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MEDIA RELEASE

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GROWERS CONVERGE FOR PRE-SEEDING SEMINAR

With the new growing season fast approaching, graingrowers gathered in Clare for the Hart Field-Site Group's Getting the Crop In seminar last Wednesday (March 14) to hear the latest information on agronomy, crop trial results, management and market information.

About 150 farmers and industry representatives attended the free event sponsored by Rabobank, which kicked off with a cooked breakfast.

David Jochinke, a dryland farmer from Murra Warra 30 kilometres north of Horsham, was the keynote speaker for the event.

Having recently returned from a tour of Sri Lanka and India as an Australian Rural Leadership participant, and as immediate past Victorian Farmers Federation treasurer and a Nuffield Scholar, Mr Jochinke has an extensive perspective on agriculture and where Australia fits into the big picture.

He spoke about what he had seen overseas and came to the conclusion that while other countries might have better soil or rainfall, taking all things into consideration including the political situation, security, access to technology and a good lifestyle, Australia was still the best place in the world to farm.

Mr Jochinke said he had also come to realise that Australia was just a small part of global agriculture and encouraged Australian farmers to pay particular attention to detail and continue to strive to do things well in order to remain competitive on the world scale.

Mr Jochinke's presentation was just part of a packed program of information at the seminar.

Struan-based SARDI senior research officer Trent Potter was there to give an update on canola varieties and agronomy, a topic of interest to many growers looking to cash in on good current canola prices.

Growers were also updated on the latest work being done to combat black leg disease in canola as well as potential new fungicides being released this year to fight the disease.

Major sponsor, Rabobank's Dean Smith and Campbell Keene were on hand to speak about world commodity markets and forecasts for cereal grain prices for the upcoming season. The bank's business programs manager Nerida Sweetapple also spoke about investing in yourself - the importance of improving your business skills and knowledge.

Peter Semmler from Agri Semm Global Brokerage gave his perspective some of the issues currently affecting international pulse markets.

The latest Hart Trials Results book was released at the event, with guests receiving an update on some of the major findings. And SARDI's Rob Wheeler spoke about cereal variety updates and harvest quality results.

Hart Field-Site Group chairman Matt Dare said he was pleased with the program offered to farmers and hoped it put them in good stead to tackle the upcoming growing season.

"It was fantastic to see the event well-supported by growers," he said.

"It was a really comprehensive program and I'm sure everyone took home some information that will benefit them on their farm."

Wednesday's seminar was just one of the events on the Hart Field-Site Group's calendar, with its Winter Walk to be held at 9am on Tuesday, July 24, 2012, as well as the Hart Field Day on Tuesday, September 18, 2012.

Everyone is welcome to attend, for more information take a look at the Hart Field Site Group website www.hartfieldsite.org.au

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