



FUTURE FARM  
INDUSTRIES CRC

# e-news

## May 2008

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## Welcome from the CEO

Welcome to the May edition of E-News. May has been yet another busy month for us as the CRC prepared for its sixth Board meeting held on Tuesday, 20 May.

FFI CRC's project level investment for the three years from 2008/09 will become clear this week with the publication of the Annual Operating Plan and Budget. This follows the Board meeting last Tuesday where it finalised the budget for all CRC activities and directed that a prospectus be prepared for additional investment in climate change-relevant research.

Program and Project Leaders are to be congratulated for their sustained effort in project development. The Directors commented that project proposals were of a high standard, echoing the assessment of the Project Evaluation Committee.

Not all the 32 Foundation projects will get their expected funding and 5 will be put on hold through 2008/09 while we raise the additional investment from external funding sources. I will take the lead on this task immediately.

**Mike Ewing, Mark Stickells** and I will phone Project Leaders more affected by the budget reductions to explain the Board's decisions.

\* Kevin Goss: (08) 6488 2555; [kevin.goss@futurefarmcrc.com.au](mailto:kevin.goss@futurefarmcrc.com.au)

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## Business matters

May has been a very busy month for project development and final processes in the lead up to the May Board Meeting. The effort and timely response by Program Leaders and project teams is greatly appreciated.

CRC auditors from KPMG conducted their first 'site-visit' – they will return in August to review the annual financial statements. After the auditor's visit, **Christina Sanderson** has taken a two-week break, sunning herself on the beaches of Phuket.

**Julia Wilson, Christina Sanderson** and **Mark Stickells** spent two days implementing and testing Centric effort reporting, with Richard Hale (Centric) – the CRC's forthcoming document management system. Centric is expected to go live in June 2008 and will require Participant contact officers to verify in-kind contributions online.

Julia attended a commercialisation and IP half-day workshop, which was run by one of our Board Directors, **Kathryn Adams**.

If you have any project related queries about in-kind, contract and project administration and/or finance, please contact Julia Wilson on (08) 6488 1846 or

email: [julia.wilson@futurefarmcrc.com.au](mailto:julia.wilson@futurefarmcrc.com.au)

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## Adoption & Commercialisation

### Advisers enhance knowledge and confidence at Tammin workshop

All the participants who attended the recent Path to Adoption workshop at the WA wheatbelt town of Tammin rated it as a 'useful' to 'very useful' activity. The 30 advisers and other 'next users' stated that the workshop increased their knowledge and confidence in advising on the technologies featured on the day.

The workshop presented 'Headline' technologies refined by CRC Salinity for whole farm and landscape water management farming systems in the eastern wheatbelt of WA, including lucerne phase farming, saltland pastures, and oil mallees.

The first day of the workshop began with excellent presentations by leading CRC researchers **Perry Dolling, John Bartle** and **Ed Barrett-Lennard**.



*Grower, Gavin Morgan, uses 2m deep soil pits to demonstrate the effect of lucerne in preserving his future grain yields at the Tammin Adoption and Commercialisation workshop.*

Participants then learnt more about the practical side of the technologies by visiting four nearby farms, where growers talked about why they adopted the technologies, the challenges of adopting them, and if they delivered the anticipated benefits.

There was lively discussion and networking all day (and night!) amongst the diverse group of participants who had been invited to the workshop. Time will tell, but the Tammin workshop may have catalysed a regional advisers network for the eastern wheatbelt.

Table group sessions held on the second saw growers, CRC researchers and 'next users' have in-depth (and sometimes loud!) discussions about the merits of these technologies. They also put forward their 'big ideas' for what should happen next to increase adoption of the technologies.

The table groups were capably chaired by **Sally Phelan**, Project Manager with the Saltland Pastures Association, **Dan Ferguson**, Project Delivery Manager with Avon Catchment Council, and **Tim Scanlon**, Development Officer with DAFWA Merredin.

'Big ideas' to come out of the Tammin workshop were:

- Promote lucerne to croppers as a tool to preserve cropping yields and land value, instead of promoting it as part of lucerne-livestock systems to address waterlogging and salinity
- Promote saltbush as part of normal farm and landscape management,

- rather than something you do when land is no longer useful for anything else
- establish regional partnerships between the Oil Mallee Association, State agencies and Shires, for coordinated oil mallee industry development.

