

the link



FarmLink Newsletter Autumn 2015



New chair of FarmLink Research, Darryl Harper on he and wife Christina's home farm, 'Wyalong No 3', Barmedman, with children Alex (9), Laura (11) and Hugo (5). The Harpers are involved in a family farming enterprise with Darryl's brother, sister-in-law and parents, operating a grain focussed mixed farming business in the Aria Park and Barmedman districts.



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Catch up with CEO Cindy Cassidy

Wow - what a busy life we all lead!! Like all the members of our FarmLink family, it's been full steam ahead focussing on cropping here at TAIC and getting our crop and livestock trials well underway for season 2015.

We have seen a return to stubble burning this year, resulting in lots of discussion about how to do it efficiently and well. Through the GRDC Stubble Initiative, FarmLink will be looking at optimising approaches to burning with a view to reducing risks and smoke production which have the ability to create adverse impacts for the industry and on the wider community.

Out of the paddock, we're concentrating on building partnerships with an eye on the future and value adding to our relationships. Right now we are working with the Grains Research and Development Corporation (GRDC), Riverina Local Land Services (LLS), Charles Sturt University (CSU), farming systems groups and St Anne's Central School to create projects and activities that will benefit members. The collaboration with St Anne's allows us to share our expertise, time and facilities with the Year 9 and 10 Agriculture students with the hope of increasing this education of our potential future farmers across the FarmLink region.

We are excited to announce FarmLink will be supporting two young farmers via two \$2500 scholarships for fourth year agricultural or veterinary science students at CSU Wagga, with further details to be available mid-year. This is a continuation of our ongoing relationship with CSU as we work together to create a supply chain

for Research, Development, Extension and Training across NSW. We are also sending two FarmLink members aged 18-35 to the Innovation Conference to be held in Canberra in July.

We are also focusing on the women in our FarmLink family farming partnerships, with early stage planning underway for our inaugural Women's Forum on July 23.

FarmLink has been in talks with the GRDC around their new strategy for investment in R, D & E as well as the consolidation of NSW into the Northern GRDC Panel. We believe opportunities will emerge as a result of these changes and embrace the new direction for the future. The GRDC focus on funds being invested in the FarmLink region is a great demonstration of the leadership GRDC is showing in the field of R,D & E.

FarmLink is continuing to work with Riverina LLS in establishing biosecurity, soil health and capacity building activities to benefit landholders across the region.

All of this ties to FarmLink's focus on fostering farming into the future, and we're excited to be working with all of our partners, collaborators and members with that continuing goal in mind.

Meet the Director: Lisa Anderson

Lisa Anderson is leading FarmLink into a new era, being the first female appointed as a Director on the Board of the organisation. Lisa says, "I have a passion for excellence in agriculture. I have been lucky to have been exposed to many experienced and inspirational leaders in this field. I'm keen to contribute to our industry."

Lisa is a partner in her mixed family farming enterprise, Elwood Pastoral Co, with her husband Kerry, at The Gap located between Coolamon and Wagga. Together they have been early adopters of technology having been on 9m Controlled Traffic Farming for 15 years. Their close proximity to both Charles Sturt University and the Department of Primary Industries has resulted in numerous collaborations over the years including various trials and hosting a visiting Chinese delegation. They have also been involved in the seeds industry for many years as producers of certified sub-clover seed, including Newseeds Pty Ltd, a collection of producers which had the production rights for Riverina sub-clover.

Lisa brings a different set of skills to FarmLink. She practised as a solicitor locally for nearly 20 years and has broad ranging experience in the area of rural commercial work. Lisa has a Bachelor of Economics and a Bachelor of Laws from the University of Sydney. She joins our Risk and Audit sub committee.

Lisa has also made an ongoing contribution to a number of community organisations, including farming groups such as Farm 2000 and Ag n Chat, as well as school and community groups.

Included in Lisa's vision for FarmLink is for the organisation to be about supporting farming families to achieve best practice. "It is about growing the educational outcomes of all in our region to produce water efficient crops and livestock."

