

ISSUE 1, FEBRUARY 2022

# SUSTAIN-A-BULLETIN

FITZGERALD BIOSPHERE GROUP



## 2022 Fitzy Fox Shoot—Wrap Up

On Friday the 25th of February 2022 we held yet another of our annual Fitzy Fox Shoots. This year we had twelve teams between Jerramungup and Bremer Bay head out to see who could take home the top prizes and do their part in ridding as many feral animals as possible from within our shire.

This year our shoot was held a lot earlier than usual in the hopes we could avoid some of the cooler foggy weather that we typically encounter. Other than a bit of drizzly rain and wind the participants said the conditions were much more comfortable than they have experienced in past years.

A cooked breakfast (sponsored by Lawson Grains) was held at 6am Saturday morning for both shoot locations followed by the tally counts. Whilst tallies were being counted the rest eagerly awaited the results. Overnight 161 Foxes, 7 cats and 95 rabbits were culled, yet another massive effort by all 56 participants involved. All of your hard work and dedication to the cause definitely doesn't go unnoticed, thank you!

Another big thank you to all of our sponsors, without whose continued support this event would not be possible.

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**Jerramungup**—8 teams entered

**Total foxes – 113. Total cats – 6. Total rabbits – 30**

**1st Place** —Fox Tamperer's (184 points) Wade Brown, Jeremy Nelson, Ashley Nelson, Pete Daniel, James Lyall & Deon Trevaskis.

**2nd Place**— Swiper no swiping (156 points) Nic Bertola, Michael, Rosie, Carly, Lara and Kade Lester.

**3rd Place** – Len & Chris (82 points)

**Most kms Travelled** – Fox's lives matter (319 kms) Jarrod Smith

**Biggest fox**– Len & Chris (7.5 kgs) Chris

**Biggest cat**– Swiper no swiping (6 kgs) Michael Lester.

**Best shooting rig**– Fox's lives matter Jarrod Smith.

**Bremer Bay**– four teams entered.

**Total foxes – 48. Total cats – 1. Total rabbits – 65.**

**1st Place**– Night Riders (164 points) Wayne Manley, Kade Ford, Mark Ford, Mark Day & Mathew C.

**2nd Place**– Texas Heart Shooters (81 points) Peter Buckenara, Paul Spink, Paul Reddington, Rowan English and Tanya Buckenara .

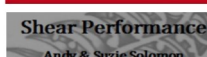
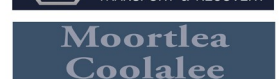
**3rd Place**– Big Bang Theory (40 points) Jeffrey Smith, Colin Smith, Mark Smith, Craig Hall, Matthew Fregon and William Simpson.

And Big Bang Theory took out the prizes for the most kms Travelled(197 kms), biggest fox, biggest cat and the best shooting rig.

Year	Foxes	Cats	Rabbits
2022	161	6	95
2021	190	4	186
2020	155	12	162
2016-18	607	25	338
Running tally	1113	47	781



**Thank you 2022 FBG Fitzy Fox Shoot Sponsors**



# Welcome and farewell

As FBG members will now be aware, I made the decision to step away from the role of Executive Officer of the FBG at the end of last year. Early 2022 feels like the right time to do it, with a new operating plan for the next three years in place, a decision to focus on salinity, a stable and experienced team working for the group, and some key projects that carry through into 2023.

I'd like to extend a warm welcome to the FBG's incoming Executive Officer, Maddy Wylie. Maddy is well-known to our membership, having worked for the FBG since 2016 on a range of production-related projects and I have no doubt the FBG will be in good hands with her in the role.

Congratulations Maddy and the best of wishes.

From March 2022 I will take on the role of managing the FBG's Bremer Projects as a separate division that operates independently under the FBG umbrella. The responsibility of managing this division will include coordinating existing projects (Wellstead Estuary Shorebirds project, Bremer Bay Regional Trails masterplan, and our environmental weeds project), supporting the Bremer Bay Regional Trails Committee, organising activities such as the Clean Up Bremer Bay in May Day, working with local community, local government and funding partners to develop future projects, including the Wellstead Estuary Bird Hide, and representing the FBG as required.

In this, my final newsletter as EO, I want to thank the people with whom I've worked these last six years. The decision to step down has been a hard one for lots of reasons but without a doubt, the hardest one has been the prospect of leaving you.

To the FBG Staff: Tash Brown, Jess Brown, Jess Bailey, Maddy Wylie, Carrie Taylor, Jolene Daniel, Therese Bell and Reagan Shalders; it has been an absolute treat to work with you.

Thank you for your support, hard work, friendship, fun, loyalty, determination and guts.

When I started in 2016, Georgina Griffiths, Karryn Dorrell and Sally Major were long-standing members of the team, along with Tash and Jess Brown. Thank you for generous support while I learned the ropes and your significant contributions to the group.

