

# THE DIRT

Official Newsletter of Southern DIRT

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# Chairman's Report

by Craig Bignell, Southern Dirt Chairman

Hello Southern Dirt members,

Southern Dirt had its Spring Field day recently in two parts. The first half indoors and then in the field. Thankyou to those who attended and a big thanks to Michael Hodgkins for his work with everything technical on the day. He managed to pull off a live interactive meeting with Michael Harvey from Rabobank a market analyst in lockdown from Melbourne. Thanks to our long-time supporter in Rabobank for offering quality presenters for us to hear from.

I'm excited to say we have introduced three new board members to Southern Dirt. Michael Wallace from Boyup Brook, a sheep, cattle and grain farmer in that order. Adrian Biliney from Kojonup, a grain and sheep farmer in equal measure and Sarah Thompson Kojonup veterinarian and sheep farmer. Thanks to these three for putting their hand up and the enthusiasm they have already brought to the table is positive for Southern Dirt's future. The sad part of that is we say farewell to Lynley Anderson an inaugural board member and Evan Hall a long time participant and previous chair. Both Evan's and Lynley's commitment to SD was greatly appreciated and their cool and thoughtful input greatly valued. Thanks to you both. Thankyou to all the current board members who are all busy people and find the time for meetings and relevant preparation.

Thankyou to our staff also. Tracey, Sheriden, Carla, Hannah, Jessica and Pip (I should include Michael here also) thankyou on behalf of our members for helping us become better famers and improving our industry. Congratulations to Jessica and Simon on the safe arrival of their new baby Isabelle.

Next year at Southern Dirt we hope to bring you new trials on subjects that will increase your bottom line as well as extension of our current trials. We also will endeavour to better inform you of what growers are getting right and give us a chance to learn from our peers. I am continually amazed at the production of some of our local producers and we can certainly learn from these people. If you have any ideas please don't hesitate to get in contact with our staff or myself in this regard.

Reflecting on 2020 it has certainly been a year to remember or forget. Whatever your political persuasions the tough decisions our leaders made have kept us relatively protected from a virus still delivering un-tolled damage to other countries. Our isolation has certainly helped us but I'm sure all of you have some contact with someone living in these badly affected countries who have informed you of the impact. Over 250,000 deaths in the USA alone.

Anyway... as we head into the festive season remember what's important to you, stay safe and good luck for 2021.

Craig Bignell

# CEO Report

by Tracey Hodgkins, Southern DIRT Chief Executive Officer

Hi everyone,

Thank goodness 2020 is coming to a close and what a year it has been. From my perspective China is throwing out a few curly ones and that will be somewhat of a challenge for many of us. COVID is still having an impact on imports and exports and the whole ag sector is having to manage with labour shortages.

It has been challenging for Southern DIRT as much of the funding we access has been redirected towards COVID initiatives. Many of our planned events were cancelled and sponsorship is currently declining as business redirect their funds to survival mode. We are still ok and have been working through strategies to enable our activities to continue unhindered. The commercial products we are developing will work somewhat towards subsidising the trials activities we have planned. Hopefully 2021 will bring us a vaccine that enables us to put our event plans into action. The Future Food Conference is still aiming to take place in September and some of our food products will come online for WA.

Southern DIRT has had a very busy month with harvesting infield trials and positively the Flax is coming up trumps. As you know diversity is one of the keys for us to push yields and Flax is just another crop we can use as necessary in the system. The trials are going gangbusters and what has been harvested so far is pushing 1.6 tonne to the hectare. At \$900 a tonne and the market in development it is looking incredibly positive. Give me a heads up if you want to be in the trials for next year. Along with this we have done a deal with a Demeter Grains to develop our commodity and supply chain markets and have engaged with Curtin University for our own branding and marketing strategies.

All last season trial results are now available in a clickable e-book on the website as well as in hardcopy: <https://southerndirt.com.au/current-trials/southern-dirt-research-annual-2019/> It is well worth a look if you haven't already. This year's harvest results will be available in March once our funding partners have approved the content. We will be presenting that at our trials update before putting the booklet out for you all.

