

agriculture today?

"Until very recently the traction that has been obtained with the use of technology and the possibilities which this creates. Also the potential for some producers to value add and the close proximity to Asia for Australian producers to leverage off high bio security and quality standards to add value post farm gate and become more horizontally and vertically integrated."

Out of the office, Lawrence enjoys football, especially the Coleambally Blues, spending time with family and watching cricket. He has also recently completed his MBA in Finance, which he achieved as a mature age student.

If there was one thing you could control in the future, what would it be?

"The future of regional Australia. Investment in infrastructure and communities to make Australia reach its potential with a sense of equality for all people."

Management after joining – costs and consequences



Author - Murray Long, ClearView Consulting

Murray is currently conducting the livestock operations at the Temora Agricultural Innovation Centre



Ensuring your ewes are in the best condition for maximum conception, lamb survival and weaning percentage is all a part of your overall farm management – but there are tools available to help you along the way.

Producer training programs such as Life Time Ewe Management (LTEM) systematically step sheep producers through the management options for a full 12-month program from pre-joining to post weaning. The program focusses on optimal ewe condition score for maximum conception, lamb survival and weaning percentage.

But just what is the cost of following the recommendations...or perhaps even more important, what are the consequences for not managing the condition of your ewes throughout the yearly cycle?

By now most producers will have either put the rams out with ewes or are planning to do so early in the new year. Optimal Ewe Condition Score (CS) for joining is CS3 or better. The higher the condition score, the more lambs are conceived. Most important is to maintain an increasing CS during joining and for at least two cycles (average 34 days) after ram removal. For each additional CS at joining between CS 1.5 and 4.5, and extra 20 foetuses/100 ewes on average can be conceived, and the percentage of dry ewes decreases.

At today's prices (\$5.00/Kg for a 22Kg lamb) given an average loss of 10% embryos post scanning - that equates to an additional \$1980 per CS/100 ewes at joining.

Management of ewes through the mid trimester is the one time in the cycle when CS can be allowed to remain constant or even

slightly decrease, but remember the cost to maintain CS is lower than that to increase CS, so the recommendation is to maintain at least CS 3. Scanning for multiples, not just wet/dry, is essential if maximum lamb survival is to be achieved. This allows for control of potential lambing problems in overfed single bearers and targeted supplementation of multiple bearers.

In the last trimester, it is all about controlling the nutrition of the ewe to control potential birth weights of the lambs. Maximum lamb survival for both singles and twins occurs between 4-5 Kg birth weight. For single bearers this can be achieved at ewe CS of around 2, although not recommended, but the up side needs to be controlled so lambs do not get too big. For multiple bearing ewes, a ewe CS of 3-4 will produce lambs with high enough birth weights to potentially ensure good lamb survival. At this stage, it is more about not letting ewe CS fall below 3.

At today's prices (\$5.00/Kg for a 22Kg lamb) for each CS below CS3, 20% of lambs born will perish or \$2200 per CS/100 ewes at birth. In addition ewe mortality will increase to by around 4% at CS 2 resulting in financial losses of around \$600 (ewes @ \$150 each) plus their lambs.

Lamb survival rates of around 90% in singles and 70-80% in multiples should be the targets for producers. Once again there is a good correlation between ewe CS and lamb survival; a change of around 12% for each CS between CS2-4. Although some of this is attributable to the actual birth weight of the lamb, ewes in better CS are more likely to have better maternal behaviour resulting in higher lamb survival. Let's assume only half of the 12% survival difference is due to birth weight;

At today's prices (\$5.00/Kg for a 22Kg lamb) for each CS change between 2 and 4, an additional 6% of lambs born will perish or \$660 per CS/100 ewes at birth.

Ewes that have more favourable CS at lambing produce faster growing lambs and faster growing lambs ensure that higher weights are achieved at weaning. At week seven after birth, ewe milk production is not as important for lamb growth as is pasture availability. A critical weaning weight of around 20Kg (200 gms/day for 12 weeks) will ensure maximum weaner survival, below that weaner losses can be relatively high.

