



Central West Farming Systems

FARMERS ADVANCING RESEARCH

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YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED – April 2005

Merriwagga Wins Award

Some more good news. The Merriwagga Regional Site has won a Special Award in the GRDC Grower Group Awards. The Award gives the group a cash prize of \$800 and the group will be profiled in GroundCover later in the year.

This is great news for the Merriwagga group who have had about 100 people attend their Field Day each year for the last few years. Considering the town has a population of less than 50, this is a great effort. Congratulations to Lawrence Higgins, the regional site chairman, to the rest of the Committee, the other farmers and sponsors involved and the local District Agronomist, Barry Haskins.

BAD Report

BAD stands for Beer Appreciation Dinner. This was held in Tottenham at the end of March and was organised by Sharon on behalf of Partners in Grain, a GRDC funded project. From all reports it was a very enjoyable evening with the following beers tasted: Hahn Premium Light and XXXX Gold as pre-dinner drinks. Tooheys New and Becks with the entrée. Tooheys Old, James Squire Amber Ale and Hahn Premium with the main meal and Southwark Stout and James Squire Porter with the dessert. The aim of the BAD was to provide information about growing and marketing barley and malting and brewing processes. Sponsors for the night included - Lion Nathan, ABB Grain and the NSW Department of Primary Industries.

Low Rainfall Workshop

At the end of March Cath attended a meeting that brought together many of the leading scientists working in low rainfall agricultural research. We spent a day brainstorming where low rainfall farming was going, what was driving the system,

what was holding us back and how could we best help farmers.

Everyone at the meeting believed that mixed farming systems were vital to survival in low rainfall areas. I was pretty pleased that this was in agreement with the results from the core site trial, Farming Systems Comparison.

There was much discussion about water – both rainfall and stored soil moisture. Water is the key driver, particularly in low rainfall environments, and if we understand water in the system better, we may be better able to manage the system. Hopefully in the next few years you may see some of the output from this meeting.

Tree Book

Peter Milthorpe and Margaret Wynne's book "Useful Trees and Shrubs of central west NSW" has arrived and if you ordered your copy, you should have it by now. If not, please give Cath a yell.

We have found that there are some books with missing pages, doubled pages, pages upside down, etc. The number of books with errors is quite small and we have enough books to replace the errors. If you received a book with page errors, please let us know and we can organise a swap for you. Thanks.

The books will be available for sale at Field Days and other events for \$28. If you would like one mailed to you before then, please post us your details and a cheque (made out to CWFS) for \$31 (an extra \$3 for postage).

Cath and Sharon



Australian Nuffield Farming Scholars Association

The mission of the Australian Nuffield Farming Scholars' Association is *'to promote excellence in all aspects of Australian agricultural production, distribution and management through the adoption of local and international best practice and continuous development of a unique network of industry leaders and innovators.'*

Applications for the Nuffield farming scholarships for 2005 are now available. This scholarship is available to property owners and managers in the Australian primary production industry, aged between 28 and 40 years. The scholarship offers a 'golden key' to the best production, management and marketing systems in every corner of the world. It also embraces the world's best in agriculture. Scholars gain a deep understanding, and global perspective, of the politics, cultures and challenges of world agriculture.

To find out what else is offered by this scholarship please contact:

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Marcus Oldham Rural Leadership Program - 2005

The Marcus Oldham Rural Leadership Program is an intense five-day course from Sunday 26th June to Friday 1st July, at Marcus Oldham College, Geelong. The Program concentrates on developing each participant's leadership skills, self-confidence and personal effectiveness to equip them with the attributes necessary to be a leader in Australian Agriculture.

Participants are selected on the basis of their potential to contribute as a leader in their community and industry, and a demonstrated desire to develop their leadership skills, self-confidence and personal effectiveness. The cost of the program is \$1,650 (incl. GST); this includes tuition, notes, accommodation and all meals for the five-day program.

For further information about the program please contact: Adrian Kennelly – Program Convenor, ph (03) 5243 3533 or visit their website – www.marcusoldham.vic.edu.au