

Outcomes from the GRDC Stubble Initiative on upper Eyre Peninsula

Naomi Scholz, Amanda Cook and Nigel Wilhelm
SARDI, Minnipa Agricultural Centre

EXTENSION

The GRDC funded project 'Maintaining profitable farming systems with retained stubble - upper Eyre Peninsula' aimed to produce locally relevant, sustainable management guidelines to control pests, weeds and diseases while retaining stubble to maintain or improve soil health, and reduce exposure to wind erosion. The major outcome to be achieved was increased knowledge and skills allowing farmers and advisers to improve farm profitability while retaining stubble in farming systems on upper Eyre Peninsula.

The project commenced in July 2013, with trials commencing in the 2014 season. Trials were conducted on three sites across upper EP (Minnipa, Lock and Mount Cooper). Activities at the sites focused on addressing local barriers to profitability in farming systems with retained stubble. These issues were identified in conjunction with farmers and included weeds (mainly barley, brome and annual rye grass), pests (snails and mice), establishment on non-wetting soils, herbicide efficacy in stubbles, establishment

into cereal and medic residues, disease and the use of break crops in rotations.

Guidelines to overcome these barriers were developed with the use of local advisors, growers, collaboration with other farming systems groups and past research findings, and further validated and demonstrated through the R&D component of the project. Economic and risk analyses were also conducted on practices likely to impact on yield, to determine the those profitability of practices adapted to local situations.

The guidelines listed below are compiled in a booklet "*Guidelines for maintaining profitable farming systems with retained stubble on upper Eyre Peninsula*" (initially distributed in conjunction with this publication), and are also available via the EPARF website www.eparf.com.au/publications

1. Break crops in low rainfall farming systems
2. Cereal stubble management at harvest
3. Mice and stubble management

4. Snails and stubble management
5. Stubble management and cereal disease impacts
6. Herbicide efficacy in cereal stubbles
7. Sowing position and row spacing in cereal stubbles
8. When to reduce stubble loads
9. Sowing into medic stubbles
10. Stubble management during the break phase
11. Stubble management and weed control
12. Economic and risk analysis of break crops compared to continuous wheat farming systems
13. Economic analysis of reduced row spacing
14. Economics of near-row or on-row sowing compared to inter-row sowing on non-wetting sands

Specific research outcomes of 2017 trials are reported in this publication, with previous years reported in the Eyre Peninsula Farming Systems Summaries 2014-2016.



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