

## Esperance Study Tour

On the 13<sup>th</sup> September, 15 people set off from the FBG for a two day tour farm study tour of Esperance and surrounds. The 15 people on board consisted of 13 farmers from across the Jerramungup Shire, one FBG staff member and one industry representative. The focus of the tour was ‘building resilient farming systems in the face of climate variability’ and we certainly saw some very impressive and innovative farming systems. Across the two days we visited six farmers, working our way from Gibson and Scaddan in the north, to Beaumont and Condingup in the east. The farming systems ranged from 100% cropping, high input and high rainfall operations, to mixed livestock and cropping systems in lower rainfall areas, focusing on lower inputs whilst implementing innovative ways to continue to improve farm productivity.

After a behind the scenes tour on Sunday afternoon with Nigel Metz of the new and improved Lucky Bay Brewery (where the next batch of ‘Biosphere Brew’ will be made for the 2021 Dancing in the Dirt Ball) we set off bright and early Monday morning to the Wandel family farm in Scaddan - a tour highlight! Mark took us through his journey into farming and gave us a run-down on his operations, crop rotations, inputs and farming methods, and was kind enough to show us through the impressive workshop and machinery shed as well as taking us out to the paddock to a bean crop.

Mark was really open with the group and happy to answer questions and share information, which is something we all took away from the whole tour—just how openly the farmers share their knowledge with their peers. No topic

was off-limits. Some neighbours even worked on the same crop rotations so they could share the costs of transport or spraying from planes. This wholesome attitude was evident right across the two days.

### Other visits included:

- Brad Egan (Scaddan) – Our visit to Brad’s farm resulted in an in-depth discussion on soil amelioration; Brad has begun implementing claying, delving, ripping and using data to drive decisions and is having some impressive results.
- Phil Longmire (Beaumont) - We had an insightful visit to Phil’s property in Beaumont – some of you may remember Phil from his presentation here in Jerramungup earlier this year at the GRDC updates. Phil showed us around his property where salinity issues are forcing him to find build a farming system that can allow him to work around – or with - the many salt lakes throughout his property. Phil has developed a method of planting a mixed summer crop around salt affect areas, as well as sowing peas around salt lakes to easily identify the spread of salt from year to year. He has also used drains, built ‘bridges’ through the salt lakes and continued to focus on precision agriculture methods – Variable Rate for gypsum and fertiliser applications, CTF and gathering data using EM & Gammar mapping to drive decisions and increase profitability
- Neil Wandel (Esperance Quality Grains) - grain handling facility, how it runs, why it started and where he hopes to take it. Neil also took us briefly through his family succession journey; again he was very open and honest about the process and happy to share his story.

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Esperance Study Tour participants

# 2020 Overview

The two big issues that shaped our operations (and our lives) in 2020 were ongoing drought conditions and Covid-19. Last autumn, when we were reeling from both, it was hard to imagine 2020 could deliver up any hope so it is with much relief that we enter harvest with drought breaking rains behind us and Covid currently under control in WA and hopefully the rest of the country.

One of the Covid-related issues we had to deal with was being unable to hold events or access interstate presenters. We still managed to run nine very successful events including our annual Fitzy Fox Shoot, Cat Sterilisation Clinic, Clean Up Bremer Bay Day, and Spring Field Day. One-off events included GRDC Regional Updates, Esperance Study Tour, Saltland Masterclass and a series of activities in Bremer Bay (foreshore assessment workshop and weeding busy bees).

Decent South Coast rainfall in August allowed many of us to breath massive sighs of relief but we are mindful that water storage in the north of the shire may still be an issue in the coming months. Since 2018, FBG staff and Board have supported the work done to manage and develop community water resources by the Jerramungup Shire and the Department of Water and Environment Regulation. We liaise with DPIRD to remain aware of any opportunities that may be available to farmers.

