

LIEBE GROUP NEWS

April 2022

Volume 25

Issue 3



What's Inside



**Risk and Rewards
of Very Early Sown
Canola**



Women's Field Day



**Ukraine: Impact on
International Supply**



**Mouse Monitoring
and Management**



The Liebe Group mission is to facilitate grower prioritised research, development and extension to support our members to be profitable and sustainable.

From the Cover

Soil sampling at Latham for the GRDC funded Stubble Height Project.

DIAMOND PARTNERS



Rabobank



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FROM THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER

KATRINA VENTICINQUE

WELCOME to the April Newsletter, which will be the last one in its current format as we undergo a slight revamp. In response to feedback from our members, the group will be moving to a quarterly newsletter. Expect to see some great articles and information extended from our partners and industry researchers, and we welcome any feedback on these changes.

With ANZAC Day only just passed, the region is seeing a huge amount of hectares already planted to make use of the significant rain received in early April. With market pricing of canola at an all-time high, this season will hopefully be one for the record books!



Several trials at the Main Trial Site in north Miling have been pegged out ready for sowing in the coming weeks. Our trial partners this year include AGT, Nufarm, CSBP, Spraytec, Summit Fertilizers, Elders Scholz Rural, Living Farm/GRDC, Pacific Seeds, Adama, Longreach Plant Breeders and Syngenta. The majority of the site will also be implemented by Living Farm, including the NVTs. Our first event for the year out at the site will be the Post Seeding Field Walk in July to view and discuss these trials.

The Women's Committee is also working hard to finalise the agenda for the upcoming Women's Field Day on the 14th June, see page 11 for the flyer. Tickets are now available for Liebe Group members, with the first two tickets per farm business membership free.

2022 will see some great milestones including CBH Group, Rabobank and Syngenta celebrating their 20 years and Elders Scholz Rural's 15th year of partnership with the Liebe Group. This year also marks the 25th year since Liebe Group's inception, what a fantastic feat! We have also welcomed new Gold Partner Bailiwick Legal to the group in the past month. Check out page 5 for more information.

All the best to our members as seeding continues throughout the region!

GOLD PARTNERS



SILVER PARTNERS

Adama Australia

Australian Grain Technologies

Bayer

Boekemans Machinery Dalwallinu

GrainGrowers

Intergrain

McIntosh & Son

Nufarm

Nutrien Ag Solutions

Refuel Australia

Syngenta

FMC

Pacific Seeds

SprayTec Australia

Summit Fertilizers

RISK AND REWARDS OF VERY EARLY SOWN CANOLA

THANKS to GRDC investment, the Liebe Group has recently commenced a project 'The Risks and Rewards of Very Early Sown Canola' that aims to support grower decision making when presented with early sowing canola opportunities, giving consideration to soil moisture, time of sowing and varietal choice.

Through the implementation of a small plot trial, and accompanied by three grower case studies, it is anticipated that growers in the region will be able to build their confidence in weighing up the risks and rewards of 'going early' to capitalise on early rainfall events.

The significant rainfall event in late March prompted Liebe's R&D Committee to prioritise an investigation into how different varieties perform in an early April sowing window. These weather events appear to be occurring more commonly as changes to climate sees more late tropical low systems coming through further south and as such providing a non-traditional season break.

With high canola market prices, and coming off a season with stored soil moisture still available, the timeliness of this project is very advantageous to growers throughout the Liebe Group region.

A replicated trial encompassing two times of sowing (very early and standard grower practice) and six varieties of Roundup Ready canola (2 early, 2 mid and 2 longer season varieties) was implemented during the first week of April 2022 in Xantippe.

Grower case studies will be conducted to highlight key decision points for three growers in their canola sowing programs, and follow throughout the season to understand how some of the varieties perform at grower scale.

More information about this project will be extended throughout the season, including an opportunity to visit the trial site.



WELCOME TO NEW GOLD PARTNER BAILIWICK LEGAL

THE Liebe Group are pleased to welcome a new Gold Partner to the group this month with Bailiwick Legal.

Liebe Group partners are an integral facet of the success of the group and since our inception we have developed long and valuable relationships with a number of organisations who have mutual interests to the Liebe Group. These strong partnerships have given the group diversity, a level of security and the capacity to build a sustainable and healthy future.

Bailiwick Legal is a law firm providing a suite of specialised legal services to both businesses and individuals across WA, with a focus on agribusiness and rural law. Bailiwick is comprised of people who are genuinely passionate about and have deep connections to rural and regional WA.

They have been supporters of WAFarmers, CWA, Shearing Association and RRR Network for many years, as well as country sport's teams and other associations. They are continuing to grow their support in the regions by partnering with the Liebe Group.

This year Bailiwick Legal launched their Regional Legal Hot Desk initiative where they will be working remotely from regional towns across WA, giving you the opportunity to meet face-to-face with one of the team. You can currently find them out and about at Beverley, Cunderdin, Dowerin, Merredin, Moora, Northam and York.

Through their partnership with Liebe Group, they will be delivering information directly to you on legal matters that will impact your farming business and they look forward to meeting all the Liebe Group members!

