

MFMG NEWS

Spring Edition 2017

MFMG UPDATE

Your MacKillop Farm Management team has been working hard to bring the latest in mixed farming RDE to your doorstep this quarter. Spring is always about the field days and crop walks, a chance to see what's happening on-ground with new crops and varieties, to hear the latest in pest and disease management as well as to see new technology developments that could improve farm management. Some of these have been MFMG days, and at others we have joined forces with the regional grower groups. As usual there has been a good mix of information and socialisation.

Pulse prices, particularly lentils and chickpeas, seem to be the talk of the town this season. MFMG is proud to be partnering with Birchip Cropping Group to bring PULSE CHECK, a GRDC funded project, to the Upper South East. This Pulse Check group will talk about all things associated with growing pulses from paddock preparation to harvest. It is a great example of how MFMG is working and collaborating nationally to bring you these opportunities. I'd like to wish you all a good spring, and look forward to seeing you at one of our upcoming events.

Charlie Crozier – MacKillop Farm Management Group CEO

UPCOMING EVENTS

October 19 - Good Clover
Bad Clover Field Day 1 -
5.30pm

October 25 - MFMG
Conmurra Field Day 1 – 5pm

November 8 - Pulse Check
Pre-Harvest Meetings – Keith
and Coonalpyn

November 9 - Millicent Crop
Walk 1 – 3pm



EXTENSION CO-ORDINATOR & PROJECT MANAGEMENT REPORT

Danielle England – MFMG Extension Co-ordinator & Project Management

Danielle has joined the team at MFMG this quarter. She comes to MFMG with an enormous amount of experience, delivering extension activities in the Australian mixed farming sectors for 20 years. Danielle has already started working on MFMG projects and events while she and her family prepare to return to the family property at Keilira via Kingston in December. You may have seen her at the recent Keith Field Day, and she will also be attending the MFMG Conmurra Field day on October 25 so be sure to introduce yourself to her!

MFMG Conmurra Field Day

Wednesday October 25, 2017

Register here; www.eventbrite.com.au/e/2017-conmurra-spring-field-day-tickets-36919253481

Mackillop Farm Management Group (MFMG) is hosting the 2017 Conmurra Spring Field Day on Wednesday, October 25, 2017. The event will give the Lower South East agricultural industry a chance to look at wheat, barley and legume varietal trials as well as presentations on a variety of topics from guest speakers.

The Field Day will be held at the MFMG Conmurra trial site and speakers will start from 1pm. Topics will include:

- Disease management in high rainfall cropping programs - Nick Poole from FAR Australia will discuss how to make the most of all that water. Nick will also discuss the opportunities for high input wheat and barley alongside Naracoorte agronomist James Heffernan.
- Cereals - High Input Wheat and Barley trial results. SARDI's Kenton Porker will give a barley update while Colin Edmunson from Advanta Seeds will talk about the latest in wheat options for high rainfall.
- Understanding soil physical properties and its implications for crop and nutrient management. Dr Melissa Fraser, from PIRSA Rural Solutions SA says it's important to know your soils bulk density as this helps to make decisions when cropping or planting.
- Keeping it healthy, pulses for every scenario - pulse disease management, and alternative pulses, messina and linseed trial results with Jenny Davidson, SARDI.

Plus, Sowing options for the high rainfall, Dual-purpose canola for SA's high rainfall zone - Amanda Pearce, SARDI, Harvest weed management options (chaff carts, chaff lines and narrow windrow burning) - Felicity Turner MFMG, and integrated cereal disease management - Hugh Wallwork PIRSA-SARDI Adelaide.



2017 Keith Field Day – held on Thursday September 21, 2017

Upper South East growers need to be monitoring mice numbers in paddocks.

This was the key take-home message from the Keith Field Day, where key note speaker Steve Henry (CSIRO Health & Biosecurity, Canberra) said they have recorded increased mice numbers across Southern Australia. For the first time this season USE growers have baited for mice at sowing, and according to Steve, growers should continue to monitor mice numbers and bait if necessary, to ensure that crop damage is minimised (especially going into season 2018).

Growers can help track numbers by entering mouse activity in MOUSEALERT - www.mousealert.org.au – which is also available in an app.

