



RCSN NEWSLETTER

Key stories for your region

Julianne Hill, RCSN western region coordinator

After a late start with little subsoil moisture, it's amazing to see crop emergence as good as it has been.

We've seen a lot of the State while travelling around delivering the Grains Research and Development Corporation's (GRDC) Regional Cropping Solutions Network (RCSN) Open Forums. We've been from one end of the grainbelt to the other and, while a bit delayed, most crops look pretty good.



There are only a handful of Open Forums left, with Esperance port zone finishing the winter series in late July. These events have been running for the last five years and are a good way for you to have your say about issues impacting on your farming business.

We also welcome a number of new growers onto the RCSN groups. These appointments are to replace members who have come to the end of their term. Those who stepped down include: Caroline Peek; Jon Hasson; Jeremy Lemon; Ty Fulwood; Mark Pearce; Leon Bowman; Andrew Sandison; Greg Creasy; and Erin Cahill. These people have all been valuable additions to the RCSN initiative over a period of time and we would like to thank them for their contributions.

The new appointees are:

- **Albany zone:** Jarrod King, Gairdner; Kelly James, Hyden
- **Esperance zone:** John Sanderson, Grass Patch
- **Geraldton zone:** Daniel Birch, Coorow; Marcus Blake, Mingenew; Shaun Earl, Yuna
- **Kwinana East zone:** Luke Yates, Trayning; Stuart Faulkner, Beacon
- **Kwinana West zone:** Norm Jenzen, Cunderdin

If you would like to find out more about the RCSN groups, visit the website or contact me – Julianne Hill: 0447 261 607, [email](#), or [Twitter](#). Don't forget to catch up on major findings from more than 100 RCSN-initiated projects that have been established since 2012 by checking out the [2018 western region RCSN Annual Report](#).

Really looking forward to seeing you around the traps soon. For more information about the RCSN initiative, listen to the podcast below.

GRDC PODCAST

Regional Cropping Solutions Network - WA Podcast

The Regional Cropping Solutions Network encourages West Australian grain growers to voice local farming concerns and put forward research ideas to help increase grower profitability in their local port zone.

Date: 15 May 2019

0:00

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Around the RCSN Port Zones

Geraldton port zone

Manganese deficiency in narrow-leaved lupin, which has a poor ability to translocate manganese from the leaves to the grain, has been an issue in parts of the Geraldton port zone in recent years.

This deficiency can substantially reduce grain yields though 'split seed'. Seeds split though the seed coat and sometimes discolour around the margins. The seed may also be small, shrivelled and poorly developed.



Manganese deficiency in narrow-leaved lupin, which has a poor ability to translocate manganese from the leaves to the grain, can substantially reduce grain yields though 'split seed'. Photo: Nigel Wilhelm, SARDI

Last month, Elders senior agronomist and Yuna grower Belinda Eastough addressed the Yuna GRDC Open Forum about this issue.

According to Belinda, manganese deficiency had a severe impact on the WA lupin industry in the 1970s and has re-surfaced as a problem in recent seasons.

In 2017, a dry year with low to average lupin yields, several of Belinda's clients reported low levels of split seed.

In 2018, a cool year with average rainfall, Belinda says the issue was widespread on the Mallee sandplain in some varieties.

Belinda says the most effective treatment to prevent manganese deficiency in lupin crops is 15-30 kilograms per hectare of manganese sulphate drilled or a starter fertiliser containing manganese at the recommended rate. Topdressed manganese is up to 50 per cent less effective when compared with drilled fertiliser.

She says stem testing is the most accurate way to determine whether manganese needs to be applied to a flowering crop to alleviate split seed issues. "A concentration of less than 20 parts per million (ppm) of manganese in the lupin stem test indicates an

application of 1kg/ha elemental manganese (equivalent to 4kg/ha manganese sulphate) is required when the first three pods on the main stem are two to three centimetres long,” she says.

Belinda says manganese seed testing is important to determine the quality of the seed when keeping seed from lupin paddocks that have expressed manganese deficiency symptoms such as split seed and ‘re-greening plants’.

To find out more about manganese deficiency in narrow-leaved lupins, and how to monitor and manage it, go to the [Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development website](#).

Kwinana West port zone



The Mallala farm of Richard Konzag, a former GRDC Southern Region Panel member, will be one of the sites visited during a Kwinana West RCSN tour of South Australia this month. Photo by GRDC (Alistair Lawson)

Kwinana West port zone RCSN members at their last meeting identified a number of issues, with Kwinana West zone RCSN members will this month embark on a tour of South Australia, where they will talk with key researchers and growers and visit research sites and events.

The aim is to get a different perspective to bring home and inform their issue identification process on behalf of the GRDC.

RCSN members will firstly visit the Mallala farm of Richard Konzag, a former GRDC Southern Region Panel member.

Richard crops about 2500ha of wheat, durum, barley, beans, lentils, canola and oaten hay.

The group will also visit the Hart field trial site, which is South Australia’s premier agronomic field trial site. This will be followed by a visit to Bulla Burra – a collaborative family farm formed in 2009 by joining two family farms, creating an ‘efficiency cell’.

Frost is a high priority issue for the Kwinana West port zone and the group is keen to visit the Loxton frost trial site, view the South Australian Grain Industry Trust Clearfield barley frost work and see the South Australian Research and Development Institute’s early sowing work. While in Loxton, the group will visit Brian Lynch, who has been involved with Russian wheat aphid and is on a 2,4-D steering committee.