Working with the FBG Board has always been a treat and I've enjoyed our meetings immensely. Sincere thanks for your time, support and advice to current FBG Board members, Dave Turner, Mick Lester, Rex Parsons, Kyran Brooks, Craig Hall and Laura Wishart, and past ones; Jolene Daniel, Damon Parker, Nathan Brown and Stu Bee.

Our Advisory Committee meetings have provided the opportunity to meet a wide range of people in our district and I'm glad to have had the chance. Thank you sincerely to past and present members for your support of and interest in the group.

We've worked with a large number of funding bodies, organisations and agency staff over the years and I thank the team at Rabobank, the Shire of Jerramungup, our regional NRM body South Coast NRM, our funding partners and agency staff for their significant contributions to our group and my role.

Finally, thank you to the FBG membership. I've always believed the FBG fulfills a valuable role in our community and I'm proud to be a part of it.

Kind regards

Leonie McMahon



*Left to right– Maddy Wylie, Jess Bailey, Jess Brown, Natasha Brown, Leonie McMahon, Therese Bell and Carrie Taylor.*

## CHANGES TO FBG OFFICE PHONE NUMBER

We will shortly be disconnecting our landline (08 98351127) and replacing it with an office mobile.

Please update your contact details for us as follows

**FBG OFFICE MOBILE: 0499 346 233**

Individual staff are also contactable via their individual email and mobile phone numbers. Details provided on page 12 of this newsletter.



# Enrich Project Update

The idea behind our Enrich Project is to use native fodder plants to turn marginal land into a sustainable grazing asset whilst also providing soil cover.

Our project is based on the nine year Enrich\* research project run by the CSIRO. This project focused on integrating suitable perennial forage shrubs into mixed farming systems in low to medium rainfall zones.

The main objective of our project is to familiarise people with the Enrich model and offer the opportunity for on-going agronomic support through native plant agronomist Geoff Woodall as they trial the concept.

Part of the work Geoff has been doing with us is assessing the suitability of the Enrich model to different parts of the landscape, whether that be saline land, rocky outcrops, low-lying waterlogged ground or other under-performing areas. He has been looking at the model's adaptability in the higher rainfall zone in the southern part of our shire, and in full-cropping systems. He is also providing advice on how to manage established stands of fodder species to get the most out of them in the longer term.

Our Enrich project has progressed through the following stages:

February 2021: Farm visit to Pingelly farmer Garry Page to observe how he has implemented and manages his Enrich plantings in a low rainfall zone as supplementary fodder for sheep.

July 2021: Workshops with Geoff Woodall to show us how best to adapt the Enrich model to our region. Workshops were held in three different parts of the shire (Needilup, Jacup and Gairdner) to cater for different issues, soil types, rainfall zones and farming systems.

September 2021: Geoff Woodall returned to our area to visit individual farms and make site-specific recommendations.

During these visits he identified any endemic species already growing in the area that were examined in the Enrich project.

Current: Geoff is finalising reports on each site visited and will make recommendations to individual farmers shortly, with the view to plantings being able to be sown this year.

Left: Geoff Woodall and Geoff Bell. Right: Geoff Woodall and Ants Thomas.

In 2022 Geoff will also be planting three 10 ha Enrich demonstration sites in the Jerramungup Shire as part of a separate FBG groundcover project being run by Jolene Daniel. Our Enrich project, which is called *Reclaiming the margins - turning unproductive land into sustainable grazing assets using the Enrich Project model*, will finish in October 2022.

## \*Background to CSIRO Enrich Project

The Enrich Project was a CSIRO research program that ran from 2004 to 2013 across Australia. Its purpose was to investigate a way of producing year-round stock feed at minimal risk to a farming system using native perennial plants already adapted to Australia's difficult and variable climate.

About 96 native species were tested for nutritional value, palatability and other benefits. The shortlisted species were then used to develop a grazing system that integrates into existing farm operations. A high number of the species selected are saltbush. The research showed that planting 10-15% of a property into a mixed perennial system with an annual pasture inter-row had multiple benefits. Two major benefits were:

- A significant reduction in supplementary hand feeding during the feed gap.
- A financial return from deferred grazing of annual pastures that are considerably more productive for the rest of the year as a result.

Google the title below to find out more:

[Perennial forage shrubs providing profitable and sustainable grazing: Key practical findings from the Enrich project](#)

With thanks to the Federal Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment Smart Farms Small Grants Program, through whom this project is funded.

Leonie McMahon



# Salinity Project Update

The FBG's State NRM funded Salinity Project is on track to meet all 2022 milestones. Planning for a salinity forum event is well underway, the bore monitoring program is commencing shortly, the first river monitoring event has been completed, and seedlings have been ordered for 2021 revegetation.