Our partners add value to the group through in-kind support, products or services and they see the relationship with the group as a meaningful way to stay in close contact with the grass roots innovators of the industry. We look forward to building an on-going relationship with our latest Gold Partner and thank them for their support towards the Liebe Group.



REGIONAL ROUND UP

THIS year, the Liebe Group will catch up with a family from within the Liebe region to find out what their plans are for the year and what they hope to achieve.

Note: Views stated in the Regional Round Up articles are strictly those of the individual and do not necessarily represent those of the Liebe Group.

Farmers (family): SC & LA Carter & Co

Location: Xantippe

Average rainfall; Annual: 325mm GSR: 190 (5year average)

Farm size; Total: 11,000 ha Area cropped: 8,000 ha

Enterprise mix: 80% cropping, 20% livestock

Tell us about your business. What is the enterprise mix, who is involved?

Day to day operations of the farm are managed by Steve, Todd and Gavin with assistance from one full time employee and supported by Lee Anne, Katrina and Kelly.

Historically wheat and sheep have been the main drivers of the enterprise but more recently it has become wheat with barley, canola, lupins and sheep providing rotation options.



The Carter family

In one word, describe the 2021 season?
Rewarding.

What were the main challenges and highlights from last season?

The biggest challenge we faced was trying to get everything sprayed and N top ups done in a timely fashion. Frost and few wet areas were also challenges but something out of our hands.

The biggest highlight was the end result and although there was some frost, yields were well above average across all crops

Looking forward to the 2022 season, what are your plans and goals? Do you have a special focus this year? We plan to complete some infrastructure upgrades. As well continuing to build the production capacity and reliability of our soils.

A focus this year has already been to try two different aggressive tillage options to alleviate pH and compaction in some poorer performing areas.

Will you be making any changes to your rotations and enterprise-mix?

With the amount of rain already received we have already increased canola ha's significantly and if the rain continues sheep numbers are likely to drop in place of more cropped ha's.

Are you looking to trial or adopt any new practices or technologies this year?

We will keep a keen eye on green on green spraying technology and continue to improve our variable rate capability.

What do you do outside of farming?

Most of the time I'm busy catching up on time with the family and if it's not spending time with them it's normally something to do with footy.



What are your expectations for the year ahead?

We are expecting to be very busy thanks to basically a perfect start to the year. I'm also sure it is inevitable there are going to be some supply and logistical challenges along the way.

What opportunities do you see in agriculture?

I see great opportunities to improve time and input efficiency through advances in automation and technology.



WOMEN OF LIEBE

CARMEN STANLEY STANLEY AG

THE Liebe team caught up with one of the women of the Liebe Group to chat about their background, involvement in the group and their own goals and aspirations.

Note: Views stated in the Women of Liebe articles are strictly those of the individual and do not necessarily represent those of the Liebe Group.

Tell us a bit about yourself – what is your background?

I grew up in Merkanooka on a grain and sheep farm 25kms from Morawa and 35kms from Mingenew, and attended Morawa Primary School. I was fortunate to attend boarding school at MLC, I loved my time there.

I had a year on my parent's farm where I played netball for Mingenew. I went on to complete a Bachelor of Commerce, where I received a scholarship to study in Borneo for six months in 2002.

Half way through my degree whilst studying fulltime, I commenced full time work as a trainee valuer and qualified as a valuer in 2008. I prepared and researched property valuations within the commercial, retail and residential sectors. Major projects included Coventry group assets management enterprise Park Wangara, Swanbourne and Scarborough Senior Highs School Residential Development site, assisted compensation and acquisition with the peel deviation Stake Hill Swamp and Springs Rivervale.

I was a member of North Cott Surf club during University and found a love of snow skiing after a Lions exchange to Italy. This love took me to work in the US and ski in different parts of the world. Towards the end of 2008, after many years of commuting, I shifted to Kalannie, married and am currently farming and raising three entertaining and gorgeous children with my husband.



What is your role in your farm business? How long have you been in this role for and how do you enjoy it?

This week I am driving a tractor until our New Zealand crew turn up. Every week is different, from book work to bigger picture decisions, to part runs, to being Mum. My role evolves as our children get older, I lean into different roles at different times. I am fortunate to be able to work and create something with my partner and raise a family simultaneously.



What are the biggest opportunities and challenges for you and your farm business?

Each year presents different opportunities and challenges; this season the opportunity is high grain prices and the challenge is rising costs, not to mention a few pesky mice that are around at the moment!

The long term opportunity is having the skillset and the ability to take advantage of opportunities and deal with challenges. Good overall health is key to being able to achieve this.

What do you enjoy most about living in a rural area?

The people, rural people are very ingenious and know how to make fun out of nothing.

Life has more depth and connection in the country. I think rural versus city is summarised with country life appearing to be slower but seeing more and the city life appearing to move quicker and seeing less. I also love being connected to the land.

What has been the involvement you have had with the Liebe Group? What have you gained from this?

I did a leadership course in 2000 with Liebe Group and I gained a husband, haha well I met my husband on the course. Liebe Group does a great job of bringing members knowledge and helping grow our businesses. I have been on the Women's Committee and attended their Kununurra study tour with my 18 month old son, all of which were valuable experiences.



