



FUTURE FARM  
INDUSTRIES CRC

# e-news

## Mar 2008

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## Welcome from the CEO

Welcome to the March edition of E-News.

This week we start compiling the full project proposals for years 2 to 4 of the CRC. This is an important and focusing event and I appreciate the hard work of Project and Program Leaders. We want to be fully prepared for the Project Evaluation Committee review of projects on 15 April.

Recently, I attended the National Outlook Conference in Canberra where, as you would expect, climate change was a strong theme. The presentations, together with my discussions with other delegates, reinforced my view that FFI CRC is in the right place at the right time. I advocated the importance of farmers having new, profitable options adapted to climatic variability in the short term as the best strategy for adaptation to climate change in the long term.

With the Board's backing, I will be following up these discussions with firm proposals for additional investment in FFI CRC.

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## Business matters

March and April are busy months for Project Leaders across all Programs as full project proposals are prepared for submission to the CRC's Project Evaluation Committee. The Foundation Projects will commence 1 July 2008. Proposals were due last week. The Board will sign off on projects at its May meeting.

A summary of key dates follows:

Date	Process/Meetings
28 March	Proposals sent to PEC for review
2 April	Project summary, collated projects (pdf) and in-kind summary (PEC) sent to Participants
15 April	PEC face-to-face meeting in Melbourne
18 April	PEC report to Program Leaders, Project Leaders and Participants
23 April	Participants' meeting in Melbourne
2 May	Revised projects due in
7 May	PEC meeting – recommendations via teleconference
12 May	Board Papers sent out

20 May

Board Meeting in Sydney

Further information is available from the CRC's headquarters. Please contact Mike, Mark or Julia as required.

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\* Christina Sanderson, Finance and Operations Manager: (08) 6488 1954;

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\* Julia Wilson, Research Contract Manager (Wed-Fri): (08) 6488 1846;

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## Adoption & Commercialisation

### Adoption & Commercialisation gathering momentum in 'Foundation' projects



*Adoption Manager John Powell's base at Yass in southern NSW*

**John Powell** has been leading the incorporation of Adoption & Commercialisation activities in the FFI CRC's 'Foundation' projects. When he's not travelling, John can be found with the phone glued to his ear in his farm office near Yass, NSW.

John has been focused on assisting researchers with the development of adoption activities that contribute to 'commercialisation' of the CRC's technologies in the broadest sense.

Commercial Director **Mark Stickells** has been assisting with commercialisation of new plant cultivars, consistent with the provisions of the Participants Agreement, and Communication Manager **Greg Lawrence** has been advising on wider communication activities that projects can consider.

Continuing projects such as *EverGraze* have well-developed adoption plans, and from extensive consultation over the last month, the Saline Landscapes Program has a well-developed whole-of-Program Adoption & Commercialisation Plan.

Other Programs have made significant progress, however it has not been feasible for many 'Foundation' projects (agronomy and farming systems projects in particular) to develop firm adoption plans prior to the March 14 deadline for submission of full proposals. Further, with agronomy and farming systems work, there can be hundreds of next users, located in various regions across five States (including southern Queensland), who may want to be engaged in the project, and in whose hands we want to leave the technologies developed by the project.

To address this issue, a Regional Engagement Plan will be implemented in the coming months to define the adoption and commercialisation activities to be undertaken by Foundation projects. To this end, John Powell and the Node Managers, with support from other senior CRC staff and key researchers, will meet with next users from 18 regions to:

- \* Explain the portfolio of FFI CRC projects relevant to their region
- \* Explore if and how they wish to be engaged in CRC projects
- \* Determine the adoption and training opportunities they and their wider networks would like to participate in
- \* Ask how they would prefer to receive wider communication about the project
- \* Estimate the costs of preferred activities and potential resourcing arrangements.

### Path to Adoption workshop, Tammin WA, 22-23 April



*John Pickford from Woodannilling describes his family's whole-farm approach to water management at last year's Path to Adoption workshop in Katanning*

The next Path to Adoption workshop will be held in Tammin, and will cover the Central Agricultural Region and the Avon Catchment Council Region of WA. The workshop will follow a similar format to the successful Katanning workshop held last year, and will focus on whole-farm and landscape salinity and water management using technologies refined by CRC Salinity, namely: saltland pastures, oil mallees, lucerne phase-farming, and surface water management.

In excess of 100 'next users' will be invited to the workshop, which will increase their understanding of the CRC's farming systems technologies and boost their confidence in advising growers on the merits of these systems.

The workshop is being jointly organised by **John Powell**, WA Node Manager **Dave Bicknell**, and **John Borger** from DAFWA Northam, with assistance from the Avon Catchment Council and Landmark.

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

As part of the Harvest and Delivery plan of the FFI CRC (formerly the Plant-based Management of Dryland Salinity), two forums were held in February 2008 to extend research outcomes to 'end users' and a wider audience. Both forums were well-attended and included land managers, Landmark advisers, researchers and consultants.