## River Monitoring

Under advice and supervision from the incredibly knowledgeable and experienced Steve and Geraldine Janicke, monitoring of the Fitzgerald, Gairdner, and Bremer rivers commenced in late November. This marks the start of an ongoing program, which comprises quarterly monitoring of parameters such as salinity, pH, temperature, and turbidity in each river. We hope to build this program into future projects, until we are able to detect trends in the water quality of these rivers, and the forces behind these trends.

## Piezometer Monitoring

Establishing an ongoing piezometer monitoring program is a significant milestone in the salinity project. This process kicked off from February 15, as John Simons (DPIRD hydrologist) travelled to Jerramungup to assist the FBG in inspecting and measuring groundwater bores around the district. This first monitoring event took place over the course of three days, 10 farms, and 35 bores. The main purpose of this was to establish the location and condition of as many bores as possible,

*Left: Establishing a monitoring photo point along the Fitzgerald River  
Right: Getting a lesson in water quality monitoring from Steve Janicke*



correct any inaccurate GPS points, take measurements, and determine if they would be suitable to include in a monitoring program. While in the area, John was generous enough to offer his advice on salt land remediation and the potential underlying causes of salinity issues on a number of properties. We will continue looking into the phenomena that may be causing water table rise at certain sites, and will stay in touch with all farmers involved regarding the outcome of this round of monitoring and assessments. We hope that this marks the start of a long-term program which will complement DPIRD's existing Ag Bores database, and allow data on changing groundwater levels in the area to be uncovered and better understood. All farmers with bores on their properties are encouraged to get in touch with Carrie on 0459454713, or at [nrmprojects@fbg.org.au](mailto:nrmprojects@fbg.org.au) to discuss a visit from herself or John.

## Salinity Forum

The FBG and NSPNR will be holding a Salinity Forum on March 25 in Needilup, where farmers and industry experts can come together to discuss salinity issues and management in the region, and work together in small groups to develop tailored, practical management plans for their own farms. Stay tuned in to our emails, website, and socials for more details soon!

Carrie Taylor



natural resource management program



SAVE THE  
DATE

FBG & NSPNR  
SALINITY FORUM

25.03.2022



# Revelations from Camera Monitoring

The Bush Heritage Fauna Recovery Project in the Fitz-Stirling has just completed its first year of Feral Predator control activities. In November and December 2021, our native fauna trapping sessions yielded good numbers of Honey Possum, Western Pygmy Possum and Grey-Bellied Dunnart representing a significant increase in capture rates for these species from our 2020 effort.

Our long season culminated in camera trap monitoring in December 2021. This monitoring is designed to specifically assess fox, feral cat and rabbit activity levels in the wake of various control methods that Bush Heritage, the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attraction (DBCA) and local community groups including FBG and NSPNR are undertaking in the area. The results have been encouraging particularly with regards to fox control. However, there are many challenges controlling feral cats and there is much work to do in this space. Their devastating impacts on our native wildlife have been widely documented.

The two photos of kittens were captured in DBCA's Corackerup Nature Reserve. The size of the litters and the healthy appearance of the mothers indicate an abundance of prey (largely a result of high rainfall in 2021). Such bountiful resources will improve survival rates of the kittens and increase the pressure on local fauna such as malleefowl and black-gloved wallaby particularly young, dispersing animals such as those pictured.

The project aims to take an integrated approach to feral animal control, therefore rabbits are also being controlled. There is a strong relationship between high numbers of rabbits and high numbers of foxes and feral cats. So, the image of the juvenile Brown Goshawk flying off with a young rabbit in its talons is a rare but welcome sight. They are helping us do our rabbit control!

With big plans for 2022 The Fauna Recovery Project will increase and expand its control of introduced fauna in the Fitz-Stirling and hopefully tip the balance in favour of our native wildlife. We will keep you updated on progress from our next camera monitoring in May.

Jeff Pinder



# Increasing Groundcover to build resilient soils

## Project Update

We have three summer crop demo sites across the shire that were planted Oct-Nov and all sites have had little to no rainfall since planting. The aim of planting these demo sites was to utilise the subsoil moisture from excess moisture in winter and attempt to increase soil health by increasing groundcover and living roots over summer. With little follow up rain the sites are not looking that productive but some rainfall in the next couple of months could still help. Plans for 2022 include seeding three Enrich Fodder Reveg sites.

The sites have been selected and seedlings ordered for planting in July. Two 10ha perennial pasture mix demo sites are still available for any interested farmers, seed is provided through the Future Drought Funding. There are still other opportunities to try any other novel or innovative idea that increases drought resilience and groundcover.

Jolene Daniel



*This program/project received funding from the Australian Government's Future Drought Fund*

*Left: SSS Sorghum at Duggans farm at Needilup (the leaking trough nearby may have helped...)*

*Middle: Early germination of multi-species at Needilup*

*Right: Early germination of multi-species at Gairdner*



## Trials of locally relevant spring/summer crops for waterlogged soils

The FBG is participating in a GRDC project being run by Stirlings to Coast Farmers that demonstrates summer options on soils that were waterlogged from winter rains.