Who or what inspires you the most?

My family get me out of bed. I get inspiration from so many different people, I could not single one person out. The common features of these people is they make a difference and are often leaders in their field, they often show the world a different perspective and they have overcome adversity. They can be from any background it's really someone that is passionate for what they do in life and overcome the challenges in front of them. I do always have a soft spot for a rebel.



LIEBE GROUP 2022 PHOTO COMPETITION

FAMILIES IN FARMING

WIN ONE OF THREE \$150 FUEL CARDS THANKS TO REFUEL AUSTRALIA!

THE RULES

- Photos are to be submitted via email to admin@liebegroup.org.au
- 5 photos may be entered into the competition per person but more can be shared via Facebook
- Judging will be completed by 3 members of the Liebe Group Board
- Entry into the competition includes permission for the Liebe Group to use images in future publications and media
- Winner will be announced at Spring Field Day, Thursday 8th September 2022

ENTRIES CLOSE FRIDAY 19TH AUGUST



TODD CLARK



REBECCA WALLIS



NATHAN SAWYER

Winning images from the 2021 photo competition.

PROUDLY SUPPORTED BY



LIEBE GROUP PRESENTS THE 2022

Women's

Field Day



TUESDAY 14TH JUNE | 8:30AM - 4:00PM

DALWALLINU RECREATION CENTRE | RSVP BY 6TH JUNE

KEYNOTE SPEAKER | Caroline Ashby - Farmer, Athlete, Ironwoman



Caroline is a farmer, mother of two girls and an Ironman athlete (3.8km swim, 180km bike, 42km run) who has successfully competed at the pinnacle of Ironman events including 2 x Hawaii World Championships.

Living in a remote area of WA, she has beaten the odds to achieve many Ironman titles. Having being struck down with an injury, Caroline has spent the last two years rebuilding her mind, body and soul trying everything holistic ready for the biggest comeback of her life. The essence of her talk is to dream, believe, achieve, remain resilient and grateful for everything you have and remember no matter what your circumstances "Anything is Possible".

ON THE AGENDA

- Staff Management Tips and Tricks
- Carbon Farming in the Wheatbelt
- Implementing Policies & Procedures On-farm
- Building a Small Business
- Business Management Courses: What is Available?
- Bookkeeping Basics
- Land Values in 2022 and Beyond
- And More!

TICKETS

Members \$40
Non-members \$80

<https://tinyurl.com/2022WFD>

ENQUIRIES

Ph: 08 9661 1907
E: admin@liebegroup.org.au

EVENT PARTNER



DIAMOND PARTNERS

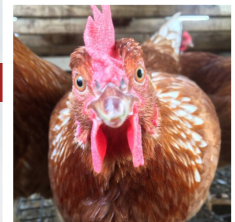


The Liebe Group Women's Field Day is focused on increasing the management capacity of women to build a sustainable future for their family, farm business & the agricultural industry

Liebe Group Women in Ag Networking and Diversification Program's



Three Day Getaway



13TH TO 15TH JULY 2022 | PERTH & PEEL REGIONS

Local women are invited to participate in a three day interactive bus trip to build resilience and strengthen connections within the agricultural community. Starting with guided tours of grain industry facilities in Perth, the group will then travel through farming regions surrounding Mandurah & Bunbury visiting innovative small businesses.

Enjoy the opportunity to network and explore diverse agricultural landscapes with your peers whilst gaining a better understanding of how to adapt farming operations to suit varying climates.

Visit CSBP Soil and Plant Laboratory, CBH Kwinana Port, Drakesbrook Wines, Patane Produce, Halls Family Farm and Runnymede Eggs!

SPACES ARE LIMITED | REGISTRATIONS BY 24TH JUNE

Cost

\$350 - including three days transport (via coach ex. Perth), two nights accommodation, all meals, resources and site presentations.

For more information or to register, contact the Liebe Group office
Ph: 9661 1907

E: admin@liebegroup.org.au

THIS 'WOMEN IN AG NETWORKING AND DIVERSIFICATION (WAND) PROGRAM' IS FUNDED THROUGH THE FRRR FUTURE DROUGHT FUND: NETWORKS TO BUILD DROUGHT RESILIENCE, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT.



FRRR
Foundation for Rural
Regional Renewal



Australian Government
Department of Agriculture,
Water and the Environment



Future
Drought
Fund

FEDERAL BUDGET 2022 - 23 OVERVIEW FOR AGRI-BUSINESS

Judy Snell
Director
RSM Australia

THE budget held slim pickings for small and medium enterprises. There were some measures that apply and may be relevant to your business:

- Business's with a turnover of less than \$50m will have an additional 20% deduction for expenditure on digital update and training. This deduction is limited to a \$100,000 spend.

This includes subscription costs for cloud based farming software and book keeping programs such as Xero, Agrimaster, Figured.

- Agribusiness in receipt of Australian Carbon Credit Units (ACCU's) or biodiversity certificates will have previously had this income taxed as non-primary production income making the income ineligible for the Farm Management Deposits (FMD's) and primary production averaging.

From July 2022, income from these sources will be treated as primary production income allowing eligible agribusiness to both utilise FMD's and averaging systems. Note though this is not eligible for Agribusiness trading through companies.

