

GRDC Regional Updates

A good crowd of about 80 people attended the GRDC Regional Updates in Jerramungup on the 11th March. We were lucky with our timing – another week or so and Coronavirus restrictions probably would have forced a cancellation.

The morning session was devoted to soil amelioration: techniques; timing, trials, machinery, costs, the down-sides, the up-sides, lessons learned. The session was chaired by Glenn McDonald, and presented by four researchers, all soil scientists with DPRID. There was general acknowledgment that amelioration of the highly variable soils on the south coast is particularly challenging. Local farmers Mike Swarbrick and Mark Lester discussed their experiences trialling different methods on their farms at Gairdner and Jacup respectively.

Split sessions ran for a couple of hours after lunch and covered a broad range of topics.

These included:

- Farmsmart: a mixed farming risk management app developed by DPIRD in conjunction with MADFIG (Merridin and Districts Farm Improvement Group) and FEAR (Far Eastern Agricultural Research Group).
- herbicide resistance status of key WA weeds, and local

trial results,

- new pre-emergent herbicides,
- chemical supply and glyphosate usage,
- harvest weed seed control options,
- snail management options in current conditions,
- frost management tools
- new barley varieties for our area.

Our final presentations for the day took us in three different directions.

Esperance grower, Phil Longmire, completed a Nuffield Scholarship on increasing profitability through precision agriculture in 2004. He described how he has gone on to use precision agriculture, specifically CTF, VRT, EM, section control and yield mapping in conjunction with drainage and summer cropping to manage salt affected areas on the family's broadacre cropping operation near Esperance. XAg is a Sydney-based technology company that develops drones for agricultural use. Company Director, Charles Chow and Agronomist, John Troughton, described how drones are now being used for aerial surveillance of crops, and how weeds, disease and pests can be managed using fleets of spray drones that operate autonomously and with extremely high precision. Benefits include drastically reduced chemical use and minimal spray drift.

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The day ended on an optimistic note with Ross Kingwell, Chief Economist for the Australian Export Grains Innovation Centre, who gave us predictions about the grain industry in 2030. Broadly speaking, the models predict an increase in overall demand. Domestically, population growth and projected dietary habits of Australians are the key factors. Demand for Western Australian grain is expected to remain strongly tied to export markets, Ross said, although history has shown that when eastern Australia has faced extended drought, demand for WA grain has been strong. On the down side, the impact of climate change on many of Australia's grain growing regions, and competition from lower cost suppliers from other

countries will negatively affect the outlook. Overall, a great day. Thanks to the many who came to support it. Thanks also to the GRDC team, headed by Ian Longstone, Maddy Wylie, the FBG's coordinator, all of the presenters, FBG Board members, Kyran Brooks for mc'ing and Mick Lester for chairing sessions, the Jerramungup Netball Club for the fantastic catering, the FBG staff for their tremendous last-minute problem solving and the Jerramungup Sports Club. Our final thanks go to XAg for sponsoring the Sundowner – greatly enjoyed by all.



Carbon farming: can it benefit your business?

When I worked for the FBG more than ten years ago, I attended a workshop in Borden about carbon sequestration. The workshop attracted a lot of interest but also revealed a fledgling industry with all of the attendant unknowns and uncertainties.

Since then, the idea of carbon farming has become much more commonplace but understanding how it can work for farming communities hasn't been easy. In February this year, Greenskills Denmark and North Stirlings Pallinup organised a workshop in Ongerup to give farmers the chance to meet the main companies dealing in carbon sequestration in WA today.

These companies were:

- Carbon Neutral Charitable Fund (Ray Wilson)
- Outback Carbon (Kent Broad)
- Green Collar (Jonathon Schultz)
- Greening Australia (James McGregor)

Broadly, carbon credits can be accrued on farm by sequestering carbon in the following ways:

- Revegetation with perennials.
- Increasing carbon in the soil using soil building practices
- Saltland reclamation (currently under investigation by Carbon Neutral Charitable Fund).