Lisa and Kerry have three children. "The future is theirs. We need to adapt to the way they learn and the endless possibilities created by technology and our national connections."

Board of Directors

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



CEO
Cindy Cassidy



Chair
Darryl Harper



Deputy Chair
Rob McNoll



Director
Rob Patterson



Director
Lisa Anderson



Director
Ron Heinrich



Director
Lyndon McNab



Director
Bernard Hart

Looking forward to a positive future

New FarmLink Research Board Chair Darryl Harper comes into the position with the organisation in a positive financial position following a year of restructuring and significant progress.

As was outlined to members at the March Annual General Meeting, FarmLink has moved into 2015 looking forward to an exciting and much more stable future, with a profit of \$27,344 recorded, a major step forward from the 2013 loss of \$437,666.

Mr Harper takes the position of chair from Bernard Hart, who will remain as a Director and move into the role as Chair of the Research, Development and Extension committee. The Board's Deputy Chair role left vacant by Mr Harper's promotion has been filled by Robert McColl.

FarmLink also welcomed its first female Board Director, with Lisa Anderson bringing a wealth of experience as a grain and livestock producer as well as from a career in legal practice, to the organisation. She filled a position left vacant by Rob Hart who stood down from the board. Continuing in their role on the board are Lyndon McNab, Robert Patterson, Ron Heinrich alongside Chief Executive Officer, Cindy Cassidy.

Key changes put into place during 2014 included restructuring the board, maintaining memberships, increasing sponsorship, improving project management and reporting and rebuilding relationships with industry partners and members.

CEO Cindy Cassidy also outlined FarmLink's Strategic Plan for 2015 and beyond, highlighting relevant projects, productive

partnerships, local focus and sustainable business as being among the keys to success.

A review of 2014's RD and E projects was provided by FarmLink's Research Technical Officer, Tony Pratt, as he presented the much anticipated 2014 Research Report, featuring summaries of 13 research projects which progressed throughout 2014. He also introduced Murray Long who is conducting livestock operations at Temora Agricultural Innovation Centre and looking for input from FarmLink members to shape the direction of his work.

CSIRO's James Hunt also outlined the stubble, early sowing and crop sequencing projects that CSIRO and FarmLink are collaborating on, with members relishing the opportunity to ask questions directly to the researcher behind the projects.

The additional opportunity to hear from Research Development Corporation Chair Richard Clark was also a benefit to members, with Mr Clark outlining the importance of relationships with grower groups such as FarmLink. He also explained the value of growers' Research and Development levy, describing it as an investment in the future. He also foreshadowed changes in the operation of GRDC.

The formal proceedings were followed by an opportunity for members to catch up over some snacks and refreshments.



2014 Research Report

The 2014 FarmLink Research Report has been published and distributed to members' mailboxes right throughout the FarmLink region.

A detailed summary of 13 FarmLink research projects is included in the 100 page report, with the researchers themselves providing insight into the background of projects encompassing issues such as stubble management, strategic tillage, soil carbon, crop rotations, dual crop grazing and weed management.

The full index of projects covered in the report includes –

1. Maintaining profitable farming systems

with retained stubble

2. The strategic use of tillage within conservation farming

3. Crop sequencing

4. Increasing soil carbon

5. The soil carbon frontier

6. PodGuard demonstration

7. Early sowing

8. To burn or not to burn

9. Grazing canola trial

10. Phosphorous rates

11. Managing micronutrient deficiencies

12. NPKS Regional soil testing

13. FarmLink Member Profiling project

The reports refer to trials being carried out throughout the FarmLink region and beyond – some at Temora Agricultural Innovation Centre, while some are taking place on members' properties, providing research and outcomes relevant to real on-farm operations.

Any member who has not received a copy of their 2014 Research Report is urged to contact Debbie Clarke at FarmLink on 6980 1333 or debbie@farmlink.com.au

Keeping newborn lambs alive

Lamb survival rates are a critical issue and there are plenty of things you can do to reduce your losses



Author - Murray Long, ClearView Consulting

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

There is a great deal that can be done from both a genetic selection and management perspective to influence both conception and lamb survival.