- A bonus 20% deduction on costs to upskill staff through external training courses. This was introduced with the aim of helping small businesses to 'become more productive and competitive' in the market.

- The IAWO (Instant Asset Write Off) that allowed for the temporary full expensing of plant and equipment was reaffirmed in the budget and the current end date for this measure is 30th June 2023.

- The budget allowed tax rebates for agribusiness that engage external registered training providers to train and upskill their employees.

- Support of large agricultural trad events funding of \$12million over 3 years.

For individuals there were few pickings:

- An increase in the low and middle income (LMITO) tax offset for the 2021-22 year in a bid to combat the rising cost of living for low and middle income earners. The proposed changes will be paid from 1st Jul 2022. Individual with an income of up to \$126,000 will benefit from LMITO, with the full benefit of \$1,500 available to those earning between \$48,000 - \$90,000 per annum. The LMITO then phases out as an individual's income reaches \$126,000.
- Retirees also got confirmation on an earlier promise to limit any further changes in the superannuation system. The only measure was the extension of the 50% minimum pension drawdown reduction. This measure which halves the minimum pension requirement for retirees drawing an income stream from superannuation, was due to expire on 30th June 2022. The Federal Budget has extended this reduction until 30th June 2023, to avoid retirees having to sell assets in a time of financial viability to meet pension conditions.

HIGH GLOBAL PRICES, REGARDLESS OF RUSSIA

Lisa Curtis
Marketing Manager
Rabobank



Rabobank

GLOBAL grains and oilseeds markets exploded following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. In the initial two weeks, Rabobank's senior commodities analyst Cheryl Kalisch Gordon said the CBOT wheat lifted 79 per cent.

"With some of the risks of the crisis digested, at least for now, CBOT wheat has moved back just below 1,100USc/bu (as at 15/3/22), but is still 40 per cent above pre-crisis trading and 100 per cent above the five-year average," Dr Kalisch Gordon said.

"Other major grains and oilseeds have followed to varying degrees and the outlook is for this elevated, and particularly volatile, pricing to remain at least until June," she said.

"For pricing in the second half of the year, we're watching three main factors: Ukraine's new crop supply, who trades with Russia and whether La Nina loses its grip on 'the Americas'.

"Most Ukrainian wheat and canola are winter varieties, about to emerge post-dormancy. However, Ukraine's spring wheat, barley, corn and sunflower planting window starts now. With high input costs and widespread uncertainty, whether these crops will be planted is unclear. And whether crops – spring or winter – are harvested, is also uncertain."

Dr Kalish Gordon said failure to plant Ukrainian spring crops would put a 60 million-tonne hole in the 2022/23 global grain supply, and that could rise to almost 90 million tonnes if both winter and spring crops cannot be harvested.

"While it's unlikely that no Ukrainian spring crops will be planted, or that none will be harvested, the longer the conflict continues, the lower the new crop supply we can expect. This supply uncertainty will keep risk priced into markets towards, and into, the second half of 2022," she said.

"For Russia – with no conflict-related impediments to planting or harvesting and ready availability of key inputs – new crop supply is not the concern, but rather if it will be available on world markets and who will buy it.

"Russian wheat is finding its way to the MENA (Middle East and North Africa) region and – with prices so high, the rouble so devalued and food security a troubling concern across that region – we know some supply will continue to make its way there in some way."



Rabobank senior commodities analyst
Cheryl Kalisch Gordon

Dr Kalish Gordon said the big question is whether China will take sizable volumes from Russia – something it could easily accommodate, notwithstanding freight challenges. “This would be at the expense of imports from Australia, the US and South America and would take pressure out of global grains markets in the second half of 2022.”

Dr Kalish Gordon also noted there is the still-active La Nina. “While indicators show it has passed its peak, and all except one global model shows a dissipation of the La Nina climate pattern by this July, dry conditions are reducing crop prospects in Argentina, parts of Brazil and across southern USA. If La Nina loosens its grip, we could see some pressure taken out of markets in the second half of the year, but, if not, more upward pricing pressure.”

These three factors have the potential to materially alter the trajectory of grains and oilseeds prices later this year said Dr Kalisch Gordon. “But even before Russia invaded Ukraine, COVID-related supply chain challenges, crop failures, additional demand and low stocks had grain markets trading in ranges not often encountered. So, whatever happens with Ukraine’s next crop, China’s buying and La Nina in the ‘Americas’, we expect global grain prices to trade at least 45 per cent above the five-year average in the second half of 2022,” she said.

To find out more about other Rabobank research, contact Rabobank’s local team in Moora and Dalwallinu on (08) 9690 8500 or subscribe to RaboResearch Food & Agribusiness Australia & New Zealand on your podcast app.

Are you interested in driving for CBH?

CBH is seeking interested growers to please support our outloading program and consider using your truck or driver/s for one of four opportunities.

With a 21.3 million tonne harvest delivered and strong export demand, we would like to be able to provide the WA grain industry with further capacity to meet this market demand.

However, with tight transport resources in WA and the ever-present threat of COVID-19 disruptions to our supply chain, we need more trucks than ever to get your grain to port.