Several members of the FFI CRC Adoption & Commercialisation Consultative Panel also participated in the workshop. Representatives of Qualdata, which is monitoring and evaluating the impact of the CRC's adoption and commercialisation activities, also attended.

The workshop was organised by **John Powell**, FFI CRC Adoption Manager, with local on-ground support from **John Berger**, DAFWA Northam, and **Glenice Batchelor**, Project Officer with the Catchment Demonstration Initiative at Doodlakine/Kellerberrin.

### Early impact of Adoption and Commercialisation assessed

The Tammin workshop was followed by a meeting of the CRC's Adoption & Commercialisation Consultative Panel in Perth. The Panel:

- Reflected on the Tammin Path to Adoption workshop and other activities led by **John Powell**
- Heard presentations by **Dean Revell**, Project Leader *Enrich*, and **Ed Barrett-Lennard**, Program Manager *Saline Landscapes Program*, about Adoption and Commercialisation activities incorporated in their Foundation Project proposals
- Discussed with Qualdata Principals **Jeff Coutts** and **Gordon Stone** the Logframe that Qualdata and the Panel have developed to evaluate the impact of Adoption and Commercialisation activities and their contribution to the CRC's Business Plan outcomes
- Considered Qualdata's interim findings about the early impact of Adoption and Commercialisation activities.

Among other things, the Panel noted that:

- Adoption and Commercialisation is well established within the CRC's culture, and there is evidence that it has already had a positive impact on attitudes and practice of engaging next users and end users in research design
- The Path to Adoption workshops and other 'harvest and delivery' forums are demonstrating good engagement and early impact on next users and end users of CRC products
- For the Logframe to be effective, there needs to be a systematic approach to data collection from different Adoption and Commercialisation activities
- There is a need to build a clearer picture of how Adoption and Commercialisation activities for the major farming systems are to be managed over time and across the geographic 'footprint' of the CRC
- Future Panel meetings should feature more presentations on Foundation Projects' Adoption and Commercialisation activities, for review and feedback from the Panel.

The Panel comprises senior path to adoption interests within FFI CRC and its user groups. It advises and assists the Adoption Manager in embedding Adoption and Commercialisation within the CRC's culture, and in achieving Adoption and Commercialisation Outputs and Milestones in the Business Plan.

For further information contact:

\* John Powell: (02) 6226 5298; [jpowell@optimalicm.net.au](mailto:jpowell@optimalicm.net.au)

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## Node activities

### SA Node



*Wolford and Marie Parson receive the 18th McKell Medal from the Federal Agriculture Minister, Tony Burke (right)*

South Australian Landcare innovators **Wolford** and **Marie Parson** were awarded the 18th McKell Medal for excellence in natural resource management in Australia at the National Regional Chairs Forum held in Melbourne on 18 April.

Wolford and Marie received this prestigious award by Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council in recognition of their commitment and visionary approach to managing dryland salinity on their property near Port Vincent, South Australia.

When they bought their property 1982, Wolford and Marie adopted a new way of land management unheard of at the time, a holistic approach that created new ways of incorporating saline and marginal land back into a whole-of-farm system.

FFI CRC researcher **Dean Revell**, who has worked closely with the Parsons over the years, said they pioneered new ways of combating dryland salinity that are now used throughout Australia.

“They planted 300,000 trees, put up 45 km of fencing and spent countless hours of labour to stop the spread of salinity and improve their farm’s productivity. Importantly, the innovation in Wolford’s work has been the commitment to address land management on a whole-farm basis. Wolford has successfully worked through a sequence of issues from identifying the problem, possessing the commitment to start on-ground remedial work as soon as possible, through to incorporating rehabilitated land into the whole-farm plan. This has allowed the value of improved land stewardship to be realised,” Dean said.

“They have also enhanced the biodiversity of their property and made it a model farm that others can learn from in the region.”

Wolford was heavily involved in the former CRC Salinity and the Sustainable Grazing of Saline Lands (SGSL) Producer Network. More recently, Wolford and Marie have provided valuable insights into FFI CRC’s research focus on combining livestock management with natural resource management.

Wolford recently gained further recognition for his outstanding contributions to land management by taking to the streets of Canberra as an Olympic torch runner last April.