## Current Projects

We are currently running six externally funded projects and we have four funding applications pending. Our current projects are:

- Regional Land Partnerships Years 2-5 (South Coast NRM from federal NLP funding)
- Weed Action Group – Bremer Bay (Communities Environment Program)
- Strategic Control of Priority Environmental Weeds in Bremer Bay (State NRM)
- Building Resilience in the face of Increasing Climate Variability. (Smart Farms Small Grants)
- One Paddock Challenge 2020 (Lawson Grains and Viridis Ag)
- Reclaiming Marginal Land (Smart Farms Small Grants).

This year we published our Achievement Report 2014-2019 – a summary of the 21 main projects (worth \$2.5 million) and key events the FBG delivered during those years.

## FBG Staff

In a year where adaptability and resourcefulness have been even more important than usual, the FBG staff have triumphed. I can't thank them enough for their support and the many, many skills and talents they bring to the group. They are: Tash Brown - finance officer; Jess Brown - Communications Officer; Jess Bailey - Administration Assistant; Maddy Wylie - Project Coordinator One Paddock Challenge 2020; Therese Bell - Project Coordinator Bremer Projects and TEC Regional Land

Partnership Program; Reagan Shalders - Project Coordinator Regional Land Partnership program (EPBC and Climate).

Sadly, this line-up will soon change as we say good-bye to Reagan Shalders and Therese Bell. Both women are stalwarts in their respective project areas and integral members of our team. They have provided great expertise, commitment and loyalty to the FBG and I thank them for their incredible generosity and support. Reagan and her husband Richard will be moving in January and Therese will be spending more time on the family farm, though staying involved in volunteer activities in Bremer. We wish them and their families all the very best for the future and thank them for all they have contributed to the FBG.

## FBG Board 2020 and 2021

Once again, I extend my sincere thanks to the 2020 Board - Damon Parker, Dave Turner, Mick Lester, Rex Parsons and Kyran Brooks – for the time and commitment they give to the FBG. Their advice and support is always greatly appreciated.

Special thanks to our Chair Damon who stepped off the Board but remains on the Advisory Committee. In his years on the Board Damon has provided tremendous support to me and I thank him for his willingness to lend an ear and supply a timely quip. Damon's ability to think outside the box and come up with innovative ideas and solutions, combined with his tremendous sense of humour, are qualities I know we will all miss.

This year we are really pleased to welcome two new Board members; Craig Hall and Laura Wishart. We look forward to working with you both. Our 2021 Board line up is; Chair - Dave Turner; Vice Chair - Kyran Brooks; Treasurer - Craig Hall; Secretary - Mick Lester; Ordinary Board Member - Laura Wishart; Shire of Jerramungup representative - Rex Parsons.

## Advisory Committee, Members, Sponsors and Funders

As always, a sincere thank you to our Advisory Committee and to the farmers who participate in our trials and host and attend our events. We greatly appreciate your time, effort and involvement. Likewise, I'd like to thank our Gold Sponsor Rabobank, the Shire of Jerramungup, Agrimaster, our supporters and our funding partners for your on-going commitment to the FBG.

## Christmas

From everyone here at the FBG, we wish you all a safe and successful harvest and a relaxing break after what has been undoubtedly one of the most unusual years in recent memory.

Please note our office will be closed and unstaffed over the harvest and holiday period from Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December until Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> February.

Leonie McMahon  
Executive Officer



# A wrap of the year for Bremer Project

Well Covid19 restrictions meant a few Bremer project activities had to be delayed and factored into the later part of this year and into next year.

## Regional Land Partnership (RLP) Threatened Ecological Communities Project

As mentioned in the last edition of Sustainbulletin, the Meechi Road revegetation project site was started after the opening rains late July. This joint project with the Shire of Jerramungup is part of the FBG's RLP Threatened Ecological Communities Project funded through South Coast NRM. Seed and seedlings were planted at Meechi Rd just prior to a significant rainfall event, which was a blessing. Placement of habitat materials around the site was started but only partially completed because the site became too wet for machinery. Visually the site appears to have a weed issue at the moment, but we anticipate the seedlings will eventually out compete the weeds as the bush grows. In-filling will be completed over the next two years. This will complement a third revegetation technique of "Brush Mulching" to allow for opportunistic germination during agreeable weather events.