We managed to sow six treatments of different summer crop (plus fallow control) in our multi-species demo site in late November. Whilst there was plenty of sub-soil moisture the soil surface had dried out slightly and germination varied across the site. At time of sowing there was still a "pond" of water in the middle of the paddock.

The site has had no rainfall all summer and the plants have relied solely on sub soil moisture. Interestingly the plant with the best germination and tolerance to the dry conditions is a summer legume called Ebony Cow Pea. The bonus of this plant is that it can fix nitrogen to then be used in the winter crop. In a wet summer it can also be used for grazing, hay or silage.

Jolene Daniel

*Top- GRDC 1B – Ebony Cow Pea*

*Bottom- GRDC 5 – Sorghum struggling with the dry conditions*



# DPIRD Research results

In the last few years, the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) has carried out two research projects on invertebrate pests in which the FBG has provided field support. In the first project, surveying invertebrate pests and beneficial insects in chaff lines in the Albany and Kwinana East port zones, the FBG was responsible for sampling chaff lines in our area.

The other project was an investigation into controlling red legged earth mites using intensive spring grazing. Red-legged earth mites were too thin on the ground in our shire at the time of the project's commencement for any of our growers to host a demonstration site. We therefore organized for the site to be on Damon Parker's property in Kalgan.

Both of these research projects have finished and been written up now. We have included below the key messages from each project. The full articles have been emailed to our members and can be found on our website at [www.fbg.org.au](http://www.fbg.org.au) under the reference documents tab.

Many thanks to the Department's Svetlana Micic and Paul Sanford for the opportunity to participate in this research.

## Controlling red legged earth mites using intensive spring grazing

Svetlana Micic, Paul Sanford, Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development

### Aim

To demonstrate if short periods of intensive grazing in spring will control red legged earth mites (RLEM) effectively without the use of insecticides.

### Key messages

Maintaining feed-on-offer at around 2 t DM/ha for four weeks around the Timerite® date in spring can effectively control RLEM in the following growing season.

### Conclusion

Intensive grazing in spring appears promising as a tactic for suppressing RLEM for the following season. However, it should only be used when the population of mites is above 5000 per square metre and FOO is more than 3 t DM/ha. To reduce RLEM's the pasture needs to be grazed to a FOO of 2 t DM/ha or less for 4 weeks around the Timerite period to achieve a significant reduction in mites the following season. The aim is to have less than 1000 mites per square metre in the following season which is below the damage threshold for canola. Control measures for canola, such as seed dressings, may still be required to protect the crop from RLEM damage.

### Contact details

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Ph: 08 9892 8591  
Email: [svetlana.micic@dpiird.wa.gov.au](mailto:svetlana.micic@dpiird.wa.gov.au)

### Paul Sanford

Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development  
Ph: 08 9892 8475

Right, Figure 4: Average number of RLEM in pasture at Boyup Brook, Kalgan and Cranbrook that was ungrazed, grazed for 2 weeks or grazed for 4 weeks in 2019 with bar showing least significant difference (LSD). Arrows indicate when livestock were removed, colour indicates treatment.

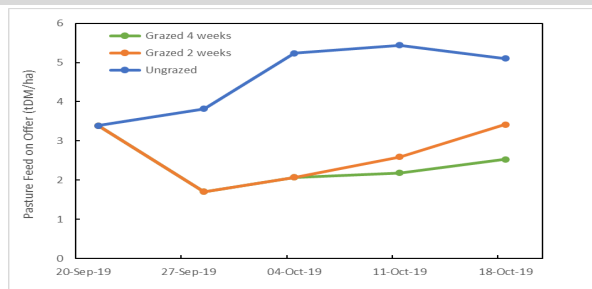


Figure 1: Average feed on offer (t DM/ha) of pasture at Boyup Brook and Kalgan that was ungrazed, grazed for 2 weeks or grazed for 4 weeks in 2019. Arrows indicate when livestock were removed, colour indicates treatment.

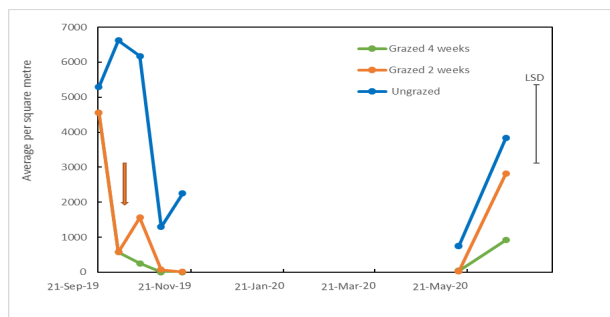


Figure 2: Average number of RLEM in pasture at Boyup Brook and Kalgan that was ungrazed, grazed for 2 weeks or grazed for 4 weeks in 2019 with bar showing least significant difference (LSD). Arrows indicate when livestock were removed, colour indicates treatment.

