

Diary dates More detailed diary dates are located on the GRDC website.

September	
3-6	4th Australasian Soilborne Diseases Symposium Queenstown, New Zealand http://www.asds2006.org.nz
4	ASX Grain Futures & Options Education Workshop Parkes, NSW, ASX on 02 9227 0197 http://www.asx.com.au/investor/futures/grain/workshop.htm
5-8	Grower Grains Research Updates John Cameron or Erica McKay 02 9482 4930, updaten@tpg.com.au http://www.icanrural.com.au Tue 5th Sept – Bellata, NSW, Golf Club Wed 6th Sept – Goondiwindi, Qld, Royal Hotel Thu 7th Sept – Pittsworth, Qld, Golf Club Fri 8th Sept – Jandowae, Qld, Accommodation Park
6	Weeds Society of NSW Inc. Seminar - "Poisonous and Allergic Plants - Where are they?", Metcalfe Theatre, NSW State Library, Macquarie St, Sydney, Lawrie Greenup, lawriegreenup@ozemail.com.au
5-7	Ag Show, Toowoomba, Qld Showgrounds Peter Erwin 07 4634 1155 perwin@agshow.com.au
8	Tulloona Field Day, Tulloona Fire Shed, NSW, Brooke Phelps, CFI, 0428 525 880
10-14	13th Australian Society of Agronomy Conference Perth, WA Esther Price Promotions 1800 177 636 http://www.agronomy.org.au/events/2006/
19-20	Eastern Durum Forum, Tamworth Agricultural Institute, 4 Marsden Park Road Calala, NSW, Josh Gordon, 02 6763 1212, joshua.gordon@dpi.nsw.gov.au
24-27	Australian and New Zealand Entomological Societies' Conference, University of Adelaide, SA, Sally Brown, 07 3201 2808, sally.brown@uq.net.au http://www.aesnzconference2006.com/index.php
24-28	15th Australian Weeds Conference - Managing Weeds in a Changing Climate Adelaide Convention Centre, SA http://www.plevin.com.au/15AWC2006
27-29	CTF06 - 4th Controlled Traffic Farming Conference University of Ballarat, Andrew Whitlock 03 5226 4074 andrew.whitlock@dpi.vic.gov.au
October	
4-6	Australian Innovative Farming Conference - Globalisation and the impact on farming in Australia Melbourne, Vic 03 9596 7341 aifc@nuffield.com.au http://www.nuffield.com.au/aifc/index.html
8-11	Landcare & Sustainable Rural Landscapes International Conference 2006 Melbourne, Vic Probarti Milton probarti.milton@dse.vic.gov.au
16-18	Focus Conference - PULSES in the FEED INDUSTRY "Lupins, Peas & Beans" Corowa NSW Conference & Free Field Day, Trevor Bray, Pulse Australia, 0428 606 886, pulse.trevor@bigpond.com , www.pulseaus.com.au
17-19	Australian National Field Day - Orange NSW http://www.anft.com.au
19	AIASST National Event - "Biofuels: From Paddock to Pump", Heritage Hotel, Canberra, ACT, http://www.aiast.com.au
27	2006 Australian Agri-food Forum Melbourne Dr. Lawrie Dooley, 03 9903 2757 lawrence.dooley@buseco.monash.edu.au
November	
2-3	Australian Farm Institute 2006 Strategic Roundtable Conference Sydney, NSW Yvonne Kingsley, 02 6272 2265 info@farminstitute.org.au http://www.abareconomics.com/corporate/conferences/conferences.html
9-12	7th Australasian Plant Virology Workshop Rottneest Island, WA Mike Jones, 08 9360 6116 M.Jones@murdoch.edu.au
December	
3-7	Australian Society of Soil Science Inc & Australasian Soil and Plant Analysis Council Inc Conference, University of Adelaide, SA http://www.plevin.com.au/soils2006/welcome.htm , Plevin and Associates Pty Ltd, 08 8379 8222, events@plevin.com.au
February	
13-14	Grains Research Update for Advisers (Southern Region) Wagga Wagga, NSW Jon Lamb, 08 8362 5417 jlcom@chariot.net.au
13 -14	CWCFa / Stipa Native Grasses Assoc 2007 Conservation Agriculture Conference & Field Day Wellington NSW Neville Gould, 02 6845 1044 cwcfabig@bigpond.com.au
21-22	Dubbo Grains Research Update Dubbo RSL John Cameron or Erica McKay, 02 9482 4930 updaten@tpg.com.au http://www.icanrural.com.au
28 Feb - 1 Mar	Goondiwindi Grains Research Update Goondiwindi Community Centre Contact: John Cameron or Erica McKay, 02 9482 4930 updaten@tpg.com.au http://www.icanrural.com.au

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Grains Research UPDATE NORTHERN REGION

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Wheat streak mosaic virus under scrutiny

Wheat streak mosaic virus (WSMV) was first detected in NSW in 2003. In 2005, the virus cut yields of some early sown wheat crops by up to 80% in the Central and South West slopes of NSW.

