

UNFS UPDATE



Upper North Farming Systems Newsletter

March 2023

A New Era

Ruth Sommerville, Executive Officer

UNFS is launching into 2023 with excitement. 2022 saw a number of significant changes to the way the organisation staffing was structured and the projects delivered. We have a few small changes to implement this month and then it will be action stations for the first of the '23 trials to be sown come early April.

We have kicked off the pre-season extension sessions with gusto...as has the industry in general! There are so many things happening it can be overwhelming. A rule of thumb across industry is that you should aim to undertake a week of training each and every year to develop your skills and build your knowledge. This is on top of attending industry events that raise your awareness of issues happening and new developments that could improve your profitability, sustainability or just the way you do things. So that means you need to work out which 5 whole day events you (and those in your business) are going to go to this year to give you new skills, and which 5-10 part day events you are going to go to expose yourself to new ideas and of course...build your social fabric...those connections that make life great. We've got as many of the events we could find below and will send up an update mid March as well!

New Branding - We have embarked on the development of a Marketing and Communications Plan. This isn't a big fancy document...it is simple tools and templates to make our communications with you easier to read and hopefully easier to digest. As a result the next newsletter should (all going to plan) look a little different. We will also have some standardised "looks" for our fact sheets, case studies and the Annual Compendium. If you have any thoughts please send them through to Deb, we're always keen to incorporate our members feedback.

Speaking of feedback...we had requests to get access to results from the previous season in a more timely manner...and so the Pre-Season/Post Harvest Regional Events have been developed. These are half day events with a number of presenters and discussions. Specific trial results will be presented as will open discussion of issues that arose in the previous year...such as White Grain in '22. We've split these events into 3 geographic zones - Western, Northern and Southern. These zones do not replace the hubs...but they enable us to deliver relevant info to you. Feel free to attend outside your zone if there are issues of interest on the other agendas! These events are open to all to attend and we'd welcome you spreading the word!

We held a Post Harvest get together and farewell for Kristina and Myself at the Jacka Bros Brewery on the 19th of February and it was such a great afternoon of families catching up. There are some snaps later in the newsletter.

As of the 1st of March, Jade Rose is now full time with UNFS and after a relaxing honeymoon in NZ is jumping into finalising the trial plans and getting the reporting on '22 finalised. 1/3/23 also marks the hand-over of all project management from my desk to hers. I am confident that she will continue to bring you quality projects and insightful results to the matters you identify as key drivers in agriculture in the Upper North. Deb Marner is also taking on the governance of the organisation this month, with her first Operations Committee and Strategic Board meetings. I am staying on until the end of March to support them both in these areas... and then hanging around on the Ops Committee...cause I just love UNFS that much! It has been wonderful working for you all since 2013. I've a few words of thanks from the farewell you can read further on in the newsletter.

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UNFS



TRIAL RESULTS,
PRESENTATIONS &
DISCUSSION

SOUTH

POST HARVEST/ PRE-SEEDING EVENT

TUESDAY 14TH MARCH 2023
JAMESTOWN AERODROME
3 - 6PM

BBQ TO FOLLOW

KEY PRESENTERS:

- **Chris Preston**, University of Adelaide - Resistant weeds, Pre-Em Herbicides, How will last year affect weeds in '23?
- **Sarah Day**, SARDI - Pulse Research Results '22
- **Dr Will Van Weterre**, University of Adelaide - Managing Heat Stress in Sheep
- **Michael Nash**, Consultant - Are you growing bugs with Nitrogen?

Contacts: Jade Rose - 0448866865,
Beth Sleep - 0418327460, David Moore - 0428641239

RSVP to assist with catering : admin@unfs.com.au
www.unfs.com.au/events



New Projects in 2023

*Jade Rose,
UNFS Project Manager*

2023 is already shaping up to be a huge year in project work for UNFS. We have a number of projects continuing from 2021/2022 which will have some fantastic resources produced this year.

Two new very exciting projects going ahead for 2023 and for the next 4-5 years, include:

The GRDC-UofA funded project: 'Enterprise choice and sequence strategies that drive sustainable and profitable southern Australian farming systems'. This project aims to identify factors driving profit and adopting management that optimises returns and mitigates risk. It incorporates field research with modelling and economic analysis to determine opportunities and risks to system profitability. A satellite site will be implemented in 2023 onwards assessing differing crop rotations, tactical treatments, and phases.

The GRDC project: National Risk Management Initiative – Action Research Groups, a collaborative effort between Hart Field Site Group, UNFS, Mid-North High Rainfall Zone, Murray Plains Farmers, Northern Sustainable Soils and SA Drought Hub. This project aims to understand and improve the risk-reward outcomes for Australian grain growers through participatory action research. This project will develop improved understanding of the risk-reward relationships, address managing risks and maximising rewards and challenge grower decision making in terms of future management decisions.

Several project proposals are also still in tender with varied funding bodies, awaiting confirmation of whether these projects will be approved for the coming year.



The Trial Planning Process

*Jade Rose,
UNFS Project Manager*

The trial planning process involves collaboration between UNFS staff, co-operators, contractors, operations committee and our members. The UNFS operations committee are involved developing project proposals and collaborations and in reviewing how each project fits the region and determines whether the outcomes are beneficial. In March each year, the Trials Planning Meeting is held between all of the above to assess the funded projects and establish: Who, What, Where, How.

The process involves:

- A summary of our project load for the year and other projects occurring in the region
- A review of current projects, their aims, outcomes, current processes, locations, trial plans, co-operators, contracts, assessments and what we can improve on
- Planning for new projects – locations, equipment, protocols, extension, reporting and budget
- Ideas for extension and requirements
- Safety on farm and for trial work
- Potential projects in tender

The project details are then reviewed by the Operations Committee prior to the season beginning to ensure identify any gaps and ensure effective delivery in partnership with the members. These processes are vital to determine a key understanding between UNFS and our collaborators and ensure our projects are going to be of value to farmers of the Upper North.

I'm always happy to receive advice, recommendations, and ways to do things better as we evolve, so please don't hesitate to contact me during the year.

