



Long-term cropping trial seeks big picture

By LAUREN CELENZA and NIKKI DUMBRELL, WANTFA

COULD we be missing out on productivity gains and long-term benefits by ignoring some important conservation agriculture principals?

The WANTFA Long-term Cropping Systems and Soils Day on Thursday, September 25, at Cunderdin will showcase the highly regarded Long Term No-Till Farming Systems Project and associated research from collaborating scientists.

The project, which is funded by the Grains Research and Development Corporation (GRDC) is now in its eighth year looking at the long-term benefits of key conservation agriculture principles including crop residue retention, diverse rotations, minimal soil disturbance and controlled traffic.

While WANTFA research trials continue to focus on the best management of no-tillage systems, increasing crop growth and grain yields also requires us to understand and adapt our systems

for an increasingly variable climate.

Realising this, the WANTFA long-term site now hosts two carbon farming projects funded by the Australian Government.

One of these projects is assessing the effectiveness of applying pelletised manure to soils at seeding time to improve crops yields and increase soil carbon.

This project will be showcased at the field day on September 25.

This field day is an opportunity for us to invite researchers to share their work and highlight any key findings that may help to inform further research and farm management in the region.

The event is a great opportunity for key stakeholders to learn about the research at the site and an opportunity to ask questions of the scientists conducting research on everything from rotations and stubble management to nutrient cycling and plant available water capacity in the soil, to insects and diseases.



Long Term Cropping Systems and Soils Day

Thursday 25 September 2014 at the Long Term Trial Site, Cunderdin

10:30am-4:30pm
FREE EVENT
All welcome!
Lunch is included

Come along to the WANTFA Long Term Site to:

- check out the trial
- see and learn about what is happening in the plots following different treatments
- find out what has happened in the soil over time
- check out the yield data.

Agenda

10:30am	Workshop sessions	
	Getting to know your soil water	Yvette Oliver (CSIRO)
	Carbon farming to improve agricultural productivity in Western Australia	Nikki Dumbrell (WANTFA)
	• Summary of results from an 'Action on the Ground' project trialling and demonstrating the economics of management practices and innovative strategies to increase soil carbon sequestration on farms across the Western Australian wheatbelt	Liam Ryan (DAFWA)
	• Does increasing soil organic matter increase nitrous oxide emissions?	Louise Barton (UWA)
12:30pm	Lunch	
1:30pm	Research focus sessions	
	What is the Long Term Project? What is actually happening in the plots and rotations? What has changed in the soil and what have the yields been like?	Ken Flower (UWA) and Neil Cordingley (WANTFA)
	Does residue retention decrease evaporation during early crop growth?	Phil Ward (CSIRO)
	Nitrogen management for continuous cereal cropping systems	Nathan Craig (UWA)
	Insects, root and foliar disease within the Long Term trial	Cara Allan (UWA)
	Precision application of carbon pellets	Matt McNee (WANTFA)
4:30pm	Finish	



Any enquiries or questions please contact
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