In the Great Southern post-harvest we will continue with our Long Season Wheat, Red Wheat, Ripper Gauge, Flax and Non-wetting trials. We have partnered with Katanning Landcare and Trials Co to deliver a compost trial and work continues on our Regenerative Farming investigation. We are continuing with our MLA Alternative Fodder Crops and Dual Purpose Cropping demonstrations in 2021 with a total of 6 new sites. I am also currently working on several applications for the MLA donor company fund with new farming systems and carbon reduction in the forefront of farmers minds.

In the Peel Region, progression has been happening with the ½ hectare high-tech Shade house we have been gifted from Wide Open Agriculture. Lotterywest has approved our EOI and we are now progressing to a full funding submission which is aimed for February 21st. The lease for the land donated by the Nicola and Shane Keliher is about to be signed and planning is well underway for a mid-2021 project start. Last week we delivered a Think Tank and partners from 30 organisations in the region came together to help us capture what will work the best on the site and pledge their partnership support.

In the Southwest work continues on the Scott River Strategy with water, roads and labour shortages top of the agenda. A funding submission for water and roads strategies is in development for the Building Better Regions Fund that is due out post-Christmas. Barbara Dunnet our treasurer chaired a meeting with the Shires and industry representatives, and all agreed to develop a permanent committee with working sub-committees for each project. I am currently developing an MOU and Terms of reference for each. Committee meetings commence before Christmas.

Finally I would like to say a big thankyou for two fantastic Southern Dirt former Chairs who have now departed the board. Lynley Anderson has been the most encouraging and wonderful support and has brought wisdom and grace to the board. Lynley knows her livestock well and has been responsible for helping us to progress trials in this area. She has been with us for 11 years and I personally would like to thank her for unwavering support. Just knowing she was there was a great motivation to keep doing what I was doing no matter how hard it became.

Evan Hall has been on the board for 6 years with 2 as Chair. His contribution has helped to elevate and diversify our offerings so as not to have our eggs in just one basket. He also examined the board engagement and has helped to bring more rigour to the process. Thank you Evan, for your part in helping us to become better as a team.

So happy harvest and Merry Christmas to you all! See you on the flipside!

Tracey

Tracey Hodgkins



## New Board Member

Sarah Thompspon



My name is Sarah Thompson. I grew up on a sheep and wheat property north east of Nyabing. The farm was purchased by my grandfather in 1973 and developed by him and his two sons before my Dad took over on his own in the 1980's. Our farm focused on wool and wheat but in addition we had a piggery and dabbled in prime lambs.

I loved the farm, in particular the livestock aspect, and my love of animals led me to the study of veterinary science and graduation as a veterinarian in the early 2000's. While studying I met my husband to be, Ben Thompson. Ben was working on his family farm in Boyup Brook. The Thompson's farm, Benbrook Grazing, is located east of Boyup Brook. The original property was purchased in 1971 by Ben's

father, Max, consisting of just under 3000 acres of uncleared land. Max, along with his father and brother, spent 10 years clearing and developing the land into the fabulous, predominantly sheep property that we run today.

Sheep began and still remain the primary focus of our enterprise however this has evolved from exclusively wool production to a mix of wool and prime lambs. The farm was expanded in 2003 with the acquisition of a neighbouring property and Ben and I took over the running of the farm in 2008. In addition to sheep we annually buy in store cattle to fatten in the spring and grow barley, oats and hay. We are currently running 4000 breeding merino ewes. Approximately 60% will be mated to merinos to maintain our breeding stock and 40% to Poll Dorsets for prime lamb production. We have a small merino stud established in the 1980's with a focus on high producing, well-nourished wool sheep that can handle the local conditions. Artificial insemination has allowed us access to desirable genetics as we strive for continued improvement in our merino flock. Cropping is a relatively small component of our enterprise. Volumes vary depending on feed availability and storage. On average we would put in around 300 acres of crop, the majority of which is kept as feed for livestock.

We have recently bought a block of blue gum stumps in the Manjimup shire that we are in the process of clearing and redeveloping. Our long term plan for this block is focused on cattle with the aim of breeding our own herd of Angus cows. Our workforce consists of Ben and myself and one full time worker. We employ casuals during busy times such as lamb marking and crutching and contractors for work such as harvest and hay bailing. Days may also be traded with like-minded neighbours so both parties can complete tasks such as artificial insemination or hay carting. I split my time between the farm, veterinary work and 3 primary school aged kids.