The MLA Seed Free Lamb project at Sherwood showed the attendees the benefits of different fodder systems to finish lambs by the end of October. On trial were forage rye (both Southern Green and Vampire), Compass barley and Scope barley (over-sown into an aging Lucerne pasture). (More information can be found in the Overview of MFMG Projects)



Dr Melissa Fraser (PIRSA Rural Solutions) talked about understanding soil physical properties and its implication for crop and nutrient management. By measuring the bulk density of your soil and the soil chemical properties in 10cm increments, you can get an accurate determination of total nutrients available in the crop root zone. (More information can be found in the Overview of MFMG Projects)

A big thank you to the range of speakers who spoke on a broad range of topics including pulse crop management, pasture varieties, new wheat and barley varieties, livestock eID, winter forage options, stubble management and post-em herbicide tolerance.

Now to wait and see the results of the trials in the 2017 Trials Results Booklet!

Pulse Check Groups Pre-Harvest Meetings

The GRDC Southern Pulse Extension project, provides a collaborative opportunity to increase the knowledge of growers and advisers on sustainable pulse production, improving the Southern Region's capacity to maximise future growth and profitability opportunities. The three-year project will develop farmer discussion groups in areas where lentils and/or chickpeas are not commonly grown or low lentil/chickpea production areas. Prior experience in growing pulses is not required as the purpose of the group is to increase regional knowledge and capacity in pulse production. Come along to a meeting on Wednesday 8th November at Keith 8am – 10am (for breakfast) at Scott Manser's property.



This group is being run by Brendan Wallis, Rural Directions Naracoorte, in cooperation with Scott Hutchings, Cox Rural Keith. For more information on the group, or to attend the day, please phone Brendan on 0427 017858.

The flier; <http://www.mackillopgroup.com.au/pages/posts/pulse-check-groups-pre-harvest-meetings-200.php>

MLA – SEED FREE LAMB WITH SHERWOOD FARM GROUP

Can using alternative forage species and newer Clearfield® technologies provide high quality fodder that will finish lambs meeting market requirements in a grass-seed free environment?

Dates: March 2016 – February 2019

Funding/Collaboration body: MLA Project, SASAG

Project Manager: Felicity Turner (Phone 0400 299087)



The project aims to assess the benefits of using alternative grass forage species and newer Clearfield technologies to provide high quality fodder that will finish lambs in a grass-seed free environment. It was implemented at the request of the Sherwood Precision Management Group and focuses on producing high quality, seed free pastures in this environment.

In 2016 small plots were established at 2 sites; Bartletts (“Tolcairn”, Emu Flat Road, Sherwood) and Grosser’s (Senior Road, Senior) to evaluate the potential of newer ryecorn varieties, and also assess the impact of over-sowing and managing Clearfield cereals on Lucerne persistence. Based on the 2016 results, larger paddock scale demonstrations have been established in 2017. The site recently visited at “Tolcairn” includes Southern Green Forage Ryecorn, Vampire Forage Ryecorn and Scope CL Barley. These plots have been strip-grazed (although there have been issues with the electric fencing) and the growth rates of a sample group of lambs have been measured.

Initial feed data samples taken prior to entry of grazing have shown slightly lower metabolizable energy (ME) and protein (CP) levels of the ryecorn when compared to the barley, but the dry matter production of the ryecorn varieties was much greater.

2018 will see full size paddocks demonstrated for easier management of grazing lambs.

FOR A DETAILED UPDATE ON THIS PROJECT FOLLOW THIS LINK TO OUR WEBSITE;

<http://www.mackillopgroup.com.au/media/Documents/Seed%20Free%20Lamb.pdf>



SPRING WITH THE SOUTH EAST NEW VARIETY AGRONOMY TEAM

Amanda Pearce – SARDI SE NVA Team

This year the MFMG has funded a High Input wheat trial at Conmurra. Long season wheat varieties have been sourced and sown early to evaluate their performance in our region and in a high input regime. The cereals are looking as having high yield potential, under the high N input and fungicide regime and weather conditions. Thanks to the Hocking family for their involvement in the trials at Conmurra and allowing us access to their property.



Conmurra September 2017 – MFMG Funded High Input Wheat Trial

Up north the Keith Main Site has a mix bag of trials, ranging from cereal variety trials (GRDC funded NVT trials), faba bean blackspot management trial (Southern Pulse Agronomy), forage cereals and filling winter feed gaps (Heritage Seeds, MFMG and GRDC and SARDI Bilateral Project), pulse evaluation trials (GRDC and SARDI Bilateral Project) and a post-emergent chemical matrix (ADAMA and MFMG). We must thank Chad and Kym Makin for letting us do this diverse trial work on their property.