It is possible to set up and run your own carbon credit program through the Federal Government's Clean Energy Regulator. The companies above serve as project developers and aggregators. Because they operate on a large scale, they can reduce the fixed costs of regulation and compliance, aggregate carbon credits from individual clients and use this greater scale to negotiate carbon credit prices with a range of markets.

Markets for carbon credits include:

1. Australian Government (Clean Energy Regulator)
2. Companies that are large net emitters
3. Voluntary markets (Small, medium and large organisations and individuals wanting to offset their annual emissions).

Although different names are used around the world, the standard measure is: one carbon offset credit is equal to one tonne of carbon dioxide equivalent.

Major carbon offset standards are called:

- Australian Carbon Credit Units (ACCUs) issued by the Clean Energy Regulator
- Verified Emissions Reductions (VERs) issued by the Gold Standard Foundation (international)
- Verified Carbon Units (VCUs) issued under the Verified Carbon Standard by Verra (international NGO)
- Private Standards of some long-standing carbon developers.

In Australia, the Clean Energy Regulator sets the price of the ACCU every six months via auction. In November 2019 the price of an ACCU was \$14/CO₂ equivalent. The standard length of time that a carbon credit contract runs for is either 25 years or 100 years.

Beware the rule of additionality

The rule of additionality means that you can only receive credits for carbon sequestered through revegetation or practise change **after** you have signed a contract. If you are interested in setting up carbon sequestration as a part of your farming business it is worth investigating **before** you carry out any large-scale revegetation or make significant changes to your farming practice.

The information provided above is barely the tip of the iceberg. I came away from this workshop realising that the industry has gained a lot of traction in the last decade. A lot of the earlier issues have been worked out, there is a lot of precedent now to ground truth and the companies involved have a lot of on-ground experience. There are multiple benefits aside from the carbon contracts themselves and I believe it is worth investigating further to see how it can fit with our farming businesses.

Should you be interested in learning more, please contact me on 0428 351127 or eo@fbg.org.au.

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How Covid-19 will affect our key commodities

In light of the impact of Covid-19 on commodities the world over, we asked our sponsor, Rabobank, for forecasts of the Australian sheep and wool, grains and oilseeds, and beef cattle sectors.

The following are highlights from Rabobank's recent webinars. Links to the full webinars are provided below each sector report.

Please note: these webinars occurred prior to the recent announcements by the Chinese Government that steep tariffs would be applied to Australian barley exports to China, and beef exports from four Australian abattoirs (representing 35% of total beef exports to China) would be suspended.

Grains and Oilseeds

Authors: Rabo Research General Manager, Tim Hunt, and Senior Grains and Oilseeds Analyst, Cheryl Kalisch Gordon

Key points:

- COVID-19 will drive global recession with price falls expected for many commodities, however global wheat prices will be firm.
- Main impacts on Grains and Oilseeds will come through lower oil prices, panic buying and disruption to the supply chain.
- It is not anticipated that there will be strong negative impact on Grains and Oilseeds demand in 2020, in fact other market factors will provide support for feed demand.
- We anticipate the risks associated with availability to agrichemicals and downstream logistics will be manageable.
- We forecast that Australian Grains and Oilseeds can still have a good year in 2020.

A snapshot from the presentation:

Local margins: Australian grain and oilseed farmers can still have a good year.

Harvest volumes expected to improve for 2020/21 winter crop harvest

- Incoming moisture has improved in most regions
- The rainfall outlook is supportive of good crop establishment.

Australian prices are expected to remain above average

- Higher global wheat prices
- Supportive AUD
- Low income stocks in most regions of Australia
- Barley less well supported, but still above average. Non-GM canola and pulses subject to greater uncertainty, but still with positive margins.

