

The Link

FarmLink Newsletter

Vol 31. - Autumn 2012



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Dear Members,

Welcome to our Autumn edition of "The Link", and we hope it finds you well.

It is usual for me to try and make some wise comment about the season at this point of my message to you, but honestly, what could be said about the extraordinary weather we have seen since New Year? Our best wishes go to those who have suffered loss or damage due to the rain and flooding events – we sure hope your recovery efforts are proceeding as smoothly as they can.

Autumn brings around a very busy time for us at FarmLink, and as I look at the calendar of up-coming events across the region, it makes me realise how crowded these times of the year can be for you as well. We recognise how busy you are nowadays and seriously consider the effectiveness, relevance and value of the events we facilitate on your behalf. However, we love your feedback as to how we can make these events, and in fact all our FarmLink services of even more value to you. As you catch up with us over the next few months, please let us know your thoughts about these services; the things you value about them or how we might improve.

Weed management is an issue close to all of our hearts, and the recent run of wet summers has presented a number of new challenges in controlling summer weeds. Fleabane and Hairy Panic are two major weeds that we will be zeroing in on this year in a new collaborative National Weeds Initiative being led by University of Adelaide, and in conjunction with the EH Graham Centre in this part of the world. Fleabane is certainly showing no limits to where it grows.....



We are pleased to be working alongside Temora Ag Bureau and Lachlan CMA and their CHASM long term farming systems project on the Research Station at Temora. FarmLink's Grain and Graze project will be co-locating a number of pasture establishment/pasture systems trials at this site and sharing knowledge

across the range of experiments. There will be a massive number of soil nutrient, tissue and soil moisture measurements taken from the site in an aim to get a much better understanding of soil carbon, the nitrogen cycle and how our farming systems impact and/or benefit these elements. This is an exciting collaboration between FarmLink and the above organisations, NSW DPI, Temora Shire Council, pasture seed companies and the Australian National University (ANU) in Canberra. There will be at least two PhD students working on the project this year, with a strong possibility of more as it develops.

Progress at the Temora Research Station continues as we progress into our second year. Support from the broader commercial and industry sectors has been phenomenal and we aim to build on that in 2012. A major effort will be made to get staff, systems and processes in place to ensure smooth, safe and successful operations at this site into the future. 2012 also sees the centenary of the Station's involvement in research and we are making plans to commemorate that significant milestone whilst we launch this exciting new model for Agricultural Research and Extension in NSW.

Best wishes for the coming sowing season; we have a good start in moisture terms anyway!!

Best wishes

Jon Cobden, CEO.

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FarmLink's CLASSIC CAPTURES

Photo Competition 2012

FARMING for LIFE



**Are you a keen or professional
photographer with an eye for capturing
that unforgettable moment?**

FarmLink is joining with the celebration of International Year of the Farmer and is calling for photo entries in 'FarmLink's Classic Captures' Photo Competition 2012.

The theme 'Farming for Life' aims to showcase the diversity in Australian farming and the many generations which eat, sleep, breathe and love 'all things' farming.

Four Categories

PRIMARY STUDENT
SECONDARY STUDENT
OPEN AMATEUR
OPEN PROFESSIONAL

Entries close 5pm, Friday 12th October, 2012

For more information see enclosed brochure.

FarmLink Projects

NEW PROJECTS FOR 2012

Assessing carbon sequestration and water use efficiency of various crop rotations

A joint venture between Lachlan CMA, Temora Ag Bureau and FarmLink Research at Temora Research Station. This project will investigate the potential of different crop and pasture rotations in regards to soil organic carbon levels and following crop water use efficiency.

Weeds Initiatives

Investigation of various weed species taxonomy and seed biology. Funded by GRDC.

Carbon Farming initiatives

Evaluating various farming practices impacts on carbon sequestration.

A full report on FarmLink's trials from last year will be provided in the 2011 FarmLink Research Report, which is currently being compiled.

STRATEGIC TILLAGE PROJECT UPDATE

On the 8th March, 2012 the Strategic Tillage Project Steering Committee met at FarmLink, Junee. The project will have four sites, Daysdale, Young, Stockinbingal and the long term Harden CSIRO site.

