A NEW PROJECT – A NEW NAME?
The new combined Grower Group Alliance and Local Farmer Group Network project has been officially funded by the GRDC for the next 3 years. So now that it is official – this is your chance to have a say on the name of the new project. There are three options:

1. Grower Group Network
2. Grower Group Alliance (retain existing name and logo)
3. Farmer Group Network

Let us know your preference for the new name by emailing Lisa Mayer on lisa.mayer@uwa.edu.au.

Other project news is that the new Development Officer position has been advertised with applications due by the 7th August. If you know someone who would be suitable for the position, please refer them to the Position Description.

KATANNING REGIONAL BREAKFAST MEETING – 10th July
A regional breakfast meeting for grower groups in the Great Southern was held on 10th July and attended by members from the North Kojonup Production, West Wagin Topcrop, Broomehill/Tambelup and Nyabing Farm Improvement groups. Representatives from the Daping Creek and Dumbleyung catchments, South West Catchment Council, DAFWA and South Coast Natural Resource Management Inc. were also present. For a full report of this meeting go to the following document.

CLIMATE AND BETTER YIELD ARE PRIORITIES OF THE GRAINS INDUSTRY
Programs that tackle climate change, improve yield and give growers greater access to information are among the research priorities in the GRDC new 5 year strategic plan.

Addressing climate change through continued investment in: the development of more resilient grain varieties which are drought and frost tolerant; practical initiatives to reduce the industry’s greenhouse gas emissions, and seeking efficient and profitable use of water by grain growers will be the focus in supporting the grains industry. For more information see GRDC’s Strategic R&D Programme 2007-2012.

BETTER FARM MANAGEMENT WITH “QUICKCHECKS”
Want a quick and easy way to measure what is going well on your land to clearly identify any issues that may need action?
Quickchecks is a step by step guide to measure the health of your pastures (including ground cover), soils, woody vegetation, farm watercourses, paddock production levels and birds. This tool will assist you to: track the changes which occur over time on your land, improve land health from whatever the starting point, and use this information as part of normal decision making to improve business performance. Free copies can be ordered here.

LAUNCH OF ONLINE GRAINS SERVICE FOR WOMEN
This is a new service for women working in the grains industry who want to expand their knowledge and are ready for new challenges.

The Grain Growers Association is launching their Women in Grains service and is looking for women to take part. The online service seeks to develop: networks between women in the industry, education on facets of the industry, and skills and confidence to increase the involvement of women in industry groups. If you would like to register to participate in the initial reference group due to begin in August, please call 1800 620 519 or email membership@graingrowers.com.au. This invitation is open to both members and non-members who are interested to join and participate in the Grain Growers Association network.

HEALTHY NEW INITIATIVES FOR SOIL HEALTH IN WA
Jessica Sheppard, Soil Health Extension Officer, Avon Catchment Council & SCNRM
Farmer groups across the South Coast region will benefit from soil testing being carried out as part of a dynamic soil quality monitoring program initiated across WA in 2006. The aim of this program is to increase landholders’ knowledge of soil health and how to manage it. Over 900 sites have been sampled across the state and their biological, chemical and physical properties benchmarked. All results from the soil analyses are available on the Soil Quality website at www.soilquality.org.au.

The groups and areas participating from the south coast in the monitoring program are: Grass Patch Sustainable Farming Group, North Stirlings Pallinup Natural Resources Group, Ravensthorpe Agricultural Initiative Network (RAIN), Young River area and Neridup area.

For further information contact: Dr Andrew Wherrett, Department of Agriculture and Food, WA, Northam. Ph: 08 9690 2103 or awherrett@agric.wa.gov.au and Dr Frances Hoyle, Department of Agriculture and Food, WA (08) 6488 7345 or hoylef01@student.uwa.edu.au.

SALTLAND PASTURES ASSOCIATION - 10 YEAR CELEBRATION FORUM
SPA is turning “10” and to celebrate they are holding a two day event in Narrogin on the 25th and 26th of September, with the theme ‘Past, Present and Future’. The event will be a collaboration between SPA, the new Future Farm Industries CRC, DAFWA and CSIRO.

Day one will be a forum showcasing the latest saltland pasture research and bringing farmers the latest information on how to make their saltland productive. Topics will include saltland pasture economics, water use, grazing management, as well as a few ‘out there’ ideas for managing salinity. The SPA AGM will be held at the end of the day, followed by a celebratory dinner in the evening. Day two will be a field tour at Chris Walton’s SGSL site in Yealering, looking at the grazing and hydrology research sites. The program for the event is currently being finalised. SPA members will receive a discount for both the forum and celebratory dinner. Expression of Interest forms for those interested in attending are available by emailing Sally Phelan or phoning 9865 1205.