All good on the plus side, what about the costs?

Obviously good quality pastures are a big plus and the cheapest option in managing the CS of the ewes and growth of the lambs once born. But access to quality pasture year-round is rarely an opportunity afforded to most producers, so some form of supplementary feeding is required. This is where LTEM provides producers with the tools to not only assess the energy requirements of their flock at any given time, but also provide the knowledge to assess pastures and manage feed requirements accordingly. Work out the cheapest cost per Mj of energy, not the cheapest supplementary feed source. Grains are nearly always the best option, for two reasons; they are less bulky and usually higher per unit weight in energy. Given the prices predicted for grain this year (and beyond), the cost to maintain a ewe at CS3 will more than be covered by the extra return from the lambs. Remember it is always more than twice the cost to put one CS on a ewe during pregnancy than it is to maintain CS.

The last consideration is mob size. Smaller mobs result in higher lamb survival to the level of about 10% per 100 ewes change/mob. Recent findings from Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA) have indicated that perhaps this is more related to stocking density than mob size but aim to have around 20 birth events per mob per day to maximise lamb survival.

So how much is potentially gained from a 1 CS difference at current lamb prices?

A gain of close to \$55 per ewe just by increasing the CS of the breeding ewe by 1 CS through higher conception, more lambs to weaning and lower ewe mortality. Why wouldn't you do it?



	JOINING	BIRTH WT	EWES MORTALITY	POST BIRTH	GAIN \$/CS//100 EWES
CS 2 TO CS 3	\$1980	\$2200	\$600 +lambs?	\$660	\$5440

SIMPLICITY - AUSTRALIA'S FAVOURITE AIRSEEDER

World class quality, technology and features -
designed and built in Australia



This edition of The Link sees Temora Truck and Tractor's partner promotion focus on Simplicity Airseeders.

Starting very modestly around 1980, the first Simplicity Airseeder was made in Dalby, south east Queensland using a simple auger-type metering system. In 1982, David Law (Managing Director) purchased this business and so began his passion for continual product development and innovation. Initial changes started by using the Napier distributors for metering seed and fertiliser and by 1985 he had developed an innovative metering system to meet the diverse needs of Australia's farmers.

The Simplicity product strength has come about due to a constant focus on quality, reliability, innovation and in-field support. Today the range of airseeders includes more than 40 different model types, from 1500 litre mounted machines to 30,000 litre trailing airseeders with the option of liquid product capability.

Complementing the range of airseeders, Simplicity manufactures a quality range of ground engaging equipment. The 'Allrounder' range, including both the original 305 Series tilt controlled hitch and the 308 Series floating hitch are offered in a range of widths from six metres up to 20 metres, with four standard tyne spacing options. For remarkable ground following capability Simplicity also developed the unique 'Striker' product, which employs a hydraulic walking beam system. This

unit is fitted to Simplicity's own 'X-Bar' giving maximum flexibility to cater for varied requirements.

Simplicity is proud to have partnered with Temora Truck and Tractor for over 15 years. Temora Truck and Tractor is a business which shares the values that Simplicity also hold dear, a business focused on understanding the needs of their customers, knowing the product they sell and servicing it to the highest standard. Allan, Paddy, Justin and the whole team at TTTS are held in high regard by Simplicity for their longstanding devotion to our product and to offering a quality of service which can only be gained through experience.

Simplicity's goals are kept simple by the awareness that customers are constantly seeking the best farming practices and technology for their business.

"We know your viability and profitability relies on efficiently and accurately planting your crop. Understanding that drives us to continually develop our product, our manufacturing processes and our operational methods. Accurate, reliable and of course simple to use are all words we would hope resound with owners of Simplicity machines over the last 34 years."

Moving forward, Simplicity's key focus is to offer complete planting packages which are world class in terms of quality, technology and features, and also importantly designed and built here in Australia.