UNFS Projects in 2023

UNFS Project #	Other Names/ References	Full Name	Funding Source
231	Weather Station Network	Upper North Fire Danger Index Alerting Weather Station Network Project	UNFS/Landholders
235	Regenerating Goyders Line	Regenerating Goyders Line - re-establishing productive pasture in once cropped land	National Landcare Program; Smart farming Partnerships Initiative round
			NY Landscape Board
237	Producer Sheep Technology	Extended funding for 2022 for 2 x workshops	Red Meat and Wool Program (PIRSA)
238	Soil Pathogen Project	Soilborne cereal pathogens national extension project - Trial Sites	GRDC
239	Building Soil Knowledge	Building soil knowledge & capacity to implement change in the farmers of the Upper North Agricultural zone of SA. Improving soil structure & function to improve plant health, landscape function & farming system resilience.	National Landcare Program; Smart farming Partnerships Initiative
240	Septoria Epidemiology	Epidemiology of Septoria Tritici Blotch in the low and medium rainfall zones of the Southern region to inform IDM strategies.	GRDC via SARDI
242	Drought Hub Partnership	SA Drought Resilience and Innovation Hub	Drought Innovation and Resilience Fund via Uni Adelaide
245	Pulse Extension	D & E to close the economic yield gap & maximise farming systems benefits from grain legume production in SA	GRDC via SARDI
246	Pasture Systems	Improved Pasture Management Systems	MLA
247	Lotsa Lambs	Lotsa Lambs - Improving Reproduction Success	MLA
249	Canola Profitability	Canola Profitability in the UN	SAGIT
253	Heat Stress in Sheep	Managing Heat Stress / increasing fertility in Sheep	SA Drought Hub
254	Farming Systems	Enterprise Choice & Sequencing for profitability & sustainability	GRDC via Uni of Adelaide
255	National Risk Management Initiative	Understand and improve risk-reward outcomes for Australian grain growers through participatory action research	GRDC Central FSG Consortium via Hart FS

In addition to this amazing project list for 2023 we still have over 10 grant applications that are yet to be announced. These cover topics such as Carbon in Farming, Technology Adoption, Soil Management, Containment Feeding...and much more!

Have an issue you think we should work on and it isn't here....then please let us know through your local hub rep or by sending it in to one of our team. Contact details at the back of this newsletter.



TRIAL RESULTS,
PRESENTATIONS &
DISCUSSION

NORTH POST HARVEST/ PRE-SEEDING EVENT

THURSDAY 30TH MARCH 2023
BOOLEROO SPORTING COMPLEX
2-5PM

KEY PRESENTERS:

BBQ TO FOLLOW

- **White Grain Harvest '22**

Marg Evans, Consultant & Tara Garrard, SARDI

- **Pasture legumes for climate change**

David Peck, SARDI

- **Canola trials '22 Results**

Andrew Catford, Northern Ag

- **Heat Stress in Sheep - Regulin implants & Vitamin supplements**

Dr Will Van Weterre, University of Adelaide



Contacts: Jade Rose 0448866865, Will Heaslip 0409067982,
Tom Kuerschner 0499598700, David Clarke 0427 182 819

**RSVP to assist with catering : admin@unfs.com.au
www.unfs.com.au/events**



Heat Stress in Sheep Project Update

Rachel Trengove, UNFS Project Officer

Over the next six months, UNFS will be involved in a project through Adelaide University 'Managing Heat Stress in Sheep' (officially - Improving climate resilience of the Australian Sheep Industry).

The focus of the research is to increase conception rates and mitigate the impacts of heat stress on ewes and rams. The aim is to develop a series of management tools that can be used across all producer systems to increase the reproductive efficiency, optimise animal health and recovery prior to and throughout gestation, and provide an option to combat the negative effects of heat stress.

A vitamin drench or a melatonin implant will be used as these are easily implemented into any production system and have proven benefits for mitigating heat stress, and improving the viability of embryos.

In conjunction with this, is the development of a climate warning system that can predict under what climatic conditions ewes and rams are likely to struggle during conception. This will enable producers to target supplementation only when necessary to improve reproductive outcomes. The use of sensor technology, on animal and in the environment will facilitate this.



This project will implement two treatments:

- 1) Delivery of a single pre-joining drench of ADE in ewes and/or rams at joining
- 2) Implant of melatonin in ewes and/or rams one month prior to joining

Our three UNFS sheep producer participants are; Jonathan Byerlee, Orroroo, Alison Henderson, Caltowie and Tom Trengove, Spalding. Associate Professor Will van Wettere and Dr Jamee Daly (researchers with the School of Animal and Veterinary Sciences, THE UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE) have travelled out to our producers during January to administer the implants and drenches.

The researchers will be joining us at our pre-seeding get-togethers in March in Jamestown and Booleroo to speak about the project and research findings so far.



**Were you finding
slugs in wheat late
last year?**

Join the discussion to do something
about it at sowing at the
GRDC Slug Workshop Upper North

Monday 27 March 2023 at 8am
98 Avonmore Rd, Wirrabara 5481



Full details:
<https://grdc.com.au/events/list/2023/03/grdc-slug-workshop-upper-north-wirrabara>

It's the Summer of Weeds

Laura Ag Bureau, Laura/Gladstone and Ag Tech Hub Event Report

By Andrew Kitto

"Summer of Weeds" was held at Gladstone on Wednesday 22 February, in conjunction with Upper Northern Farming System group and with funding from Landscape South Australia Northern and Yorke. Farmers and commercial exhibitors had a rare chance to gather as one to hear many current and future ideas to control weeds.



Mid State's Drone and the Nitro together in paddock

Displays included a robot weeder, a large drone used for spraying and aerial mapping, and several sprayer mounted camera systems that detect weeds resulting in only spraying a fraction of the paddock.

Ray Harrington farmer and inventor from Darken WA, spoke about the green on green camera evolution. He is the Australian farmer representative on the Green on Green GRDC project. Using artificial intelligence technology, algorithms are

developed and built on to detect weeds using cameras mounted on spray machines.

At Gladstone, Ray in his seventies was delighted to meet Jordy Kitschke, a young farmer from the Mid North and founder of Flux Robotics whose team had a robotic weeder on display using this artificial intelligence technology.

Two buses transported the 70 farmers and reps out to a members paddock where a trial site was sprayed two weeks previously. The area was mapped by Clare based Extreme Drones and then sprayed with a 36mtr Miller Nitro sprayer in conjunction with Flinders Machinery using a Bilberry camera spraying system off the gathered data. Bilberry was developed in France only four years ago and adapted to be used in agriculture. Currently in SA there are only three of these sprayers.