Some of the key issues discussed were;

John Kirkegaard gave a 20 year history review of the trial at Harden and its trends, for example burning stubble has consistently out-performed stubble retained (SR) systems over this period.

A cultivation applied with a rotary hoe had a positive but insignificant impact on crop biomass at Z30 in the burn system. A cultivation applied with a rotary hoe had a significant impact on crop biomass at Z30 in the SR treatment. Addition of nutrients had a significant impact on crop biomass at Z30 in the cultivated treatments in both the burn and SR treatments.

Clive Kirkby presented data on soil biology from the Harden site and reported a trend for increased microbial biomass over whole plot with cultivation but increase not significant. Difference in microbial biomass between upper and lower slope regardless of cultivation or no cultivation was significant. Cultivation tends to have more of an effect on the upper slope compared to lower slope. Cultivation tends to have more of an effect on burnt compared to stubble retained areas.

Committee members: Mark Conyers, Albert Oates, Graeme Poile, Kurt Lindbeck, Peter McInerney, Sandy Biddulph, Chris Holland, Greg Hunt, Andrew Bissett, John Byrne, Scott Byrne, Clive Kirkby, John Kirkegaard, Paul Breust, Jon Cobden, Peter Martin, Geoff Byrne, Andrew Simpson.

News and Events

HARRINGTON SEED DESTRUCTOR DEMONSTRATION

Demonstrations were held in the region during mid December last year. The HSD has been developed by Western Australian grower and inventor Ray Harrington, with assistance from the Australian Herbicide Resistance Initiative (previously the Western Australian Herbicide Resistance Initiative), the University of South Australia and the Grains Research and Development Corporation (GRDC).

More information and to view an online video visit www.ahri.uwa.edu.au/Research/Grains-Research-and-Development-Corporation-projects/Harrington-Seed-Destructor



CONSERVATION AGRICULTURE FIELD DAY

More than 50 exhibitors and 300 farmers from across New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria came together in Parkes on the 23rd of February for the 17th Conservation Agriculture Field Day, an annual event organised by the Conservation Agriculture and No-Till Farming Association (CANFA) in association with Central West Farming Systems, FarmLink Research and Central West Lachlan Landcare.

Three new machinery releases were a stand out feature, they were all single disc units - from NDF Disc Planters (NSW), Milne Industries (Qld) and Grizzly Engineering (Vic).



Above: 2012 Conservation Agriculture Field Day, Parkes Racecourse.

LUCKY WINNER of the iPad 2

As a membership promotion, FarmLink offered new members who joined before 31st January, 2012 or existing members who renewed their membership the chance to win an iPad 2.

Ben Hogg from Coolamon renewed his membership and was our lucky winner of the iPad 2. Seeing that Ben was looking to purchase an iPad 2 before Christmas, the prize was very well received.

For more information about agriculture apps and Web 2.0 technology see page 4.



Above: Cathie Fox presents the iPad 2 to Ben Hogg recently at the FarmLink Research office.

Technology Update

A number of members have requested further information about cloud technology and software applications suitable for use on farm.

Cloud Technology

Data can now be stored online in what is generally called the cloud. The general idea of the cloud is to store your data and files on the internet so you can access from any device at any time, as opposed to leaving it on a hard drive. You have probably already used some cloud systems if you have a hotmail or gmail account- instead of running the email program on your computer, you log into a web account remotely. The cloud offers huge potential in the way we manage data, allowing data entry on the run that we can then access back in the office and allowing documents to be shared and edited easily.

Pros:

- If you damage your device eg if you drop your phone in a header, all your information is backed up and is easily accessed on another device or your next phone.
- Data can be entered or changed in the paddock and you won't have to re-enter or transfer the data once you get home. If you edit a document on your iPad, the same edit appears on your home computer.
- Most devices now handle automatic syncing and some programs will store data until the internet is available again when syncing will happen automatically.
- You can share documents with others and edit them simultaneously.

Cons:

- Limited fast internet access can restrict the cloud's usefulness in country areas.
- Security of the cloud is currently being examined

There are a number of cloud services which vary in terms of services, features, compatibility and storage space. Common cloud storage includes Dropbox and iCloud, however there are many other specialist storage services available such as Screencast which stores and organises videos and allows you to determine who can access particular sections.