Temora Truck & Tractor
Service
PTY LTD



MANAGING FOR A CLEAN Paddock



This photo shows a canola crop in southern NSW taken in July 2012. At first glance it appears to be a missed strip at planting. However, these strips merely germinated later due to a missed summer fallow spray. A dry start to the season exacerbated the difference between the paddock which had a summer fallow spray and a run which was missed. As this strip lacked moisture which had been taken up by the resultant summer weeds, the canola germination in this area was delayed until sufficient moisture was found by the crop.



Dow AgroSciences

Effective weed control in fallow is essential to maximising available water and nutrients for the next crop. Dow AgroSciences has a wide range of specialist broadleaf weed fallow herbicides for use alone or as 'spike' with glyphosate.

FallowBoss™ Tordon™ Herbicide provides faster knockdown and robust residual control of a broad spectrum of fallow broadleaf weeds, including fleabane, amaranthus, noogoora burr, thornapple, black bindweed, sow thistle and many more. FallowBoss is stronger than most fallow herbicides, with three active ingredients, picloram, triclopyr and aminopyralid, working simultaneously. Whilst this makes FallowBoss Tordon a standout fallow control option, care needs to be taken regarding plantback periods, refer to the label for details.

Garlon™ FallowMaster™ Herbicide is a significant development in formulation chemistry, with a new patented emulsification package and the highest active ingredient loading available. Garlon FallowMaster provides faster uptake and brownout of melons with improved compatibility with a wider range of partner herbicides. There is no substitute for Garlon FallowMaster when controlling melons during the summer!

Starane™ Advanced is a broadleaf herbicide used for the control of a wide range of weeds in fallow, grazing lucerne, maize, millets, pastures, poppies, sorghum, sugarcane, sweetcorn, winter cereals as well as woody weeds in agricultural noncrop areas, commercial and industrial areas, forests, pastures and rights-of-way. Starane Advanced is selective to pasture grasses, rainfast within one hour and has short plantback periods to major crops. Starane Advanced is a flexible solution and can be used as a spike with glyphosate to improve control on difficult fallow weeds, without compromising plant back periods, refer to the label for details.

Lontrel™ Herbicide has long been used in fallow to control thistles and groundsel bush. With Lontrel Advanced, knockdown and residual

control of flax-leaf fleabane can also be achieved. Flaxleaf fleabane is hard to control due to the timing of emergence, rapid growth habit, increased tolerance at maturity to herbicides, and large number of seeds produced (100,000 seeds per plant average). It thrives in non-competitive environments, particularly where glyphosate kills the grass but not the fleabane. Knockdown and short term residual control is achieved when Lontrel Advanced is used at 150 mL/ha. When looking for slightly longer residual control where pasture removal is required (such as in firebreaks or when removing a pasture to put into cropping rotation), use 1 L/ha plus 2.4 L glyphosate (450 g/L) + BS1000 0.2%v/v. Keep in mind that sensitive species such as clovers and medics will be eliminated for at least 1 year at these high rates. Depending on the rate chosen, subsequent crop options may also be limited. Using this approach for paddocks destined for cereal or canola crops is fine. Check the label for other crop plantback information.

Controlling summer weeds soon after germination is the most important aspect of fallow management for subsequent crop production and gives economic returns in most years (GRDC, 2012). Benefits from summer weed control include moisture conservation and increased nitrogen availability to the following crop. The more weed bulk (biomass), the more nitrogen is extracted. A GRDC* trial at Merredin in Western Australia found grain yield and protein were generally lower where summer weeds were uncontrolled, due to differences in nitrogen rather than plant-available water. Similarly, a trial in Victoria by Birchip Cropping Group** showed a 1.3t/ha wheat increase by controlling summer weeds. Their website states that "differences can still be seen almost a year later from controlling weeds."

Information on fallow management and each of these products can be found at www.dowagrosciences.com.au or contact your local Dow AgroSciences representative on 1800 700 096.