## Bremer Bay Weed Action Group

The purpose of this project is to support our Weed Action Group in Bremer Bay to carry out strategic control of high priority environmental weed species. The group has now held several weeding bees. Other activities this group has enjoyed are learning to identify local coastal weed species and learning how to spread rust for Bridal Creeper control. Individual members often don't wait for a "working bee" and simply weed their favourite walk trail when they see the weeds. A very pleasing outcome for the Shire and the community as a whole.

Given the Covid-related delays, it was pleasing to see the Weed Action Group recently rise to the challenge and get busy at Short Beach in October. The Short Beach community have taken on a large task to decrease the



wild geranium that has choked the sand dune. Small scale trial works testing weeding techniques are also being completed. Infill planting with some more appropriate sedges was then carried out. This project is funded, with thanks, through the Communities Environment Program Department of Industry, Innovation and Science. O'Connor Electorate



Australian Government  
Department of Industry,  
Innovation and Science  
Department of the  
Environment and Energy

## Strategic Control of Priority Environmental Weeds in Bremer Bay

The objective of this project is to raise awareness about the importance of weed control, with a focus on keeping Boxthorn under control around the Wellstead Estuary. Covid restrictions have pushed a number of the project activities into 2021 but a Bridal Creeper awareness session was run in October 2020 explaining in particular the biological control, rust fungus (*Puccinia myrsiphylli*) and its distribution method. This project is funded through a Community Stewardship Grant from State NRM. We greatly appreciate this support.



natural resource  
management program



## Other activities

The Clean Up Bremer Bay Day planned for May happened in July and the Bridal Creeper workshop was also slotted into the last day of September school holidays.

The Bremer Bay Regional Trails Group have also been busy as a reference group for the Shire. They are looking forward to some positive funding applications. All in all, with some very trying conditions on many fronts, most of the Bremer projects finished the year on track.

A huge thanks to all the wonderful people I have worked with and to the tireless volunteers in Bremer I am constantly impressed. Best wishes for the harvest/holiday season and I hope some Christmas cheer reaches you and you all stay safe and healthy.

Therese Bell.



# 2020 Spring Field Day Wrap Up

The 2020 FBG Spring Field Day was this year was held on Wednesday 9th September, attended by around 50 farmers and industry. It started with a global grains and livestock markets update from Cheryl Kalisch-Gorden and Angus Gidley Baird of Rabobank (via Zoom). Thank you to Phil Thompson from Rabobank Albany for facilitating this successful technological hook up. From there, we headed out to the GRDC National Variety Trials (wheat and barley), hosted once again by Trent and Tina Parsons. We were led through the NVTs by Pip Payne from Living Farm (this year's contractor) and Georgia Trainor from Intergrain.

We then hopped back on the bus with a yummy morning tea provided by the Gairdner P&C and headed down to Lawson Grains, Jerry South, for a presentation on Precision Ag in Practice from farm manager Andrew Wylie. The site we stopped at focussed on a variable seeding rate trial, but Andrew covered off on how he uses ag data and incorporates it into the business on a practical level. Adjacent to this particular site was an area that had been worked by an H4 Reefinator with a seeding bar then put through it.

Heading further south, we then visited Michael Swarbrick's farm on Meechi Road where he has been trialing deep ripping on his gravelly sands. We stopped firstly in a lupin paddock which had traditionally been an underperforming one with non-wetting issues. He had also deep ripped a significant portion of the rest of this farm, including a barley paddock and some canola. Responses had been excellent, and it was interesting to note that despite some setbacks following strong winds

at seeding, crops were well advanced and looking healthy. We had excellent insight provided also by DPIRD's Jeremy Lemon. We were by this time pushing our schedule, and we unfortunately did not visit the second site in Mike's barley paddock.