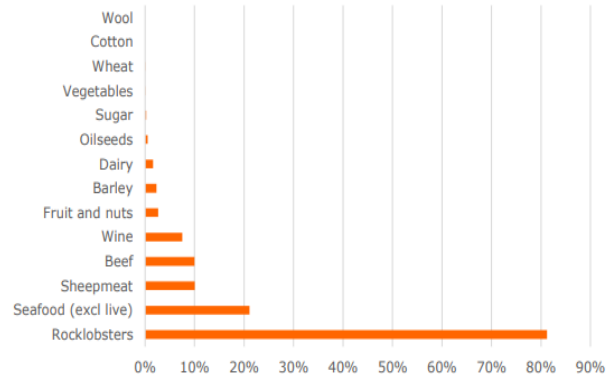
Costs subject to increase due to lower AUD but offset in part due to:

- Lower crude oil prices

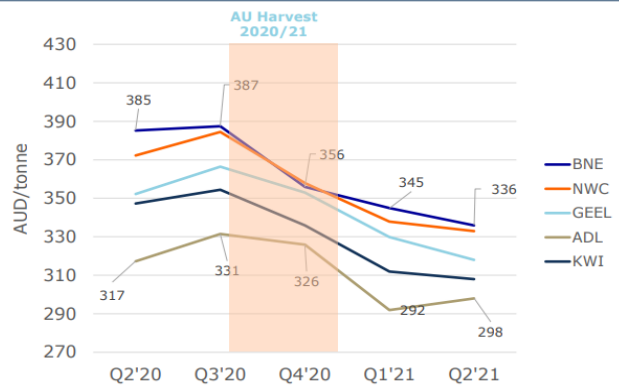
- On hand stocks/lower fertiliser expenditure – more precision applications.

View the webinar in full (including Q&A session) at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uD8I-nVo7BU>

Share of Aus Production Exposed to Chinese Foodservice



Relatively high barley to wheat availability to keep spread above average



Australian Barley, points to consider:

- Inputs availability – seem to be resolved
- Prone to US-China trade deal substitutions
- Post drought low risk option likely to deliver more AU supply
- Local stocks in some regions
- More supply – the rainfall outlook is supportive
- Softer demand – less drought feeding

Sheep and Wool.

Author: Senior Animal Protein Analyst, Angus Gidley-Baird,

Key points:

- With the lowest sheep flock in over 75 years and improved seasonal conditions, 2020 was shaping up to be a year of rebuilding and high livestock prices.
- Reflecting the lower sheep numbers and improved seasons, lamb slaughter for the first three months of the year is currently down 11% on 2019 levels and wool production is down 6% for the first eight months of the 2019/20 year.
- However, the outbreak of COVID-19 is now having major impacts on the global meat and wool trade. While we feel local conditions and favourable exchange rates will help shield Australian

producers from a major reduction in prices, there will be disruptions to supply chains and downward pressure on prices.

- With the slowing global economy we believe that there will be downward pressures on wool and lamb prices over the coming months as global restaurant sales for lamb and retail clothing activity for wool decline. However, forecasts of improved economic conditions in 2021 should help lift markets.

View the webinar in full (including Q&A session) at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x6wKvFyzJY8>

Beef Cattle

Author: Senior Animal Protein Analyst,
Angus Gidley-Baird

Key points:

- The Australian cattle market will be characterised by two extreme countervailing forces in 2020. Limited cattle supplies and restocking activities provide strong domestic price support, but disrupted markets and dramatically reduced economic activity create countering downside pressures.
- We are going to see slaughter numbers drop to some of the lowest levels in 20 years.

- But reductions in restaurant and fast food traffic as a result of social distancing measures will have a big impact on Australia's global markets which are heavily reliant on foodservice trade.

On balance, we believe domestic forces will play a stronger role to keep cattle process high. But the severity and suddenness of Covid-19 and the ensuing economic slowdown – to levels not seen in over a decade – will test markets.

Cattle slaughter in 2020 will be 14% lower than 2019, at 7.29 million head. Years of high female slaughter have reduced breeding cattle inventory, leading to lower calf numbers. In addition, improved seasonal conditions will encourage producers to hold or purchase stock to rebuild herds, compounding the reduction in slaughter. Under this supply-constrained scenario, we estimate the average Eastern Young Cattle Indicator (EYCI) for 2020 will increase by 30% on 2019. We expect production to decline by 13%, to 2.1 million tonnes and exports to fall by 17%.

