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## Social licence the key to gold at the end of the farming technology rainbow

Exciting developments in farming technology are continually evolving and it is good news for local farmers, as long as growers can gain social acceptance of the changes in the broader community.

That's the word from Crop Protection Australia managing director and consultant Dr Rohan Rainbow who is busily working behind the scenes in Canberra to support industry in developing policy to enable this social licence and ultimately to "help farmers sleep at night".

Rohan will be the key-note lunch time presenter at this year's Hart Field Day on Tuesday, September 18.

"Apart from the productivity and safety benefits, a lot of this new technology is going to have a profound impact on our family, how we farm, our business and how we interact," he said.

"They're going to be positive changes ultimately but they are going to create change and I think it's important to talk with our families about how things will change.

"The challenge will be how we embrace, support and use this in our business, all under an agreed code of practice."

Rohan said he believed it was important to "put to rest our concerns of the risks" and open up the discussion about the positive impact of new technology.

"In reality any of this technology whether it be chemical, machinery or communication, has a profound impact on the way we do business – just look at the way we now use the mobile phone as an example," he said.

"We need to talk openly about the benefits, we tend to look at the dollars returned and that's important, but we forget about the impact this technology makes in the way we farm and the improvements in efficiencies and the way of life for families."

No stranger to the Mid North, Rohan was based in Clare for 17 years until 2006 and still fondly calls it 'home'.

Many locals will remember Rohan for his role with the South Australian No-Till Farmers Association (SANTFA) and in the adoption of one-pass seeding systems and operation FerTill, which looked at fertiliser placement.

Since leaving Clare, Rohan has been based in Canberra, initially taking on a role with the GRDC as national crop protection manager.

He is now managing director of Crop Protection Australia, a director of AgtechCentric and consults to a range of research and development corporations, commercial companies, peak industry bodies including Grain Producers Australia, as well as supporting State and Federal Government programs.

Much of his work is behind the scenes, helping develop policy and regulations, and 'going in to bat' for farmers.

"Ultimately my role is to help farmers sleep at night," Rohan said.

"It's important we do what we do with confidence, so I'm working with regulators and peak industry bodies to deal with issues before they become major problems for industry - the issues that cause great concern and people lose sleep over.

"It's exciting times for the way that technology will have a positive impact on farm, the challenge will be having the social licence – or social acceptance – to use it and not just in the farming community, but acceptance from the general community and the metropolitan community to ensure they're on-board with what you're doing on your farm.

"What I do is iron out the speed humps of regulation and the red tape, to put technology in farmers' hands."

Dr Rohan Rainbow will also present during the rolling field day program. Hear him speak with Peter Cousins and Mick Faulkner about spray drift, the new Mid North weather station and what is happening behind the scenes at a national level in terms of chemical regulation.

To register for the Hart Field Day, or for more information, take a look at the Hart Field-Site Group website [www.hartfieldsite.org.au](http://www.hartfieldsite.org.au) or contact Sandy Kimber on 0427 423 154 or email [admin@hartfieldsite.org.au](mailto:admin@hartfieldsite.org.au)

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