After a delicious lunch (thanks again to Gairdner P&C) at Richard Surridge and Reaghan Shalders farm between Gairdner and Boxwood Hill, we heard from the very impressive Sue Middleton, with her Moora Citrus and Rural Edge hats on. We heard a bit about her family's journey into diversification, including their adoption of applicable agtech, as well as increasing agtech capabilities in Sue's role with Rural Edge. A high caliber workshop will be rolled out across WA in 2021.

We then hopped back on the bus and crossed the road to Colin Green's farm where we had a look at a site where Colin had been spreading on-farm clay. Colin has converted a mixed farm to a 100% cropping farm in the three years since moving from further north in the wheatbelt. With some challenging seasons, he has been setting up the farm with some significant soil amelioration projects using machinery that he has available, such as a plozza plough and his road grader. This generated a lot of discussion amongst farmers present and again we heard from Jeremy Lemon's extensive experience.

Back to the shed, we then heard from Johnny Inferrera from McIntosh Distribution about the Integrated Harrington Seed Destructor (iHSD) which again generated plenty of questions from farmers present. We then heard more on agtech from Philip Honey, Smart Farm Coordinator with Stirlings to Coast Farmers. It was really interesting to hear of some of the projects that he is involved with in that region, as well as some of the potential for expansion and further RD&E. We then finished the day with an update from Rodney



*Left- Field day attendees inspecting the NVT's  
Right- Georgia Trainor from Intergrain  
discussing all of their varieties*



Scott and Suzanne Butter of CBH Group, before enjoying a sundowner also sponsored by CBH. We would like to thank all of the day's presenters for their input, our host farmers, our sponsors, visiting industry representatives and of course our local farmers for attending. We hope you enjoyed the day, found it relevant and had something to take home to your own business. We would also like to note that an email was sent around to those who registered to attend with some presentations and further information.

If there is anyone else who would like this sent out, please get in touch with Maddy Wylie on 0421 645 410 or at soilprojects@fbg.org.au.



**Above– Talking deep ripping in lupin paddock at Mike Swarbricks. Top right– Starting the tour at the cereal NVT's at Trent and Tina Parsons. Bottom right- Sue Middleton taking a group selfie.**

## Esperance Study Tour

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- Jeremy Curry (DPRID) - Kaylx Wheat NVTs and discussion on benefits and options for early sowing of wheat and varieties to use.
- Mic Fels (Beaumont) - Mic took us through his journey with the Alphadisc machine, and how he came across the need to fill a gap in the current machinery market. Mic has also engineered the turbo drum, is trialling mid-row banding and has developed several smart phone apps to monitor and manage farm data.
- Belinda Lay (Condingup) – The Lay family in Condingup have been working to improve their soils with claying and ripping for over 20 years. The Lay family have also been pushing the productivity of their farm through grazing of crops combined with a confinement feeding system, working their 2300 head merino sheep flock in with a 100% cropping program.

All of the farmers we visited were progressive thinkers and innovative; developing methods to implement into their farming systems to ensure they remain resilient in the ever-changing face of our climate.

Special thanks go to Ricky Carpenter for facilitating the visits, Trent Parsons, Tina Parsons, Brad Bailey and Mick Lester for sharing the bus driving.