Research in 2006 near Coolah by NSW DPI researcher, Steven Simpfendorfer, will test the impact on wheat, durum, oats, barley and triticale. While oats, barley and triticale are not expected to be as susceptible to WSMV as wheat, this work will confirm their level of resistance," said Dr Simpfendorfer.

WSMV is vectored by the wheat curl mite. Overseas data shows insecticides do not control this pest. Local research will confirm the situation here. Controlling volunteer wheat and grass around crop edges can reduce mite numbers moving into the crop.

"Early wheat crops are sown when the mites are active and are thus more susceptible to infestation. The mites thrive in temperatures ranging from 24 to 28 degrees Celsius, becoming dormant when temperatures fall below ten degrees," said Dr Simpfendorfer.

Breaking news!!

A second species of leaf curl mite has just been discovered by the Centre for Environmental Stress and Adaptation Research (CESAR) at Melbourne University. Research has shown that the two species of wheat curl mite are both widespread across the wheat belt - although only one species has been collected in Queensland. "A new diagnostic test can distinguish the species - one of which may yet prove to be a new 'undescribed' species," said CESAR director Professor Hoffmann.

Leaf curl mites have been found on grasses and volunteer wheat, enabling survival over summer between wheat crops. It is hoped that research will determine if both species of wheat curl mite transmit WSMV and to also better understand cause's of the 2005 epidemic.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

Steven Simpfendorfer 02 6763 1100

Ary Hoffmann 0408 342 834

<http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/aboutus/resource/factsheets/primefacts/wheat-streak-mosaic>

Project code: DAN485

PestFacts – a free service targeting insect & mite pests

PestFacts is a new free e-mail newsletter to keep advisers and growers informed about pest-related issues and solutions as they emerge during the growing season. It provides information on seasonal pest outbreaks in crops and pastures, management recommendations and the latest in research findings.

While the newsletter is aimed at the southern grains region, many northern advisers are also subscribing, because it:

- Offers information on pest species, including control and IPM recommendations on pests that are also problems in the north.
- Provides links to 'up-to-date' fact sheets.

- Already receives reports on current seasonal issues from advisers and growers as far north as southern Qld, with many from northern NSW.
- Has a free pest identification service.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

Paul Umina 03 8344 6502

pumina@unimelb.edu.au

Project code: CSE00029

National Variety Trials

Grout[®] and Fitzroy[®] are two new barley varieties and Carinya a new wheat variety released this year for the northern grains region.

How did they perform in variety trials last year? What about the past three years? What about trials near me?

Answers to these questions can be found on the National Variety Trials (NVT) website at: www.nvtonline.com.au where details how these varieties performed are compared against other commercial varieties in regional trials.

National Variety Trials are supported by the GRDC, to provide growers access to independent information on the performance of new varieties. Trials include elite material from all breeding programs across Australia.

Project code: CAS00012

New manual on precision ag

A major new manual on Precision Agriculture (PA) will be released by the GRDC in August.

The manual covers work from all grain growing areas on the value of PA in improving profit and sustainability.

The manual, aimed at advisers, consultants, retailers, and growers with some knowledge of PA, will initially be available on CD and later via the GRDC website at www.grdc.com.au. It discusses the economics of PA, the causes of spatial variability in yield, the different types of PA data available, and how to get started. The GRDC is also developing training in the form of a set of learning modules developed specifically for growers and others not yet familiar with PA. Training courses in PA are now being offered through some state agencies and the Southern Precision Agriculture Association.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

Phil Price 02 6251 4669

mackellar@bigpond.com

Project code: AGH0001

Pastures package

The benefits of integrating pasture with cropping for risk management and to improve soil fertility have been well proven. A training package called "LeyGrain" has been developed that focuses producers on how to integrate pastures with crops and the resulting advantages.