Back in Adelaide, the RCSN members will visit Australian Precision Ag Laboratory, a locally owned company specialising in soil, plant and water analytical services. There will also be a visit to barley breeders at the Australian Grain Technologies breeding facilities at Roseworthy. This will be followed by a catch up with grower Mark Branson, a committee member of the Society of Precision Agriculture Australia.

The group is having dinner in Glenelg with GRDC southern region low-rainfall zone RCSN members. Prior to flying home, the Kwinana West RCSN members will hold their six monthly RCSN meeting.

Kwinana East port zone

Growers attending recent GRDC Open Forums at Beacon and Muntadgin received a locally focused update about the resistance status of knockdown herbicides, and trends.

They were addressed by Craig Brown, of Synergy Consulting, who also covered the importance of testing for herbicide resistance, as a way of helping growers to identify effective herbicide options and to target areas where resistant weeds need to be managed.

New weed management technology that can target green weeds in green crops was addressed, as were other potential applications for near-infrared reflectance.

Recently introduced Very Coarse spray quality requirements for 2,4-D were also discussed.

[The GRDC Spray Drift web page](#) has information about how to comply with changes, recently implemented by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA), to the application requirements of 2,4-D herbicides.



It also has a range of other resources to support growers and spray operators with the very latest best practice advice and guidance.

It offers guidelines about how to mitigate spray drift risk, weather implications in spray application, nozzle selection, application and equipment, and State and Territory regulatory contacts.

GRDC project code: BGC1811-001SAX

Albany port zone

The management of snails remains a high priority issue for many growers in the Albany port zone.

Local growers may be interested to know about a new GRDC investment project, to be conducted by Stirlings to Coast Farmers (SCF), that aims to determine whether snail rollers can cost-effectively remove small conical snails from canola and barley.

The project will involve controlled and replicated testing of a snail roller and rotary grain cleaner to clean the species from contaminated canola and barley.

It aims to equip growers and advisers with best practice guidelines to enable informed decisions to be made regarding the economics of grain cleaning.

It outlines how a consistent approach to integrated pest management throughout the year should help to reduce numbers and damage to manageable levels and prevent them from becoming a more significant problem.

Baiting remains a key tool for all growers, but it is important to use other mitigation strategies, in addition to baiting, to provide adequate snail control in the long term. Meanwhile, resources are available that can help growers to manage these pests, including the GRDC publication '[Mitigating snails, slugs and slaters in southern Western Australia](#)', written and compiled by SCF.

The growers interviewed for the booklet found that with no control and the right environmental conditions, snail numbers could build up quickly, so consistency and timing are important.

GRDC project code: SCF1804-002SAX, SCF1906-003SAX



A new project aims to determine if snail rollers can cost-effectively remove small conical snails from canola and barley. Photo by Stirlings to Coast Farmers.

Esperance port zone



Low-level resistance to sulfoxaflor has been detected in a small number of green peach aphid populations collected near Esperance. Photo: cesar

Growers may already be aware that, for the first time, evidence has been found of green peach aphid (GPA) evolving resistance to sulfoxaflor, the active ingredient in Transform™.

The low-level resistance to sulfoxaflor was detected in a small number of GPA populations collected near Esperance.

GPA is a widespread pest of canola and pulse crops and is a key vector of turnip yellows virus (TuV) (formerly known as beet western yellows virus).

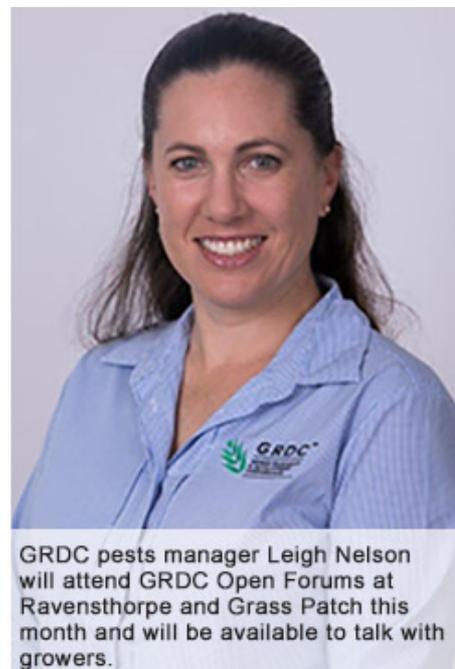
Sulfoxaflor, a group 4C insecticide, is an important tool in GPA management in canola, particularly since effective chemistries are limited. In Australia, GPA is already known to have resistance to synthetic pyrethroids, carbamates, organophosphates and neonicotinoids.

Growers attending GRDC Open Forums in the Esperance port zone on July 30 will have the opportunity to speak with GRDC pests manager Leigh Nelson who will be available to discuss current and future GRDC investments into GPA.

The Open Forums will be held at Ravensthorpe Recreation Centre (8-11am) and Grass Patch hall (4-7pm).

More information about the low-level resistance to sulfoxaflor is available on the [cesar website](#) and in a recent [PestFax article](#).

GRDC project code: CES00003



GRDC pests manager Leigh Nelson will attend GRDC Open Forums at Ravensthorpe and Grass Patch this month and will be available to talk with growers.

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