View the webinar in full (including Q&A session) at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0XYhf8DOqIQ>



Rabobank

Community water sources

The 250,000 litre tank and solar pump are now operational in Needilup but water taken from this site will be closely monitored so as not to drain the dam as it still services two dwellings in Needilup.

There has been a new bore and solar pump installed on John Meier's property on Millers Point Road and the new 130,000 litre tank will be installed in the near future. The tank will be accessed from Millers Point Road once constructed.

DWER have installed 8 x 75,000 litre tanks on the old oval in Jerramungup and Water Corp is carting in the water for these, which is to be used for stock water only. Many farmers are carting from here for stock water. To access this water farmers will need to have

filled in the DWER Water Survey and contact the Shire to be added onto the WhatsApp to monitor the amount of water being taken and delivered.

DWER have also installed a tank at Fitzgerald Dam behind the old school site which operates in the same way as the tanks in Jerramungup.

If you live in a part of the shire that has not been declared water deficient, and you are currently carting water or will be carting water for livestock in the coming weeks, please send an email to Charmaine Solomon (dceo@jerramungup.wa.gov.au) with the following information: Farm location number, your contact details, stock numbers and distance to closest community water points.

Murray Flett, Shire of Jerramungup.

Proposed Great Southern Cattle Grower Group

Great Southern cattle growers are being asked to share their views in survey launched today, designed to assess the viability of a producer driven cattle grower group forming in the Great Southern region of WA to address local production and natural resource management challenges. Local beef growers and representatives from the Harvey Beef Gate 2 Plate Challenge Inc., Oyster Harbour Catchment Group Inc. and local service providers Bovitech Veterinary Services and Clear South

Project Management are collaborating on the initial stages of the initiative and have recently commissioned the survey to test the waters.

The FBG will send the link to its members and place it on our Facebook page.

Growers can take the survey by visiting:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SouthernBeef>

For more information, please contact:

Bruce Radys, 0428 994 408

Sheena Smith, 0427 214 707

Jarrod Carroll, 0427 828 418

Dr Jessica Shilling, 0413 107 113

Johanna Tomlinson, 0429 960 810

FITZY FOX SHOOT WRAP UP 2020

Friday the 20th of March 2020 saw 54 men venture out on night of feral animal control, once again aiming to make a significant impact on the fox, cat and rabbit numbers within our shire. In light of the situation with COVID-19 at that time, we put a few extra precautions in place and deemed the Fitzy Fox Shoot safe enough to go ahead.

More teams entered this year, spread from Jacup to Needilup to Bremer Bay, covering an even larger local area than past years. We also held the shoot one month earlier and managed to avoid our usual foggy conditions. This made for a much more pleasant night than participants have seen previously.

At 6am Saturday morning, all teams gathered at the tally count locations for a cooked breakfast (sponsored by Lawson Grains) and to see who our winners were for 2020.

Jerramungup— nine teams entered.

Total foxes – 119. Total cats – 11. Total rabbits – 139

Winning team (reigning champions)
Lead Spreaders – West (207 Points)
Most cats – Jacup Cool Gang (4)
Most rabbits – Dead Pool (56)
Most kms Travelled – MacGyver and the Fox Freezers (251.1 kms)
Biggest fox– Jacup Cool Gang (8.5 kgs)
Biggest cat– Lead by Example (5.5 kgs)

Bremer Bay— five teams entered.

Total foxes – 36. Total cats – 1. Total rabbits – 23

Winning team– Texas Heart Shooters (114 Points)
Most cats– Night Riders (1)
Most rabbits– Night Riders (22)
Most kms Travelled– Night Riders

Between the two shoots (Jerramungup and Bremer Bay) a total of 155 foxes, 12 cats and 162 rabbits were culled.



Above: Jerramungup Winning tea– Lead Spreaders West

Top right: Bremer Bay Winning team– Texas Heart Shooters

Bottom right: Bremer Bay participants practicing social distancing.