An increase of around 10% in conception rates will provide an additional 2-6% gross margin (\$/Ha) depending on property location and enterprise mix, whereas increasing lamb survival by the same margin will increase gross margins by around 4-12%. There is no benefit increasing conception rates if management strategies are not in place to ensure that additional gains are realised. It could be argued that potential gains in conception rates through genetic selection have not been matched by management strategies to take full advantage of those gains.

Most deaths of new born lambs occur with the first 48 hours, with starvation and mismothering the major contributor (59%) followed by dystocia problems at birth (17%). Both these issues can be addressed through genetic selection and management with significant gains achievable. Increasing genetic fat through selection using Australian Sheep Breeding Values (ASBV) has the effect of boosting the resilience of the new born lamb and increasing lamb birth weights especially under feed limiting conditions. Results from the Cooperative Research Centre for Sheep Industry Innovation (Sheep CRC) showed significantly higher lamb birth weights and a subsequent increase in lamb survival simply by using sires with higher ASBVs for fat. Similarly, analysis done on the 2009 drop lambs at "Pendarra" showed a difference of 12% in lamb survival between sires with P_{Fat} ASBV's leaner than -0.6 compared to those that were fatter than -0.6. Under low

nutrition, higher levels of genetic fat increases birth weight which is the main driver of lamb survival, especially in twin lambs.

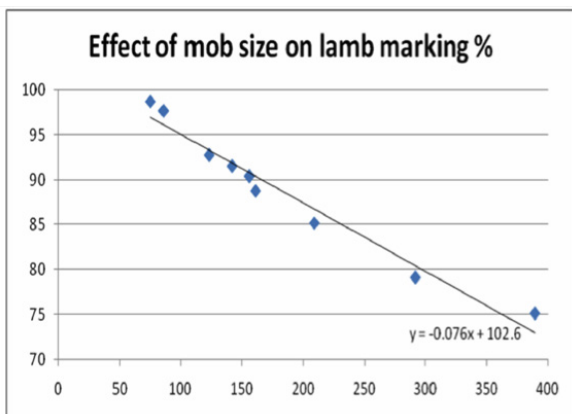
Selection for sires with genetically lower birth weights is an undisputable approach to reducing problems associated with dystocia. As breeders have selected for higher growth rates, we have also potentially increased birth weights. The use of breeding values to strategically select sires with lower birth weights will result in fewer problems at lambing and more live lambs to weaning.

It is through management that significant gains in lamb survival can be made. The condition score of the ewe is critical in ensuring high weaning rates and this is not an assessment done at 50 paces from the ute window. Condition score is not ewe weight, it is an assessment of the fat and muscle reserves the ewe can rely on to buffer against any drain on body reserves whether in the last trimester of pregnancy or during early lactation. Condition score can only be assessed by yarding the ewes and feeling for the amount of tissue and fat over the short ribs and a minimum condition score of 3 to 3.5 is essential in ensuring good lamb survival. While a good condition score at all times during pregnancy is crucial, it is during the last trimester that the highest demand for reserves is required by the developing foetus with 70% of the growth occurring during this period. If ewes are not at the required condition score entering the last trimester, feeding to correct the problem will have limited success. Feeding to maintain weight is much more efficient than

feeding to increase weight during this period and a 10Kg gain in body weight of the ewe will only result in around a 0.5 Kg gain in lamb birth weight.

Scanning of ewes for multiples 40 -50 days after ram removal is an important tool that will allow a range of management techniques to maximise lamb survival. Book your scanner the day you remove the rams as any delay in scanning will limit the accuracy of identifying multiple bearing ewes. Separation of multiple bearers allows a range of management options to ensure that your overall weaning percentage is above the 100% level. Single bearing ewes require little additional management to ensure good levels of survival and even at slightly sub optimal condition, scores will have acceptable lamb survival rates. The same cannot be said for multiple bearing ewes and it is very difficult to over feed these ewes for the simple fact that the uterus takes up substantial space in the abdomen. High quality feed should be available for these ewes to ensure good birth weights of multiples as lamb birth weight is the main driver of lamb survival, with energy levels of feed being critical.