Jordy Howard, Marisa Djukanovic & Jordy Kitschke (far right) from Flux Robotics with the robotic weeder.

On the day a drone from Mid State Drones sprayed an area of cereal stubble using water.



Jordy Kitschke founder of Flux Robotics, Ray Harrington and local family farming business owner Ian Harslett deep in

Previously an area was blanket sprayed with chemical by a case patriot sprayer to compare and a Hydra boom with the WeedSeeker camera system fitted in conjunction with Koch Ag sprayed an area with a dual chemical tanks system. The areas on trial were cereals and legume stubbles as well as pasture.

After returning to the Gladstone Stadium for tea, Ray Harrington shared his wisdom about what farming and his farm will look like in 10 years and yes sheep are still necessary on his farm.



Laura Ag Bureau

Part of the farming community Since 1914



PDS Lotsa Lambs 2nd Workshop—Implementing eID's on farm and Improving reproductive success - Rachel Trengove UNFS Project Officer

Since the announcement of mandatory eID's in Australia, sheep producers have been looking for information and options for hassle free implementation of an electronic system on farm. 40 Upper North Farming Systems (UNFS) farmers came together and braved the heat at Caleb Girdham's family property near Melrose to learn more about "Implementing eID's on farm and improving reproductive success". Farmers were treated to a sticky beak at Girdham's containment feeding pen set up, newly built shearing shed and yards as well as a demonstration of the BreedElite autodrafter. A wealth of knowledge and experience was shared throughout the morning amongst participants and with guest presenters Deb Scammell (Talking Livestock), Nathan Scott (Achieve Ag) and Mary Rowe (Zoetis).

Girdham's usually contain pregnant ewes for a couple of months and then release into paddocks just before lambing. The best lambing results are consistently achieved in scrub paddocks with mob size around 100. Caleb says he's happy with lambing results, especially through the drought and he considers containing ewes worth the effort to maintain ewe condition and preserve ground cover on paddocks during a time of feed deficit in the autumn months. Deb Scammell talked through Caleb's containment set up and shared the advice "you can save money on set-up, but it might cost you in labour later so that's something to consider when planning your containment feeding infrastructure".

Good rainfall in late spring/summer in the Upper North has seen feed abundances in paddocks, but Deb still sees containment feeding in 2023 a good fit in mixed farming systems in the region to ensure dry feed and ground cover is retained and to allow pasture to get away prior to lambing. Poor quality hay (low energy and high fibre) due to the lush spring and rain damage at hay making will be an issue this year and needs to be taken into account when feed budgeting. Ewes are likely to need higher quantities of energy dense feed to make up for the energy shortfall. Mycotoxin tests are also worth considering this year to determine if you are likely to have production or reproductive issues.

The advantages to containing pregnant ewes include:

1. Improved ground cover and food on offer in lambing paddocks
2. More effective management of ewes – keeping a closer eye on condition
3. Confidence to hold onto stock during dry periods
4. Can achieve higher stocking rates
5. Improved marking percentages – or maintain %'s rather than experiencing a dip in the dry time



Sheep were drafted using a BreedElite autodrafter as a demonstration for the group. Caleb explained that he purchased this handler because the "system had a lot of potential". He has had 'teething issues' to the point of not using it initially but has recently invested the time to work through setting up the system and inputting data and can now see the potential gains for his business in labour efficiency and improved data-based decision making in the future. Nathan Scott advised that these processes can be complex, and they may not save you time at the start, they will take you more time in the learning and set-up phase, but the benefits will start to be apparent down the track. As mixed farmers we do not use these operations regularly with cropping being the main priority at certain times of the year so there are two things to consider when choosing a system:

1. Do you like the way it operates?
2. What back up support is provided – look for good reps and back up support – because you WILL be using them!

Nathan reiterated the importance of lead up race design for smooth operation of sheep handlers. The race needs to be as narrow as possible directly behind the drafter and an adjustable option is ideal to change race width when drafting lambs compared with ewes.

Nathan urged livestock producers to think about eID's as 'precision ag for livestock'. He said "you cant improve what you can't measure" and understanding the information is crucial. For instance, recording birth status against ewe hoggets can be very useful because visually we could be classing out our twins as lesser looking animals and potentially reducing fertility of our flock as a result. The data collected and stored for each animal may not be utilised straight away, but down the track when dry conditions hit and feed is tight, we can refer to this data to make informed decisions on which ewes to keep and which to cull, for example holding onto ewes that have been pregnancy scanned with twins 2-3 years running to improve fertility.

Nathan talked through how crucial eID's are in managing biosecurity, especially in the case of a foot and mouth disease outbreak in Australia. He said "it's not just another cost but an investment in our industry".

PDS Lotsa Lambs is not only focussing on containment feeding of pregnant ewes but also lambing multiples in smaller mobs to improve reproduction success in our Upper North flocks. Nathan is a firm believer that mob size is an underestimated factor in lamb survival from his experience as a farmer as well as working with many sheep producers. He says, for singles, mob size doesn't matter too much, but for multiples, it is best to aim for as small a mob size as you can practically achieve, ideally less than 100. The time between the birth of the 1st & 2nd lamb and the 2nd & 3rd lamb is crucial and mob size significantly improves the chance of survival of these multiples.

Lastly, Mary Rowe came to talk about the importance of managing worms in our sheep flocks this season with large worm burdens developing locally due to substantial summer rainfall including the potentially harmful Barber pole worm. Mary emphasised that effective drenching will control a worm burden and also minimise the incidence and impact of drench resistance and listed 6 important principles to consider:

1. Only use drenches that work
2. Only drench when needed
3. Use paddock management to decrease worm risk
4. Use combinations
5. Use short-acting drenches preferentially
6. Rotate drenches

Many workshop attendees took advantage of free feed tests offered on the day for hay, pasture and grain samples. These samples were coordinated by Deb and funded by the Northern and Yorke Landscape Board.

This workshop was funded by Meat and Livestock Australia, The Northern and Yorke Landscape Board and Red Meat & Wool Growth Program. If you'd like any additional information about future UNFS livestock events, please contact Project Officer - Rachel Trengove, 0438452003, rachel@unfs.com.au



It's the Summer of Weeds - Great Numbers in Attendance!