The McKell Medal takes its name from a former NSW Premier and Governor-General who made an outstanding contribution to soil and land

conservation.

Nominations for the 19th McKell Medal are now open. Nomination forms and other information about the McKell Medal are available at: [www.daff.gov.au/mckellmedal](http://www.daff.gov.au/mckellmedal) or email: [mckellmedal@daff.gov.au](mailto:mckellmedal@daff.gov.au)

For further information contact:

\* Anna Dutkiewicz: (08) 8303 9735; [Dutkiewicz.Anna@saugov.sa.gov.au](mailto:Dutkiewicz.Anna@saugov.sa.gov.au)

### WA Node

For further information contact:

\* David Bicknell: (08) 9881 0222; [dbicknell@agric.wa.gov.au](mailto:dbicknell@agric.wa.gov.au)

### VIC Node

For further information about the Victorian Node contact:

\* Austin Brown: (03) 9742 8728; [Austin.Brown@dpi.vic.gov.au](mailto:Austin.Brown@dpi.vic.gov.au)

### NSW Node

For further information contact:

\* Peter Regan: (02) 6391 3185; [peter.j.regan@dpi.nsw.gov.au](mailto:peter.j.regan@dpi.nsw.gov.au)

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## Communication

### Media



*Phil Larkin under the recent media spotlight with the CRC's perennial wheat project*

FFI CRC continued to generate good media coverage in late April and early May. One of the hot topics featured during that time was the research we are doing into perennial wheat. The original story, an interview by a Port Lincoln-based ABC journalist with the Perennial Wheat project leader, **Phil Larkin**, ended up gaining national radio and print coverage:

\* [http://www.ypct.com.au/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=2691&Itemid=68](http://www.ypct.com.au/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=2691&Itemid=68)

\* <http://www.abc.net.au/rural/news/content/200805/s2232412.htm>

\* <http://www.futurefarmcrc.com.au/MediaCoverage.htm>

## Efocus launched



In late April, the CRC launched its latest publication, *efocus*. *Efocus* is a new external email newsletter that features snapshots of the latest happenings in the CRC. It will be published between each quarterly edition of *Focus on Perennials* except over the Christmas – New Year holiday period.

- \* The May edition of *Efocus* can be downloaded from:  
<http://www.futurefarmcrc.com.au/documents/FFICRCefocusMay08.pdf>

## Website updates

The FFI CRC website continues to evolve with the addition of an 'Events' page: <http://www.futurefarmcrc.com.au/events.html>. Please forward **Greg Lawrence** the details of any events for inclusion on the website and in the 'Coming Events' section of *E-News*. The new 'Events' page, under the 'Previous Events' section, also features a complete set of papers and posters presented at the Second International Forum as zip files. Get them while you can, as they will only be up there for a few months.

For further information contact:

- \* Greg Lawrence: (08) 6488 7353; [greg.lawrence@futurefarmcrc.com.au](mailto:greg.lawrence@futurefarmcrc.com.au)

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## Program activities

### P1 Future Livestock Production

For further information contact:

- \* Joe Jacobs: (03) 5561 9946; [joe.jacobs@dpi.vic.gov.au](mailto:joe.jacobs@dpi.vic.gov.au)

### P2 Future Cropping Systems

For further information contact:

- \* Alison Bowman: (02) 6938 1628; [alison.bowman@dpi.nsw.gov.au](mailto:alison.bowman@dpi.nsw.gov.au)

### P3 New Woody Crop Industries

For further information contact:

- \* Mike Bennell: (08) 8303 9674; [bennell.mike@saugov.sa.gov.au](mailto:bennell.mike@saugov.sa.gov.au)

### P4 Farming Saline Landscapes

For further information contact:

- \* Ed Barrett-Lennard: (08) 9368 3441; [egbarrettlennard@agric.wa.gov.au](mailto:egbarrettlennard@agric.wa.gov.au)

## P5 Biodiversity & Water

For further information contact:

\* Ken Wallace: (08) 9334 0341; [ken.wallace@dec.wa.gov.au](mailto:ken.wallace@dec.wa.gov.au)

## P6 Economic, Social & Policy Analysis

For further information contact:

\* Bill Malcolm: (03) 8344-5015; [b.malcolm@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:b.malcolm@unimelb.edu.au)

## P7 Education & Training

### Graduate Certificate in Research Commercialisation course now open



Researchers and students who want to improve their understanding of the commercialisation process and further develop their leadership skills in the workplace should seriously consider completing the Australian Technology Network's e-Grad School (eGSA) Graduate Certificate in Research Commercialisation. eGSA has been selected by the CRC Association as the preferred supplier of the course to CRC researchers and students.