Mob size is another easily implemented management practice that will ensure higher rates of lamb survival. Findings from a PIRD case study conducted in Victoria (Burnside) found a linear relationship between lamb survival and mob size and in this trial, multiple bearing and single bearing ewes were not segregated.



Recommendations for ideal mob sizes vary depending on ewe age as maiden ewes tend to have more issues with mismothering in more condensed lambing situations. Once again, scanning to identify conception status of your ewes is essential in management of mob size. Recommendations are:

SINGLES - MATURE EWES	400
SINGLES – MAIDEN EWES	300
MULTIPLES – MATURE EWES	200
MULTIPLES – MAIDEN EWES	150

Sheltering is an important consideration as you never know what is likely to confront your flock weatherwise once lambing commences. Obviously lambs with higher birth weights and more genetic fat will have higher resilience to chill factor issues but provision of shelter can reduce lamb mortality by up to 40%, especially in multiple bearing mobs. Even without any substantial increases in lamb survival, research conducted in Hamilton (Vic) found lambs that had shelter resulted in higher weaning weights.

Ewe condition score is critical to ensuring higher lamb birth weights, scanning for multiples essential in allowing the full range of management options and selection of the right genetics will result in lambing percentages that will ensure a higher profit margin. Aim for 90% survival in singles and 75-85% in multiples. Given the average conception rate nationally of 130%, this will boost lamb survival to well over the 100% level which is essential in maintaining good profitability and high genetic gain.



New Staff

Kellie Joins the Team



Kellie Jones settles into her new role as FarmLink Research and Extension officer.

FarmLink has welcomed a new member to its staff, with Kellie Jones filling the position of Research and Extension officer.

Kellie has moved to Temora from her home town of Bulla, Victoria. She has a degree in Agricultural Science from La Trobe University, and has a range of hands-on farm and station experience ranging from Central Queensland and Northern Territory to the western Riverina, much of it gained during her employment through the Australian Agricultural Company graduate program.

Kellie is looking forward to joining FarmLink, as she loves the link between science and farmers, communicating and networking.

She joins FarmLink at a busy time for the entire region, with cropping activities getting into full swing following the Easter long weekend rainfall.

"We're looking forward to conducting more research trials both here at TAIC and across the FarmLink region. Kellie joining the team will mean additional capacity for FarmLink in the hands-on practical, data collection and reporting aspects of our research," Ms Cassidy said.

Commonwealth Bank Agribusiness Team Members

FarmLink has enjoyed a partnership with principal sponsor Commonwealth Bank Agribusiness over many years, and is continuing to strengthen the relationship between the two entities, aimed at developing strategies which will benefit FarmLink members across the region.

We'll be introducing members of the Commonwealth Bank Agribusiness team via The Link over the next few editions, starting with a former Aria Park boy.

Country Boy



Commonwealth Bank Agribusiness Executive and FarmLink member, Andrew Schmetzer called into the FarmLink office earlier this month so we could get to know him a little better.

Andrew was raised in Aria Park where he attended schooling to year 10. He joined the NAB in 1988, where he started in the Aria Park branch. In 1996 Andrew married his wife Helen and in 1998 they moved to Wagga for employment reasons. Together they have three boys, Kyle who is 15 (Year 9), Hugh who is 13 (Year 7) and Alec who is 9 (Year 3). "Our family is very active and most days we are taking the boys to one of their respective sports or activities. Helen is a High School teacher at Koorngal High School, where she has been teaching since 1998," Andrew explained. "It can get pretty busy."

Andrew's agricultural background has seen him work in Agribusiness Banking for three years, and he has over 26 years of banking experience. He grew up working on farms in Aria Park and spent a lot of time with friends staying on farm and enjoying the farming culture and lifestyle. "We have been in Wagga now since 1998, but I would have to say

home is Aria Park - you just can't take the country out of the boy."

Andrew completed a Post Graduate degree in Small and Medium Business Management at CSU in 2001.