This array of trial work has kept us busy with timing of herbicide and fungicide hand-sprays, early biomass cuts and now flowering dates. In early August we recorded up to 2.0 t/ha off the filling winter feed gap plots (Mammoth Oat and Vortex Italian Ryegrass mix) with the forage cereals not as productive recording up to 1.5 t/ha (Compass Barley). Plots will be cut again, and potentially for a hay cut later in the season. All these results with feed test data will be presented in the MFMG Trial Results Book.

Like some growers in the district the SARDI team is planning to utilise soil moisture and sow a dryland spring crop. This trial will evaluate a range of barley and wheat varieties, whilst also looking at the break crops chickpeas, lentils, field peas, canola and linseed.



A RIRDC funded dryland spring quinoa trial will also be sown. This is the final year of trials within the project, with some quinoa plots in 2016 under irrigation yielding up to 3 t/ha.

Bool Lagoon 2016 – RIRDC funded Quinoa Irrigated Trial

It hasn't been all plain sailing with a number of trials becoming inundated and spray days few and far between.



The group has also farewelled Matthew Hoskings from the team. Matthew has spent 21 years with SARDI working in the grain industry. Matthew has moved into the viticulture industry and we wish him all the best in his new endeavours.

Bool Lagoon September 2017 – Ian (left) assessing GRDC/SARDI Bilateral Project bean phenology trial



Matthew Hoskings (right)

ALL ABOUT SOIL

Melissa Fraser – PIRSA, Rural Solutions SA

More Funding for Sandy Soils Project

Outcomes from South Australia's successful New Horizons soil modification program will help frame a new GRDC research investment to investigate the management of sandy soils across three states. MFMG will be involved in the extension component of this now larger, GRDC funded project from 2018 onwards. Information regarding the results of the original New Horizons program that ran from 2013 to 2016 is available at pir.sa.gov.au/new_horizons

The three original New Horizons trial sites on the Eyre Peninsula and in the Murray Mallee and South East will continue as part of the GRDC project. The new industry-led research project will identify 'problem sands' and constraints

to crop growth and yields, and investigate cost-effective solutions to increasing production on these soils, in southern New South Wales, Victoria and SA. In addition to the new sandy soils project, PIRSA's wider soils research and extension portfolio, which looks at issues such as sodicity, acidity and building soil carbon, will now become part of an expanded New Horizons soil improvement program.



Understanding soil physical properties and its implications for crop and nutrient management.

Why is bulk density important?

Come along to the MFMG Conmurra Field Day on Wednesday October 25, where I will be speaking about soil characteristics and why bulk density is important. If you are keen to learn more about soil characteristics in your region check out the soils database which can be viewed on Google Earth by downloading the APSoil database in Google Earth; <https://www.apsim.info/Products/APSoil.aspx> Or, get yourself a copy of SoilMapp for iPad from the App store. For more information on soil fertility visit; <http://soilquality.org.au/>



For more information, follow this link to the MFMG website;

<http://www.mackillopgroup.com.au/media/Documents/Understanding%20soil%20physical%20properties.pdf>



GOOD CLOVER BAD CLOVER FIELD DAY

Thursday 19th October 1.00pm – 5.30pm

Being held at Richard Kirkland's Property, 155 Kirklands Road Conmurra (Located off the Furner/Conmurra Road).

Topics include: Oestrogenic Clover Identification and Management – David Woodard and Ian McFarland (Rural Solutions SA), EID Programs and Equipment for Sheep – Michelle Cousins (Cousins Merino Services).

Just a reminder about the project;

Following feedback from a MFMG Productive Pastures for Sheep field day in September 2016, funding has been secured from MLA for a project which will focus on upskilling producers on oestrogenic clover identification and the implementation of practices to improve lamb marking rates. The project will be run in partnership with AgKI.



Oestrogenic clovers have recently been identified in pastures on properties in the South East and Kangaroo Island as well as in the Barossa, Adelaide Hills and lower Eyre Peninsula. It is suspected that there has been a slow buildup of oestrogenic clovers given the recent dry years (particularly in the South East), which have favoured these clovers. This project will aim to quantify the issue of oestrogenic clover in the South East and Kangaroo Island while helping producers identify oestrogenic clover species.