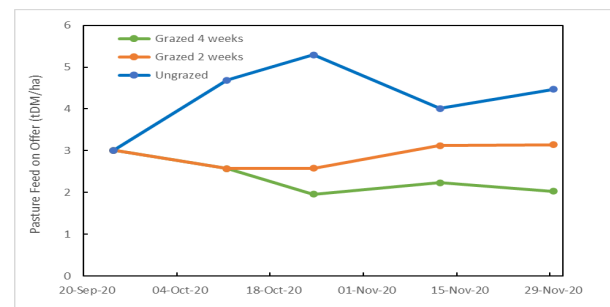
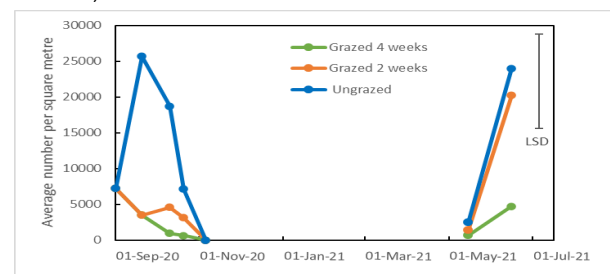


Figure 3: Average feed on offer (t DM/ha) of pasture at Boyup Brook, Kalgan and Cranbrook that was ungrazed, grazed for 2 weeks or grazed for 4 weeks in 2020. Arrows indicate when livestock were removed, colour indicates treatment.





# Survey of invertebrate pests and beneficials harbouring in harvest weed seed control system

Svetlana Micic, Entomologist, Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development

## Aim

To determine whether there is a difference in invertebrate populations across different HWSC systems over the WA grain belt, specifically if there is a species change with accumulating chaff within paddocks and the impact on the following crop.

## Key Messages

Both invertebrate pests and beneficials are found in association with chaff in paddocks. Paddocks located in the Albany port zone are more likely to have higher densities of pests associated with chaff, whereas paddocks located in the Kwinana East port zone had the least pest densities and highest numbers of seed-harvesting ants associated with chaff.

The most abundant beneficials were weed seed harvesting ants which were found in close association with chaff. This trend presents an opportunity to investigate in greater detail whether seed-harvesting ants provide an economic benefit to growers by consuming weed seeds from HWSC systems left to rot-in-situ.

Leaving chaff to rot-in-situ does not affect abundances of pests such as desiantha weevil. However, other pests do use chaff as refuges. For instance, pest beetles, Rutherglen bugs, European earwigs were found in association with chaff. It is unlikely these species are feeding on chaff, but rather are using chaff as a refuge. This survey was not able to determine if long term retention of chaff will increase abundances of these pests.

## Contact details

Svetlana Micic  
 Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development  
 Ph: 08 9892 8591  
 Email: svetlana.micic@dpird.wa.gov.au

For the full article please go to [www.fbg.org.au/](http://www.fbg.org.au/)  
 Under the reference documents tab.

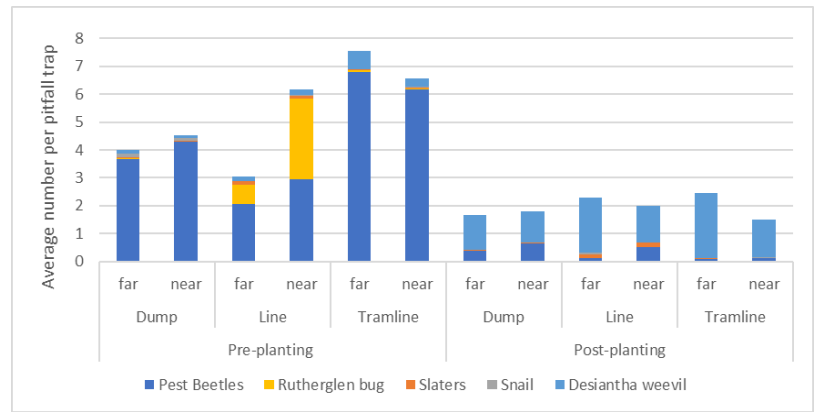


Figure 1: Average number of pests found in pitfall per pitfall trap located 5 cm from chaff (near) or at least 3 m away from chaff (far) in paddocks with HWSC systems of either dumps, chaff lining or chaff tram-lining, sampled at two different times.