Steve Norton — Croplands



David Humphris welcoming participants at Gladstone Complex

HATS OFF FOR HEALTH CHATS

GOOD GRACIOUS GUT

**FRIDAY 17TH MARCH -
MEN**

**SATURDAY 18TH MARCH -
WOMEN**

FREE EVENT



Jacka Brothers
Brewery, Melrose
6.30pm start



Dr Sophie Plagakis
Urologist

- Prostate Cancer
- Pelvic Floor Health



Nigel Young
Physiotherapist, Thrive Health
Centre

- Joint health and injury



Dr Simon Khoury
Dermatologist

- Skin Cancer



Dr Paula Kitto
General Practitioner

- Tales from Somalia



Dr Alice Bennett

Gastroenterologist

- Bowel Cancer and Gut Health



AgriFutures®
Rural Women's
Acceleration Grant



Be sure to arrive early to
purchase a delicious meal.
Check out Jacka Brothers
Brewery on Facebook to
view the menu!

RSVP ESSENTIAL EVENTBRITE

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/hats-off-for-health-chats-mens-night-tickets-562182542117?a>

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/hats-off-for-health-chats-womens-night-tickets-562189352487>



**JOIN US FOR A
RELAXED NIGHT OF
CATCH UPS AND
HEALTH CHATS**



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Register Here Womens Night: <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/hats-off-for-health-chats-womens-night-tickets-562189352487?utm-campaign=social&utm-content=attendeeshare&utm-medium=discovery&utm-term=listing&utm-source=cp&aff=escb>

Monday 16 January 2023

GPSA project explores future options for grain silo bags

A project to look at options for the reuse and recycling of grain silo bags in South Australia is underway thanks to a \$60,000 grant awarded to Grain Producers SA (GPSA).

The 'Circular Economy Market Development Grant' program through Green Industries SA is enabling GPSA to undertake a feasibility study to better understand the challenges and opportunities in repurposing and reducing waste of grain silo bags.

GPSA Chief Executive Officer Brad Perry said grain producers had increasingly raised the problem of used silo bags and lack of recycling avenues available.

"There is currently a successful recycling stewardship scheme for plastic chemical containers called 'DrumMuster' as well as pilots for plastic seed and fertiliser bags with 'BagMuster', however there is a gap when it comes to used grain silo bags," said Mr Perry.

"Through the '*Grain Silo Bag Circular Economy Feasibility Study*' we are seeking to understand the scale of silo bag waste on grain farms in South Australia, what recycling avenues currently exist, and what investment strategies can be developed to provide industry participation and circular solutions for used silo bags.

"Grain producers want to harvest their crops as quickly as possible and are increasingly utilising temporary plastic grain silo bags as a convenient storage solution.

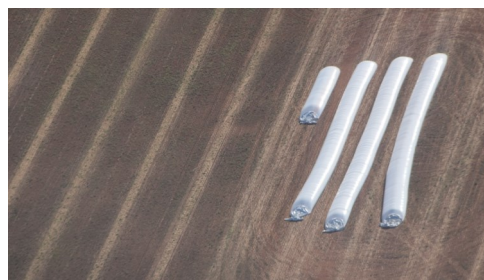
"These silo bags are single use and once finished with, they are stored on farm or producers try to find alternate uses.

"As use of silo bags grows, the amount of plastic waste generated on farms is increasing, as is awareness of the associated waste management responsibilities.

"It's hoped that this Feasibility Study will lead to potentially innovative recycling solutions to this problem if no existing recycling avenues are identified as feasible."

GPSA will work with a consultant to develop the Feasibility Study and will also develop an awareness campaign aimed to educate key stakeholders identified in the study on used grain silo bag recycling, avenues for recycling, innovative uses, and circular economy best practices.

Grain Producers SA is the peak industry body representing the 4,500 grain farming businesses in South Australia.





Upper North Farming Systems Post Harvest Catch Up and Staff Farewell



Damien Sommerville & Dave Moore



Gilmour Catford outgoing committee member was presented with a gift for many years of service



Matt & Alice Nottle



Hazel Moore



Thanks to Rosalie Dibbens for photos supplied

Upper North Farming Systems Post Harvest Catch Up and Staff Farewell cont.



James Heaslip and Ruth Sommerville



Kristina Mudge and James Heaslip



A Note of Thanks

Presented by Ruth Sommerville, Jacka Bros Brewery, 19/02/2023

To all of those who have stepped up to chair UNFS, both since I started in 2013 and those that drove it in the 12 years before that. Thank you for your passion, your commitment and willingness to make it work.

Joe, thanks for being willing to fight for Upper North's future, your commitment and belief that UNFS was necessary was unwavering. You had a vision and made it possible.

Barry, I have enjoyed every one of our in depth discussions around decision making, risk and climate and look forward to many more into the future. Thank you for always being a level head, practical and so knowledgeable.

Matt McCallum, so passionate about local research and the need for good R&D to support the whole region in being more profitable and sustainable. I will forever be in debt for the time he gave me after Tom was born and the space he kept open for me in UNFS. I never got the chance to thank him in person.

Matt Nottle, you had some big shoes to fill and you did it with passion, a willingness to always show up and get it done and a down to earth attitude sprinkled with plenty of humour. It was great fun.

James, your approach to good governance and sound financial management is setting UNFS up for a solid future and many years of service to the region.

Each term and each chair has been so different but I've loved working with all of you, Thank You.

To all the committee, each and every one of you plays such an integral part in the running of UNFS. You are what makes it relevant and viable and a true asset to the region.

Now to the staff, past and present. Thank you Sam and Mary who helped untangle the books and build a financial system that is transparent and mostly balances. To Rach, Jade, Hannah, Morgan and Denni and all our contracted Project Officers, thank you for always being flexible, bringing passion and enthusiasm and being patient with me when I say...I think we should do this...

Deb, believe in yourself, your can do attitude and approach to communication will get it done, I have full faith. As I do with Jade...who's climbing a glacier as we speak.

Now Kristina, thank you for saying yes when Barry said we need help, for always seeing a way to make it simpler, for making all the little things happen, for keeping the cogs turning always with light in your voice. And thank you for being a wonderful colleague and friend. All the best for your retirement. I look forward to visiting you by the beach soon.