Pasture assessments will be undertaken in Spring on focus farms to establish whether oestrogenic clover may be a contributing factor to poor conception and lamb marking rates. Property management plans will be developed by each producer. These plans will include the identification and application of strategies to reduce or eliminate issues associated with oestrogenic clovers.

Follow this link to see a flyer and program for the day;

<http://www.mackillopgroup.com.au/pages/posts/good-clover-bad-clover-field-day-199.php>

For more information, please contact Tiffany Bennett - 0488524609 tiffany.bennett@sa.gov.au

MFMG STUDY TOUR TO ESPERANCE WA 6 – 11 AUGUST 2017

Felicity Turner – MFMG Project Coordinator

During August, the MacKillop Farm Management Group held its biannual study tour. This year, twelve farmers travelled to Esperance in Western Australia to look at their farming practices, systems and businesses.

The tour was a great success with all participants increasing their knowledge of the region, and identifying future opportunities for their own businesses.

We were extremely fortunate with the farmers who hosted us as they were incredibly open about their businesses and happy to share information for the improvement of the industry. A range of farms were visited varying from corporate farms, to large family farms and some smaller farm businesses. Several of our hosts were Nuffield Scholars who have implemented their findings on their own farms and brought vast knowledge back to their district where it has been shared with, and adopted by neighbours.

With no major feed grain industry locally, harvest efficiency was a key issue that all farms looked to address, and the machinery sheds reflecting that, were a continual highlight to the growers who attended the trip.

Besides the sheds, some of the other highlights included;

- Soil Amelioration in high rainfall areas
 - Grain Storage, handling and drying systems
 - Use of EID's in livestock systems
 - Grazing crops
 - Pasture systems and their use in the crop rotation
 - Reclamation of bluegum country
 - Development of the pulse industry and local marketing initiatives
- (As well as the whale watching and drinks in the most amazing shearing shed bar)



The next MFMG is planned for 2019 and we would encourage anyone thinking about attending to speak to those farmers who have been on study tours in the past. It is a great experience both looking outside your patch and networking with other people within the region.

TRIALS AND DEMONSTRATION PROPOSALS

To ensure the MacKillop Farm Management Group continues to meet the information needs of its members and supporters, it is calling for expressions of interest (proposals) from interested parties to partner with us in the sowing/management of both cropping and livestock trials/demonstrations during 2018.

Sponsors, researchers, supporting groups and individual growers are encouraged to submit an EOI (even if it isn't fully costed or planned).

By filling out an expression of interest you let the MFMG Trials Committee know what you'd like to see trialed in the region during 2018, and we can then build on these trials through other extension activities such as specialist field days or discussion groups.

Key Dates for 2018 trial season

Expression of Interest Open:	1 st October 2017
Expression of Interest Closes:	15 th November 2017
Operations (Cropping Trials Sub-Committee) meeting:	December 2017 to finalise 2018 plans
Site management contracted:	January 2018

They can be livestock, fodder or cropping trials. No ideas are too big or too small.

Applications close strictly on the **15th November** to allow us enough time to finalise trial plans and to contract trial/demonstration site management before February 2018. For a copy of the application form, please email Danielle at dengland@mackillopgroup.com.au or speak with either Charlie Crozier (CEO) on 0427 775822 or Danielle England (Extension Coordinator) on 0429 676077.

CALLING THE NEXT GENERATION

Are you, or do you know of a Young Gun who would like to be involved in MFMG?

MFMG is establishing a Young Guns group. This is a chance for anyone under the age of 35 involved in farming or agribusiness in the South East region to be involved in a specialist social/farming discussion group.

It will tap into other Young Gun groups in South Australia and Victoria, and organise its own events and activities.

To be involved simply drop Danielle England a text on 0429 676077 – or message via Twitter [[@EnglandDanielle](https://twitter.com/EnglandDanielle)] or Instagram [[dengland573](https://www.instagram.com/dengland573)].



MFMG FIELD DAYS

We look forward to seeing you at this year's Conmurra Field Day or join us at the Millicent Crop Walk. For more details go to our website or keep an eye on the weekly emails for updates.

Contact Us

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