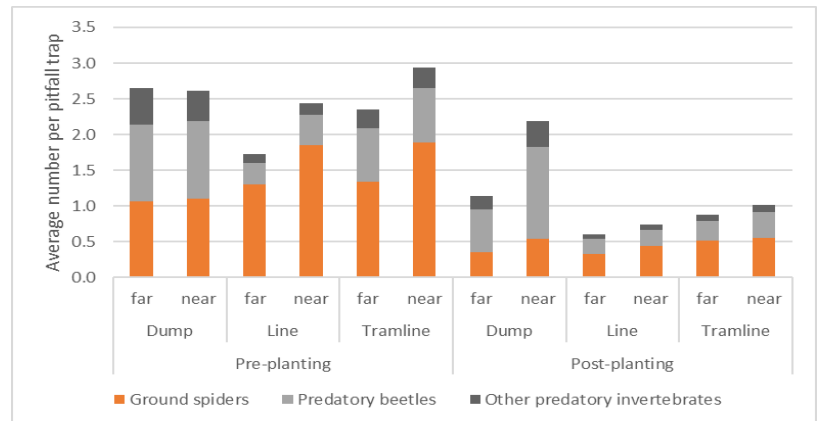


Figure 2: Average number of beneficials per pitfall trap located 5 cm from chaff (near) or at least 3 m away from chaff (far) in paddocks with HWSC systems of either dumps, chaff lining or chaff tram-lining, sampled at two different times

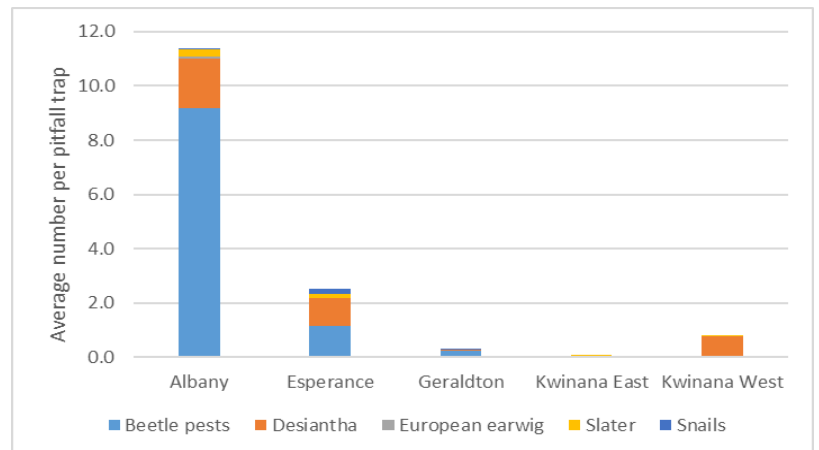
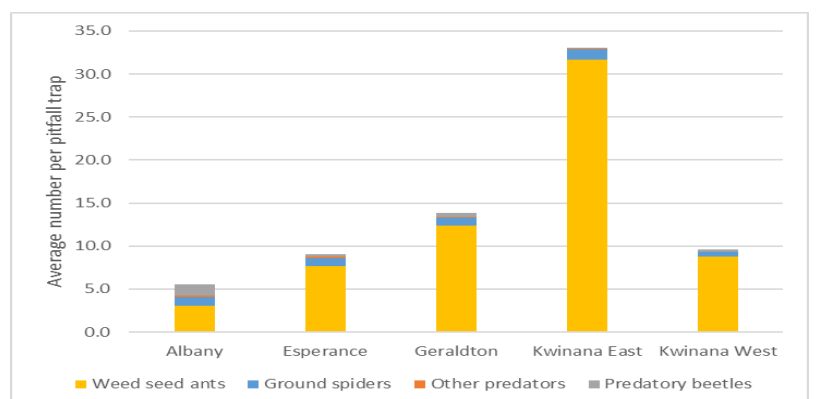


Figure 3: Average number of pests found in paddocks per pitfall trap by port zones.



Right, Figure 4: Average number beneficials per pitfall trap by port zones.

# “Sun shines brightly” for Australian agriculture in the year ahead – 2022 industry outlook

Australia’s agricultural sector is set for another profitable year ahead, with the gross value of agricultural production on track for a fourth consecutive year of growth in 2021/22, Rabobank says in a newly-released industry report.

In its flagship annual *Australian Agribusiness Outlook* for 2022, titled ‘Making Hay While the Sun Shines’, the specialist global agribusiness bank says a stellar 2021 – with high to record-high agricultural commodity prices and production volumes reaching record levels in some Australian commodities – represented a continued recovery from the crippling 2017-2019 drought and had positioned Australian agriculture for a strong year ahead. “Australia’s second year of great pricing and mostly exceptional production conditions in 2021 means the Australian agriculture industry is well placed to take on the challenges of 2022. More importantly, it means the industry can prepare for the time when the sun is not shining so brightly in its favour,” the report said.

RaboResearch senior commodities analyst Cheryl Kalisch Gordon said while there will be some pressure on farming margins in 2022 compared with 2021 – with some heat forecast to come out of a range of commodity prices, a mixed production outlook and supply chain challenges – another favourable year was expected for Australian agriculture.