Thanks for taking a chance on the mum of a toddler who was 6mths pregnant with #2 back in 2013. Thank you for giving me a job that has also been my passion. It has challenged me and provided so many wonderful rewards.

I'll always cherish our friendships and what we've achieved together.



Barry Mudge thanking Ruth Sommerville

Got silverleaf nightshade on your property?

Silverleaf nightshade is one of those weeds you just can't ignore because it becomes increasingly difficult and costly to control if left alone. Due to summer rain, it's having a field day in our region.

Here are some do's and don'ts for controlling silverleaf nightshade:

DO: Treat silverleaf nightshade urgently, before it sets seed

DO: Use extra wetter for best results, even if your herbicide has an inbuilt wetter

DON'T: Use a mix of herbicides, as it's not as effective as a single herbicide and more expensive

For best practice control methods, watch our silverleaf nightshade webinar.



And refer to the PIRSA Weed Control Handbook .

Controlling the declared pest plant silverleaf nightshade requires prompt action from land managers. Image: Emily Kakoschke



New carbon management modules on 'The Toolbox'

Two new carbon management modules are now available on MLA's free eLearning platform, 'The Toolbox'.

Packed with practical advice, the training modules focus on the key concepts of carbon accounting and the actions producers can take on-farm to support their emissions reduction and carbon sequestration journey.

What's covered in the new modules? Following on from the release of 'Carbon 101'* in October 2022, the two new modules – 'Measure Your Own Emissions' and 'Carbon Sense' – provide guidance on the carbon accounting process and steps producers can take to reduce emissions.

[Measuring your own emissions:](#) Using the Primary Industries Climate Challenges Centre Greenhouse Accounting Framework, this module supports producers in understanding what data is needed and how to estimate emissions. It uses custom-built videos to walk producers through using the Sheep and Beef Greenhouse Accounting Framework (SB-GAF) calculator to estimate emissions and establish a baseline emissions profile.

[Carbon Sense:](#) This module gives practical advice and tips on how to take action and reduce on-farm to emissions.

Both eLearning modules, which take less than an hour to complete, provide producers with an opportunity to learn through case studies, images, videos, quizzes and practical data application (either their own or default data). They also help producers understand how their learnings can be applied to their current and future planning.

'Measuring your own emissions' and 'Carbon Sense' were developed and funded in partnership with Australian beef processor, Greenham, with technical support from agribusiness consultants, Pinion Advisory.





Sheep Technology Expo – Hawker

Tuesday 21 March 2023, 9.00am - 4.00pm

Hawker Community Sports Centre

Presentations include:

- Using eID in low rainfall and pastoral areas
- Wool traceability, marketing and certified integrity schemes
- Water telemetry: Producer case studies
- Q & A with producers and telemetry providers

Trade displays invited include:

- eID equipment/tags
- Sheep yards and sheds
- Sheep handling equipment
- Sheep auto feeders
- Farm and livestock software
- Remote sensing technology
- Water technology
- Remote monitoring – water, security, electric fencing
- Animal health
- Sheep equipment
- Genetic testing
- Farm safety/security

Register

To assist with catering register on-line to attend event:
Morning tea and lunch provided

Contact

Jodie 0428 103 886 | Bart 0428 102 920

www.sheepconnectsa.com.au

 @sheepconnectsa

Event sponsor



This event is supported by Red Meat and Wool Growth Program.

Monday 30 January 2023

GPSA to hold series of on-farm grain storage workshops

Grain Producers SA (GPSA) is delivering a series of Grain Storage Workshops, in conjunction with Grains Research and Development Corporation's (GRDC) Grain Storage Extension Project, to provide information and resources for producers on best practice on-farm grain storage.

The free workshops are being held in late March 2023 from the Yorke Peninsula to the Murraylands with support from industry service providers and suppliers.

GPSA Chief Executive Officer Brad Perry said the workshops are in response to feedback from GPSA's annual producer survey.

"Our 2022 grain producer survey demonstrated the increased investment and use of on-farm storage and we identified an opportunity to provide information and resources on this important topic," said Mr Perry.

"Off the back of a record harvest in South Australia, it was evident that many grain producers opted to store grain on-farm for convenience, productivity and profitability reasons.

"There is a range of new technologies available to monitor on-farm storage and the workshops will explore the most efficient and practical ways to store grain, while protected from moisture and pests.

"Following the workshops, we are offering attendees the opportunity to visit a local grain producer's property to see their on-farm storage first-hand."

Leading the Grain Storage Workshops will be agricultural engineer Ben White, a well-known and respected expert in best practices for on-farm grain storage.

The GPSA Grain Storage Workshops will be held:

- 27 March – Balaklava Sports Club
- 28 March – Georgetown Bowls Club
- 29 March – Maitland Golf Club
- 30 March – Brown's Well Football Club
- 31 March – Coomandook Church Hall

To register for the free workshops or to find out more details, visit www.grainproducerssa.com.au





Did you know that a high-quality grassland can be as diverse as a rainforest?

The iron-grass natural temperate grasslands (INTG) of South Australia are listed as critically endangered with only a few small areas remaining.

These grasslands are a community of plants dominated by grasses and are home to amazing birds, reptiles and insects, plus wildflowers such as herbs, lilies and orchids.

The Nature Discovery Day is a unique opportunity to unlock their mysteries with expert ecologists, including:

- Nicola Barnes, Grassland Ecologist from the Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board
- Dr Michael Nash, Applied Invertebrate Ecologist
- Mike Gardner, Professor in Biodiversity/Ecology, Flinders University
- Dr Amy Slender, Flinders University

The Northern and Yorke Landscape Board, together with the Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board and the Mid North Grasslands Working Group is hosting a full day of grasslands learning.

Come along to the workshops to learn about the role our native grasslands play in our landscape.

Lunch, tea and coffee provided.

The day will finish with a grassland walk, led by Milie Nicholls of the Mid North Grasslands Working Group. Please wear appropriate clothing and footwear for walking.

For more information, contact Nick Modra (NYLB) on 0458 353 309 or email: nick.modra@sa.gov.au.

This event is part of the project, Removing barriers to the conservation of the pygmy bluetongue lizard, which is funded through the Australian Government's Environmental Restoration Fund Priority Species Grant.