Source: Essential starter guide to technology making life easier on the farm. Karen Roberts & Graeme McIntosh

Software Applications

What are Apps? Apps is an abbreviation for application. An app is a piece of software. It can run on the Internet, on your computer, on your phone or other electronic device.

As the use of tablets and smart phones is increasing we have listed below general information about some of the Apps relevant to agriculture. Whilst many of these are specific to apple products, many also have android phone and desktop versions. To download apps, google the application name.

CropMate Variety Chooser, NSW DPI - Free - iPad and iPhone

<http://cropmate.agriculture.nsw.gov.au/>

Assists in choosing varieties of barley, canola, chickpeas, oats and triticale and wheat in NSW.

Weeds the Ute Guide, GRDC - Free - iPad and iPhone

<http://www.grdc.com.au/director/events/apps?shortcut=1>

This application is designed to be used in the paddock by growers to assist in identifying the most common, annual, biennial and perennials weeds in Southern Australia. Where possible photographs have been provided of the weed at various growth stages to ensure correct identification. Each weed has a calendar to show which month/s the weed is likely to be present in the paddock.

Tankmix Calculator DuPont - Free - iPad and iPhone

http://www2.dupont.com/Prod_Agriculture/en-us/content/article/tank-mix-app-on-itunes.html

The DuPont TankMix Calculator Application lets you quickly and easily calculate how much product and water you need for effective applications based on your acreage or spray tank size. Choose from a wide selection of units of measure and work in either numerals or fractions.

Weatherzone Plus - Free - iPad and iPhone

<http://itunes.apple.com/au/app/weatherzone-plus/id336262957?mt=8>

4 For serious weather watchers who rely on the weather for work or play.

2011 NVT Trials

The National Variety Trial reports from 2011 season are now being released and the reports are now available through a list of current trial reports and the Google Maps functionality on the NVT website www.nvtonline.com.au

Current trial reports can be accessed by clicking on the link under the What's New section of the homepage, called "2011 Trial Results". This spreadsheet is regularly updated and shows the reports that are close to release, those that will not be released as well as hyperlinks directly to any reports that have been released.

Tabled below are 2011 predicted average yield results extracted from NVT reports of some of the commonly used varieties in the region.

Details regarding sowing and harvest dates, 1000 grain weight, protein, oil % etc are available on the nvt website.

WHEAT MAIN SEASON 2011 PREDICTED AVERAGE YIELD t/ha

SITE	Gladius	Waagen	Livingstone	Lincoln
Lockhart	3.34	3.70	3.29	2.94
Temora	4.28	4.36	3.94	3.70
Quandialla	4.07	3.88	4.20	3.50

CANOLA MID TRIAZINE 2011 PREDICTED AVERAGE YIELD t/ha

SITE	Hyola 555TT	Hyola 751 TT	Tawriffic TT	CB Jardee
Lockhart	2.29	1.89	1.75	1.86
Temora	2.13	2.21	1.80	2.08
Grenfell	3.11	-	2.50	2.87

Did you know?

WEEDS BIBLE

The latest edition of the Noxious and Environmental Weed Control Handbook has been published by NSW Department of Primary Industries. **More information** phone 1800 028 374.

NUFFIELD SCHOLARSHIP

Applications for the 2013 round of Nuffield Australia Farming Scholarships will open on the 1st April 2012. **More information** visit www.nuffield.com.au

NSW WHEAT AND CANOLA PRODUCTION 2011 -12

ABARES estimates the area planted to wheat is to have increased to around 4 million hectares. Wheat production is estimated to have fallen by 26 per cent in 2011-12 to just over 7.9 million tonnes.

Canola yields were well above average and quality was excellent with oil content averaging 44 per cent across the state. **More information** ABARES Australian Crop Report February 2012.

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It's our Agribusiness Managers' knowledge of the paddock that makes them experts in the field.

Call one of our Agribusiness Managers today, or ring AgriLine on 1300 245 463.