All units for the course are offered over a 13 week semester. However, to receive the Graduate Certificate, CRC Association sponsored researchers are required to complete four compulsory units.

The course is offered jointly by four providers:

- \* Curtin University of Technology
- \* Queensland University of Technology
- \* RMIT University
- \* University of South Australia
- \* University of Technology Sydney.

For more information about course, visit the eGSA website:

<http://www.egradschool.edu.au/whategsaoffe/awardlevelqu/gradcert/index.jsp>

\* For more information about CRC postgraduate students and activities, contact the Education Manager, Daryll Richardson.  
[drichardson@agaveeducation.com.au](mailto:drichardson@agaveeducation.com.au)

For further information Education & Training contact:

\* Scott Glyde: (02) 6933 2385; [sglyde@csu.edu.au](mailto:sglyde@csu.edu.au)

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## Snippets

### Land salinity booklet available



A new booklet on land salinity has been published by the National Land & Water Resources Audit. The booklet is part of a series aimed at policy makers, regional bodies and land managers which describes the status of data and information which is relevant to national indicators agreed under the National Natural Resource Management Monitoring and Evaluation Framework. For salinity these are: depth to groundwater, groundwater salinity, baseflow salinity, and location, size and intensity of salt-affected areas.

Clarifying the current status of data and information on land salinity is a vital first step towards more strategic future investment. Noteworthy advances include:

- \* A strong partnership between Australian governments through the National Coordinating Committee for Salinity Information
- \* Significant progress on identifying relevant information management systems and standards for storing salinity information
- \* Progress on land salinity indicators and reporting, building on the Audit's Australian Dryland Salinity Assessment 2000
- \* Progress on filling key data gaps, particularly mapping of land salinity and identification of networks of bores suitable for monitoring salinity.

The booklet is available for free from the National Land & Water Resources Audit; please phone (02) 6263 6081 or email: [denise.fowler@nlwra.gov.au](mailto:denise.fowler@nlwra.gov.au) for a copy.

### Submissions closing soon for parliamentary climate change inquiry



Submissions for the terms of reference for the inquiry into climate change and environmental impacts on coastal communities close on May 30, 2008.

The committee will inquire into and report on issues related to climate change and environmental pressures experienced by Australian coastal areas, particularly in the context of coastal population growth.

For more information:

<http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/ccwea/coastalzone/index.htm>

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## Coming Events

### **Climate Change and Biodiversity Forum**

**5 June 2008, UWA Club, University of Western Australia, Crawley, WA**

Email: [nic.dunlop@conservationwa.asn.au](mailto:nic.dunlop@conservationwa.asn.au)

Further information:

[www.gga.org.au/files/files/42\\_Scientific\\_Forum\\_Flier\\_5th\\_March\\_2.pdf](http://www.gga.org.au/files/files/42_Scientific_Forum_Flier_5th_March_2.pdf)

### **21st International Grassland Congress and 8th International Rangelands Conference**

**29 June - 5 July 2008, Huhot, China**

[www.rangelandcongress.com](http://www.rangelandcongress.com)

### **2nd Annual Climate Change Summit 2008**

**23-24 July, Dockside, Darling Harbour Sydney**

Email: [glenfrost@frocomm.com.au](mailto:glenfrost@frocomm.com.au)

Further information: <http://www.climatechangesummit.com.au>

### **13th International Lupin Conference**

**14-18 September 2008, Fremantle, WA**

Email: [conference@lupin.org](mailto:conference@lupin.org)

Further information: [www.lupins.org](http://www.lupins.org)

### **14th Australian Society of Agronomy Conference**

**21-25 September 2008, Adelaide**

[www.agronomy.org.au/2008](http://www.agronomy.org.au/2008)

### **STIPA Native Grasses Association Inc 2008 Conference**

**9-11 November 2008, Horsham Town Hall, Victoria**

Email: [vivienne.stipa@bigpond.com](mailto:vivienne.stipa@bigpond.com)

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