NEW FACTSHEET!

Using Satellite Imagery in the Growing Season to Inform Adaptive Management'.

Satellite technology in agriculture has become a widely adopted method of viewing and analysing broadacre crops, giving new insights into variability across and between fields. However, widely this technology is still underutilized given there are many opportunities for changed management practices.

In this fact sheet, the uses for the data and maps available through satellite imagery will be demonstrated through four very different case studies – growers in the Upper North using the imagery to overcome site specific challenges on their farms.

This initiative has been made possible thanks to funding from the SA Drought Hub, and the MLA Pasture Demonstration Sites project and was compiled by Breezy Hill Precision Ag Services.

Here is the link to the full document on our website:
www.unfs.com.au



Using SATELLITE IMAGERY to INFORM ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

Author: Jessica Koch, Breezy Hill Precision Ag Services



Breezy Hill Precision Ag Services



INTRODUCTION

Satellite technology in agriculture has become a widely adopted method of viewing and analysing broadacre crops, giving new insights into variability across and between fields. As time has gone on, accessibility to satellite imagery has become higher in resolution, faster and more affordable for growers. Agronomists have satellite imagery available in their software programs, and the maps can even be viewed in machinery data services such as John Deere Operations Centre. Despite this fact, the practical uses for the maps are still not widely known or adopted. In low rainfall environments, the opportunities for changed management using the maps and information from the imagery are huge. Data can offer increased confidence when making tough decisions in harder drought years. We will explore four very different case studies throughout the Upper North, and how the growers made profitable management decisions through understanding variability.



SATELLITE IMAGERY USES:

- ▶ Crop Scouting – gain insights into the crop variability before visiting the field. Often variability shows up that isn't visible from the ute cab
- ▶ Change Detection – Comparing images over time to view the changes in crops within a season or between seasons. Very important for management of both abiotic (eg - heat stress, drought, chilling stress, salinity) and biotic (eg - disease, pest) crop stressors
- ▶ Harvest Order Management - As a crop grows its amount of green leaf area increases. As it senesces the green leaf area begins to decrease. This effect shows clearly on the imagery and can be very helpful in targeting desiccation timings and harvest operations
- ▶ Crop Effect - Hail/Storm/Herbicide Damage/Overspray assessment
- ▶ Fallow Selective Spot Spraying – In a summer spray scenario, spraying outcrops of weeds in stubble
- ▶ In Crop Selective Spot Spraying – Fungicide application for example – spraying product based on the density of the crop canopy
- ▶ Frost Management – finding and defining frost affected zones to make harvest decisions – cutting for hay or selective harvesting
- ▶ Targeted Insect Inspections – Pests tend to congregate in thicker biomass zones, nutrient or moisture deficient/excess areas. Crop inspections can be targeted accordingly
- ▶ Soil Performance Zoning - soil types and soil condition delineation (soil capability and capacity)

Thursday 23 February 2023

SA grain producers urged to take the ‘Spray Pledge’

Grain Producers SA (GPSA) and CropLife Australia have teamed up to launch a new initiative for grain producers in South Australia to take the ‘Responsible Spray Applicator Pledge’.

South Australian grain producers are being encouraged to take the voluntary pledge to demonstrate they are using best practice when spraying agrichemicals on-farm by visiting spraypledge.com.au.

Grain Producers SA Chief Executive Officer Brad Perry said this national-first initiative is designed to highlight and reward grain producers who are applying agrichemicals responsibly.

“We know that a majority of grain producers using agrichemical are applying it diligently, but we also know that spray drift incidents are occurring in South Australia, particularly where broadacre and horticulture co-exist,” said Mr Perry.

“The ‘Spray Pledge’ campaign encourages grain producers to refresh their knowledge on the application of agrichemicals and highlights those producers who continue to do the right thing.

“It is pleasing to be able to deliver this campaign with the support of CropLife Australia, which represents the innovators, developers, manufacturers, formulators, suppliers and registrants of crop protection and ag-biotechnology products.”

CropLife Australia Chief Executive Officer Matthew Cossey said pesticides are crucial to modern integrated pest management methods.

“CropLife’s members invest billions of dollars each year into the research and development of innovative products, allowing farmers to access economically viable and environmentally sustainable crop protection solutions,” said Mr Cossey.

“This investment has resulted in improvements in on-target application that reduces the risk of pesticide drift occurring.

“CropLife also has developed stewardship programs like SprayBEST, produced in partnership with the Australian Ground Sprayers Association, to equip farmers, spray applicators and environmental land managers with the latest advice and resources for efficient spray application and effective spray drift management.

“Ultimately, we are on the same page when it comes to spray drift mitigation. And we can achieve this common goal when combining StewardshipFirst best-practice initiatives with the leadership demonstrated by applicators in South Australia who are committed to being world best.”

From previous page

The Pledge features a series of multiple-choice questions designed to educate producers and concludes with the producer taking the 'Spray Pledge'.

Once the grain producer has completed the pledge, they will be sent a 'Spray Pledge Pack' which includes a letter, certificate, corflute and bumper sticker, as well a \$100 voucher.

To undertake the 'Spray Pledge', visit www.spraypledge.com.au



RESCHEDULED KONAMORE STATION STICKYBEAK DAY TUESDAY 21 MARCH

Soil conservation methods
Improving pastoral production
Understanding soils in the rangelands
Celebrating 100 years of research on Osborn Reserve



Australian Government
Department of Agriculture,
Fisheries and Forestry



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The Koonamore Stickybeak Day is offered as part of the Building Pastoral Sustainability project, which is supported by the SA Arid Lands Landscape Board, through funding from the Australian Government's Future Drought Fund

Tuesday 28 February 2023

Grain harvest code Working Group to review fire index

A Working Group has been established to review the 'cease harvest' threshold for grain harvesting in South Australia, with its first meeting to be held this week.

The Grain Harvest Code of Practice (GHCoP) most recently relied on a Grassland Fire Danger Index (GFDI) of 35. In the field, grain producers derive the 'cease harvest' threshold for grain harvesting at a working height of two metres.

As part of the national implementation of the Australian Fire Danger Rating System (AFDRS), the GFDI measurement is being superseded by the Fire Behaviour Index (FBI).