Participants were asked to fill out an exit survey to help assess the benefits of the forum and identify any follow up actions. It was great to see so many survey respondents who indicated that they gained new knowledge and understanding from the presentations. In particular, on saltland pastures and saltbush followed by lucerne and other perennials.

The feedback also suggested the CRC needs to ensure that grower experiences are documented and transferred to others, so that the gap between research and adoption

can be bridged.

For further information contact:

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### WA Node

For further information contact:

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

### VIC Node

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

### NSW Node

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## Communication

### Real Choices in a Changing Climate



*Kevin Goss speaking at the RPCV luncheon in February for the launch of Real Choices in a Changing Climate*

At the end of February, FFI CRC embarked on a national awareness campaign coordinated by Currie Communications. Beginning with an address to the Rural Press Club of Victoria (RPCV) by **Kevin Goss** on 28 February, the campaign has put into motion a series of media opportunities for the CRC. These opportunities have positioned FFI CRC as a state-of-the-art research and development provider well placed to provide some of the immediate solutions needed by broadacre farmers in temperate Australia dealing with climate change. The campaign entitled *Real Choices in a Changing Climate* will continue to the end of April.

\* A copy of Kevin's speech to the RPCV can be downloaded from:  
<http://www.futurefarmcrc.com.au/documents/FFICRCCEOaddresstoRPCV.pdf>

\* To hear Kevin on the ABC's WA Country Hour, click on the link below:  
<http://www.futurefarmcrc.com.au/ABCRadioWACountryHour.mp3>

### WA Science Network tour



WA Science Network Editor, Suzannah Lyons, (left) out in the sun with **Daniel Real** as part of her tour of FFI CRC's WA-based research activities

In March, the WA Science Network Coordinator Suzannah Lyon came on a tour of FFI CRC's Western Australian-based facilities to get a better understanding of our research activities.

The tour began at UWA, where PhD student **Richard Bennett** gave Suzannah the low-down on how a group of native Cullen legumes are showing great potential as a pasture species for the lower rainfall temperate regions of Australia. Then it was off to visit **Hayley Norman** at CSIRO Livestock Industries in Floreat to find out more about sheep and saltbush, before driving down to DAFWA's Medina trial site south of Perth to see the exceptional performance of the Bituminaria variety of plants in the dry summer conditions.

### Website updated

To make it easier for FFI CRC staff, and its partners, to access FFI CRC templates, logos and forms, a staff resources page has been added to the FFI CRC website.

The *Staff* page can be found at the bottom of the menu options on the FFI CRC homepage. To gain access the page, type in the password: pollocks.

To go directly to the staff resources page, click on this link:

<http://www.futurefarmcrc.com.au/staff.html>

### New edition of *Focus on Perennials*

The March edition of *Focus on Perennials* is about to hit the streets. A PDF of the March 2008 edition can be downloaded here: <http://www.futurefarmcrc.com.au/publications.html>

For further information contact:

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## Program activities

### P1 Future Livestock Production

For further information contact:

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### 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

For further information contact:

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## Snippets

### 2008 Prime Minister's Prizes for Science



Nominations are currently sought for Australia's national science and science teaching awards. The prizes, which include the \$300,000 Prime Minister's Prize for Science, are awarded to those who have made outstanding contributions to science and science teaching. Nominations close 9 May 2008.

\* Further information is available from <https://sciencegrants.dest.gov.au/SciencePrize/Pages/Home.aspx>

### FFI researcher speaking at commercial weed seminar

FFI CRC Weed-risk researcher Dr **Lynley Stone** will give a presentation on 17 April to the Victorian Weed Society as part of a *commercial weeds: roles, responsibilities and innovations* seminar. Her presentation is entitled *Identifying and managing weed risk in perennial pasture research*. A corresponding paper will be published in the Plant Protection Quarterly journal.

The seminar will also feature a range of other speakers from Weed CRC, Biosecurity Australia and the CSIRO.

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## Coming Events

### WA Farmers Annual Conference

**26-28 March, Perth**

Email: [ChrisMarris@wafarmers.org.au](mailto:ChrisMarris@wafarmers.org.au)

## **2nd International Salinity Forum**

**31 March - 3 April 2008, Adelaide**

[www.internationalsalinityforum.org](http://www.internationalsalinityforum.org)

## **FFI CRC Participants meeting**

**23 April, Melbourne**

Email: [sarah.colombera@futurefarmcrc.com.au](mailto:sarah.colombera@futurefarmcrc.com.au)

## **Adoption & Commercialisation Consultative Panel meeting**

**24 April, Perth**

Email: [jpowell@optimalicm.net.au](mailto:jpowell@optimalicm.net.au)

## **FFI CRC Board meeting**

**20 May, Sydney**

Email: [sarah.colombera@futurefarmcrc.com.au](mailto:sarah.colombera@futurefarmcrc.com.au)

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

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

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

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

**21-25 September 2008, Adelaide**

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

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