Local macro-economic settings also remain supportive for Australian agriculture, the report said. “In particular, we expect the Australian dollar to only gain a little over the year and remain near its five-year average,” it said.

## ‘Blue moon’ year

Dr Kalisch Gordon said 2021 had been a “once in a blue moon” year for Australia’s agricultural sector, with very strong prices resulting from “hardship globally”, and with the high pricing coinciding with “favourable to very favourable Australian production conditions again”.

“There was a combination of drought and adverse weather in key cropping regions around the world, strong stockpiling demand in the face of potential food shortages along with Covid-induced labour shortages which impacted intensively-produced agri products and transport,” she said. “This delivered clouds to agriculture sectors in many regions of the world and a silver lining for Australian agriculture.

“This second straight year of increasing commodity prices coincided with again favourable to very-favourable Australian production conditions. And for those commodity sectors where production has been lower, high pricing still delivered strongly profitable positions.”

## Supply chain and price outlook

While the outlook for 2022 is also positive, the bank expects the year ahead will bring “less pronounced opportunities” for Australian agriculture.

“We start 2022 with the Australian food supply chain under unprecedented pressure, supply chain disruption and

bottlenecks being felt across the board – from access to inputs at the farm level through to consumers accessing food on supermarket shelves,” Dr Kalisch Gordon said. And the impacts on supply chains are expected to linger at least through the first quarter of the year.

“We also expect some of the heat to come out of prices for a number of commodities in 2022 as supplies are renewed globally, stock levels are increased and demand tempers,” she said. “However, we expect prices to remain at levels above the five-year average for our main agricultural commodities.”

The Rabobank Rural Commodity Price Index – which tracks local prices of key commodities in Australian-dollar terms – is forecast to ease from record highs reached in December 2021 over the course of this year, albeit to still sit five per cent above the five-year average (and 16 per cent above the pre-COVID five-year average) by the year’s end.

## Production

For Australia’s agriculture production, the outlook is mixed, the bank says, coming off the high base of 2021 volumes.

“Very favourable seasonal conditions in 2021 – and in some cases record rainfall – have provided a beneficial start to 2022 for cropping and pasture prospects, due to good soil moisture,” Dr Kalish Gordon said.

“That said, at this point, we can’t expect a repeat of the record grain and oilseed harvest we’ve seen for the 2021/22 season. Although for livestock, we do expect year-on-year lifts in slaughter numbers for both cattle and sheep, given the extended period of good seasonal conditions we’ve seen in most regions that have enabled some rebuilding of stock numbers.” Milk production was also likely to lift, but only in the second half of the year, the report said, while 2022 cotton production was on track to continue rising, to see an 85 per cent increase on last year.

## Global challenges

While 2021 had its share of challenges, 2022 will also bring some headwinds for Australia’s agricultural sector, the report says. This will include the ongoing impacts of Covid, as the world grapples with the Omicron surge and also “the prospect of Rho, Sigma or Tau delivering the next blow”.

On top of this, Dr Kalisch Gordon says, “lies the pervasive challenge of inflation, which continues on one of the steepest rises in 30 years”.

“Additionally, we expect there will be global policy tightening around economic stimulus measures that have been in place during the pandemic, which will be designed to moderate demand,” she said.

“Getting the policy settings on reducing stimulus and managing inflation will be critical to maintaining economic growth and consumer demand in many economies, and failure to get this right could curb demand in some of our markets for some, especially more discretionary, purchases.”

Ongoing supply chain issues and geopolitical tensions also loom large as challenges for agricultural markets in 2022, the report says.

“Dry bulk freight rates have fallen considerably from their 11-year highs in 2021, but still remain elevated on several routes,” Dr Kalisch Gordon said. “Container rates remain near their recent record highs and we expect global trade to continue to be impacted by issues, especially relating to boxed freight, in 2022.”



In terms of geopolitical considerations, she said, the tight global market for agricultural commodities had shielded Australia from the impact of losing China as a buyer in 2021. “However, as markets unwind, we expect Australia may need to work harder on diversifying into alternative destinations,” she said. Meanwhile, the report said, there is also the potential for market fallout from current tensions between Russia and Ukraine, which could “deliver exaggerated volatility in markets ranging from wheat through to oil and fertiliser”. Other challenges ahead included still-high farm input prices (albeit easing somewhat in the second half of the year) and ongoing labour shortages.

**Ready for what’s next**

The report says with Australian agriculture positioned for another positive year ahead, it presents an ideal opportunity for the sector to prepare for future times when “the sun is not shining so brightly in its favour”.

This, Dr Kalisch Gordon said, included preparing for an increase in margin pressures (when global prices decline and Australian farm returns come under pressure) , diversifying markets and trading relationships, and equipping farm businesses for future droughts and climate change.



