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MEDIA RELEASE

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MID NORTH GROWERS FIRST TO TRY 'SEED DESTROYER'

Mid North grain growers will be the first to try the new Harrington Seed Destructor (HSD) during the upcoming harvest and will have the opportunity to put their hand up to be part of the experience at the Hart Field Day on 18 September.

University of Western Australia's Australian Herbicide Resistance Initiative research associate professor Michael Walsh will be calling for volunteers to have the new machine on their property for two days during the harvest to see first hand the impact it will have on harvest weed seed control.

With the research and development complete on the HSD, the machine is now in the process of commercial production, with two units already pre-sold.

Developed by WA farmer Ray Harrington, the HSD unit comprises a chaff processing cage mill, chaff and straw delivery system and its own power supply.

Dr Walsh said the HSD was showing consistent results in the control of weed seeds during harvest.

"The HSD consistently destroys 90-95 per cent of annual ryegrass, wild radish, wild oats and brome grass seed present in the chaff fraction," he says.

"I'll be looking for growers at the Hart Field Day to put up their hand and say they want to give this unit a go in the upcoming harvest.

"Then on Friday, 21 September, just after the Hart Field Day, I'll be asking those growers to attend a workshop in Clare to learn more about the HSD and harvest weed seed control in general.

"We envisage we'll be able to make the HSD available to 20 Mid North growers, for two days on each property during the harvest and will employ someone to drive the header and operate the HSD for the duration."

Dr Walsh said the Mid North was the perfect location for this first grower trial given its central location and the logistics of moving the machine between farms.

"There's also some history of chaff cart use in the area so it's not a completely blank sheet in terms of farmers being interested in harvest weed seed control," he says.

Also joining Dr Walsh at the Hart Field Day will be WA farmer and developer of the revolutionary new conveyor belt system for chaff carts Lance Turner.

Dr Walsh said the new conveyor belt was an exciting improvement to chaff carts and another great innovation in the control of weed seeds at harvest time.

“Chaff carts have been around for 30 years and have had a number of issues, one of the biggest being the burn time of the chaff heaps,” he said.

“This new delivery system developed by Lance incorporates a bit of straw with the chaff and it can then be burnt down in three to four hours rather than smouldering for days, making it much more efficient with less fire risk.”

Dr Walsh said the new chaff cart delivery system had sparked significant interest in WA and he expected growers at the Hart Field Day would be equally excited by the latest advancement in harvest weed seed control.

“This design, as simple and straightforward as it looks now, is revolutionary for chaff carts and their use in the future,” he says.

Dr Walsh and Mr Turner will be part of the rolling program at the Hart Field Day, giving growers the opportunity to hear directly from the researcher and developer of these two new exciting weed control systems.

For more information on the program, take a look at the Hart Field Site Group website www.hartfieldsite.org.au or contact Sandy Kimber on 0427 423 154 or email admin@hartfieldsite.org.au.

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Mid North farmers will be the first to try the new Harrington Seed Destructor this harvest and associate professor Michael Walsh will be calling for volunteers at the Hart Field Day to give the machine a go on their farms.