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John Bartle discusses Oil Mallee rooting patterns with members of the CRC postgraduate group in an excavation pit during the 2009 Annual Postgraduate Meeting.

The 2009 Annual FFI CRC Postgraduate Meeting was held in Western Australia from 8 to 11 June. The meeting gave postgraduate students from around Australia a chance to meet, discuss their research and share experiences while learning more about FFI CRC.

Following an opening address by CEO Kevin Goss, the first day featured a series of short presentations by the attending 31 students about their respective research projects. On the second day, the group participated in a Future Farm Business (FFB) Workshop facilitated by CRC economist, Amir Abadi (DEC). This workshop had the students managing a virtual farm enterprise, which gave them insights into the daily decisions faced by farmers. CRC Contracts Manager, Julia Wilson, then completed workshop activities with a presentation about IP issues relevant to the postgraduate researchers. In the evening, the student delegation joined the FFI CRC Board, Executive and local CRC participants for a networking function at the University of Western Australia Club. On the morning of the third day, students travelled to Medina Research Station south of Perth to view some perennial plants under evaluation with the assistance of Senior Plant Breeder, Daniel Real. Following



Presenters Tania Midgley (NSW DPI), Dr Nick Edwards (SARDI) and Gordon Stopp (landholder) work with participants to develop a soil use map for a salt affected property at the CRC's first EverTrain Workshop.

An evaluation of the first *EverTrain* Salinity Concept and Management workshop held in South Australia in October last year has shown it to be a very valuable and worthwhile course by those attending.

Done in partnership with Rural Solutions SA and NSW DPI, the two-day workshop was attended by nine Landmark agronomists and 11 NRM officers based at Murray Bridge. At the workshop, attendees learnt about salinity processes and management concepts, and the ways salinity can be managed. It also included a field trip out to a salt-affected area at Brinkley and a visit to the CRC's Enrich site at Monarto.

An important part of the workshop involved the assessment of water testing, sampling tasks and the development of a soil-use map. Participants who successfully performed these activities gained two nationally recognised competencies towards a qualification in Certificate IV in Agriculture or Conservation and Land Management.

Follow up evaluation has shown that the course was organised, highly relevant and improved the attendees' understanding of salinity management.

The field trips in particular played a valuable role in reinforcing the knowledge presented at the workshop in a practical way.

Scott Glyde (CSU), FFI CRC Education and Training Program Leader, said the inaugural *EverTrain* Workshop highlighted the benefits of what can be achieved from a partnership approach to training delivery.

"*EverTrain*, through the NSW DPI Natural Resources Advisory Services Team, is qualified to travel throughout southern Australia to delivery and assess training activities towards Certificate IV qualifications. All that is needed is local coordination to help organise these events," Scott said.

The *EverTrain* team is currently working on expanding the course to a wider client network to provide flexible learning arrangements such as online training for the CRC's *Salinity Knowledge Exchange* project, and the *Saltland Genie* website. For more information, visit the [EverTrain website](#).

lunch, postgraduate researchers Bronwyn Crowe and Richard Bennett gave presentations to the Directors and others at the UWA Boatshed building (see *CRC Board gets boatshed briefing from students* article) before the group headed off on their field trip. The field trip covered a large section of the north eastern wheatbelt including an overnight stay at Dalwallinu and a visit to Ian Stanley's property at Kalannie to see his woody perennials trial. While at Kalannie, the students met with researcher and oil mallee expert, John Bartle (DEC) before moving on to the Liebe Grower Group site at Buntine to see the CRC's Cullen, Tedera and C4 grasses field trial evaluation sites. Some of these trials are complementary to the work at Medina as Daniel Real, who was in attendance again, explained.

The final stop was the Badgingarra Research station where Dean Revell talked about the *Enrich* project evaluating the potential benefits of adding native shrubs to grazing systems. The final presenter, Geoff Moore, gave the group a great talk about his C4 perennial grasses trial site before the students headed back to Perth, and for most, the airport, to catch overnight flights back home.