PRODUCTION *Wise*®

ONLINE CROP MANAGEMENT

www.ProductionWise.com.au

Supercharged with NDVI satellite imagery

Australia's leading online crop management platform ProductionWise – now features Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI) satellite imagery for every cropping region in Australia.

The new feature enables ProductionWise users to receive imagery direct to their paddock diary up to four times per month.

A change map is also created in the paddock diary enabling users to compare previous imagery with the most recently delivered – providing a spatial guide to assist with paddock inspections.

By having NDVI imagery in their tool box – growers and their advisers can track crop growth, target crop inspections and fine tune inputs.

To celebrate ProductionWise is offering up to 1000 hectares of imagery FREE between December 2016 and April 2017.

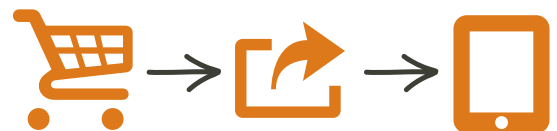


Visit www.productionwise.com.au today!



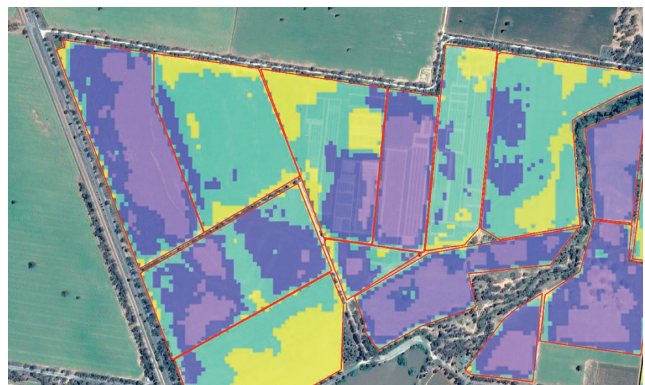
Timely, set-and-forget image delivery

Users can now order NDVI images for their mapped paddocks at the click of a mouse. Once the order is placed new imagery will be emailed to the user and added to the paddock diary up to four times per month ongoing. ProductionWise accesses imagery from the Sentinel 2 (10m every 10 days) and Landsat 7 & 8 (15m pan-sharpened every 16 days) satellites.



Paddock zoning – target input application

NDVI imagery provides growers with powerful intelligence on the seasonal vegetative health of each paddock. Identifying areas of variable performance due to nutrient deficiencies, weed, pest or disease outbreaks allow farmers to better target input application through the generation of paddock zone maps and VRT application resulting in optimised paddock productivity and efficiency.



*Available between Decemeber 2016 and April 2017



More efficient crop inspections

Growers and their advisers can gauge the state of their entire crop from the comfort of their home office or via their smart phone or tablet. With imagery updated up to four times per month, users can view the change map and easily pin-point 'hot spot' areas of concern leading to more efficient in-crop inspections.



More informed decision-making

Growers and their advisers will be more informed in their decision-making by combining the insights learned from NDVI imagery with their on-farm management activities, paddock variability and yield history. The information combined provides greater traceability, accountability and all-round smarter farming.



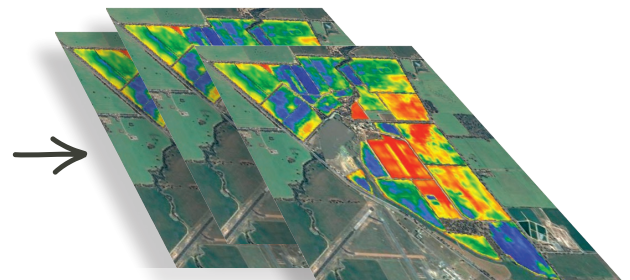
Assess frost and hail damage

Following severe climatic events such as frost, heat stress and hail, users can view NDVI imagery in conjunction with the integrated seasonal climate data to identify paddocks most impacted. By identifying the scale and severity of these events, growers and their advisers can adapt their paddock and marketing activities to suit.



