

GRDCs Regional Cropping Solutions Network (RCSN) meeting for the Geraldton Port Zone was held as part of an interstate trip to Adelaide. This was the first RCSN member meeting for 2018.

Meeting attendees included: Andrew Sandison, John Flannagan, Tony Rosser, Chad Eva, Dale Pearse, Kathryn Fleay, Geoff Fosbery, Craig Topham, Raylene Burns, Erin Cahill, Murray Thomas, Rohan Ford (Western Panel), Jo Wheeler, Julianne Hill (Coordinator), and Graham Mussell (Project Support). Apologies were received from Jason Stokes and Greg Creasy.

Geraldton RCSN members toured a number of facilities on their four days in Adelaide including APAL laboratory; SARDI and WAITE; and visited Mallala growers Trish and Richard Konzag. They also attended the two days of Adelaide Research Updates and heard from key researchers working in RCSN identified high priority areas; as well as met with RCSN members from the Southern Region. They conducted their RCSN meeting on 22 February 2018 at the Oaks Embassy (Adelaide). RCSN members stayed at the Oaks Liberty (Glenelg) and Oaks Embassy (Adelaide) for the duration of their stay.

At their RCSN member meeting, RCSN members considered and voted on all ideas that had been gathered from the five growers they liaise with prior to each meeting; as well as any other topical and high priority issues that they had considered since last meeting. The top 10 ranked issues are listed in the table below.

**TABLE 1: Summarised Top 10 areas that Geraldton port zone RCSN members ranked highly as impacting heavily on growers profitability (those in bold were further developed with MAKATs undertaken).**

ID #	Idea	Area	Further expansion by RCSN members on top issues
<b>GER1</b>	<b>Summer weeds</b>	<b>Innovation</b>	<b>Utilise identification and management tools to minimise the impact of summer weeds on farm profits.</b>
<b>GER2</b>	<b>Summer weeds</b>	<b>Crop protection</b>	<b>Identify chemicals that offer residual control of summer weeds that can be put out in the growing season.</b>
<b>GER3</b>	<b>Summer weeds</b>	<b>Crop protection</b>	<b>Identification of weed types and best management control options.</b>
<b>GER4</b>	<b>Summer weeds</b>	<b>Crop protection</b>	<b>Survey of NAR to identify what summer weeds we have.</b>
<b>GER5</b>	<b>Summer weeds</b>	<b>Crop protection</b>	<b>Greater understanding of economics of weed seeking application machinery to allow for better informed purchasing/contracting decisions.</b>
<b>GER6</b>	Potassium measurement and management	Nutrition	Potassium use efficiency. What is the interaction between N and K in wheat?
<b>GER7</b>	<b>N management and measurement</b>	<b>Innovation</b>	<b>Development of a service that allows farmers and advisors to measure nitrogen availability both soil and plant, and soil moisture status and match predicted future seasonal conditions to develop a profitability focused decision-making tool.</b>
<b>GER8</b>	<b>N management and measurement</b>	<b>Nutrition</b>	<b>Develop best management practices for N use throughout the season in a range of rainfall environments using a variety of tools to measure N use throughout the season.</b>

ID #	Idea	Area	Further expansion by RCSN members on top issues
GER9	<i>N management and measurement</i>	<i>Innovation</i>	<i>Real time yield predictive tools matched to nitrogen response models, leading to more interactive real time nitrogen decision making and understanding. A quick efficient method of best matching N needs to production capabilities while optimising gross margins. Matching season/analogous years/rainfall predictive N.</i>
GER10	Nutrition after amelioration	Soils	How and when is the best time to use gypsum on heavier soil types. How do nutritional response curves (P/N/K) change after soil amelioration (deep ripping, lime, ploughing etc)?
GER11	Ripping	Soils	True cost and practicalities of deep - deep ripping (600-800mm). Keen to know more about red ground ripping. How often to rip - return after 2, 3 & 4 years?
GER12	New varieties and disease packages	Genetic Technology	Adoption of new varieties is quick and we do not have the full agronomist packages. Need to look at nutritional package requirements for new varieties. New varieties and susceptibility PM.
GER13	Long term impacts of CTF	Farming system	Crop establishment issues under long term CTF systems with bars working on compacted and uncompacted soils.
GER14	Connectivity and networks	Agribusiness	Farm networks and connectivity issues.
GER15	Machinery replacement decisions	Agribusiness	Machinery replacement decisions and cost of machines.
GER16	Improving adoption levels of things like VRT	Nutrition	

Other issues were also brought up but were not as highly ranked; however all issues 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 may feed into existing or future initiatives.

**What Next?** All issues considered to be high ranking by the RCSN members will now be further defined; due diligence conducted on each area with regard to research conducted in the past, currently or in development (to avoid replication and to make best use of resources); and those areas which are still considered an issue will be further developed for possible project work. Also, vacancies that exist on the current RCSN have been readvertised with applications closing on 23 April 2018.

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**The next meeting of the RCSN** will be on 24 August 2018 in Geraldton (8am-5pm) with accommodation supplied for all RCSN members for the night of 23 August 2018 following Open Forums at:

- 22 August 2018 – Eneabba (2-6pm)
- 23 August 2018 - Morawa (8-11am)
- 23 August 2018 - Geraldton (2-6pm)

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