The meeting was a fantastic event that would not have been possible without the cooperation of senior CRC researchers who took the time to share their work and valuable insights. Special thanks to Amir Abadi for running the FFB workshop, Daniel Real, John Bartle, Dean Revell and Geoff Moore for hosting the field site visits, to Julia Wilson for her IP presentation, and to Richard Bennett and Dion Nicol for their work in coordinating the field trip component.



CRC Board gets boatshed briefing from students



CRC Board Member, Professor Tim Reeves, with DAFWA researcher, Dr Diana Fedorenko, at the UWA Club.

This month saw the CRC's second Board Meeting of the year take place at the University of Western Australia (UWA). By a very well planned coincidence, the annual FFI CRC Student Workshop, also held in Perth, provided Board Members with the opportunity to mix and mingle with the students and learn more about their research projects at the University Club of Western Australia.

Facilitated by CRC Directors, a Participant Representatives and Directors briefing was held on



CRC gets new focus

Following the Board's decisions on Friday to simplify program structure, reduce management costs and provide additional investment to some projects, the CRC will enter its third year of operations with a different look. In addition, some additional but temporary cost cutting will occur in 2009/10. CEO Kevin Goss said he was very pleased with the new make-up of the CRC.

"With the complexity of the transitional activities behind us, we can more easily focus on core research and attracting additional investment to the new project base."

As of 1 July, there are now five programs and 30 projects starting 1 July 2009.

The CRC's Board approved budget for 2009/10 and financial forecasts for 2010/11 and 2011/12 will be sent to Participants and Program and Project Leaders shortly.



Mallee CMA puts CRC technologies to the test



Mallee's CMA Enrich trial site at Walpeup, north western Victoria. The Mallee Catchment Management Authority (Mallee CMA) in north western Victoria is putting some of the CRC's technologies to the test through its demonstration activities.

These activities include an *EnrichTM* field evaluation trial at Walpeup, near the South Australian border where the interaction of livestock with potential forage shrubs will be observed, which could lead to a water efficient alternative grazing system.

The Mallee CMA is also involved in evaluating the low-risk establishment methods the *EverCrop* project will use to establish lucerne. They will be working with the CRC and the Birchip Cropping Group to measure sub-tropical and temperate grasses and lucerne productivity.

In the long term, the Mallee CMA believes its demonstration activities will assist farmers in the area in making informed decisions about the sustainability of dryland farming systems while ensuring environmental

the follow day at UWA's picturesque Boat Shed Building to put some of the CRC's research and adoption activities under the spotlight and provide an update of current activity.

In the morning session, the FFI CRC *Weed Risk Protocol*, *Lucerne Adoption* and *Adoptability Tool* projects were profiled with each presentation including a brief discussion. A Postgraduate research session took place after lunch with PhD students Bronwyn Crowe giving a presentation on NRM policies in the developed world followed by Richard Bennett presenting on the potential of the Australian *Cullen* species as a perennial pasture species.



New EverGraze® Action: Identifying native pastures of eastern Namoi

A recent publication about native pastures in northern NSW has been coordinated by Lochie Rowling (NSW DPI Tamworth). National *EverGraze* Coordinator, Geoffrey Saul, said the new native pasture brochure *EverGraze Action – Identifying native pastures of eastern Namoi* contains details of 20 major native perennials found in the region, where they occur in the landscape, their value to livestock and management to improve production and persistence.

"Native pastures are the mainstay of many grazing operations in northern NSW and a key part of the *EverGraze* program in the region is to understand ways to better manage and use these pastures in conjunction with areas of sown pastures such as sub-tropical legumes and lucerne," Geoff said.

"The native pastures fact sheet summarises the current information and best practise to manage and use pastures in the region."

EverGraze Action – Identifying native pastures of eastern Namoi brochure can be downloaded from the [EverGraze](#) website or by emailing [Lochie Rowling](#). *EverGraze* is a Future Farm Industries CRC, MLA and AWI research and delivery partnership.

