



Central West Farming Systems

FARMERS ADVANCING RESEARCH

PO Box 171 CONDOBOLIN NSW 2877 Ph. 6895 1001 Fax. 6895 2688
Email – catherine.evans@agric.nsw.gov.au sharon.taylor@agric.nsw.gov.au

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED – Dec 2004

CWFS – Planning for the Future

Over the past year CWFS staff and Executive have spent many hours planning for the future. We believe that the model we have in place is working. Funding bodies, however, want something new. So how do we keep what we have yet change to make it better without taking on too much extra, unpaid work?

We have come up with the idea of setting up a Farming Information Centre. The idea of this is that it becomes a hub for information about farming for central-western NSW. It can be used by farmers, tourists, school groups, universities, local clubs, etc. So far it is a dream but let me try to explain.

Have you been to Shear Outback or a similar tourist attraction? We want to do something along those lines over the next 10 years. If possible, this site will be located next to the Farming Systems Comparison trial. This will enable people to see different farming systems and enterprises. It will allow people to see and understand fallows, tillage, rotations, livestock systems, cell grazing, stubble management, etc. Inside the “shed” will be displays and more information about farming practices – brochures, handouts and fact sheets. The building could be run on solar power, use environmental building aspects to minimise power requirements, have rainwater tanks for water supply, use composting toilets and be surrounded by a variety of suitable trees.

The Farming Information Centre will allow people to learn more about farming, the environment and how agriculture and the environment can work together.

It's a huge undertaking and we are only just making a start. We will need to talk to many people to see if there is support for such a venture before we start trying to get it off the ground.

If you have any objections, ideas, areas of expertise or suggestions we would love to hear from you. So give us a call or drop us a note. THANKS!

How did our harvest finish up?

As we get towards Christmas, headers across the central west begin to finish up harvest. CWFS have decided to provide an insight into the yields across our districts. Each of the NSW DPI district agronomists associated with our regional sites have provided us with the following information.

In the Condobolin, Tottenham and Cobar districts, yields were highly variable, with an average yield of 0.8 t/ha (4 bags). Nathan Border said that earlier planted crops performed well, as did quick maturing crops like H45. He reported that the better crops were to the north of Condobolin around and toward Tottenham and along Boona Road.

In the Forbes district Ken Motley reported that wheat yields have been 25% below the October estimates, with a district average of 1.4 t/ha. Canola yields were disappointing with an average yield of 0.8 t/ha with very low oil levels. Ken said the late break meant H45 was the dominate variety in the district, with large areas sprayed with foliar fungicide for stripe rust.

In the Parkes district Karen Roberts estimated the average wheat yields to be around 1.5 t/ha, with the best crops yielding 4 t/ha. Parkes' estimates will be update after harvest is finished to provide a more accurate estimate.

More yield reports in the January edition.

MERRY CHRISTMAS

To all we wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Thanks for your support and friendship through 2004.



Sharon and Cath



PO Box 171
Condobolin NSW 2877

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