Grain Producers (GPSA) Chief Executive Officer Brad Perry said GPSA has been working with the State Government and South Australian Country Fire Service (CFS) to review the proposed 'cease harvest' threshold of FBI 40 measured at a height of 10 metres.

"When the new FBI figure was first announced GPSA raised serious concerns with the calculations behind the 'cease harvest' threshold. Thanks to the lobbying efforts of GPSA, the implementation of the FBI as the sole threshold was delayed for the 2022 harvest," said Mr Perry.

"From the feedback we received from grain producers during harvest, it is clear that FBI of 40 is not equivalent to GFDI of 35 measuring at a two-metre working height.

"Through this Working Group, we envisage an agreement will be reached on the 'cease harvest' threshold before the end of this financial year, giving grain producers time to adjust and prepare to use the new FBI in the 2023 harvest season.

"We welcome the establishment of the Working Group and look forward to providing input, evidence and data on behalf of South Australian grain producers.

"The majority of South Australian grain producers have demonstrated strong adherence to the voluntary harvest code under the GFDI of 35 and we want this commitment to remain under the FBI."

The Working Group will be led by former South Australian Premier Rob Kerin, as Independent Chair, while GPSA will be represented by CEO Brad Perry and Eyre Peninsula Grower Director Peta Willmott.

For interviews, contact Brad Perry, GPSA CEO, on 0418 619 907

AWI Shearing Update

March 2023



Australian Wool
Innovation Limited

MEDIA RELEASE

Australian Wool Innovation's Chairman Jock Laurie says extensive work continues to tackle the challenge around shearing.

"Shearing is the number one issue facing many growers and AWI is doubling down on efforts to tackle the problem.

We are doing this through helping roll out modular race delivery systems, increasing training and retention programs for shearers, investigating robotics and working on improving biological defleecing.

The beauty of the modular race delivery system is taking out some of shearing's most physically demanding task – the catch and drag.

As sheep have got bigger that is additional stress on the shearers' body, the modular system removes that.

AWI is working with six engineering companies to take the AWI led design and make them commercially available to growers around Australia.

- Haynes Engineering, Naracoorte SA
- Proway Livestock Equipment, Bomen, NSW
- Stockpro, Condobolin, NSW
- Kyabram Steel, Kyabram, VIC
- Commander AG-Quip, Albany, WA
- RW Engineering, Darkan, WA

Interested growers are either looking to retrofit or construct a new shed incorporating the system to reduce costs in upgrading, utilising or replacing older infrastructure".

AWI applied for and received a grant of \$45,000 from the WA Government to further develop the Race Delivery System with a manufacturer in Western Australia. With matching funding from AWI, this will bring the total investment to \$90,000 in 2023. The funding is now being used to engage with RW Engineering and developments are underway to innovate the design and uptake of the Race Delivery System.

More here: <https://www.wool.com/about-awi/media-resources/news/awi-shearing-update/>



NSS & CROP SCIENCE SOCIETY
SA COMBINED PRE SEEDING
MEETING

**Wednesday 29th
March**

**6:30 PM START @ MUNDOORA
COMMUNITY SPORTING CLUB -
DINNER AVAILABLE**

GUEST SPEAKERS

SAM TRENGOVE - TRENGOVE
CONSULTING *2022 TRIALS REVIEW*

ROYCE PITCHFORD - AGRIBUSINESS
CONSULTANT WITH PINION ADVISORY
*THE TRUE COST OF OWNING AND
OPERATING MACHINERY*

RSVP'S APPRECIATED TO 0418524754

THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS



Code of Practice

Summer Weed Control

Spray drift from summer weed control is a serious threat to sensitive crops.

Ongoing spray drift damage risks additional regulatory restrictions to important summer herbicide products.

Objective

To provide a standard for the safe and effective application of herbicides for summer weed control.

To minimise the risk of off-target damage to grapevines and other susceptible plants from droplet and vapour drift of herbicides.

Recognising a surface temperature inversion is critical

Do not apply summer herbicides in inversion conditions. These conditions exist most evenings one to two hours before sunset and persist until one to two hours after sunrise. If temperature inversion conditions develop while spraying, spraying operations must cease.

A surface inversion is likely to be present if:

- mist, fog, dew or a frost have occurred
- smoke or dust hangs in the air and moves sideways, just above the ground surface
- cumulus clouds that have built up during the day collapse towards evening

- wind speed is constantly less than 11km/hr in the evening and overnight
- cool off-slope breezes develop during the evening and overnight
- distant sounds become clearer and easier to hear
- aromas become more distinct during the evening than during the day.*

Wind speed and direction

Recording weather details is a legal requirement for all Group I herbicides in South Australia and for other summer herbicide products if required by their label direction.

Spray when the wind is blowing away from any nearby susceptible plants/crops. Do not spray when there is little or no wind.

Be aware that sea breezes can move chemicals many kilometres from their source and then deposit them directly into inland regions or into inversion layers that are forming, or have already formed inland.

Read the label: 2,4-D has mandatory label instructions to apply between 3 and 15km/hr wind speed. For all other products apply as per label instructions.

Monitoring and record keeping

Monitor and record on-site weather conditions (wind speed, wind direction, temperature and relative humidity) at the start and finish of spraying and at least for every load during spraying. It is a legal requirement to keep records in accordance with label instructions



and for all Group I herbicides in South Australia.

Examples templates and information:
pir.sa.gov.au/biosecurity/rural_chemicals

Equipment and products

Use nozzle types and operating pressures that maintain a very coarse spray quality, or larger. An extremely coarse spray quality is recommended where a glyphosate, MCPA or 2,4-D product is use.

For 2,4-D it is a legal requirement that spray quality must be very coarse or larger. Label directions for 2,4-D now recommend extremely coarse or larger spray quality for the period 1 October to 15 April.

With other products, when using smaller than extremely coarse spray quality select adjuvants that do not increase the drift potential, such as LI 700 Surfactant or similar emulsion adjuvant.

It is critical to get the entire combination of droplet size, boom height and travel speed right. Even small changes in any or all of these elements can significantly increase the number of fine droplets produced and the subsequent spray drift risk.

*Information from GRDC Fact Sheet: *Surface Temperature Inversions and Spraying* (July 2014)

New fact sheet – which pasture forecasting tools are right for you?

Knowledge of current pasture production and the ability to accurately predict future production helps livestock farmers with decision-making around pasture supply and feed budgeting.