## New Board Member

Sarah Thomspson... continued



Professional development centers largely on attending local field days and workshops with an occasional online webinar. Less formal social gatherings have also proven valuable as opportunities to share information and ideas for agricultural advancement.

While our farming practice has not changed dramatically in the last 20 years there have been significant improvements in the efficiency of the system. Scanning sheep for multiples and scales on sheep feeders allow improved accuracy of feeding stock and GPS tracking ensures correct application of fertilisers and sprays. We have introduced early weaning with great success and herd health measures such as vaccination and supplementation have been adjusted where needed to help improve productivity. Other areas of change and improvement center on farm biosecurity and safety. Technologies are already out there with respect to

the tracking of an individual animal's performance and these are things we would be hoping to embrace in the future.

Current challenges we face are drought proofing, chemical and drug resistance and opportunities for expansion. Seasonal changes have put water at the forefront of our minds in recent years so more time has been put in to dam cleaning and enlargement and improving water catchment. Combatting drench resistance involves more strategic worm control and monitoring via worm egg counts. Expansion is becoming ever more difficult but can only be addressed by thinking outside the square – looking at different regions and considering different farming options even when this comes outside your comfort zone.

The research undertaken by Southern Dirt is invaluable in many aspects of agriculture. Addressing ongoing concerns as well as introducing completely new ideas can only have a positive impact on farming going forward. Southern Dirt plays a key role in both the development of these new ideas and getting these ideas out into the wider agricultural community.

By joining the Southern Dirt Board I am hoping to contribute positively to the advancement of farming in our area. My main interest is in livestock and animal welfare. As debate rages over the inefficiency of livestock production in comparison to cereal grains it is becoming increasingly important to continue to improve the productivity, sustainability and relevance of livestock farmers in our region.



# Project Report Updates

## Increasing Profits with Dual Purpose Crops

Southern Dirt Participation: Develop 3 sites each year for 3 years to demonstrate and quantify the benefits of dual-purpose crops into mixed farm systems to address the autumn/winter feed gap. We have one site for 2020, Kojonup Distric High School, and have added another year, 2024 for another two sites.

Status: ongoing

Looking for 2 new sites for 2021. If you are interested and would like more information, please get in contact with Sheridan Kowald.

## Alternative Fodder Crops

Investment:	MLA
Project Duration:	3 years (2020-2023)
Project Hosts (2020)	1. Andrew Scanlon 2. Peter Cummings
Status:	On Going

Our MLA invested Alternative Fodder Crop project will run for 3 years with the aim 'To determine an economical alternative fodder crop system to increase weight gain in weaner lambs/hoggets to reduce reliance on live shipping and to provide alternative livestock management systems to increase profitability by targeting markets.'

Lambs have been weighed & enter their trial sites; they will be removed in March 2021. We are hoping to turn lambs of at 52kgs. Sites will be monitored weekly during the grazing period. Annual report with 2020/21 data to be released at the end of March 2021. The project has been extended via social media and was on ABC's country hour.

Looking for 2 new sites for 2021. If you are interested and would like more information, please get in contact with Sheridan Kowald.

# Project Report Updates

## Ripper Gauge Trials

Investment: GRDC  
Project Duration: 3 years (2018 - 2021)  
Project Hosts: 1. Paul Duffield- Darkan  
2. Craig Bignell- Broomehill  
Status: On Track

Southern Dirt Participation: Develop, implement, and manage a research trial & project extension to evaluate grain yield and economic benefit of soil amelioration. Awaiting to hear if this project will be extended. All in-field assessments are completed. Craig Bignell's harvest has been completed on this site, and Paul Duffields will be completed early December. Results will be presented at our next trials update day.

## Legume Demonstration for Reliable Profit

Investment: GRDC  
Project Duration: 3 year (2018 - 2020)  
Project Host: 2020: Ben Webb - Muradup  
Craig Bignell - Broomehill  
Status: On Track

Southern Dirt Participation: Develop, implement, and manage a research trial & project extension to demonstrate the viability of different legume crops and their effect on the subsequent cereal crop.

