

Eyre Peninsula Agricultural Research Foundation Annual Report 2019



Eyre Peninsula
Agricultural Research Foundation Inc.

Bryan Smith

Chairperson, EPARF

The Eyre Peninsula Agricultural Research Foundation (EPARF) was incorporated in 2004 and has a Board comprising of farmers, special skills consultants, SARDI and University of Adelaide representatives.

The Board is a consultative committee for farmers. Its purpose is to represent the interests of research, development and extension on the Eyre Peninsula.

Vision

To be an independent advisory organisation providing strategic support for the enhancement of agriculture.

Values

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

Purpose

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

The Board provides a link between farmers, researchers, scientists and industry.

The role of the Board member is to consult with and represent farmers in their local area, to bring farmer and community views to the table.

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

EPARF Board Members

Farmer elected members:

Bryan Smith, Greg Scholz, Matthew Cook, Jerel Fromm, Angus Gunn.

Special Skills and Experience representatives:

Andy Bates, Mark Stanley.

SARDI representative: Dr Kathy Ophelkeller, Research Director, Crop Sciences.

University of Adelaide representative: Prof Jason Able, Head Department Agricultural Science.

Membership

261 members.

Activities in 2019

Again 2019 has been a difficult year for some areas. Areas on eastern and upper EP and areas west of Ceduna have all had decile 1 rainfall while western EP south of Streaky Bay enjoyed average to above average seasonal conditions. To add to the issue of below average rainfall, frost caused significant damage in many areas and to finish the season off, significant wind damage was reported from some of the later areas.

Unfortunately, the Board was unable to organise an EPARF Members Day in 2019, due to the difficulty in finding a date that was available and a suitable speaker on the topic we chose.

At the AGM we farewelled Board Members Simon Guerin and Wes Matthews as they both chose not to re-nominate for their positions on the Board. On behalf of all members I would to thank Simon for his Leadership as past Chair and his contribution over 12 years as a board member. We now welcome Angus Gunn as a new Board Member.

Another veteran of the organisation, Linden Masters, has also decided to move on after 10 years as the Regional Landcare Facilitator to pursue other interests.

Holly Whittenbury has been appointed as the Regional Agricultural Landcare Facilitator (RALF) with the position now combined with the NRM position to have an Authorised Officer to serve the upper Eyre Peninsula.

We were fortunate to have the GRDC Southern Panel visit the EP for two days in August during which time we were able to highlight what we saw as major research deficiencies on EP. This has resulted in a project being funded by GRDC and Soils CRC to explore the constraints of highly calcareous grey sands.

Over the last few years there has been a number of changes within SARDI and GRDC. These changes have seen research staff numbers decline on EP and with the additional requirements of research funding organisations it has been necessary to review the role of EPARF.

The complexity of applications, project oversight requirements and reporting standards have all become far more stringent. To meet the standards required and win competitive tenders for research, specialised skills are needed. This all comes at a cost.

To remain viable and maintain research capacity on EP, discussions were held with LEADA to form an EP based research organisation which is large enough to contract experienced people to manage and conduct research. These discussions have progressed to a point that we should be announcing the formation of a new organisation in the near future. Both organisations are acutely aware of the need to have local farmer input into research so a 'low' rainfall committee will be formed at Minnipa and a 'medium' rainfall committee will be formed on Lower EP. Both committees will be represented at Board level and all members will be transferred to the new organisation. The majority of members will not notice any changes as this is predominantly a governance and administrative change, to maximise research opportunities and improve research capacity on EP.

We hope you continue your membership with the new organisation. The value of your membership can not be overstated, as the number of members is an extremely important tool to leverage funding when making applications. We look forward to continuing delivering research outcomes to farmers on Eyre Peninsula.

EPARF Projects

- SAGIT: Using Soil Water Information to make better decisions (Soil Probe Network), completed June 2019
- Soils CRC 4.2.001: Developing knowledge and tools to better manage herbicide residues in soil
- Soils CRC 1.2.002: Understanding adoptability of techniques and practices for improved soil management
- Soils CRC 1.4.002: Addressing barriers to adoption. Building farmer innovation capability
- NLP 2: A new paradigm for resilient and profitable dryland farming on the Eyre Peninsula using data to improve on-farm decision making
- NLP 2: Regional Agriculture Landcare Facilitator service delivery
- NLP 2: Adapting cropping systems to changing climatic conditions to reduce inputs and maximise water use through improving crop competitiveness 4-BA9KBX5
- NLP 2: Perennial Pasture Systems for the Upper Eyre Peninsula and Other Dryland Farming Areas 4-BA96C6H

- NLP 2: Warm and cool season mixed cover cropping for sustainable farming systems in south eastern Australia' project 4-60A5VY4
- Rural R&D for Profit: Boosting profit and reducing risk on mixed farms in low and medium rainfall areas with newly discovered legume pastures enabled by innovative management methods - southern region: EP demo sites and extension (Delivery of DLPS Demo Sites on Upper EP).
- GRDC: Southern Pulse Extension BWD9175825
- GRDC: Increasing production on sandy soils in low and medium rainfall areas of the Southern Region CSP00203
- GRDC: Demonstrating and validating the implementation of integrated weed management strategies to control barley grass in the low rainfall zone farming systems 9176981
- GRDC: Using soil and plant testing data to better inform nutrient management and optimise fertiliser investments for grain growers in the southern region 9176604
- GRDC: Mixed Farming Masterclass 9176148

Sponsors 2019

Gold	AGT
Silver	Rabobank Letcher Moroney - Chartered Accountants Intergrain ADM Grain
Bronze	Agfarm ALPHA Group CBH Grain Market Check Viterra/Glencore

Thank you to all sponsors for their generous support. Sponsorship has been a vital link in EPARF being able to provide the services to our members and we thank our long term sponsors for their continued support over the past 15 years.

A special mention and thanks goes to Letcher Moroney who willingly audit the finances and supply the Financial Report for the EPARF AGM. This support is greatly appreciated.

And finally a big THANK YOU to Dot Brace for her tireless work as Executive Officer of EPARF since 2007. Dot has been a huge asset to the organisation, making sure everything from events, meetings, membership, sponsorship, finances and the website ran smoothly while keeping the Board members in line! Well done Dot.