

GRDCs Kwinana East Regional Cropping Solutions Network (RCSN) met for the first closed meeting of 2019 as a combined meeting with the Geraldton port zone. This joint meeting was held 11-12 February 2019 across two days and included a day of tours to the Australian Herbicide Resistance at Initiative at the University of Western Australia, Optus Stadium, and High Spirits Distillery, followed by the closed meeting at the International on the Water, Ascot.

The meeting also included a joint dinner on the evening of 11 February 2019 with guest speaker Rochell Walker who is a grower from Newdegate and agricultural social media personality. The following members attended the meeting: Darren Kilminster, Ty Henning, Glen Brayshaw, Cathy Cooke, Alex Leake, Natalie Purdy, Nic McGregor with apologies from Caroline Peek, Clint Della Bosca, Nick Gillett, Floyd Sullivan and Callum Wesley who were unable to attend the meeting. The meeting was also attended by a number of GRDC members and facilitated by Julianne Hill with RCSN project support by Graham Mussell, Helen Ablett and Gilly Johnson.

The meeting included the following agenda items:

- Seasonal updates and reflections on 2018 harvest.
- Guest presentation by Andrew Bates of Swarm Farm.
- Updates on the progress of RCSN ideas since the last meeting and GRDC general update.
- Identification of port zone top issues, including reviewing data collected from the Summer Sesh forums held in Dongara and Busselton held in January 2019.
- Guest presentation by Jerome Critch of PlanFarm and also a Geraldton RCSN member on a new decision-making tool that has been trialled/introduced which provides a responsive MS Excel tool to a review of how investments can affect priority areas, using a set of variables.
- Review, discussion and expansion on the port zone top issues, leading to the identification of the issues to be further developed using the MAKAT process (see below).
- NVT committee updates.
- Meeting evaluation, discussion of next meeting dates and formal meeting close at approximately 4.45 pm.

The Top 10 Issues and those that the RCSN further developed with a MAKAT (in bold) included:

- Long term results/comparison of harvest IWM methods to help growers make the best choice for their farming system
- **Further testing and identification of products and factors associated with testing of lime, Morrell lime and other products to ensure return on investment of product.**
- Addressing acidity in subsoil and developing methods to better incorporate lime efficiently at depth
- Extension of current work on heat and drought tolerance of cereals
- Frost is impacting on profits in the Kwinana East port zone and growers want varieties and genetics that can better handle this issue
- Net Blotch resistance management needs to be extended to preserve fungicide options
- Highly profitable legume options for heavy soils in the Eastern Wheatbelt
- Connectivity may impact on the success or otherwise of implementing autonomy in the Eastern Wheatbelt
- 'Social Licence' is impacting on growers in the eastern wheatbelt
- There is still a lack of suitable short season cereals available for the Kwinana East port zone
- **Management of high stubble loads after the 2018 season**

The selected topics for the MAKATs included (as per bold above):

- Further testing and identification of products and factors associated with testing of lime, Morrell lime and other products to ensure return on investment of product.
- Management of high stubble loads after the 2018 season.

The Kwinana East members then completed two MAKATS on the above topics, using the online GroupMap tool which enabled capture of ideas and information against the MAKAT framework. The MAKAT framework is the methodology upon which projects are then taken forward for consideration by GRDC.

The next meeting for the Kwinana East RCSN will be 28 June 2019 in Merredin. For further details, contact the RCSN Facilitator Julianne Hill on 0447 261 607 or email regionalcroppingsolutions@gmail.com or visit www.grdc.com.au or www.rcsn.net.au