Andrew joined the Agribusiness team at the CBA in February this year, when he was given a great opportunity to return to the industry that he is passionate about and enjoys.

As an Agribusiness Executive, Andrew is passionate about agriculture and being there to support farmers through the good times and the bad. "It's important to me that I am the trusted advisor for my clients and that I share my knowledge and banking skills throughout the industry. I think it's important to be involved in the rural community and contributing in many different ways." He sees the innovation and passion that farmers have as the really exciting part of agriculture today and he enjoys being involved and helping farming families achieve their goals and dreams. "Whilst change is hard to manage, it is exciting to see the development of new farming practices to enhance the efficiencies in the farming businesses.

Out of the office, Andrew loves sport and outdoor activities. "I play old fellas' touch on Monday nights and we play touch as a family at the Rock on Thursday nights. Sometimes I forget my age

as I am still playing Footy (Aussie Rules), but it's a sport I still enjoy as I try to keep fit. We enjoy water skiing which normally includes a week camping at Blowering Dam. We also love spending time with family and friends and enjoy travelling and holidays."

What's something many people would not know about you? "I coach 5 kids sporting sides throughout the year and enjoy being involved in the community. I learnt to shear sheep in my first holidays from the bank, with 67 being the most I knocked over in

one day. I am a passionate St Kilda member/supporter.

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

"Well of course world peace would be great, and I'd love to see the world a fairer place. But I would improve the weather and/or environmental conditions and increase commodity prices."

FarmLink - Fostering farming into the future



Aimed at fostering farming into the future, FarmLink has developed a set of initiatives to reach out, support and educate potential farmers of the future - targeting young people at various life stages - school and university students, plus those already working in the agricultural industry.

FarmLink/St Anne's Ag Elective Program is into its third year, operating as a collaboration between FarmLink and the Catholic Central School located in Temora. Under the program, Year 9 and 10 students who have selected the Agriculture elective visit Temora Agricultural Innovation Centre regularly for hands-on training in a variety of topics relating to mixed farming enterprises. The 2015 program will see students exposed to the areas of soils, farm safety, livestock and cropping. The students will also set up

a field trial which will be showcased at the FarmLink Open Day on September 10, 2015. It is hoped the program could be introduced to additional schools across the FarmLink region

A scholarship partnership is being developed between FarmLink and Charles Sturt University, Wagga, which will see two fourth year agricultural science or veterinary science students each awarded a \$2500 scholarship to assist with their studies, with details to be released mid-year. An additional section has also been added to FarmLink's Membership package, which will see university students studying agricultural or veterinary sciences offered a complimentary FarmLink Future Farmer Membership.

Finally, two FarmLink members aged 18-35 with a passion for agriculture will be supported by FarmLink to attend the Innovation Generation (IG) Conference in Canberra in July 2015. IG is the leading annual muster for young people working in Australian agriculture and this year's conference is being developed around Business Risk and Succession Planning. The two successful FarmLink participants will also have the opportunity to write a report on their IG experiences for publication in a future edition of The Link.

Our Own Finalist



FarmLink's own Chief Executive Officer, Cindy Cassidy, has been named as a finalist in the 2015 NSW-ACT Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation (RIRDC) Rural Women's Award.

Cindy grew up on a sheep and grain farm in Aria Park NSW before moving to Melbourne to work in the agribusiness sector – a career spanning more than 20 years. She returned to the Riverina region in 2013 to settle on the family farm with her young daughter and take up the role with FarmLink.

Her love of agricultural research and strong desire and capacity for change has been a consistent theme in the roles and the organisations she has worked for. Her focus has been to deliver outcomes that move the industry forward by adopting new approaches, creating or adding value and improving the marketability of products.

Cindy's ambition is to improve the relevance and effectiveness of local agricultural extension in order to support farmers in the adoption of innovation and to maximise returns from investment in agricultural Research and Development.