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Jade Freeburn
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Manager
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Jonathan Uphill
Agribusiness
Manager
Wagga Wagga
0428 432 801

Richard Hewitt
Agribusiness
Manager
Young
0428 542 450



Determined to be different

Diary Dates

News from WA

MARCH 2012

FarmLink Research Rural Leadership Program 2011-2012 - Session 3

21 March, 2012, Wagga Wagga, Charles Sturt University
More information: Jon Cobden 02 69 24 4633

GRDC Farm Business Update

21 March, 2012, Temora Ex Services Club
More information: ORM Communications 03 5441 6176

GRDC Persuasion Skills Workshop

"How to use persuasion skills to drive technology adoption".

27-28 March, 2012, Temora Research Station
More information: Bruce Howie 0418 254 668

APRIL 2012

Precision Ag Workshop on Yield Data

4 April, 2012, Temora Research Station
8.30 am - 12.30 pm
More information: Paul Breust 02 69 24 4633

FarmLink Research Executive Meeting

4 April, 2012, Junee, Farmlink Research
More information: Jon Cobden 02 69 24 4633

Don't Be a Drifter

Spray Workshop and Farm Visit
10-11 April, 2012 Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga
More information: Nickie Berrisford (03) 5226 4075

DOLLARS FOR MOVING WINDROWS

The Australian Institute of Agricultural and Science and Technology reported growers who burn their windrows and have auto-steer should move their windrows about one metre each year to avoid costly nutrient losses, according to new research.

A study by DAF in WA showed the value of potassium and nitrogen burnt in wheat windrows on the same path each year was \$42.75 a hectare. If the harvester moved across by a metre annually, the loss was cut to \$13.15.

Repeatedly using the same narrow windrow each year results in a wave effect with good crop growth over the windrows, but significant nutrient loss over the rest of the paddock.

INVIGORATING INTEREST IN AG CAREERS

With the declining interest of young people entering the agricultural industry, a young agriculture graduate Steph Coombes has launched an initiative she hopes will help raise the profile of agriculture as a career option.

Steph Coombes graduated with first class honours from the University of Western Australia in Ag Science and has set up the website *Careers in Australian Agriculture* which will carry a range of profiles of people working in agriculture with links to various university agriculture courses **visit <http://ausagcareers.com/>**

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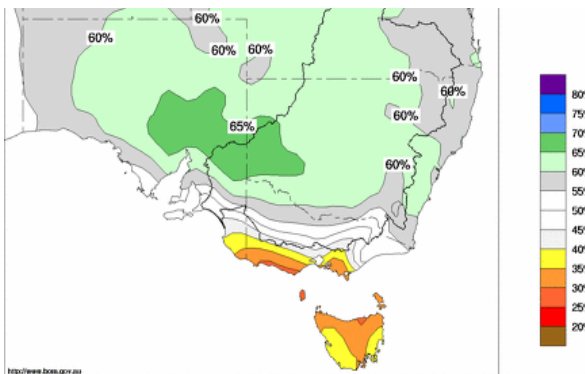
Seasonal Outlook

FarmLink Gold Sponsor

Rainfall: Wetter autumn favoured for much of southeastern Australia

The southeast Australian outlook for March to May 2012 shows the following:

- A wetter autumn is more likely for SA and NSW.
- At this time of year, the outlook model has low skill over SE Australia; we advise caution using this output. This outlook is mostly due to warmer than normal waters over the Indian Ocean; cooler Pacific waters associated with La Niña have had a lesser impact.



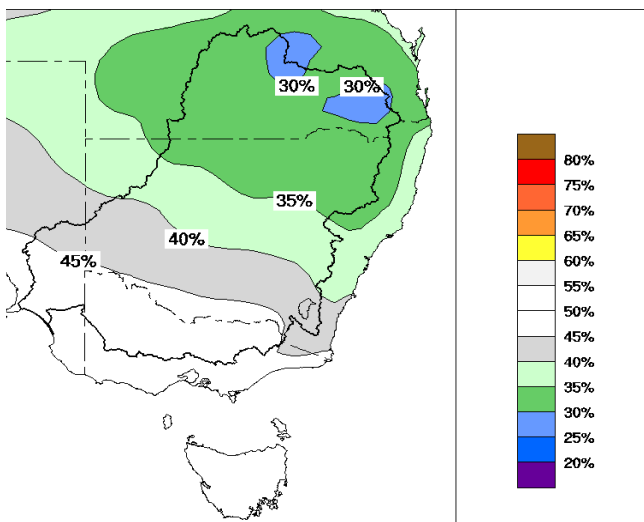
Source: www.bom.nsw.gov.au

Temperature: Cooler Autumn days favoured in northern parts of SE Australia

The autumn 2012 temperature outlook for southeast Australia shows the following:

- cooler days are more likely over the northeast half of NSW and northeastern SA.
- warmer nights are more likely over NSW, eastern SA and much of Victoria.

At this time of year, the outlook model has low skill in maximum temperature for most of southeast Australia; we advise caution using this output.



Source: www.bom.nsw.gov.au



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www.awb.com.au



SUPPORTING PEOPLE AFFECTED BY DISASTER

Sometimes it can be difficult to know how to help a person affected by disaster. It is normal to struggle with what to say or do in these cases. Below are some tips on how to best help a person recovering from a traumatic event.

- Spend time with the stressed person, without judging or demanding. Everyone's recovery will occur in its own time.
- Offer support and listen. Talking is one of the best things people can do to work things out. Remember that people may need to go over things many more times than usual.
- Help with practical tasks and chores. This gives people more energy and time for the recovery process.
- Give people time, space and patience and don't take it personally if at times they are irritable, bad tempered or want to be alone. These reactions are a natural part of the stress response and will pass as people recover.

People may need to be supported by specialists in the community to ensure that the stress does not linger unnecessarily or lead to other health problems.

Stressed people need to concentrate on themselves at first; they will feel supported if you let them know you are concerned, want to help and are trying to understand.

EXECUTIVE in PROFILE

JEFF HOFFMAN, “Ceranya” Lockhart



Above: Jeff Hoffman soil sampling in the paddock.

Jeff grew his first crop in 1967 and has been a grain farmer ever since. He is innovative and even at the age of 65 is excited by the prospects of applying science and technology.

Jeff farms at Lockhart and currently grows wheat canola and barley. He also produces wool and lamb from lucerne clover pastures.

In an attempt to be good at all aspects of what he does, Jeff has pursued further knowledge in the science of agriculture. He is an adjunct research associate of Charles Sturt University, a member of the local Agricultural Bureau, NSW Farmers, FarmLink Executive Board, The Soil Science Society, The Australian Skeptics and the Hang Gliding Federation.

Jeff's PhD thesis was titled 'The response of lucerne to a stratified soil water environment and the implications for dryland salinity management in Australia'. It involved a detailed study of the deep roots of lucerne. He was an editor of the book 'Producing Quality Lucerne Hay' (Lattimore, 2008) and a book on sustainable agriculture in the Northern Territory 'Striking the Balance' (O'Gara, 2010).

Jeff has presented research results at agronomy conferences and climate analysis to growers (He was awarded the NSW prize for climate management in the Masters of the Climate awards 2000).

Jeff is well aware of the problems and opportunities of farming and has a trained mind to apply to those issues. He has tried a few things but really just likes being a farmer.

Recently Jeff has been appointed to the GRDC's Southern Region Cropping Solutions Committee (RCSC). There are four regional committees, covering the principal cropping zones – the high rainfall, medium rainfall, low rainfall and irrigated zones of south eastern Australia. The role of the Committee is to provide advice to the Southern Panel on local grain production constraints, opportunities and how best to tackle them.

FarmLink Executive

- Charles Kingston, The Rock (Chair/Director)
- Matt Dart, Ariah Park (Director)
- Steve Day, Lockhart (Director)
- Geoff Dale, Illabo
- Darryl Harper, Barmedman
- Jeff Hoffmann, Lockhart
- Ernie Idiens, Canowindra
- Derek Ingold, Dirnaseer
- Ian Jennings, Coolamon
- Mike O'Hare, Beckom
- Michael Sinclair, Temora

FarmLink Staff

- Jon Cobden, CEO
- Paul Breust, Research
- Vacant, Extension Agronomist
- Cathie Fox, Administration
- Karen Giddings, Communications

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