Back with SALTdeck



The very popular *SALTdeck* publication (picture above) is back. *SALTdeck* is a valuable guide designed to help people in the field identify the 50 most common saltland species that can be used to stop the spread of salinity. Each *SALTdeck* has

considerations of land use change are effectively addressed.

For more information about the Mallee CMA visit:
www.malleecma.vic.gov.au



Genies' knowledge bottled in a book



A wealth of information that underpins the successful [Saltland Genie](#) website has been put into a book called *Saltland Solutions – options for saltland restoration* (pictured above).

Saltland Solutions brings together the latest findings and conclusions on saltland management as featured on the *Saltland Genie* website into one concise and easy-to-read manual.

Published by Land and Water Australia, through their *Land Water and Wool* program, who partnered the development of the *Saltland Genie* with FFI CRC, the publication is designed for people who prefer having hard copy references in the office or out in the field. While it lacks some of the navigational power of the website, it features a useful glossary plus additional references. FFI CRC has been given limited copies of *Saltland Solutions*. If you are interested in having a copy, contact either [Greg Lawrence](#) or request a copy through the *Saltland Genie*'s [Contact](#) page. Alternatively, the publication can be downloaded from the [Land Water Australia](#) website.



photos plus tips on the use of sown saltland species and how to identify common indicator plants that grow naturally on saline land.

To get your own deck, place a request via the *Saltland Genie*'s [Contact](#) Page. Otherwise, download a digital copy from the [Land Water & Wool](#) website.



Communications round up



There has been a flurry of media activity in recent months with FFI CRC representatives getting on the airways to talk about the CRC and its research.

Earlier this month Graeme Sandral talked about the drought proofing potential of four new birdsfoot trefoil cultivars on the [Victorian Country Hour](#). PhD Student, Melissa Fraser, as part of her impressive Early Career Scientist Presentation at the 2009 CRCA Conference, was interviewed by ABC radio on how she helped farmers manage their [sodicity problem](#). You can listen to her interview [here](#). CEO Kevin Goss has also been speaking to ABC radio about the CRC's [Florasearch](#) and [EverGraze](#) projects.

Out this month are the June editions of [Focus on Perennials](#) and [Future Farm](#) magazines. *Future Farm* magazine (pictured above) celebrates its first birthday with a feature on the benefits that farmers are enjoying by giving *EverGraze* technologies a go on their properties.



Coming Events

10th International Congress of Ecology

16-20 August 2009, Brisbane, Qld

Email: intecol10@tourhosts.com.au

Further information: www.intecol10.org/default.asp

5th Australia-New Zealand Climate Change and Business Conference

24-26 August 2009, Melbourne, Vic
Email: f.driver@climateandbusiness.com
Further Information:
www.climateandbusiness.com/index.cfm

19th Annual Combined Biological Sciences Meeting

28 August 2009, Perth, WA
Further information: www.cbsm.uwa.edu.au/welcome

Agricultural Technologies in a Changing Climate -

2009 CIGR International Symposium of the Australian Society for Engineering in Agriculture

13-16 September 2009, Brisbane, Qld

Email: seag2009@icmsaust.com.au

Further information: www.seag2009.com

2009 Australian Meat Industry Council Conference

24-25 September 2009, TBA

Email: admin@amicprocessors.org.au

WA State NRM Conference

27-30 October 2009, Geraldton, WA
Email: ctc@nacc.com.au

Yorke Peninsula Field Days

29 September to October 1 2009, Paskeville, SA
Email: ypfd@netyp.com.au
Further information: www.ypfielddays.com.au

OECD-GenomeAssociation-OZ09

**9-12 November 2009, The University of Western
Australia, Perth, WA**

Further information: www.oecd-genomeassociation-oz09.com

2009 APEN Conference

11-13 November 2009, Busselton, WA

Further information: www.apen.org.au

Outlook 2010 (ABARE)

2-3 March 2010, Canberra, ACT

Further information: mfinnegan@abare.gov.au

WANTFA Annual Conference

10 March 2010, TBA

Email: kaye@wantfa.com.au

Further information: www.wantfa.com.au

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