Prior to joining FarmLink, Cindy worked with a number of large agribusinesses including the Australian Barley Board, AWB Ltd and co-established Wheat Quality Australia. She has been involved in stakeholder and industry committees and presented at

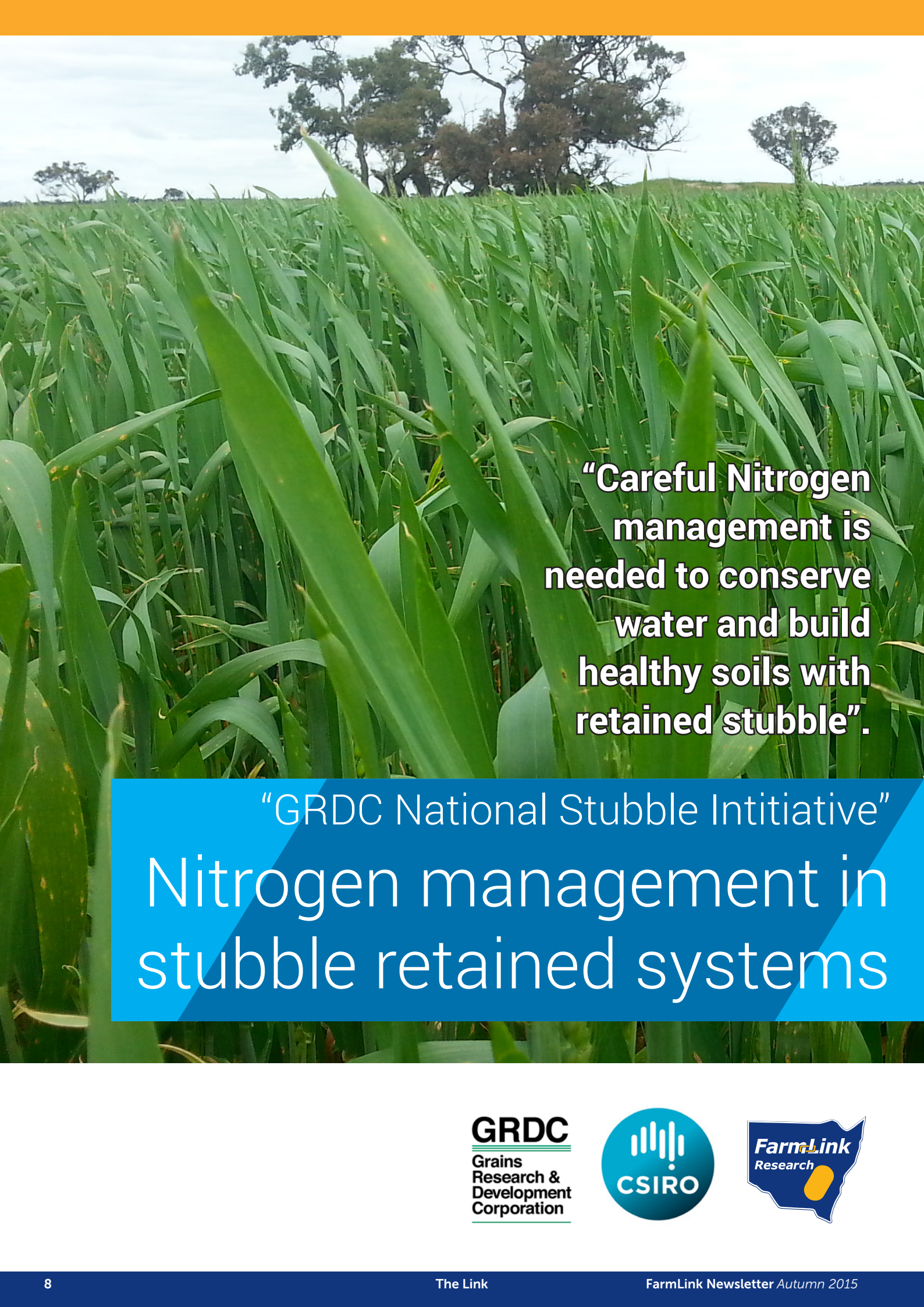
conferences, both nationally and internationally.