There are currently four ways you can help:

1. Subcontract to an existing CBH road transporter
2. Grain Forward Haul
3. Lease your prime mover or trailer to Cropline Haulage
4. Directly contract to CBH and cart grain for select routes

For more information, please visit our website:

<https://www.cbh.com.au/storage-and-handling/grower-trucks>



LATEST NEWS FROM CBH

CBH Community Relations
Team



UKRAINE: IMPACT ON INTERNATIONAL SUPPLY

Adrian Clancy
Marketing Consultant
Farmanco



KEY Points:

- Invasion potentially impacts 30% of international wheat and barley supply
- This is ongoing and will likely impact spring plantings
- International grain is already critically low for vulnerable consumers
- Australian prices are likely to remain strong into the second half of 2022

The Russian invasion of Ukraine continues to place a heavy toll on Ukraine and its people; the humanitarian impact of millions being displaced, let alone the loss of life and irreparable damage being incurred. Yet, the impacts are likely to be far reaching internationally due to the reliance many consumers have on Black Sea grain.

Since the invasion, the Black Sea region has become a no-go zone for shippers. This has cut off around 30% of the world's wheat and barley export supply. At some point, if Russia decided to put a hold to its hostilities, shippers are likely to return to Russian ports and recommence shipping old season stocks. However, the impact on Ukrainian exports will be far deeper.

Ukraine, in its own right, is a major supplier of grain to a range of markets (Table 1). While winter crops in the ground are still likely to be progressing, access to crucial resources such as seed, fertiliser, diesel, and labour will have a compounding effect in the next month as conditions warm and growers look to commence spring plantings.

Damage to rail and port infrastructure will further delay exports at a time when its customers cannot afford it, as key consumers start to run critically low on crucial stocks.

Table 1: Ukraine production and exports. Source: www.fao.org/www.statista.com

Ukraine Production and Exports						
	% of International Trade	Est. Export MMT	Average Production MMT	Winter Planting	Spring Planting	Planting
Wheat	12%	25	30	95%	5%	
Barley	18%	6	9	40%	60%	
Canola	20%	3	2.5	100%		
Corn	16%	35	35			May - Sept
Sunflower (oil)	50%	7	17		100%	

While it is not possible to know exactly what the intent of the invasion is, the focus appears to be spread between Kyiv, the home of the Ukraine parliament, and the southern coastal region. The southern region of Ukraine adjoins the Black Sea, which links Ukraine's highly productive cropping country (Figure 1) in the south to its port capacity, where it exports its crops to the world.



Figure 1: State Statistics service of Ukraine Av Wheat production 2016 -2020. Source: www.fas.usda.gov



Figure 2: Ukraine grain exports from major ports in February 2019. Source: www.apk-inform.com



Figure 3: Chicago wheat 1969 – 2022. Source: www.barchart.com

The port of Odessa also has capacity to link both Moscow and St Petersburg to the Black Sea, making it highly beneficial to Russian producers (Figure 2).

The timing of the invasion is likely to have dire consequences for some vulnerable countries as it comes at a time when international stocks are already running critically low. The resulting supply shortfall has caused a price spike internationally for all major commodities, eclipsing those set in 2008 (Figure 3). For some buyers such as Egypt, who are heavily reliant on the Black Sea region for daily staples, the effect on daily living costs has been pretty much immediate.

Egypt imports around 6mmt of wheat annually to make flat bread, a large part of the Egyptian daily diet, with a large percentage from the Black Sea. In recent weeks, the cost of flat bread has increased by up to 50%, with the increasing cost of flour the primary driver.

In the past, we have seen civil unrest as food comprises a large part of the weekly expenditure. Likewise, those countries that will be impacted by large increases in grain import costs are those that can least afford it, such as Iraq, Iran, Libya, and Algeria, where stability is precarious.

What does it mean for Australia?

The reality is that decreased supply has resulted in an escalation in values for the major commodities for both current and new season grain. The limiting factor is Australia's capacity to get ships loaded. In recent weeks, we have seen further export capacity added in the west, with a further 600mmt made available by CBH, while in the east, all shippers both big and small are working at full capacity to maximise exports. Although, the supply of road freight and wet conditions, particularly in QLD and northern NSW, has hampered this to some degree.

USDA has forecast exports for wheat, barley, and canola out of Australia to hit a record 41.3mmt this year (27.5mmt wheat, 9mmt barley and 4.8mmt canola), which is a big step up from last year's record crop of around 35mmt. With 4.1mmt of wheat, barley and canola shipped nationally in January and early indications that February may exceed this after adding increased capacity to the shipping stem, it does appear achievable if supply of export stocks to port can be maintained.

MOUSE MONITORING AND MANAGEMENT

Tristan Clarke
Agronomist
Elders Scholz Rural



AT a glance

- High mice number have been reported in the Dalwallinu district predominately on sandy soils.
- Mice numbers build up very quickly and once numbers are high it is very difficult to reduce damage and control strategies are often costly
- Seeding is the most damaging time with all crop susceptible in the first 2 – 3 weeks
- Monitoring is essential to detecting when mice level become economically threatening
- Mice can be controlled through on farm hygiene practices and baiting

Background

There are reports of increase mouse activity across Western Australia's grain growing region. High mice numbers have been reported and observed around the Dalwallinu district.



