

GRDCs Regional Cropping Solutions Network (RCSN) meeting for the Albany Port Zone was held on 16 August 2017 from 8.00am to 4.10pm in Boyup Brook at the Boyup Brook Community Resource Centre. This closed RCSN meeting followed on from three Open Local Forums which were held in Hyden, Woodanilling and Boyup Brook on 7 and 15 August 2017. This was the second RCSN member meeting for 2017, after the combined RCSN meeting in Perth on 1-2 March 2017.

Meeting attendees included: Mark Pearce, Jeremy Lemon, Trent Parsons, Daniel McDougall, Ben Ball, Ben Creek, Mark Sullivan, Mae Connelly, Kirsty Smith, Sammy Adams, Peter Roberts, Steve Jefferies, Ehsan Tavakkoli, Glenn McDonald, Dean Diepeveen, Alice Butler, Emma Clarke, Andy Duncan, Andrew Etherton, along with Julianne Hill (Coordinator) and Cindy Power (Project Support). Apologies were received from Mark Lawrence, Scott Smith and Kent Stone.

The meeting included the following presentations:

- **Peter Roberts (GRDC):** GRDC soil constraints investments. (How much, where, who).
- **Ehsan Tavakkoli (DPI):** Subsoil constraints and soil fertility work from southern NSW.
- **Glenn McDonald (DPIRD):** How long can any tillage effects last & impact on non-wetting, ripping, ploughing & spading.
- **Andrew Etherton (GRDC Manager of Farming Systems and Agronomy Adelaide):** High rainfall wheat and canola production.
- **Dean Diepeveen (Curtin):** Improving the quality of research/science from GRDC funded activities.

In addition to the above presentations, Steve Jefferies (GRDC CEO); Peter Roberts (Western Panel Chair); and Andy Duncan (Western Panel) also provided a GRDC and RCSN general business update. Presentations provided additional information to assist with meeting discussions.

The RCSN members then considered and voted on all ideas that had been gathered from the three Albany port zone Open Local Forums, plus their own incoming ideas and ideas from the five growers they liaise with prior to each meeting. The top 10 ranked issues are listed in the table below.

ID number	Idea (HYD = Hyden; W = Woodanilling; B = Boyup Brook)	Where did the idea originate?
ALB1	<i>Group map 3a Nematodes x soil nutrition. HYD - Nematodes, subsidised testing to investigate cross section across district at both summer time when most testing is done and then follow through to more testing in season. This will allow understanding of how numbers change. Also will have more uptake of understanding issues, increase discussion on rotations etc</i>	RCSN ideas at beginning of Closed meeting ** Grouped to form one priority area **
ALB2	<i>W - Growers still unsure of rotational implication and management for controlling nematodes</i>	
ALB3	<i>Group Map 3b Subsoil constraints, adoption of deep ripping and CTF on south coast sands.</i>	RCSN ideas at beginning of Closed meeting
ALB4	<i>B- soil classification for the HRZ to use in modelling like Yield Prophet, soil water modelling, APSIM</i>	** Grouped to form one priority area **
ALB5	<i>HYD - Subsoil amelioration, continually an important area of research. More understanding of which soils are responsive, how to manage. Alternative methods of amelioration, local sources. How to identify areas to target.</i>	
ALB6	<i>B - Subsoil constraints - sodicity, compaction, Al toxicity, waterlogging on forest gravels.</i>	
ALB7	<i>W - Better understanding of soils in the Albany port zone. Issues that impact on profitability are subsoil constraints etc.</i>	

ID number	Idea (HYD = Hyden; W = Woodanilling; B = Boyup Brook)	Where did the idea originate?
ALB8	<i>W - Longevity and economics of one off strategic tillage options for soil constraints. Extension work.</i>	
ALB9	W - Research on soil biology; chem effects on soil biology	
ALB10	Ultra-deep ripping across variety of southern soil types for compaction, acidity etc	RCSN ideas at beginning of Closed meeting
ALB11	<i>Group Map 3d Still want to address the yield gap in HRZ canola and other cereals</i>	<i>Open meeting ideas (Hyden, Woodanilling and Boyup Brook)</i> <i>** Grouped to form one priority area**</i>
ALB12	<i>HYD - Whole farming system, why aren't we achieving the yields on farm that the researchers tell us we should be in field trials e.g. trials showing 2t/ha improvement from ripping in trial work, but not so stark on farm. What are we missing to make larger yield difference, we keep doing best practice but the yields are staying stable</i>	
ALB13	<i>B - Which constraints, why aren't we growing high yield across the whole paddock, identifying all yield constraints</i>	
ALB14	<i>Understand relationship between plot yields and broad acre scale yields. Also understanding of spatial variability across paddocks to determine wins/losses from treatments - need to have number of years of yield data to accurately determine this</i>	
ALB15	<i>Presenter comment: Education maybe required to give growers the knowledge and tools of interacting data sets to determine the yield gaps v yield potentials including yield monitors - EM38 - soil testing (nutrition /moisture/pH) both pre and post harvest - and how to calculate these all together in something like yield prophet to see if there are parts of the paddock with yield gaps. GRDC grower survey gives very good statistics of adoption in all GRDC regions for back grounding of research proposal</i>	
ALB21	<i>Group Map 3c TOS trials x region. Building a picture of yield. Get better at gaining more data from trial sites. Frost events, tos, establishment, rain, disease etc. Multi use trials.</i>	RCSN ideas at beginning of Closed meeting

The RCSN members were split into groups of three to work up the four chosen priority areas as identified in ***bold and italics*** above (with some areas being group in a single priority area). Members in each port zone were asked to further refine these top issues, considering the following:

- **IMPORTANCE AND SCALE** – geographical area, crop types, frequency, cost of control.
- **CURRENT SITUATION** – what do you currently do to manage this situation/issue?
- **END RESULT** – what & where would you like to see work happen (R, D or E)? What needs to change for this to happen?

Other issues were also brought up but were not as highly ranked; however, all issues including the high ranking issues that were further developed by RCSN members will continue to have presence at the RCSN discussion table and have been forwarded to the GRDC Western Panel for continued visibility as port zone related issues that feed into existing or future initiatives.

Connect with Us. GRDC now have a Facebook page – www.facebook.com/theGRDC/ (like us!) as well as a dedicated RCSN website – www.rcsn.net.au. Follow us on Twitter @Julianne_Hill, or visit GRDC www.grdc.com.au.

Further queries? Please call Julianne Hill (GRDC Regional Cropping Solutions Network Coordinator) on 0447 261 607 or email regionalcroppingsolutions@gmail.com

The next meeting of the RCSN will be in early February 2018 at Curtin University to connect with the Curtin Centre for Disease Management (CCDM) and the Australian Herbicide Resistance Institute (AHRI).