We received an extension for this site to monitor the effects over a second year, 2020 site is going well. Ongoing site monitoring and evaluations as required.

Ben Webb's site has been harvested, with lupins yielding the highest. Results will be presented at our next trials update day.

# Project Report Updates

## Summer Cropping Demonstrations in the Western Region

Investment: GRDC  
Project Duration: 2 year (2020 - 2022) Project extension to March 2022  
Project Hosts: 1. Simon Harding - Williams  
Status: On Track

Southern Dirt Participation: Develop, implement and manage a research trial & project extension demonstrating summer crops and their effect on winter waterlogged soils and the subsequent winter crop growth.

The summer 2019/2020 summer crop went extremely well and into the winter growing season. GRDC approved an extension to redo the trial next winter so we can get the winter crop sown over the summer crop at the correct time. The new trial site will be in Williams. Site will be seeded in December.

## Non-Wetting Management Options for Growers in the Albany Port Zone

Investment: GRDC  
Project Duration: 2 years (2019 -2021) extension for SCF until 2022  
Project Hosts: 1: Theo Cunningham- Cranbrook  
2: Todd Lubcke- Darkan  
Status: On track

Southern Dirt Participation: Develop, implement and manage a research trial & project extension to improve the confidence in diagnostic methods for delineating and implementing methods to overcome non-wetting in a variety soil types, and to increase the confidence of growers in the decision making for improving soil productivity.

2 sites established with a both mechanical soil amelioration and wetting agents trialled. All in-field assessments are completed & harvest has been completed at each site also.

Awaiting to see if there will be an extension for 2021.

# Project Report Updates

## Using Long Season Wheats for Increases in Profits and Grazing Opportunities

Investment: COGGO & GRDC  
Project Duration: 2 years (2020 & 2021)  
Project Hosts: 2 sites required each year for 2 years  
1: Simon Zacher  
2: N/A  
Status: On Track

Southern Dirt Participation: Develop, implement and manage a research trial & project extension the aim of the project will be to encourage the adoption of long season wheats into crop rotations through farmer scale demonstrations. The project will demonstrate time of sowing, best available varieties suited to the area, and the opportunity for grazing without yield penalty.

Three sites will be established in 2021. With all host spots being filled.  
We are awaiting harvest of the site.

## Red Wheat Trial

Investment: GRDC  
Project Duration: 3 years (2020-2023)  
Project Hosts: 1. Simon Zacher  
Status: On track

Site was seeded later then what would have been preferred. Site is in the same location as the Long Season wheat site, field day hosted 24th September.

Simon Zacher will host this site again in 2021.  
Awaiting harvest of the site.

# Project Report Updates

## Investment in WA focused Linseed Agronomy (Small Plot Flax Trials)

Investment: GRDC  
Project Duration: 1 year (2019)  
Project Hosts: 1: Evan Hall  
2: Tim Harrington- Darkan  
3: Peter Cummings- Wagin  
Status: On track

Southern Dirt Participation: Small plot trials to establish the best agronomic practises for growing flax crops in the Great Southern of WA, comparing canola for economic package and benefits.

All sites looking fantastic!

All in-field assessments are completed & awaiting harvest on two of the sites.

The other two sites have been harvested with impressive yield results. Results will be presented at our trials update day.

## Flax Supply Chain

Investment: RNIF  
Project Duration: 2 years  
Project Hosts: 1: Lynley Anderson  
Status: On track

Southern Dirt participation: To take 15 hectares of flax crop from paddock to retail to develop a supply chain.

Late Brom spray on the crop twisted the flax slightly however it is back on track now. Spray was recommended and pushed to go ahead by agronomist and Blair Jepson (TAS).

Awaiting harvest.

## GRDC NPK 2018-2022

Investment: GRDC  
Project Duration: 4 years (June 2018 – June 2022)  
Project Host: UWA, DPIRD, GIWA  
Status: On track

Southern Dirt Participation: Workshop development and hosting, supplemented by media and social media material. To organise a series of workshops in the western region that present GRDC research findings and increase grower knowledge on N, P, and K fertilisers and enable them to make more informed fertiliser decisions.

# Project Report Updates

## Soil pathogens Project

The project has general aims to provide extension activities to help growers and advisers to better understand soilborne pathogens, their impacts, how to identify symptoms and options for management.

