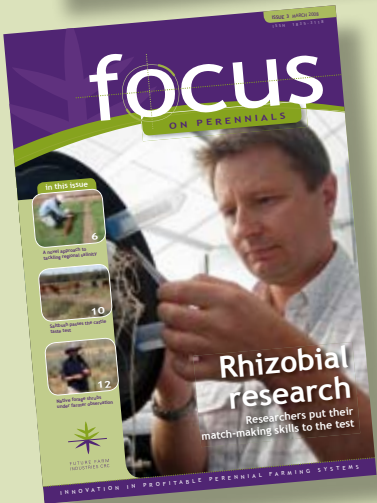
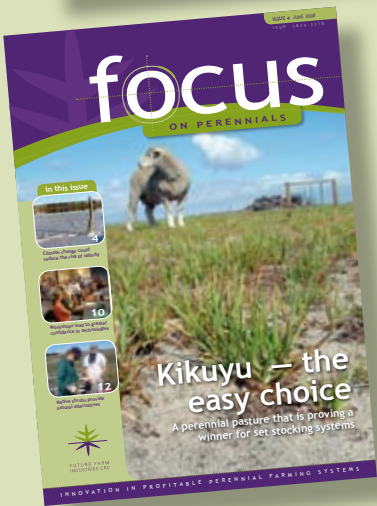
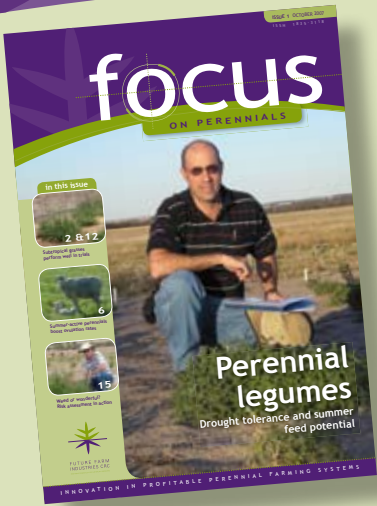


Focus on Perennials



It is hard to believe we are already up to our fifth edition of *Focus on Perennials*.

Since the inaugural edition during October 2007, *Focus on Perennials* has published 42 stories that have profiled a variety of research and education initiatives underway at the FFI CRC.

The past four issues have also featured successful adoption stories, all of which have been sent to more than 7000 readers. As a result, the magazine has positioned itself as the definitive magazine in Australia that profiles research that is applying perennial-based farming systems to broadacre agriculture in a short space of time.

Now 12 months into our new publication we have an opportunity to take stock and consider if the magazine has been living up to expectations. From the feedback we have been getting, we can safely say *Focus on Perennials* is making a difference and our readers are expressing a continued interest in the research profiled by the magazine. However, rather than continuing to give broad self-congratulatory statements, it would be more worthwhile to provide some examples of this interest.

A point of contact

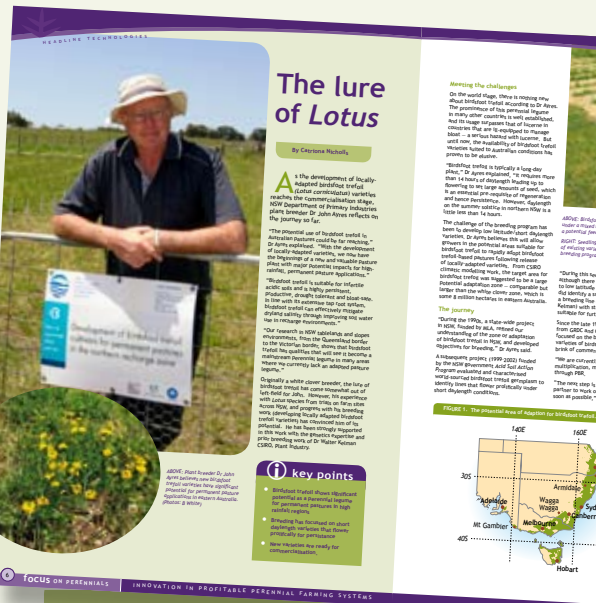
NSW DPI plant breeder Dr John Ayres, who was originally featured in the December 2007 edition regarding his locally-adapted birdsfoot trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*) varieties, has continued down the path of commercialisation for the high-rainfall regions of south-eastern Australia (see update story on page 12).

After being featured in *Focus on Perennials* last December, John received numerous calls from farmers across the country keen to share their own experiences with birdsfoot trefoil with the passionate pasture breeder.

“The most exciting thing was that I usually only get calls from local NSW farmers, but after the story in *Focus on Perennials*, I had numerous phone calls from farmers as widespread as Bruny Island and Western Australia.

“Each had a positive story to share about their experiences with *Lotus*.”