Mice are not a declared pest in WA. It is up to land holders to implement control measure to protect sown and newly emerged crops. Whilst soil testing many active mouse holes were observed and as we approach seeding it is important to monitor mouse numbers and make decisions around baiting. It is important to get on top of control measures as seeding starts.

Impact

High numbers of mice cause crop damage, loss of livestock feed and fodder, contamination of stored grain and spread of disease. Mice cause yield losses through eating seed in the ground, eating young plants and chewing stems, heads and pods. All crops are susceptible in the first 2 – 3 weeks. Mice will eat sown grain and young seedling.

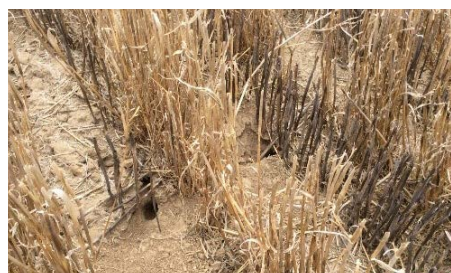


Damage of mice is most severe at sowing. Yield damage with economic implications is likely when there is 200 – 300 mice per ha at sowing which is seen in 1 – 2 active burrows per 100 meters transect. 200 mice per ha eat 1% of the crop sown each night or 14% in 2 weeks. One adult mouse required 2 – 3 grams of food per day (100 grains of wheat). 200 mice eat the equivalent amount of feed as one sheep.

Monitoring

What to look for in the paddock

- Poor germination - bare patches and chewed plants
- Seeds chewed in the head
- Stems gnawed just above the node causing them to die
- White heads that are either scattered or in patches in spring
- Pods lopped and chewed



PARTNER UPDATES

Thresholds

1) Count Active Holes

- Walk along 100 m transect
- Count number of active holes within 1-meter width
 - To identify active holes, look for fresh sand or put talcum powder around holes and observe the following day if the talcum powder has been disturbed
- Control required at 5 holes per 100 meters
- Assuming 2 mice per hole is 1000 mice per ha
- (5 holes x 100 meters x 2 mice = 1000 mice per ha)
- Doesn't work for cracking clays (more mice in less holes)

2) Mouse chew cards or canola oil cards

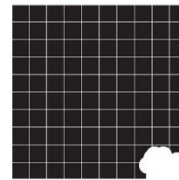
Chew cards are set up as follows:

- 10 cm x 10 cm strong paper or light card marked with 1cm grid lines
- Paper is soaked overnight in canola oil
- Cards are placed randomly across a paddock and pegged to the ground
- Cards are left overnight
- The emergence of a significant mouse population is indicated when more than 10 squares per card are eaten
- If more than 20 squares per card are eaten in an immature crop there is a significant mouse problem

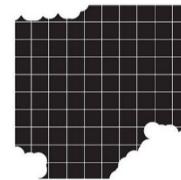
MOUSE CHEW CARD

INCIDENT MONITOR:

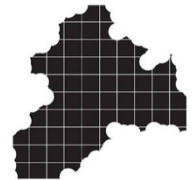
Check your chew cards – identify if mouse activity is:



LOW



MEDIUM



HIGH

Management

On Farm Hygiene is essential

Year-round farm hygiene practices are essential to minimising the availability of food for mice

- Cleaning spilt grain around sheds and silos
- Mouse proofing grain storage and stock feed areas
- Grazing stubble
- Stubble burning to reduce cover
- Control summer weeds and remove weeds along fence lines
- Remove and reduce potential cover including plant material, rubbish around buildings, silos and fodder storage

Harvest time management

- Minimise grain losses with sieve settings and harvest speed
- Harvest before crops are overripe and pod shatter or grain loss occur
- Do not leave strips of unharvest grain
- Clean up grain spills

Chemical Control - Baiting

Bait within 24 hours of sowing to protect seeds. The seed will still be covered by the soil which increases the likelihood of mice taking the bait, prior to finding the seed. Timing is critical, delays of 4 – 5 days can give mice time to find crop seed.

Two approved concentrations of Zinc Phosphide mouse baits

- 25g/kg
- 50 g/kg

Bait according to label directions within optimal time frame. There is a small window within which to bait before the crop emerges or the mice find the seeds in row, optimizing the baiting efficacy will come down to ensuring that when bait is spread there is minimal other food sources around.

HR & SAFETY TIPS FOR SEEDING

Danielle McNamee
Managing Director
ProcessWorx



AGRICULTURE is a unique industry with employment demands driven by peak seasonal periods like seeding and harvest. At ProcessWorx we understand that the demands on farmers during these periods are high. Human resources and work, health and safety might not be your first priority when preparing your farm for seeding, but having good processes can save you time, money and hassle in the long run.

Seeding comes with unique HR and safety considerations such as managing fatigue, onboarding seasonal casuals, and chemical handling. ProcessWorx HR and Safety Advisors have outlined our best practice tips for farmers to consider this season.