Cheryl Kalisch Gordon

## Pushing back against weeds at Short Beach

Weeds can become such an integral part of our landscape that we can accept them as a given and forget about the native bush they displace. The foreshore vegetation at Short Beach on Point Henry Peninsula is a case in point. Rose pelargonium had become the dominant species, having established a very strong toe-hold over time. It was densely carpeting the dunes, smothering out at least a dozen local endemics including native grasses, sedges, saltbushes and well-known favourites like Pimelea (pink rice flower), *Melaleuca nesophila*, and *Acacia cyclops*.

Thanks to the sustained efforts of a group of Short Beach residents who are part of our Weed Action Group the foreshore vegetation between the carpark and the beach is gradually being reclaimed. Short Beach residents including Mick Lance, Jan Roberts, Paul Audin, Christine Soulier, Geoff Barr and Nathan McQuoid have adopted this site and carried out successive weeding bees over the last couple of years. Their persistence is beginning to pay off. At two weeding bees in November and December 2021 we were pleased to find seedlings of native species getting a chance to re-establish in

areas that were once too thickly covered with rose pelargonium for natural recruitment to occur.

About 18 months ago the group took the opportunity to revegetate some of the weeded patches with sedges and these plants are all doing well. In the coming months we will brush mulch using branches from local species to encourage further revegetation.

There’s still plenty of work to be done but the results have been gratifying so far. Huge thanks to the Short Beach crew for their efforts, and to Therese Bell (former Bremer Projects Manager) who initiated the Weed Action Group.

The FBG is providing support to this group through a grant from State NRM and we thank them for their support. As part of this same project, we have been providing information at community market days about management of environmental weeds that are a serious problem in our area, such as bridal creeper, Victorian (Coastal) tea tree and boxthorn.

If you want to know about management of local environmental weeds please get in touch at [bremersprojects@fb.org.au](mailto:bremersprojects@fb.org.au).

Leonie McMahan



natural resource management program



*Photos: Members of the Weed Action Group carrying out follow-up weeding in November and December 2021 at the Short Beach site.*



# Bushland health check

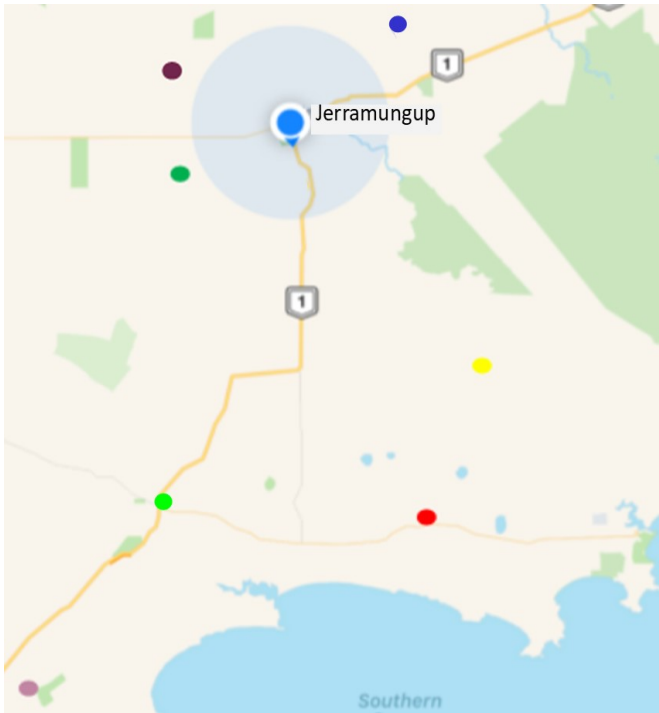
- Botanist, Kelsey Tucker (B. Sc. Adv. Hons.) will walk your property with you
- Learn what native plants you have
- Get advice to control weeds
- Ask any bushland management question!

**Immediate report provided.  
Follow up celebratory visit  
for taking action!**



**Book at  
[triggerplant.com/takeaction](http://triggerplant.com/takeaction)**

## Jerramungup district rainfall



Location		Dec	2021 Total	Jan	Total YTD
Jerramungup			430.5	3.2	3.2
Needilup Nth		3.0	299.0	3.5	3.5
Needilup Sth			372.5		
Jacup		7.0	392.5	6.0	6.0
Bremer Rd		0.5	672.0	12.5	12.5
Gairdner			430.0		
Boxwood			507.6		
Mettler			581.3		

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## FBG Board

**David Turner**  
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**Rex Parsons**  
Shire of Jerramungup  
Representative

## FBG Advisory Committee

Changes to the Advisory Committee were flagged in late 2021 following development of our Operational Plan 2019-22 and our decision to focus on Salinity. Membership of the Advisory Committee will be confirmed in coming months following discussion with current and potential members.

Contact FBG for more details ph. 0499 346 233

Email: [admin@fbg.org.au](mailto:admin@fbg.org.au)

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