Jess Bailey

*This project is supported by the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, through funding from Australian Government's National Landcare Programme.'*



**Nic Bertola holding a Faba Bean plant.**

## One Paddock Challenge 2020

As we near the end of another year, we reflect on the range of endeavours being undertaken by farmers in our community. As part of this year's One Paddock Challenge, I had the pleasure of gaining insight into a range of on-farm trials in the area, notably:

- Brad Bailey – variable rate potash
- Lawson Grains, Gunnadoo – faba beans (alternate break crop potential)
- Mick & Mark Lester – deep ripping and claying
- Dean Hislop – variable rate potash
- Trent & Tina Parsons – faba beans (opportunistic)
- Mick Swarbrick – deep ripping (non-wetting soils)
- Colin Green – multiple soil amelioration measures
- Viridis Ag, Tantanoola – serradella in non-productive areas

There were many more interesting and relevant on-farm trials taking place, but thank you to the farmers above for sharing their time and motivations with FBG members. As part of the recent Spring Field Day, we looked at some of the soil amelioration measures taking place on Mike Swarbrick's farm at Gairdner. The soils on Mike's farm are fairly uniform, tending to be gravelly sandy duplex. His motivation for change came from his non-wetting soil issues. In January 2019, he delved a paddock using a custom made machine hired from Trevor Symes, Bolgart. The Symes family also combat non-wetting soils in their red clay to sandy soils and have tried a variety of approaches to ameliorate the problem.

While there was some wind blow in the months following the use of the customised machine, the yield results in 2019 were encouraging enough to widen the experiment to other paddocks and in early 2020, Mick purchased a Bednar Terraland TO. This machine is a chisel plough which acts to rip and incorporate along the lines of a spader aiming to resolve issues such as non-wetting while working on the deeper soil profile. It is designed for intensive tillage down to 55 centimetres on a 6 metre working width, with the capacity to mix to a depth of 350 millimetres.

In 2020, four paddocks were ripped and sown to barley, canola and lupins respectively. The lupin paddock on Meechi Road was discussed in some detail at the Spring Field Day. The barley paddock was perhaps the more impressive. Like many in the area, Mick experienced some significant wind blows during and shortly after seed emergence. This resulted in crop damage to the emerging

crop at the time. However, the paddock in question now shows a significant visual difference between areas that were ripped and those that were not, particularly in those parts of the areas with non-wetting issues. Those left unripped have very patchy crop, while the ripped area (the majority of the paddock aside from headlands and the outside lap) shows a consistent crop with 3-3.5t/ha yield potential.

Based on his results so far, Mike's plans for 2021 are to expand the program over another 500 hectares. He has found that a ripper which has a small delving effect resulted in improved germination by reducing the effect of non-wetting soils. He found that rolling fields that had been ripped aided trafficability and for seeding efficacy. However, even where the paddock was not rolled, Mike noted better crop performance. The effect on non-wetting has been impressive and likely to show the greatest yield gain in 2020.

Asked as to what he would do differently, Mike cautioned against ripping pasture paddocks. In 2020 this resulted in significant wind erosion, which with some luck was partly ameliorated by rain received in August.

To date, Mike has not been ripping outside laps and headlands. He would look to trial this, but is wary of this approach in wetter years due to trafficability concerns. Lastly, his advice to other farmers looking to trial different soil amelioration techniques is to trial a smaller area first to see how different soil types respond. In Mike's case, the farm is relatively uniform, but he still found that bringing too much clay up in drier seasons has not been beneficial, although he thinks this is less likely to be an issue in an average season.

Longevity of deep ripping is a largely unknown quantity as well on the South Coast, with long term trials largely absent. In seasons where waterlogging is an issue, it has been found that the effects of deep ripping are largely cancelled out. It will be interesting to follow the results of the deep ripping at the Swarbrick farm through subsequent seasons.

For further information, please contact Maddy Wylie at [soilprojects@fbg.org.au](mailto:soilprojects@fbg.org.au) or 0421 645 410 or Mike Swarbrick on 0427 131 548.

We also acknowledge the invaluable knowledge of Jeremy Lemon, senior development officer at DPIRD Albany.