This year we were registered again with Red Card for Rabbits and Foxes, where \$5 for every fox and cat culled will be donated to a very important cause. This year the money will be donated to the Regional Men’s Health Initiative. Thank you to all of our participants who took part this year. It’s a huge and very exhausting effort and your dedication to this very worthy cause does not go unnoticed.

Big thank you to all of our sponsors for your continuous support towards the Fitzy Fox Shoot. In times like these even a little goes a long way and is very much appreciated by us all.

Bennett’s Batteries, Bremer Bay Hardware, Bremer Bay Resort, Bremer Roadhouse, Coromandel Poll Merino Stud, Elders Jerramungup, Farmers Centre, Jerramungup Hotel, Jerramungup Roadhouse, Kintail Park Dohne Stud, Landmark Harcourts, Lawson Grains , Moortlea Coolalee, S & A Martin Smash Repairs, Shear Performance, Sports Power Albany, St John Ambulance Jerramungup.

If you have any feedback on this year’s event or ideas for future shoots please email Jess at communications@fbg.org.au

Year	Foxes	Cats	Rabbits
2020	155	12	162
2019	178	9	107
2016-18	429	16	231
Running tally	762	37	500





Top left: Lead Spreaders– East, Top Right: Night Riders– Most rabbits
 Second row, left: Cairlocupian Canine Carnage, middle: Jerramungup's haul (thanks to Malcolm Turner for the disposal), right: Texas Heart Shooters, team member Paul Spink.
 Third row: Dead Pool– Most rabbits, Bottom: Some of the Jerramungup shoot participants.

FBG FITZY FOX SHOOT SPONSORS 2020



FBG 2020

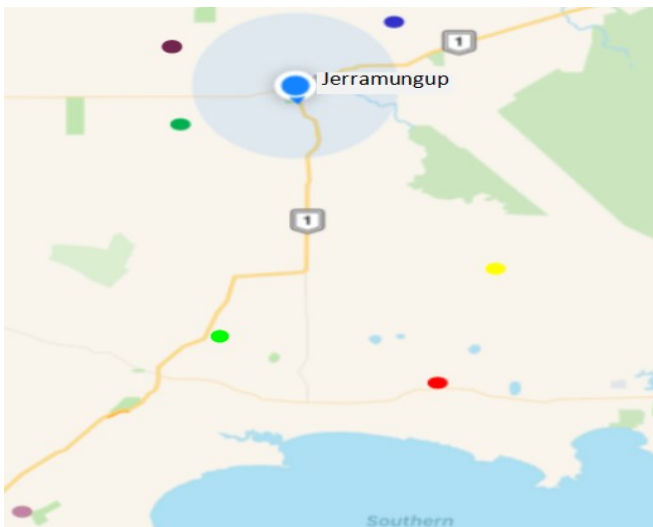
CAT STERILISATION CLINIC

Date is yet to be confirmed

Please send expression of interest
to Jess at
communications@fbg.org.au



Jerramungup district rainfall



Location		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Total YTD
Jerramungup	●	2.1	59.7	19.4	9.6	90.8
Needilup Nth	●	0	34	18	12.5	64.5
Needilup Sth	●	0	58.5	25	10.5	94.0
Jacup	●	1	46	19	9	75.0
Bremer Rd	●	11	31	20	6.5	68.5
Gairdner	●	5.5	33.5	17.5	8	64.5
Boxwood	●	2	37.5	12.5	7	59.0
Mettler	●	10.7	42.1	30.9	10.5	94.2

COVID-19 Update

Upcoming Activities

Although Coronavirus restrictions are now easing we are still only able to provide provisional information about events we have planned. Once we are able to confirm dates we will send emails and post on Facebook to keep you up to date. The following information is about the most imminent events.

- Cat sterilisation clinic – Jerramungup – 2020 date to be confirmed.
- Clean Up Bremer Bay in May Day – postponed until further notice
- Smart Farms tours and workshops – postponed until further notice



Contact FBG for more details ph. 9835 1127

Email: admin@fbg.org.au

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FBG Acknowledges the support of