Cindy believes Agricultural R&D is critical to the ongoing competitiveness of Australian Agriculture. She sees farming systems groups, with their committed member base, local focus and emphasis on farmer-to-farmer learning, to be integral to the successful adoption of research outcomes on farm.

If successful, Cindy would use the award to explore national and international approaches to modern agricultural extension in order to improve the effectiveness of locally delivered programs. "I see this as an opportunity to take on a greater responsibility for the future direction of our industry and to play an active role in shaping it. The award will allow me to develop my leadership skills and knowledge. Hopefully I can be a positive role model for other women," Cindy said.

Cindy was selected alongside fellow finalists, Sophie Anderson from the Byron Bay hinterland, and Trudy McElroy of Deniliquin.

The winner of the award, to be announced in Sydney on May 26, will receive a bursary of \$10,000, progress to the national award held later this year and participate in the RIRDC Australian Institute of company directors' course.



“Careful Nitrogen management is needed to conserve water and build healthy soils with retained stubble”.

“GRDC National Stubble Initiative”
Nitrogen management in stubble retained systems



Stubble retained systems need more N and need it earlier

Stubble retained, no-till systems need more N than systems where stubble is removed and soil cultivated prior to sowing. Soil bacteria and fungi that break down retained stubble compete with crop plants for N, and this has to be taken into account when budgeting N in stubble retained systems. A rough rule of thumb is that every tonne per hectare of cereal or canola stubble will tie-up (immobilise) 5 kg/ha of N. This means that in a paddock with a typical SE NSW cereal stubble load of 5 t/ha, 25 kg/ha of N will be tied up if the stubble is retained, and this must be compensated for with fertiliser N if yield is to be maintained.

Also, retaining stubble during the summer fallow and direct drilling can make more water available to crops compared to cultivated systems, and N must be added to turn this extra water into yield.

Author: DR James Hunt, CSIRO.

GRDC Project: CSP00174 - Maintaining profitable farming systems with retained stubble in NSW south-west slopes and Riverina

Crop plants grow slower in uncultivated soil, particularly when it is cooled by surface retained stubble. Wheat grown in stubble retained systems typically have higher incidence of yellow leaf spot which also reduces early plant growth. Providing up-front N increases early growth and can help alleviate these constraints.

Managing N in stubble retained systems

The process for managing N in stubble retained systems is relatively simple, and there are good rules of thumb to help with decision making, which are outlined below;

1. Soil test in March-April
2. If soil test results show less than 40 kg/ha N in the top 60 cm then apply some N at sowing. If there

is more than 40 kg/ha mineral N then wheat and barley will make it to Zadoks stage Z30 (start of stem elongation) and canola will get to 6-leaf without losing yield potential.

3. Top-dress the majority of N at Z30-31 (mid-July – early August) based on your best assessment of yield expectations. Add 40 kg/ha N per tonne of anticipated wheat grain yield, 80 kg/ha N per tonne of canola and 35 kg/ha N per tonne of barley. In SE NSW this can be done 'by the calendar' without waiting for a rain event.

4. If conditions are favourable top-dress more N at Z39 in cereals (flag leaf emergence, early September) but at this time of year a rain after application is required to ensure plant uptake.

This is the first section of a four page fact sheet created by FarmLink as a part of the GRDC National Stubble Initiative. The remainder of the fact sheet can be downloaded from the FarmLink website, or contact the office on farmlink@farmlink.com.au or 02 6980 1333 if you would like us to send a copy to you.

Principal Partner

CommonwealthBank
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Bayer CropScience



Bronze Partner



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Corporate Member



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Out & About



CSIRO's James Hunt provided a summary of FarmLink and CSIRO collaborative research from 2014.



Catching up after the FarmLink AGM were members (l-r) Craig Warren, Robert Hart and Peter Harper.



GRDC Chair Richard Clark (right) relaxes after the FarmLink AGM with Lyndon McNab (FarmLink Director).

Murray Long of ClearView Consulting presenting at the Sheep Profitability Workshop held at Temora Agricultural Innovation Centre in March.



FarmLink's Tony Pratt is pictured taking some of the many pre-sowing soil samples taken at Temora Agricultural Innovation Centre during April.