There are four main activities where grower groups can be part of this project and can be sub-contracted by FarmLink Research to this end.

1. The planning and holding of interactive workshops in July - September 2020
2. The identification and establishment of demonstration sites in 2021
3. The oversowing of these sites with a single cereal crop in 2022
4. Associated field extension and communication activities to support these activities.

1 site – Matt Crosby – Broomehill

Looking for more sites if possible.

## KLC Compost Trial

Status: On track

TrialCo have agreed to run this trial with us. Small plot layout.

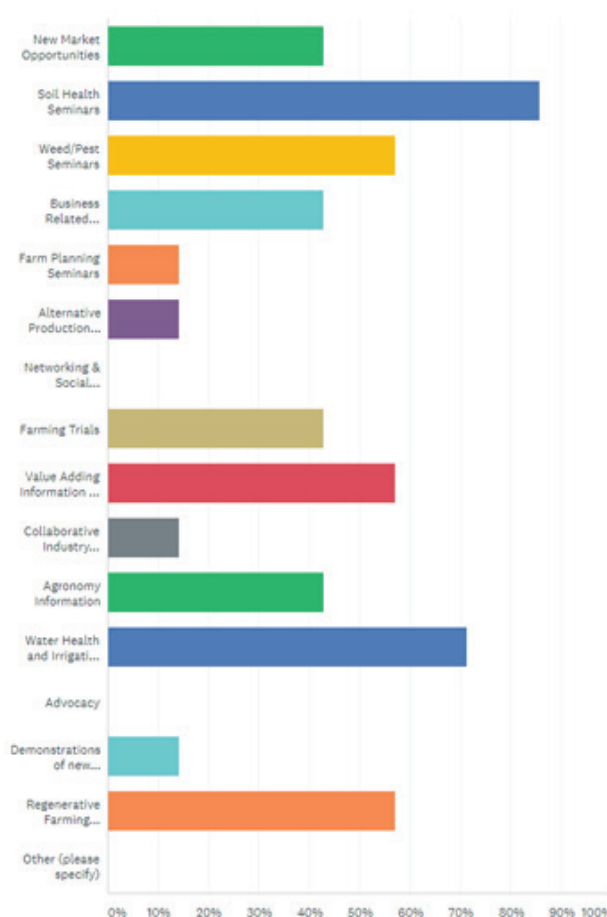
To commence in 2021.

This year we focused on connecting with growers and food businesses in the region, to increase our reach and find out what major issues they need assistance with. Along with sending out information to our members about events, workshops and new initiatives that were happening in the region, we applied for funding to set up a “Starter Farmer” education program aiming to support new growers and we are currently putting together another application to set up a Peel Regeneration Hub, which will include a youth training component.

In conversations with our members, it has been clear that they would like to connect with experts, but at the same time, have the opportunity to learn from each other. Sharing new ideas, technologies and initiatives is what will drive the region forward and make sure farming is here for generations to come.

We are currently putting together our plan for events and projects to run in 2021, with the first being a soil improvement workshop booked in for early February. Soil improvement was the most common topic raised by our growers this year and we are hoping to get experts and growers to present some innovative ideas on the topic.

Other areas of interest are currently in new markets, weed and pest management, value add and regenerative farming. We would like to hear from more growers before committing to specific topics for the rest of the year, so if you would like to contribute your ideas, please complete the survey here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/5P5879L>



We wish you all a safe and happy Christmas and New Year and hope you are all able to take a well-earned break through Summer. We are looking forward to moving ahead with projects in 2021 and get more growers involved in the Peel Hub.

Hannah Lalor



Southern Dirt in partnership with Regional Regeneration Alliance have recently put in an expression of interest to Lotterywest to fund a Regeneration Hub in the Peel region.

A half hectare shade house, associated farming equipment and irrigation system are being donated by Wide Open Agriculture and we are planning to relocate it to donated land in Meelon. It will allow vegetables to be grown in a controlled regenerative environment and then possibly sold under a new brand celebrating produce from Peel.

