



Friday, 18 March, 2016

## Farmers well-armed for 2016 cropping season following annual Getting the Crop In seminar

Recent teasing rains got many of the region's farmers seriously thinking about the 2016 cropping season, and the Getting The Crop In seminar held in Clare last week (March 16) gave them an insight into all the latest agronomy, trials, and global market information to help plan the year ahead.

Hosted by the Hart Field-Site group, the free, annual half-day seminar was sponsored by Rabobank who brought in its Global Financial Markets manager origination and sales Campbell Keene from Sydney to give a comprehensive rundown on international markets, trends, influences and what it all means for South Australian growers.

"Global uncertainty and volatility in currency markets has been a big aspect for 2016 already, however this has become the new 'normal'," Mr Keene said.

"On the commodities front, wheat is still in plentiful supply. On the bullish side, the southern plains of the United States is getting dry and had a very dry February, having said that, on the bearish side they argue they have a very good crop and it's coming out of dormancy now in very good condition.

"Something to watch in the pulse space this year is the Indian Government policy on domestic supply, their current harvest which has had a wet start and could potentially effect quality on the back of three dry monsoon seasons. Additionally, production of yellow field pea out of Canada and its competition on our pulse market into the Indian Subcontinent being a flour substitute."

Warracknabeal farmer and former grain marketer and agricultural economist Julia Hausler was the keynote farmer speaker at the seminar, sharing what she has discovered about grain marketing from her work in the field and how it fits with the reality of farming.

Julia spoke about how she and husband Tim utilise farm management deposits, her thoughts on multi-peril crop insurance, some of the challenges they have overcome, the marketing opportunities they have tapped into, lessons learned and also her interest in social media.

SARDI new variety evaluation senior scientist Rob Wheeler gave a comprehensive rundown on last season's cereal variety performances from seeding through to harvest, including how new wheat, durum and barley varieties performed in 2015.

Hart Field-Site Group research and extension manager Sarah Noack launched the 2015 Hart Trials Results book (now available to download free online either article by article or in full at [www.hartfieldsite.org.au](http://www.hartfieldsite.org.au)), the culmination of almost 40 agronomy trials undertaken at Hart in 2015.

Ms Noack also presented some of the key findings from the trials on stubble systems, narrow windrow burning, wheat time of seeding, nitrogen fertiliser losses and deep ripping and placement of nutrients.

Koolunga farmer Leigh Fuller was among the farmers at the Getting The Crop In seminar and said it continued to provide practical, timely information.

“It’s relevant to our area and the timing of it is good because it focusses on the issues that are upcoming and issues that are at the front of our minds at this time of the year,” Mr Fuller said.

“With the information we get here, we can make decisions for the following year, and having a broad range of speakers gives us a global perspective on grain marketing and trends, which is great.”

Outgoing Hart Field-Site Group chairman Justin Wundke said he was thrilled with the success of the 2016 Getting The Crop In seminar and thanked the growers who continued to support it, as well as its sponsors who enabled the event to go ahead.

“The ongoing support of Rabobank as our major sponsor for this event, as well as Rocky River Ag and all our other sponsors and supporters, means that we can provide this information morning free of charge to growers,” Mr Wundke said.

“This has become a key event on the pre-season calendar and we’re proud to bring such high quality speakers here to give a range of perspectives – from global, to research, to grass roots – and better equip the farmers here to make decisions on their future cropping programs.”

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