Managing Fatigue

Managing fatigue during seeding generates a lot of questions amongst ProcessWorx farming clients and can be challenging given there is a lot of work to do in a short window of time. Fatigue affects your clarity, decision making ability and motor skills which ultimately affects productivity. In regard to farms, safety legislation is not specific unless you are a commercial vehicle driver, however, farms have a duty of care to provide a safe workplace therefore, it is important to manage fatigue on your farm.

Some guidelines ProcessWorx recommends farms follow to manage fatigue:

1. Ensure maximum work hours are capped at 14 hours per day.
2. For any shift over 12.5 hours provide accommodation or travel.
3. Ensure break times are followed, at least 30 minutes every 5 hours and an additional 10 minutes agreed break throughout the shift.
4. Ensure employees have at least a 7 hour continuous sleep break in the last 24 hours.
5. Employees should have at least 1 full day off per fortnight.
6. Fatigue can accumulate over time, please take time to rest if you or your employees are feeling fatigued.

ProcessWorx understands that fatigue guidelines can be difficult when farmers and employees just want to get the job done, but health and safety are imperative to running a successful business and it is important to enforce breaks.

Employees covered by the Pastoral Award are entitled to an unpaid 30 minute break for the first 5 hours worked. Under the Pastoral Award, all work performed on the instruction of an employer during the recognised meal break must be paid at 200% of the ordinary hourly rate until the employee has a meal break.

It may seem as though stopping for breaks will reduce productivity, however, in the long run, having employees take breaks reduces fatigue and wages and ensures farmers are meeting their legal duty of care to provide a safe and healthy workplace.

PARTNER UPDATES

Onboarding Seasonal Workers

It is important farmers have the right processes in place when onboarding seasonal casual employees. This includes HR, ensuring employees have an employment contract, are being paid correctly, understand the expectations of their role and are familiar with the farm's policies, and safety, ensuring employees can safely operate vehicles, manage fatigue and use farm equipment safely.

Online inductions are a great option to give a comprehensive but succinct overview of the farm's HR and safety policies. ProcessWorx Advisors recommend, using an induction checklist as a guide to explain; the employee's role, hours of work and breaks, accommodation and rules, equipment and machinery being used, incident and hazard reporting methods, emergency management procedures and first aid procedures, to the employee.

A smooth and structured induction process will make onboarding seasonal workers easier and help ensure farmers have met their legal duty of care to provide a safe and healthy workplace.

Hold a Safety Meeting

ProcessWorx WHS Advisors recommend farms hold safety meetings during peak periods of operation like seeding. At this time there is likely to be more staff and more hazards to be aware of. Our WHS Advisors recommend holding an informal safety meeting with employees at the beginning of seeding covering; the hazards associated with seeding (e.g., fatigue, chemicals, heavy machinery), the control measures in place to minimise the risks, the location of first aid kits and emergency contact numbers, how to spot and report a hazard and safe operation of machinery and equipment. Keep a record of what was discussed at the meeting and who was in attendance.

Chemical Handling

Chemical usage is an important part of seeding, so it is crucial for farmers, and their employees to handle chemicals safely. ProcessWorx WHS Advisors recommend, developing a register of the chemicals on the farm, storing hazardous chemicals in a designated area away from other hazards, and having accessible Safety Data Sheets (SDS) for all the chemicals kept on the farm.

If you would like more information or assistance preparing your Farm for seeding, ProcessWorx has extensive experience working with farms to ensure their HR and Safety is compliant. Farmers can have peace of mind that a team of expert advisors are helping their business, so you can focus on farming.



CSIRO TOURS ADDRESS MOUSE CONTROL IN WA'S REGIONS

GRDC Media Release

April 8, 2022



WESTERN Australia growers across the state's mouse-troubled regions were visited by leading CSIRO rodent management scientists last week as part of a Grains Research and Development Corporation (GRDC) investment addressing increased mouse activity.



Growers and advisers attended a mouse management workshop with Steve Henry, CSIRO, in Binu focusing on awareness, monitoring and practical information for on-farm management. Photo: GRDC

The 'Mouse Roadshows' travelled to 21 locations in the mid west and great southern across four days, from Northampton through to Dalwallinu in the north and Esperance across to Wagin in the south, with 245 growers and advisers attending the small group sessions.

Each workshop delivered regionally specific information ahead of anticipated mouse control issues throughout 2022.

Leading rodent management scientist Mr Steve Henry and biosecurity ecologist Dr Wendy Ruscoe, from Australia's national science agency, CSIRO, delivered the workshops in collaboration with local industry partners and grower groups, focusing on awareness, monitoring and practical information for on-farm management.

Mr Henry said it was crucial that mouse activity in the Geraldton, Albany and Esperance port zones was monitored over the coming months to ensure growers and local bait suppliers are prepared for potential outbreaks.



CSIRO rodent management expert Steve Henry said that mice start breeding at six weeks old and have litters of six to 10 pups every 19 - 21 days. If conditions are favourable, the rate of increase is dramatic. Photo: Liebe Group

“Mice start breeding at six weeks old and have litters of six to 10 pups every 19 to 21 days. Breeding starts in spring and can continue through to late autumn. If conditions are favourable, the rate of increase is dramatic,” Mr Henry said.