One of the main aims of the project is to engage youth in the region that have been impacted by the loss of employment opportunities due to Covid-19. The labour market in Peel worsened in Q2 2020, which sustained job losses and higher unemployment rates across all age cohorts. The largest increase in unemployment was observed in Peel youth (15 – 24 years), which more than doubled from 14.3% in Q2 2019 to 36.2% in Q2 2020.

With the support from local TAFE's, schools and Peel Youth Services, the project will give youth opportunities to develop horticulture, technology, business and sales skills that build confidence. It will help build food security by teaching young people how to grow food whilst also giving them marketable skills that enable them priority entry into an industry which is struggling to maintain its workforce.

The Regeneration Hub will be situated next to the WA Food Innovation Precinct, which will also give our cohorts exposure to value add, food accreditation, warehousing, and marketing programs in conjunction with the Future Food CRC and Murdoch University.

Southern Dirt and Regional Regeneration Alliance are currently in discussion with many experts to determine the best setup and produce to grow in the facility. Meetings with a range of experts and stakeholders have given us direction for what we can do with this project currently and what it could extend to in the future. We thank everyone involved so far for providing their expertise, which will give us the best chance to create a successful project and determine how we can make the most positive impact in the region.

# Peel Regeneration Hub

... continued



*Herbs being grown in an NFT greenhouse system in Baldvís*



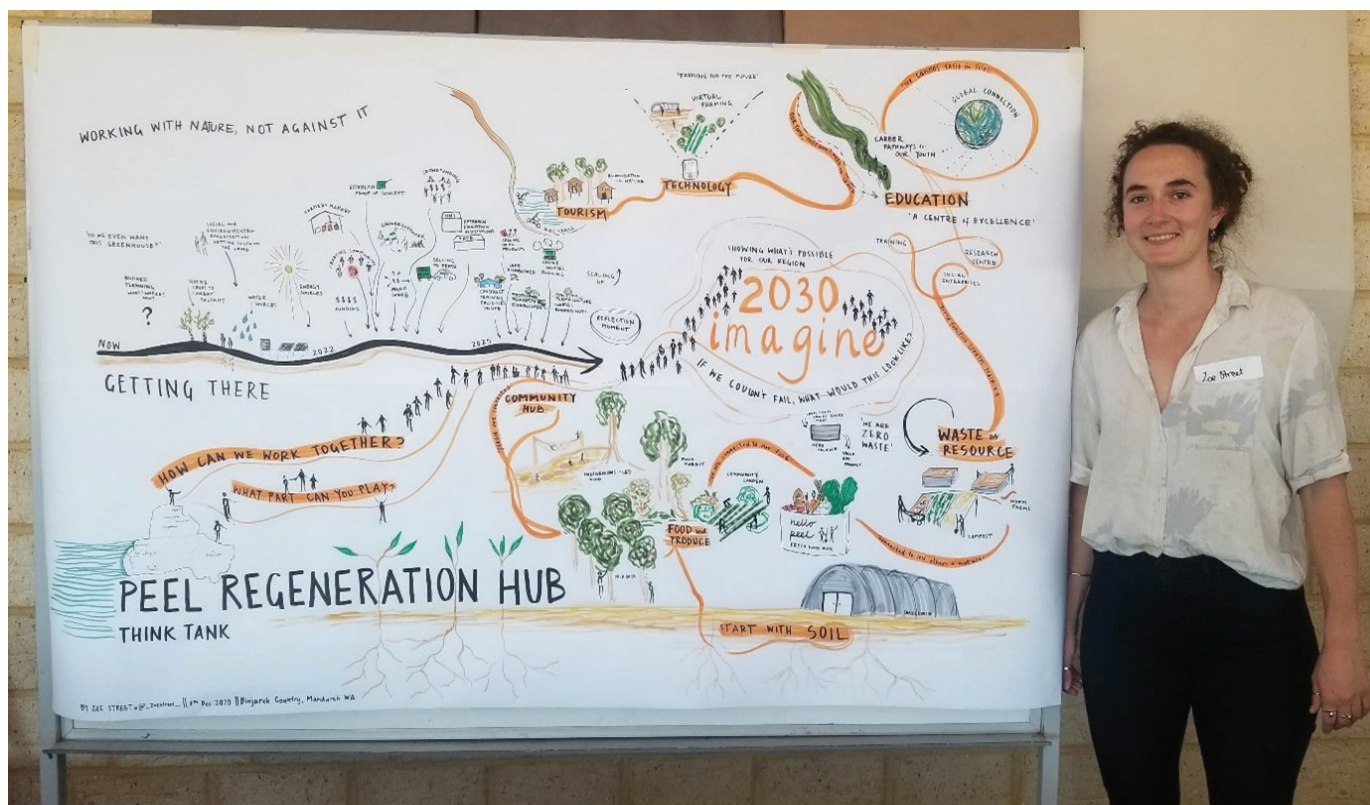
*Capsicums being grown in a rockwool greenhouse system in Oakford*