Interest in pastures in rotation with crops is increasing and is being driven by high beef and lamb prices, flat grain prices, increasing cost for fuel and fertiliser and pressure to maintain effective weed control. Queensland's Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries principal experimentalist, Brian Johnson of Toowoomba, said "there has been a 10-21 per cent increase in the area sown to ley pastures in the northern grain belt since the mid-1990s".

"The package is divided into 4 workshops, with over 40 workshops having been delivered to date. A decision support model called PRECaPS can be used to help producers make better decisions on the profitability of integrating pasture rotations into their farming systems. The workshops extend to on-farm activities where observation and demonstration sites are established for growers to learn and share experiences. LeyGrain is now recognised as a strategic package for national use and is being modified for Grain & Graze projects in other states," Mr Johnson said.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

Brian Johnson QDPI&F 07 4688 1339

Project code: DAQ529

Northern Grower Alliance

The Northern Grower Alliance (NGA) started operations in May this year. Executive Officer Richard Daniel said "The main task for the NGA is to identify and facilitate on-farm research to test and validate agronomic issues in northern NSW".

A number of field trials have been planned and are already underway – including research to validate work on crown rot and stripe rust management conducted by NSW DPI pathologist Steven Simpfendorfer and agronomist Andrew Verrell. This work shows that sowing in-between the rows

of the last cereal crop can reduce the impact of crown rot. The 7 sites already sown between Walgett and Narrabri will see how well this finding translates, when done by farmers using commercial equipment.

With the need to manage both stripe rust and crown rot, a decision is often required to define 'which one do you need varietal tolerance to?' as few varieties have both. The NGA has six commercial scale trials looking at the role of seed treatments for stripe rust, as well as the impact of timing of foliar fungicides under northern conditions.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

Richard Daniel 07 4698 7983

richard.daniel@nga.org.au

Project code: NGA00001

Sunflower disorder cause identified

The cause of Central Queensland's mystery sunflower disorder is no longer a mystery after Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries researchers identified Tobacco Streak Virus (TSV) in infected plant tissue.

An 18-month Grains Research and Development Corporation funded project began in January this year, prompted by a marked escalation of the disorder in 2004.

The early breakthrough in identifying TSV as the causative agent is good news and will go a long way toward restoring much-needed industry confidence in growing sunflowers in Central Queensland.

A new DNA-based test to identify specific virus particles in plants came up with a positive match for TSV.

The testing needed to be repeated but there was little doubt that the sunflower disorder could be attributed to Tobacco Streak Virus and the most likely insect vector was the western flower thrips.

Researchers will now investigate practical management strategies for the insect vectored disease.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

Richard Routley 07 4983 7429

Project code: DAQ00097

Bio-fuels website

The Department of Agriculture and Food, Western Australia has recently launched a website dedicated

to bio-fuels. The site can be found at www.agric.wa.gov.au/biofuels. It has a wide range of information including outcomes from workshops and seminars.

Two new Ute Guides

Two new Ute Guides have just been released! These are 'Sorghum' and 'Maize Disorders'. Also new is a 38 page booklet on Cereal Growth Stages.

Both Ute Guides feature lots of quality pictures for easy identification and a tough waterproof full colour format with a spiral binding. The Ute Guides cost \$27.50 each, and Cereal Growth Stages \$20 plus postage and handling.

TO ORDER: These and other GRDC publications can be ordered by calling Ground Cover Direct on 1800 110 044 and quoting the product code. Sorghum Disorders Ute Guide (GRDC246), Maize Disorders (GRDC245), and Cereal Growth Stages (GRDC237).

John Slatter

The Update Newsletter is not an obituary column, but occasionally someone who has given us a lot, leaves, and their passing demands recognition. It was only back in March when John Slatter (Slatts) was seen by many of us at the Updates receiving the coveted Seed of Light Award. Unknown to even Slatts at the time, he already had cancer.

Slatts will be remembered for his 120% approach to everything, for being a character, and for his enormous input into agriculture – especially in the Northern Grains Region.

Just days before he went, he called me to discuss possible chickpea topics for an Update planning meeting to be held that day. "Where are you calling from?" I asked. Slatts replied, "from the trolley they have me on in hospital – I am about to go into surgery." Later that same day I received another call from Slatts, "Cammo, have you considered this...?" I asked, "Where are you calling from?" Slatts replied, "From the recovery room!"

We will all miss you Slatts! - John Cameron

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