With the support of the SA Drought Hub, MacKillop Farm Management Group (MFMG) has developed a fact sheet on pasture forecasting tools, which summarises the attributes and capabilities of each tool into a single, easy-to-use document. It includes a comparison table that distils key information, such as data that can be inputted, data the tool delivers, applicable livestock categories, user platforms available and costs.

[Download the fact sheet on pasture forecasting tools](#)

In addition to the main fact sheet, MFMG has also developed a supplementary fact sheet that describes tools not currently available for producers in South Australia.

[Download the supplementary fact sheet](#)

Image supplied by Meg Bell



Australian Government
Department of Agriculture,
Fisheries and Forestry



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THE UNIVERSITY
of ADELAIDE

This program received funding from the Australian Government's Future Drought Fund

SAVE THE DATE

Scratching the Surface

Learn how to identify and describe your soil profiles, learn simple soil testing methods and how soil type and health can affect livestock nutrition and pastoral productivity

Upalinna Station
Wed 15 March



Australian Government



Future
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LANDSCAPE
SOUTH AUSTRALIA
SA ARID LANDS

The Scratching the Surface Workshop is offered as part of the From the Ground Up project, which is supported by the SA Arid Lands Landscape Board, through funding from the Australian Government's Future Drought Fund.



Climate Services for Agriculture (CSA) gives Australian farmers an online platform to help prepare for climate variability, providing seasonal forecasts, future climate projections and historical climate data.

Funded by the Australian Government's [Future Drought Fund](#) and developed by the Bureau of Meteorology and CSIRO, CSA provides insights into how users can adapt their business to increase climate resilience.

CSA user and Western Australian beef farmer Dale Park encourages farmers to go online and look at CSA.

'The real value of this tool is to help make farmers aware of what the future might hold and to plan accordingly.'

Incorporating feedback from the agriculture sector, new features have been added that allow greater customisation of location-specific data as well as climate insights for even more crops, including mangoes, potatoes and bananas.

Use CSA for your farm planning here: <https://climateservicesforag.indraweb.io/>



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This program received funding from the Australian Government's Future Drought Fund

Contact Us

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Visit us on socials at: www.facebook.com/UpperNorthFarmingSystems

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Upcoming Events Calendar

March 2023

Date	Event	Contact
6th	UNFS Nelshaby Ag Bureau Western Post Harvest / Pre Seeding Event—Napperby	Jonno Mudge 0409 378 490
8th	UNFS Trials Planning Meeting @ Railway Hotel Jamestown	jade@unfs.com.au 0448 866 865
14th	UNFS Southern Post Harvest / Pre Seeding Event— Jamestown	jade@unfs.com.au 0448 866 865
15th	UNFS Strategic Board Meeting 3pm @ Booleroo Centre UNFS Operations Committee Meeting 7pm @ Booleroo Centre	admin@unfs.com.au Deb Marner 0409 100 134
15th	Jamestown Sheep Market	Scott Fleetwood 0247727827
15th	Scratching the surface—Upalinna	Matthew.Westover@sa.gov.au 0438 816 210
16th	Curramulka Farm Technology Planning Workshop	Brad Perry 0418 619 907
17th	Hats off for Health Chats—Mens - Melrose	Visit UNFS website events for more info
18th	Hats off for Health Chats—Womens - Melrose	Visit UNFS website events for more info
20/21st	Agri-Silience—Wirrabara & 22nd	Pene Keynes 8297 2299
21st	Sheep Technology Expo—Hawker Koonamore—Sticky Beak Day	Jodie 0428 103 886 Andrea.tschirner@sa.gov.au 0438 720 469
27th	GRDC Slug Management Workshop - 8am - Wirrabara	www.grdc.com.au
27th	Grain Producers SA—On Farm Grain Storage Workshop—Balaklava	Pene Keynes 8297 2299
28th	Grain Producers SA—On Farm Grain Storage Workshop—Georgetown Nature Discovery Day—Rangeland Grasslands	Brad Perry 0418 619 907 Nick.modra@sa.gov.au 0458 353 309
29th	NSS & Crop Science Mtg - 6.30pm - Mundoorra	Stefan Schmitt - 0418524754
29th	Grain Producers SA—On Farm Grain Storage Workshop—Maitland	Brad Perry 0418 619 907
30th	UNFS Northern Post Harvest / Pre Seeding Event—Booleroo Centre	jade@unfs.com.au 0448 866 865

Upcoming Events Calendar

April 2023

Date	Event	Contact
4th	Cactus Injection Working Bee	Morgan.McCallum@sa.gov.au 0436 477 604
Tbc	Regenerating Goyders Line - Post Summer Site Visits	Ruth Sommerville - 0401042223

When was the last time you worked on your farm business?

Taking time out of your farm operations to work on your farm business is key to building resilience across your business and the people involved in it.

Round 2 of the AgRi-Silience program is being held across South Australia in 2023 and will connect you with other farm business operators and professional advisors. It will provide an opportunity for you to reflect on what is important to you and how to understand and manage the risks facing your farm business.

Dates and locations:

* Lower North - 8th and 9th March, Auburn Institute, Auburn

* Upper North - 20th and 21st March, Wirrabara Senior Citizens Centre, Wirrabara

* Mid-Upper South East - 30th and 31st March, Keith

* Adelaide - 4th and 5th April (open to all areas)

* Burra - 3rd and 4th May



An investment of \$500 (ex.GST) per business will cover:

- 3 days of dedicated business planning with leading agriculture facilitators
- Catering
- Workbooks
- A minimum of 2 hours of coaching (per business) following Workshop 1
- 1 day with a specialised advisor to help build your businesses strengths or performance (to the value of \$3,500)

This program is for you if you are:

- wanting to set your business up for success and prepare for challenging times
- part of a business with new generations coming on board, or returning to the farm
- a livestock and/or broadacre farmer wanting to gain new perspectives from expert facilitators
- an individual looking at transitioning your business.

For more information, visit <https://livestocksa.org.au/industry-development/agri-silience>

This program is part of the Farm Business Resilience Program and is jointly funded through the Australian Government's Future Drought Fund and the Government of South Australia. It is being delivered by Co-ee Collective in partnership with Livestock SA.



Upper North Farming Systems

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