Maddy Wylie



LAWSON  
GRAINS



*Below- side by side comparison , unripped (left) ripped (right)*



# Saltland Masterclass

The Productive Saltland Pastures workshop aimed to provide participants with knowledge and skills so they have the information and education to confidently begin a plan and process to implement a successful pasture grazing system that can be used on salt infected land. The two-day workshop is a hands on interactive approach that offers the latest information available for tackling salinity. Participants look at and learn site selection and preparation, establishment of revegetation systems for relevant grazing and management of improved pastures and their grazing utilisation. The workshop was designed specifically for landholders, farmers and advisers with an interest in rehabilitating salt affected land and improving production in these areas. Discussions were had on different plant species that grow in differing levels of severity in salt affected areas, agronomy of the plant species and management of them. The workshop aimed to address salinity problems as part of a whole farm system. On the first day of the workshop, Monday September 21, there were 34 participants in attendance. The second day, Tuesday September 22, had 32 participants in attendance. The first day was held in Jerramungup and consisted of presentations from guest speakers and a site visit to Fitzgerald Biosphere Group's Sustainable Grazing on Saline Lands trial site at West River to look at previous work done to address salinity. Presentations included hydrological considerations from John Simons, DPIRD; saltland economics from local Cranbrook farmer Sam Lehman and John Paul Collins, DPIRD; Ed Barrett-Lennard, DPIRD, discussed saltland pastures and Hayley Norman from CSIRO discussed livestock, grazing and saltbush. Practical skills of mapping paddock zonation, soil texturing, EM mapping, measuring water table and sampling were also covered.



On the second day participants met at Gairdner where everyone split into small teams and proceeded to travel to a salt affected challenge site on a property along Devils Creek Road. While at the challenge site, teams assessed management history, rainfall, NVDI images, soil attributes, drainage and EM mapping to evaluate the site and develop a design and plan to address the problems the salinity has been causing. Teams presented their site designs and explained the reasoning for their decisions with feedback and discussions provided by the presenters to the participants.

The two day event was very successful. It has highlighted the importance of salinity problems in the Shire of Jerramungup and the response from the number of participants involved in the workshop indicate that landholders are keen to address the problems.

The workshop is an activity of the Gillamii Centre's project *Regenerating Saline and Marginal Landscapes in Southern WA* with support from Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, CSIRO and the WA Government State NRM Program, South Coast NRM and the Australian Governments National Landcare Program.

Reaghan Shalders



Left- Participants on day 2 of the masterclass.

Above- Cranbrook farmer Sam Lehman (left) watching John Paul Collins (DPIRD) measure ground water levels.



# We're back!

## Australia on track for above-average winter crop



Australia is on track for a major recovery in grain production, with the winter harvest set to come in at above-average levels, according to just-released forecasts by agribusiness specialist Rabobank.

In its Australian Winter Crop Production Outlook 2020/2021, the agribusiness bank says after three successive years of below-average production due to drought in many parts of the country, Australia's "long-awaited grain production recovery is here", with the nation expected to harvest 47.4 million tonnes of winter grains, oilseeds and pulses this year.

This is an increase of 63 per cent on last year and 16 per cent above the five-year average.

For New South Wales, it represents a staggering 366 per cent increase on last year's harvest and for Queensland, 139 per cent – with all grain-growing states in Australia set to record an increase in production.

"This increase not only represents a recovery, but also puts production back over average levels," says Rabobank senior grains analyst Cheryl Kalisch Gordon in the report.

"A 22 per cent year-on-year increase in planted hectares, together with well-timed and above-average rainfall in most regions, support our expectations for 28.8 million tonnes of wheat, 11 million tonnes of barley and 3.3 million tonnes of canola to be harvested in Australia in 2020/21."

This will see Australia stage a major return to the global grains market, with Rabobank forecasting the nation's grain exports to increase 93 per cent on last year.

And exports would be supported by a relatively-low Australian dollar (forecast to remain at around 70 US cents in the year ahead) and comparatively-high global grains prices, the report said.