“High numbers of mice cause crop damage, loss of livestock feed, contamination of stored grain and spread disease.

“The big question I like to ask farmers is, do you know what’s happening in your paddocks, particularly in big stubbles? Any paddocks that have big head loss, either before or after the header has gone through, are the paddocks that have the most mice in them.”

At this time of the year, when there’s lots of food around, active burrows are the best way to monitor mouse populations.

“Get out of the ute and walk through your paddock to calculate the number of burrows per hectare. If you’ve got more than 100 burrows per hectare you need to be vigilant, keep monitoring and be prepared to bait when you sow the crop,” Mr Henry concluded.

Group discussions from growers focused on issues including managing mice at seeding, baiting efficiency and economic return, burning stubble and soil amelioration and their impact on mouse numbers, and aerial baiting.



An in-paddock session in Gairdner with CSIRO biosecurity ecologist Dr Wendy Ruscoe attracted almost 40 growers and advisers. Photo: L Philip Honey

Liebe Group development and support officer Rebecca Wallis said that growers had heard a lot about mouse activity in the northern wheatbelt over the past year but weren’t sure how widespread the problem was.

“Now we’ve seen a lot more mouse activity over summer, including around our houses and sheds, we anticipated they were going to be an issue in the paddock,” Ms Wallace said.

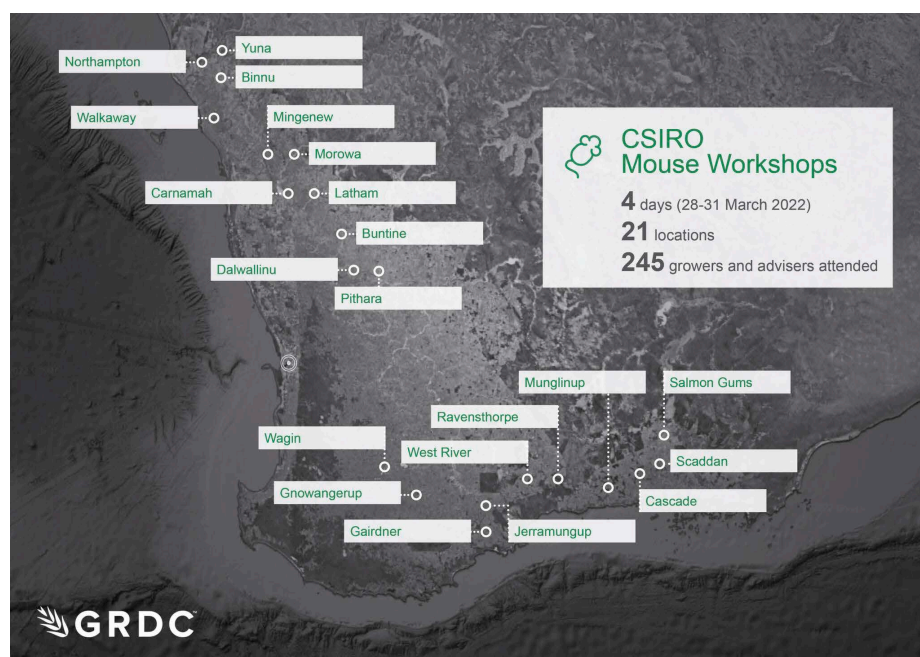
“Having someone like Steve come out and look at paddocks and assess the mouse control problem, or potential problem, has helped growers understand the extent of the issue in their local area.

“From a Liebe Group perspective, we always value having experts come and talk to growers in the regions, so we’re grateful to GRDC for making this type of event happen.”

Morowa Farm Improvement Group Chair and local grower Travis Collins said that following the workshops, he was implementing Mr Henry’s advice to bait early.

“It’s great that Steve came over and that GRDC and CSIRO are supporting mouse research in WA. Steve has a lot of knowledge that is valuable for growers, especially at this time of year,” Mr Collins said.

GRDC crop protection manager - west Georgia Megirian said that GRDC was working with industry partners and grower groups to ensure that growers could be part of a coordinated response to mouse management.



“Local support is imperative to the getting message out and managing the problem, as the best approach is proactive management across larger areas and multiple properties to keep infestations under control,” Ms Megirian said.

“The workshops provided in-paddock, seasonally relevant information to growers, with opportunities to look for signs of mouse activity and active burrows, ask questions, optimise management in their particular farming systems and learn about issues growers are facing.

Almost 250 growers and advisers attended the in-paddock sessions by CSIRO rodent management experts and grower groups across 21 locations. Photo: GRDC

“The project is part of the \$7.5 million GRDC has invested nationally into mouse outbreak research, development and extension (RD&E) with CSIRO, centred around better understanding mice in cropping systems, such as the impact of residual food in stubbles, increasing surveillance and improving strategic management options.”

For further information visit GRDC’s mouse management resources on the GRDC website.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2022

Women's Field Day	Tuesday 14 th June	Dalwallinu Rec Centre
Women in Ag Networking and Diversification Tour	13 th - 15 th July	Perth and Peel regions
Post Seeding Field Walk	Wednesday 27 th July	Main Trial Site, North Miling
Spring Field Day	Thursday 8 th September	Main Trial Site, North Miling

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