

Eyre Peninsula Agricultural Research Foundation Annual Report 2017



Eyre Peninsula
Agricultural Research Foundation Inc.

Simon Guerin
Chairperson, EPARF

“An independent advisory organisation providing strategic support for the enhancement of agriculture research on Eyre Peninsula”

Board of Management

Simon Guerin, Bryan Smith, Shannon Mayfield, Dion Trezona, Greg Scholz, Wes Matthews, Andy Bates, Mark Stanley, Dr Kathy Ophelkeller (SARDI), Prof Jason Able (University of Adelaide).

Ex Officio members: Mary Crawford (EPNRM), Andrew Ware (Snr Research Scientist EP, LEADA), Dot Brace (EO).

Values

To proactively support all sectors of agricultural research on Eyre Peninsula including the building of partnerships in promoting research, development and extension.

Role of EPARF

The Eyre Peninsula Agricultural Research Foundation (EPARF) was incorporated in 2004 and has a Board comprising representatives of farmers, University of Adelaide, SARDI, local consultants and the EPNRM Board. Its purpose is to represent the interests of research, development and extension on Eyre Peninsula.

The EPARF Board is committed to ensuring the ongoing development of agricultural systems in low rainfall zones of Australia and recognises its obligations to Eyre Peninsula.

EPARF is a not for profit foundation drawing its income from membership, industry funding and sponsorship.

The main publication funded is the “Eyre Peninsula Farming Systems Summary” booklet, a highly regarded annual summary of the trials conducted on EP.

Membership

Membership support is a critical factor when seeking funding for projects on the Eyre Peninsula to address local research needs. EPARF value your membership and support.

Annual subscriptions run from January to December and fees for 2018 are: \$132 for the first member of your business or entity, and \$66 per additional members (GST inclusive). Subscription forms are available on our website, or alternatively, contact Minnipa Agricultural Centre.

Activities

Dry Start Forums

2017 has given us a few challenges with what looked like a very good opening rain for some early, then a long dry spell. Some farmers sowed early and others missed these rains. EPARF worked with GRDC to facilitate a series of “Dry Start” forums to help farmers come to grips with some of the issues they may be facing. These meetings, held in Wudinna, Cummins, Cleve and Streaky Bay were well attended and showed a good response to the seasonal conditions.

Ag Ex Alliance Perpetual Award

Local Minnipa farmer, Bruce Heddle was awarded the Inaugural Ag Excellence Perpetual Award for outstanding service to agriculture within South Australia at the 12th Ag Excellence Alliance Annual Forum held in April. Bruce, a very worthy winner was nominated by EPARF and this Inaugural Award gave an opportunity to recognise an individual involved within a grower group who has made a significant contribution within their community.

Strategic Planning

Following a recent strategic plan and review the Board identified a number of key issues and opportunities to better serve members. EPARF value their membership base and the EPARF Board are continually looking for ways to improve the services that the organisation delivers for agriculture in the region.

Initially, to gain an insight to what EPARF member's value from their membership and to provide future guidance to the Board, a member's survey was sent out. The survey results are published on the EPARF website. One of the additional services identified was the inclusion of a regular e-newsletter to the members. This has progressed and feedback has indicated it is being well received.

The survey has also given the Board a list of issues that members identified as important to be addressed in the future, with managing soil constraints a high priority. Building agricultural scientific and technical capacity for the EP, through Agricultural Graduate programs is also being pursued, aiming at being proactive in attracting and retaining the best agricultural science graduates onto the EP.

Projects

The Reducing Methane Emissions from Improved Forage Quality project has been completed with the final report accepted by DAFF, along with the GRDC RCSN Soil Nitrate project.

Current projects directly managed by EPARF are:

- Using soil water information to make better decisions (EP Soil Probe Network), funded by SAGIT;
- Maintaining profitable farming systems with retained stubble (EPFS4), funded by GRDC;
- EP Farming Systems Summary, funded by SAGIT and
- Regional Landcare Facilitator, funded by EPNRM.

MAC Staff

There have been a number of staff changes at MAC and some new faces about, we wish those leaving all the best and welcome the new ones on board and hope we can show them a lot of support in their new roles.

2017 EPARF Member day

Due to the very dry weather conditions in 2017, it was decided not to proceed with our member day as our plan was to focus on legume pulse crop management. As not much was sown at the time the committee thought we should postpone the event. The date is now set for Wednesday 14 February 2018.

Sponsors 2017

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Alpha Group

Thank you to all sponsors for their generous support. Sponsorship is a vital link in EPARF being able to provide the services to our members and we hope to be able to continue this relationship.

2018 EPARF Adjuvant roadshow

EPARF are holding an Adjuvant information session. This will be a 'roadshow' type event, going to three locations on the upper EP. It will be an open event, free entry for EPARF members and an entry fee for non-members. Trusting you will come along to support the event and go away with new knowledge and skills, or reaffirm your current understanding. Dates and program to be confirmed – check the website for details.

Appreciation and thanks

Thank you to SARDI and the team at MAC.

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Minnipa Agricultural Centre

www.eparf.com.au

REMINDERS

ANNUAL EPARF MEMBERSHIP

Membership is \$132 for the first member in the farm business or entity and \$66 for additional members (GST incl)

Contact Dot Brace 8680 6202 or eparf31@gmail.com