"The last time Australia had export volumes in these ranges, the Australian dollar was 10 US cents higher and global grain prices were around 35 per cent lower than our current forecasts for the year ahead," Dr Kalisch Gordon said. "Both these factors will assist in moving these anticipated export volumes and support a good year for Australian grain farmers."

### From famine to feast

New South Wales would be the driving force behind Australia's grain recovery in 2020/21, the report said, after being "the epicentre of devastatingly-low grain production in recent years".

"New South Wales has gone from worst performer to best performer in just 12 months to lead the pack when it comes to grain production," Dr Kalisch Gordon said.

"We expect a year-on-year lift of 12 million tonnes – a



*Above- Cheryl Kalisch-Gordon*

massive 366 per cent increase – in grain production in New South Wales, which would put the state's harvest neck and neck with its record 2016/17 harvest," she said. "Seasonal conditions in New South Wales have been near to ideal and in stark contrast to recent years. Most production gains will be made in the central west, but above-average yields are also expected in the north and south of the state.

"All other states are set for an average or above-average harvest, with the exception of Western Australia. Here, a poor start and lower rainfall across the growing season means we expect a hit and miss year for WA and with the state's harvest volume to come in above last year, but still 10 per cent below the (five year) average."

### Wet spring

The report said with a La Niña now declared active by the Bureau of Meteorology – for the first time since 2010 – and expected to deliver a wet spring, this would help finish crops and improve soil moisture in the eastern states, ahead of summer crop planting.

"Above-average spring rain will be beneficial, especially for regions that had a drier July and August, although the risk of a wet harvest – especially in parts of Victoria and New South Wales – is heightened," Dr Kalisch Gordon said.

"Above-average rainfall during later spring does, of course, introduce challenges to harvest and the prospect of impact on quality. In areas that have already begun harvest, such as northern New South Wales, rain delays have already interrupted progress. This brings with it the real risk of downgrades to the quality of the grain which, if widespread, could have a substantial impact on the market due to the change in the quality profile of grain on offer."

### COVID concerns

The report said Australia's grain sector had been able to proceed with an almost "business as usual" production year, despite the upheaval caused by COVID-19. And challenges related to the availability of harvest labour and contractors were also expected to be managed for the most part, with forward planning and work-arounds in place.

"Early season concerns regarding input availability due to COVID were managed so that there were no material



impacts on production and, for the most part, we expect the same with harvest. However, the need to manage a wet harvest period without the typical labour force may deliver some regionally-significant production and quality downgrades,” Dr Kalisch Gordon said.

### Market outlook

Notwithstanding the need to rebuild domestic grain stocks following drought, Australia is on track to export 19.8 million tonnes of wheat, 5.6 million tonnes of barley and 2.7 million tonnes of canola this year, Rabobank forecasts.

While global wheat stocks are forecast to grow again by more than five per cent in 2020/21, the location of those stocks outside key exporting nations means global prices are expected to be supported, the report said.

“With a combined 15 million tonne year-on-year reduction in wheat exports from the EU and Ukraine this year, the world is looking to Australia’s recovery to help keep the market in balance,” Dr Kalisch Gordon said. The bank forecasts CBOT wheat to trade around US\$ 580/bu over the coming 12 months, up 12 per cent year on year and approaching 40 per cent higher than 2016/17, when Australia last harvested an above-average winter grain crop.

“Despite supply renewal in Australia, we expect domestic prices to be supported by both global prices – which we expect to be near to 40 per cent higher than the last time Australia had an above-average harvest – and by an Australian dollar that is lower than 2016/17. This will keep prices in line with the five-year average and off the lows of 2016/17,” Dr Kalisch Gordon said.

### Barley

With barley representing close to 23 per cent of this year’s winter crop harvest, 2020/21 is expected to be the second-highest barley crop on record (albeit still 19 per cent behind 2016/17), the Rabobank outlook says. Export opportunities for Australian barley are also very different to 2016/17, Dr Kalisch Gordon said, with China’s introduction of tariffs on Australian barley effectively ruling out significant volumes being sold to

that market in the near term.

