



Friday, March 13, 2020

Getting to the Hart of cropping preparation

Farmers from across the Mid North and Yorke Peninsula gathered in Clare on Wednesday for the annual Hart Field-Site Group's annual Getting The Crop In seminar.

Long-established as an Australian leader in cropping trials and research, as well as providing information to growers and industry, Hart's annual event continues to attract good crowds who were this year given an insight into cropping, marketing and risk management despite the 'big dry'.

Hart chairperson Ryan Wood said it was fantastic to see a good turn-out for the event and thanked the Hart members for attending to hear a line-up of quality speakers provide the latest information to help set them up for the growing season ahead.

"Our Hart events, like this year's Getting The Crop In seminar really do aim to provide a broad range of information for growers and industry," he said.

"Even though we've experienced some very dry seasons leading up to 2020, the seminar program aimed to reflect that and provide information and data to enable growers to keep moving forward even in very challenging times."

Outgoing Hart regional intern Jade Rose and Agronomy Solutions research agronomist Sean Mason spoke about using soil and plant testing to assist in making better fertiliser decisions.

Hart's new research and extension manager Rebekah Allen ran through some of the highlights of the Hart 2019 trial program, with detailed reports now available in the free 2019 Trials Results publication available online at www.hartfieldsite.org.au

Agronomist Craig Davis provided a timely reminder to growers about responsible spray practices and encouraged farmers to not only take responsibility for their own spraying practices but also to keep an eye on what their neighbours are doing to ensure all sprays are hitting the target.

A thought-provoking presentation was given by key-note speaker, Mallee farmer John Gladigau who not only 'threw open' his farm gate to give attendees an insight into his collaborative farming operation, but challenged attendees to 'find joy in the challenges of farming'.

He encouraged his peers to get to know their neighbour and those in their community, and look out for each other, to open up and become more transparent, and to find and continue doing things that give them joy off the farm.

Whether it be getting and staying involved in the local footy club, church or service group, or like himself, finding a passion in the arts, John encouraged fellow farmers to get off-farm and find something they love doing.

“We have to do a lot of looking after each other as we go through these tough times,” he said.

“We have to still continue to live our lives and we have to find things that make us happy. Find things that motivate us and give us joy and not stop doing those things.

“Go somewhere that you can have a laugh, have a beer and talk to people because that’s the stuff that helps us enjoy life.”

Market Check’s Richard Perkins gave an insight into international grain market trends and managing crop price risk.

Grain Growers regional coordinator SA David Evans explained the development of the Grains Sustainability Framework, giving growers a better understanding of its purpose and how it will benefit them.

And SARDI senior research scientists Marg Evans and Blake Gontar spoke about the research they have done into local root diseases, in particular research work done in conjunction with the Hart Early Careers Farmers program looking at crown rot, rhizoctonia, eyespot and take-all across the Mid North.

Hart will hold its AGM on April 7, and Hart chairman Ryan Wood urged interested members to attend and nominate for a position on the board.

“I’d encourage anyone interested in becoming a member of the Hart board to nominate,” he said.

“Being involved in the Hart Field-Site Group with other, like-minded people and helping bring the line-up of quality events that we host throughout the year for grain growers is extremely rewarding.”

Other events for the calendar this year include the Hart Winter Walk from 9am-midday for an informal, guided tour of the Hart Trial Site on July 21; the Hart Field Day on September 15; and the Spring Twilight Walk on October 20.

See full details plus loads more information and grower resources at www.hartfieldsite.org.au

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