## Think Tank Meeting

Southern Dirt and Regional Regeneration Alliance held a successful Think Tank event for Peel Regenerating Hub. The event consisted of a group of diverse people from a range of different industries, from youth workers, scientists to engineers and local council representatives. Ideas were created from backcasting and picturing the future of the regenerative hub.

We started with the shadehouse and the potential it can grow to if there is no restraints. Interpretation of the project was drawn from everyone's minds and the future focused on building communities, creating job opportunities, learning and education programs, putting a spotlight on sustainability and education for the youth in Peel.

During the event, we had a talented artist Zoe Street draw an illustration of keywords and ideas that were discussed by the attendees. She created a masterpiece of a promising picture of the Peel Regenerating Hub.



*Zoe Street with her illustration of our ideas at the Think Tank Meeting*

## Global fertiliser price outlook positive news for Australian growers

Cheap fertiliser prices have supported growers' profit margins and further contributed to the 2020/21 winter crop recovery, according to agribanking specialist Rabobank.

Nationally, urea sales were 26 per cent up year-on-year (YOY) during the first half of 2020, while global fertiliser benchmarks bottomed out at, or near, 10-year lows.



*Rabobank analyst Wes Lefroy*

However Rabobank analyst Wes Lefroy said the market had taken a new turn during the second half of this year, with prices across the global fertiliser complex moving back toward the 10-year average.

Mr Lefroy said that according to Fertiliser Australia, on average over the past five years, 66 per cent of all fertiliser sold in Australia had been imported, up from an average of 50 per cent from 2002 to 2006.

For the three main products sold here, the figures are even higher – in 2019, 86 per cent of urea sold was imported, 79 per cent of mono-ammonium phosphate (MAP) and 100 per cent of Muriate of Potash (MOP).

And of the domestically-produced fertiliser products, Mr Lefroy said some rely on imported raw materials.

"As such, local farm-gate fertiliser prices are largely driven by global prices, the Australian dollar and, to a lesser extent, ocean freight rates," he said. "For growers, the good news is we expect heavy supplies and growing production capacity will continue to weigh on prices across the global nutrient complex."

In the immediate term, he said prices of phosphates and urea continuing would be supported by northern hemisphere demand (until the start and end of quarter one 2021 respectively).

However he warned that once seasonal demand from the northern hemisphere subsided, markets would again be exposed to heavy supplies.

"In 2021, this is expected to be particularly the case for urea. The International Fertilizer Association expects another nine million metric tonnes (mmt) of urea production capacity, a 4.5 per cent increase, well above their forecast demand growth of one per cent," Mr Lefroy said.

Almost half of that new capacity was likely to appear in India, reducing that country's activity in global markets.

"The one exception is potash, where the market is more supportive of prices. We expect importers in China and India will continue to cover inventories and demand in the US and Brazil will be sustained."

On the supply side, current low prices may limit production from high-cost plants and new projects coming online, and as a result, Rabobank was forecasting global potash prices to increase at a constant rate over the first half of 2021.

"While we expect global fertiliser prices to remain favourable for Australian producers, one factor chewing into importers' purchasing power will be a relatively weak Australian dollar. At current urea prices, a one cent drop in the AUD represents approximately a 5-6 AUD/tonne increase in local prices."

The ongoing impacts of COVID-19 also needed to be considered in the year ahead, he said.

"The resilience of local and global fertiliser supply chains to the impacts of the global pandemic this year have been something to celebrate. In fact, to the end of August, year-to-date urea imports reached 2.1 mmt, some 300,000 million tonnes more than 2019, and 665,000 million tonnes than 2018."