Dr John Ayres, NSW DPI



By Greg Lawrence
FFI CRC

Another example of interest shown in CRC research came about in response to an article that featured CRC-sponsored UWA PhD student Richard Bennett's research into assessing the potential of a group of native legumes (*Cullen* species) in becoming drought-tolerant fodder plants. Following publicity generated from the research described in the article, Richard received phone calls from farmers keen to get

“This article began the rush of publicity when it prompted an editorial column in a SA publication, the *Stock Journal* which discussed some of the research and ended with the sentence ‘There should be more government funding for this kind of research.’... an excellent sentiment in my mind!”

“Talking with a farmer at Bencubbin really drove home to me how the research I am doing has the potential to impact on people's lives.....He and his wife were so keen to see a good outcome that they suggested that I come and put a trial on their property... they even offered me some funding out of their own pockets to cover any expenses of such a trial.”

Richard Bennett, UWA

— it's only just begun



involved with his project by having some *Cullen* planted on their property.

Also featured in the December 2007 edition was work by CRC researcher Sarita Bennett in helping to put together a publication that assists land-users in productively managing their salt-affected land. This publication, *Saltland Prospects*, was released during early 2008. Since then, the CRC has received positive feedback regarding its practicality.

Some of the comments received regarding the CRC's *Saltland Prospects* publication are below.

"I found your publication excellent and it has inspired me to keep going with our restoration work."

Farmer, Bruce Rock, WA.

"I found the publication to be useful as a technical reference which provides an overview of what's happening across southern Australia with saltland. I would view this publication as being a key resource in a farm/agribusiness library collection."

Agronomist, DPI, Vic.

"It was easy to read and provided area-specific information. On a personal note, I will be implementing some of the recommendations on my own property."

Engineer, Onslow Salt Pty Ltd.

Ever keen on EverGraze™

A series of articles that has resonated especially well with *Focus on Perennials* readers has been those dealing with the research advances made through the *EverGraze* project.

The level of farmer involvement in *EverGraze* trial sites has allowed for farmer case studies showing how research is rapidly being adapted on-farm in our *Future Farm* magazine.

Funding opportunity

An article featured in *Focus on Perennials* has created a new opportunity for the CRC itself.

The first edition of *Focus on Perennials* featured an article during October 2007 that highlighted the need to design a harvester to make the oil mallee industry commercially viable. In response to reading about the situation outlined in the article, the WA Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) approached FFI CRC and encouraged them to apply for a research grant through their Low Emissions Energy Development Fund (LEED). An application was submitted in June this year and the CRC was awarded \$1.5 million by the WA State Government to assist in the cost of designing the harvester.

Capturing innovation

After four editions, *Focus on Perennials* has matured to become an informative source of information that captures the latest innovations in profitable perennial farming systems, and it is particularly encouraging to note that many of the stories are gaining traction with some readers who were even motivated enough to contact us.

While we are making some headway in getting the stories out there, the reality is that the magazine has really just begun. With that in mind, all of us here at *Focus on Perennials* look forward to continuing to provide informative stories from the CRC, receive feedback from interested readers and play a part in creating new opportunities that arise from sharing knowledge and innovation.

Focus on Perennials is keen to continue receiving feedback from its readers. So if you would like to provide some general comments, or find out more about a research project featured in the magazine, email Greg Lawrence, the FFI CRC Communication Manager. ↘

More information

Greg Lawrence, FFI CRC

T: (08) 6488 7353

E: greg.lawrence@futurefarmcrc.com.au

Casting wide to capitalise on Cullen

By Richard Bennett

Richard Bennett, CRC researcher, is working with a group of Australian woolgrowers to identify and trial Cullen species that can survive and produce valuable grass fodder during the summer drought period on sheep lands.

A group of Australian woolgrowers from the Cullen region already have developed an interest in Cullen species that can survive and produce valuable grass fodder during the summer drought period on sheep lands.

Several collections from the CRC's Cullen Safety trial have been used to identify Cullen species that are well suited to the region's soil and climate. Richard is working with a group of woolgrowers to identify and trial Cullen species that can survive and produce valuable grass fodder during the summer drought period on sheep lands.

The CRC is currently conducting a trial to identify Cullen species that can survive and produce valuable grass fodder during the summer drought period on sheep lands.

Duty of care in biodiversity conservation

When Gillian East moved to a new approach to land management, she was faced with a duty of care to conserve the biodiversity of her land. She has been successful in achieving this through a combination of research and practical experience.

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Key points

- Identify Cullen species that are well suited to the region's soil and climate.
- Conduct a trial to identify Cullen species that can survive and produce valuable grass fodder during the summer drought period on sheep lands.
- Work with woolgrowers to identify and trial Cullen species that can survive and produce valuable grass fodder during the summer drought period on sheep lands.