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Core carbon group plan for graingrowers

Stories and pictures by
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A CORE group of researchers and extension providers with an interest in carbon farming met last month to discuss future opportunities for grain farmers to reduce emissions and improve productivity.

The meeting, facilitated by WANTFA Carbon Farming project officer Nikki Dumbrell, included 20 researchers and grower group representatives who have an interest in carbon farming, have similar projects which focus on greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) management by graingrowers and the Carbon Farming Initiative (CFI).

WANTFA's four year extension and outreach project funded by the Australian Government will look at carbon farming from the productivity perspective.

The drive towards forming the core group stemmed from the need to ensure WA growers received the best and most recent information about carbon farming and GHG emissions management in broadacre agriculture.

"I look forward to collaborating with other groups to achieve the best outcome for WA growers," Ms Dumbrell said.

WANTFA is distributing a quarterly carbon farming newsletter and will be holding workshops throughout the State.



WA core carbon farming group comprises Richard Bell (left), Murdoch University, Liam Ryan, DAFWA, Sudeesh Manalil, Peter Thorburn, CSIRO Brisbane, Nikki Dumbrell, WANTFA, Guy Boggs, Wheatbelt NRM, Lauren Celenza, Matthew McNee, Penny Roberts-Craig (WANTFA), Adelle Killen (NACC), Louise Barton, Ken Flower, Deirdre Gleeson, UWA and David Minkey, WANTFA.

Please contact Ms Dumbrell to be put on the mailing list.

Similar meetings will be held every six months for the duration of WANTFA's extension and outreach project.

WANTFA has plenty in pipeline



WANTFA staff

WE are looking forward to a prosperous year at the WANTFA office.

With a few new staff members and a new office at CSIRO in Perth, more trials and more extension work are in the pipeline and we hope to reach more of WA graingrowers with each venture.

Research trials continue their focus on the fundamentals of no-tillage systems, ground cover, rotations and weed control options.

But increasing crop growth and grain yields also require an understanding of adaptation strategies for an increasingly variable climate.

As such, the WANTFA long-term site

includes two carbon farming projects that are assessing the effectiveness of application of carbon pellets, biochar and nitrification inhibitors on the conservation of soil water and nutrients.

We also have some interesting results for crop residue retention, rotations and soil carbon sequestration in the long-term trial.

New trials coming up this year also include the dry seeding, frost and summer cover cropping projects going in across the State.

We look forward to seeing you at the post seeding field walk in July for more updates.

Passion for conservation in crop-livestock farming

NEW WANTFA research officer Dr Penny Roberts Craig has a strong farming background, having grown up, worked, and been involved with managing farming business and working with grower groups.

Penny is looking forward to bringing this experience as well as her experience in research into her WANTFA role.

Twelve months ago Penny and her young family moved to WA to pursue new opportunities.

Since moving to WA Penny has predominately spent her time working on farming system models with CSIRO, focusing on cropping systems and pasture-cropping systems.

Prior to the big move west, Penny worked in the high rainfall zones of southern South Australia and western Victoria.

In 2011, she completed a PhD focusing on a field study of pasture-cropping in the high rainfall zone of southern Australia.

Subsequently her research roles have included pasture field studies with the South Australian Research and Development Institute and farming systems modelling with CSIRO, livestock data management with DAFWA, and sessional lecturing with Curtin University.

Penny is looking forward to working on the existing research project, in addition to developing new projects that will improve the understanding and outcomes of conserva-



Penny Roberts

tion farming systems in WA, with a particular passion for crop-livestock farming system integration.

In addition to this role, Penny and her family look forward to continuing to explore the regional areas of WA.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

July - WANTFA Post Seeding Field Walk (date to be announced depending on crop emergence and season)

September 2 - WANTFA Spring Field Day

There will be two main field days in September this year to cater for the States growing research portfolio so keep your eye out for event updates on www.wantfa.com.au