Build an image library

With images delivered up to four times per month to the paddock diary users can quickly build an archival collection of paddock images. This 'library of images' will allow growers and their advisers to assess paddock performance over time, understand paddock variability and employ appropriate paddock management strategies.



PRODUCTION *Wise*[®]
ONLINE CROP MANAGEMENT

www.ProductionWise.com.au
1800 620 519
or info@productionwise.com.au

 **Grain Growers**

ProductionWise is a product of GrainGrowers

PA Source 

Imagery powered by PA Source

FarmLink Partners

Silver Partner

CommonwealthBank



Bayer **CropScience**

Bronze Partner



Dow **AgroSciences**



Corporate Member



agri**business**



Legal advice generously provided by



Contractors

and stubble

This is the first section of a four page fact sheet created by FarmLink as a part of the GRDC National Stubble Initiative (CSP:00174). The remainder of the fact sheet can be downloaded from the projects section of the [Farmlink website](http://farmlink.com.au), or contact us via farmlink@farmlink.com.au or 02 6980 1333 if you would like us to send a copy to you

Engaging harvest contractors with equipment suitable for stubble retention

- ▶ Contractors should be aware of what operations are needed before they arrive on site
- ▶ Stubble management starts at harvest! Preparing stubble at harvest can cost more at harvest time, but can save having to do further treatments prior to sowing the next crop
- ▶ Farmers need to assess the stubble and weed burden prior to harvest so that a stubble management plan can be negotiated with the contractor



Out on the Farm

An update from Temora Agricultural Innovation Centre (TAIC)



The challenges presented to farmers this year by the outstanding rainfall have started to manifest themselves as harvest has progressed here at TAIC.

Our canola oil was good, but waterlogging meant yield was well down, the barley has been a tale of extreme contrasts, low yielding feed and high yielding malt, but the lupins were a highlight. At the time of printing we were still waiting to see how the wheat goes. As you could see from our Christmas cover photo, pastures have gone through the roof, we even cut some Lucerne for hay, as well as extra sheep being brought in to graze other paddocks.

The massive variety of activities at TAIC was highlighted on one day in late November. CSIRO was taking dry matter cuts from trials, Landmark was harvesting trials, contractors were harvesting the commercial barley crop, Lucerne was getting baled, the irrigator was watering late season Dow varieties and sheep were being moved into a new pasture paddock.

Beyond harvest (yes, it will eventually finish!) it will all be about weed control, as TAIC will surely face the same issues as you all are, lots of rain will mean lots of summer weeds and management decisions will have to be made to best cope with them. As you will read on page 3, we've embarked upon a short-term project (thanks to funding support from Riverina LLS) to examine how farmers can adapt to impacts of climate variability, particularly with the management of summer weeds. Stay tuned for an update on that in our next edition.

As in the past, the FarmLink office will be closed between Christmas and New Year, re-opening on Tuesday, January 3, 2017. In the meantime, we hope you all have a satisfying harvest, some lovely relaxation and fulfilling family time over Christmas.

Stay safe and we'll see you in 2017!

Diary

January 3, 2017

FarmLink office re-opens after Christmas/New Year break

March 31

FarmLink AGM

Current Projects

- GRDC Crop Sequencing (CSP-00146)
- GRDC/Department of Agriculture Cropfacts Soil Carbon (CRF00002)
- GRDC Early Sowing (CSP-00178)
- GRDC Harvest weed seed control in the Southern region (2015.03.06D)
- GRDC Managing Subsoil acidity (GRDC DAN00206)
- GRDC Regional Soil Testing (DAN0000168)
- GRDC Stubble Initiative (CSP-00174)
- GRDC Strategic Tillage (DAN00152)
- Landcare Soil Moisture Education
- Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA) Resource Flock Database Satellite Flock

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Our major project funding partner is