"However, with case numbers still very high in many part of the world, the potential for a COVID-19-related interruption to either supply or production remains," Mr Lefroy said.



# CropCast

with

Craig White

CropCast is a podcast developed to deliver current broadacre agronomic news, product and application know-how and information from Bayer's Market Development Agronomy Team about the latest technologies.

Produced and hosted by Craig White, Market Development Agronomist at Bayer Crop Science, CropCast is created for everyone with an interest in agriculture. With new episodes available covering seasonally relevant topics for broadacre crops, CropCast is essential listening to keep you up-to-date with what is going on in the world of broadacre farming.



Search CropCast or scan the QR code to listen to the latest episode.



Bayer CropScience Pty Ltd ABN 87 000 226 022 Level 1, 8 Redfern Road, Hawthorn East, Vic 3123  
Technical Enquiries: 1800 804 479 [enquiries.australia@bayer.com](mailto:enquiries.australia@bayer.com)

# Precision Ag Training

Free Workshop



9am - 3pm

Feb 10th, 2021

Southern Dirt

Contact: Carla Green  
[carla@southerndirt.com.au](mailto:carla@southerndirt.com.au)

Southern Dirt Office  
129 Albany Highway  
Kojonup

## Free Hands On Precision Ag Training Workshops

Workshops will provide a brief introduction into precision agriculture so each participant can develop a PA implementation plan.

Tailored to each region information presented will include grower experiences, economic examples of applications, data layers to identify and manage variability as well as look at software/cloud based programs and tips and tricks for success.

Second workshop will follow with topics based upon participants feedback.

Facilitators: Alice Butler & Blake O'Meagher



## Why you should soil sample

At CSBP we recognise that as a farmer your soil is your biggest asset and the key to maximising crop and pasture growth and profitability.

Targeted soil sampling is the first step to understanding your soils nutrient status and crop nutrient requirements ahead of the season as well as identifying any possible soil constraints which may impact crop performance.

Soil testing accurately measures the levels of macro nutrients such as nitrogen (N), phosphorus (P), potassium (K) & sulfur (S) in the soil as well as providing an indication of other factors that can affect crop performance such as pH, organic carbon, electrical conductivity and overall soil health.

Soil analysis and NUlogic interpretations allow us to provide you with a deeper understanding of your nutritional requirements for the season relative to your target production. By using soil analysis results along with current economics such as grain and fertiliser pricing we can provide you with evidence based fertiliser recommendations to maximise your returns.

Using geo-referenced soil test points ensures that you can re-visit the same sites each time a paddock is sampled. This way over time you can monitor nutrient trends as well the effectiveness of your fertiliser program. The easiest way to plan your soil testing points is by using the Decipher-Ag platform.

It is recommended to select soil test points at least every 30 hectares with the aim of soil sampling each site every 3 years, or sampling 1 third of the farm every year. However if the size of your management zones differ from this rule of thumb then a representative number of samples should be taken in each management zone. Recent research undertaken by CSBP has also highlighted to value of deeper soil analysis in providing greater accuracy of the interpretation and fertiliser recommendations. This research has found that soil sampling to a depth of 30cm in 10cm increments with a standard NUlogic soil analysis test performed on each soil depth provides the most accurate fertiliser recommendation.

An easy way to remember this is by the 30, 30, 3 rule.

- Soil test every 30 hectares
- To a depth of 30cm
- Every 3 years.



Samples sites should be representative of the management zone. Ensure that old fence lines, old headlands, stock camps and similar areas of the paddock are avoided as these can bias results. The use of biomass imagery can assist in this selection process.

Soil testing and NUlogic analysis ensures that you can use the right product at the right rate in the right place at the right time on your farm. Contact your local CSBP area manager to organise your soil testing program.



All of us at Southern Dirt wish you and  
your family a very

**MERRY  
CHRISTMAS  
&  
HAPPY NEW  
YEAR!**

**WE ARE OUT OF THE OFFICE UNTIL  
5TH JANUARY 2021**

# Sponsors 2020

THANK YOU TO ALL OUR SPONSORS AND SUPPORTERS

## Partners



## Gold Sponsors



## Silver Sponsors



## Bronze Sponsors



## Supporters



## Southern Dirt Contacts

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