

HART

MEDIA RELEASE

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Field day remains at the 'Hart' of agriculture

The 35th annual Hart Field once again cemented itself as one of the top agronomy field days in the country, with about 650 farmers and industry professionals attending to inspect the trial site and hear the latest in cropping research and extension last Tuesday.

They were also the first to hear a GRDC Grains Research and Development Infrastructure Grant worth more than \$71,000 has been awarded to the Hart Field-Site Group to build a new field research facility to increase the group's capacity to undertake grains research.

Federal Member for Grey Rowan Ramsey and GRDC deputy chief executive Dr Steve Thomas were at the field day to make the official announcement.

Hart Field-Site Group chairman and Spalding farmer Damien Sommerville welcomed the news, saying it would assist the group to progress its on-site research and development capabilities.

"With a top up of \$7900 from the Hart Field-Site Group to include solar panels and battery storage units for a permanent supply of power to the site, this new shed will give us a far greater capacity for grains research including soil and plant sample preparation, seed storage and packing and preparation of treatments," he said.

"Currently we're having to transport our samples to Clare or to a laboratory off-site, and once we have this new facility I think we'll be amazed at how much we will be able to grow our research and extension capacity, as well as freeing up space in the small existing shed for things like a lecture room to provide more learning opportunities for our growers."

In what is proving to be a season of mixed fortunes across the state, growing conditions in the Mid North appear to have made a turn in the right direction and crop trials on show at Hart last week displayed the change in fortune after a dry start to the season.

A sensational spring day greeted growers who rolled in to hear 35 specialist speakers present 21 sessions throughout the day.

Mr Sommerville thanked the growers – many who had travelled long distances from across South Australia as well as interstate – whose attendance continued to ensure the Hart Field-Site Group could provide such a high quality event.

"Without the farmers there and their continued support there would be no point in doing the trials and trying to extend their knowledge," he said.

"They're the reason we exist; to try and provide access to an extensive range of research and learning, with direct access to the experts who can give a first-hand insight and share their knowledge that can be then taken back to our farms to improve productivity."

The next event on the Hart Field-Site Group calendar is the annual twilight spring walk on October 17. Full details on the website www.hartfieldsite.org.au

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