The first load of sheep from the Lamb Finishing Trial conducted at Temora Agricultural Innovation Centre headed to market in early April.



Enjoying a chance to socialise after the FarmLink AGM were (l-r) Kym Hampton (Commonwealth Bank), FarmLink member Mike O'Hare and newly appointed FarmLink Director Lisa Anderson.

Out on the Farm

An update from Temora Agricultural Innovation Centre (TAIC)



Sowing was in full swing at Temora Agricultural Innovation Centre during mid-April.

Some encouraging rain in early Autumn provided enough moisture for early trial sowing at Temora Agricultural Innovation Centre, with trial planting from mid-April and commercial sowing progressing without delay. Drier conditions towards the end of April and early May, may hold up planting until the next rain event depending on paddock moisture assessments.

The TAIC cropping program for this season will see 490 hectares occupied by trials, canola, wheat, barley, pasture or brown manure. Trial paddocks totalling 50 hectares have been a hive of activity, with collaborators, researchers, observers and workers from CSIRO, Bayer, Landmark, Kalyx, Nufarm, Cargill, Pioneer, Pacific Seeds, Charles Sturt University, Advantage Seed, Grain Growers, Australian Grain Technologies, Injekta, Syngenta and St Anne's School plotting, planting, measuring and marking their way through trial establishment and continuation.

In other areas of TAIC, we already have 133 hectares of canola in the ground, with 43 hectares of barley, 162 hectares of wheat and 118 hectares of pasture, brown manures (12 hectares) and hard seeded legume pasture (12 hectares) expected to be finished by mid-May. Murray Long of ClearView Consultancy is running the livestock operations at TAIC, and currently has approximately 260 of his White Suffolk ewes, which are in lamb, rotating around TAIC. They are expected to start lambing in late May, early June. The first load of lambs from the Lamb Finishing Trials were sent to market in early April, while Murray conducted a Sheep Profitability Workshop for producer members on March 30.

The unique facilities on offer at TAIC have been well utilised, with a myriad of different workshops, demonstrations and training sessions conducted. Among the business and organisations to take advantage of indoor and outdoor spaces over the past few months are Landmark, Delta AG, Intersales, Techgrow International, Local Land Services and Hutcheon and Pearce.

Looking forward – once sowing operations are wrapped up, the FarmLink team will start to focus on preparing for the FarmLink Open Day to be held on September 10, 2015, a great opportunity to showcase the activities of FarmLink at TAIC as we welcome members, sponsors, supporters and the general public to view trials, enjoy demonstrations and hear from industry experts while enjoying the social and relaxed atmosphere of the day.

Diary

- Winter bus tour – June (date TBA)
- Mirrool Creek field day in Aria Park – July 15
- FarmLink Annual Dinner – July 24
- FarmLink Open Day – September 10
- Australian Universities Crop Competition – September 15-18

Current Projects

FarmLink is currently collaborating on 16 projects covering a myriad of topics which have the potential to impact on the way farmers enact change in their farming systems.

Current projects:

- GRDC Crop Sequencing (CSP-00146)
- GRDC/Department of Agriculture Cropfacts Soil Carbon (AOTGR1-955086-42)
- GRDC Early Sowing (CSP-00178)
- GRDC Harvest Weed Seed Management TBA
- GRDC Managing Subsoil acidity TBA
- GRDC Micronutrient Deficiency (DAS000146)
- GRDC Regional Soil Testing (DAN0000168)
- GRDC Stubble Initiative (CSP-00174)
- GRDC Strategic Tillage (DAN00152)
- FarmLink Moisture Network and Yield Prophet
- Mirrool Creek Landcare Moisture Probe Education
- FarmLink/St Anne's Ag Elective Program
- Murray Long/FarmLink Livestock Efficiency and Productivity Research
- CSU/FarmLink Canola Allelopathy
- CSU/FarmLink Hardseeded Legume Systems Trial
- CSU/FarmLink Hardseeded Legume Grazing Trial

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Our major project funding partner is