“Instead sales to feed-grain markets – such as Saudi Arabia, Japan and Thailand – will dominate Australian barley exports this year. This will mean pricing that is competitive relative to other origins of feed grain and at a discount to corn,” she said. “These exports will also not replace the volumes that would have gone to China.”

As such, the report says, domestic barley stocks will grow this year, keeping local prices at a broad discount to wheat in 2021.

### Canola and pulses

Despite an increased Australian canola harvest, Australian canola prices are expected to remain supported in 2020/21.

EU import demand for canola will approach record volumes this year – due to a significantly below-average European rapeseed (canola) harvest for the second year running – with Australia “in the box seat” to provide non-genetically modified canola (the European preference) to that market, the report said.

“We also expect Australian GM canola prices to remain supported in 2020/21, based on higher year-on-year pricing in the global edible oil complex more broadly and potential Chinese demand for GM canola,” Dr Kalisch Gordon said.

### Cash or carry

After successive years of drought, the generation of cash flow would be critical for many Australian grain farmers this season, the report said,

“However, alongside this, there is also increased on-farm storage capacity among growers as well as the recent memory of high grain pricing due to drought, while interest rates are also at record lows,” Dr Kalisch Gordon said.

“With this in mind, we expect a large number of farmers will choose to carry grain, especially barley, into 2021.”

Cheryl Kalisch-Gordon

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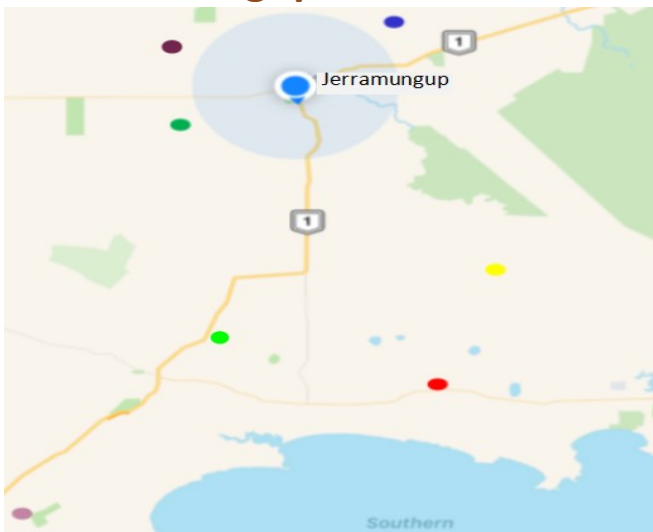
**Rex Parsons**  
Shire of Jerramungup  
Representative

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### Jerramungup district rainfall



Location		Jan-Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Total YTD
Jerramungup	●	190.3	53.8	47.6	9.4	301.1
Needilup Nth	●	164.0	45.0	38.5	9.5	257.0
Needilup Sth	●	188.0	58.0	42.5	12.0	300.5
Jacup	●	176.0	62.0	34.0	34.0	306.0
Bremer Rd	●	157.5	161.5	50.5	45.0	414.5
Gairdner	●	129.5	92.0	32.0	40.0	293.5
Boxwood	●	118.0	95.0	53.5	22.5	289.0
Mettler	●	176.0	175.2	60.9	17.6	429.7

### FBG acknowledges the support of



### Upcoming Events

- Grazing Naturally Workshop– 4th-6th March 2021
- Dancing in the Dirt Gala Ball– 27th March 2021

**MERRY CHRISTMAS**

FBG office hours over the Christmas Break

THE FBG OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED FROM FRIDAY THE 18TH DECEMBER UNTIL TUESDAY THE 2ND FEBRUARY

Contact FBG for more details ph. 9835 1127  
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