NUFFIELD SPRING TOUR IN OCTOBER
Nuffield Australia (who fund international study trips for farmers) have their “spring tour” in WA from Thursday 4th to Sunday 7th October - mainly around Perth but also in parts of the wheatbelt. The 2007 national award winners will be announced at a dinner on Friday 5th September, with guest speaker Michael Chaney. For more information call (02) 6964 6600 or email enquiries@nuffield.com.au or see www.nuffield.com.au.
Debbie Allen has won a coveted place in the Australian Government’s second Pathways to Rural Leadership course, to be held in Canberra in August 2007. Debbie has been employed as the Mingenew-Irwin Group’s Research Agronomist for 5 years and hails from Ogilvie, north of Northampton. Congratulations Debbie! For more information, see www.rural-leaders.com.au.

PESTFAX N°12 – Friday 20th July
Articles on first wheat leaf rust detected for the season, wheat powdery mildew and leaf spotting diseases, barley powdery mildew, balaustium mites. PestFax

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

AUSTRALIA POST COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GRANTS (Round 2) – Due 14 September
Improve your community’s environment and way of life. Community groups can now apply for yearly grants of up to $3,300 (including GST). The grants can fulfil a community groups’ “wish list” and directly fund a community project, help buy much needed tools and equipment, or help raise awareness and encourage more community members to get involved. The flexibility in the allocation of funds aims to help groups in their ability to grow within the community. Click here for more information.

NEW INDUSTRIES DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (Round 16) – Due 26 September
Pilot Commercialisation Projects (PCP) should be innovative, market driven, sustainable and aim to commercialise new agribusiness products, services or technologies. Applicants need to demonstrate the project’s potential for market success. As such, the initial market assessment and the research and development stage of the project should have been completed. Funding for PCP projects is provided on a matched dollar for dollar basis with the applicant. The New Industries Development Program’s contribution is from $35,000 to $120,000 (net of GST). For more information go to the website.

GRANTS FOR SMALL RURAL COMMUNITIES PROGRAMME – Due 30 September
Retention of young people in rural and regional Australia; community hardship in drought effected areas and community infrastructure are all preferred projects for this $5000 grant. Click here for more information

AWARDS

REGIONAL ACHIEVEMENT AND COMMUNITY AWARDS – Due 5 September
The Awards encourage, acknowledge and reward valuable contributions and outstanding achievements of individuals, networks and groups in regional and rural areas. The focus of the awards is small to medium size businesses, organisations involved in promoting the community through events and tourism, individuals providing leadership and initiative and community groups enhancing the social, economic, commercial and environmental prosperity of their region. For more information go to http://www.awardsaustralia.com/RACA_wa.html

RIRDC RURAL WOMENS AWARD – Due 15 October
The RIRDC Rural Women's Award is designed to recognise, but more importantly encourage the vital contribution women make to rural Australia. The Award seeks to increase women's capacity to contribute to agriculture and rural Australia, by providing them with the support and resources to further develop their skills and abilities. While the Award acknowledges past achievement, it is clearly focused on supporting women with strong leadership skills, a positive vision for the future of agriculture and the potential to make a difference in their chosen field.
The Award provides a Bursary of $10,000 for each of the seven State and Territory winners and the opportunity for the winner AND runner up in each State and Territory to attend the Australian Institute of Company Directors Course. The Award also provides the opportunity for one of the seven State and Territory winners to be selected as the RIRDC Rural Women’s Award Australian winner to represent the Award and RIRDC. For more information

**2007/08 DUPONT AUSTRALIA NEW ZEALAND INNOVATION AWARDS – Due 2 November**

The biennial DuPont Innovation Awards program is an independently judged competition, launched in 2004, to recognize the introduction of a new innovative technology, application, product or service. The Awards are open for entry to individuals, companies or tertiary students.

2007/08 Award Categories:
1. Building Innovation sponsored by Fletcher Building Limited
2. Medical & Healthcare sponsored by Invetech
3. Sustainable Energy sponsored by BHP Billiton
4. Sustainable Services sponsored by Worley Parsons
5. Agriculture & Food Production sponsored by Cargill Australia Limited
6. Performance Materials sponsored by Plantic
7. Tertiary Student Award sponsored by ABB

To find out more and download an entry form, visit [http://www.dupontinnovationawards.com](http://www.dupontinnovationawards.com) or Awards Hotline 9923 6144.

**WORKSHOP OPPORTUNITIES**

More details on the following workshops can be found on the LFGN website at [http://www.lfgn.org.au/current_opportunities](http://www.lfgn.org.au/current_opportunities)

**SUSTAINABLE AND PROFITABLE FARMING FOR A NEW WORLD – 8.45 am, 31 July**

*Technology Park Function Centre Bentley*

The sustainability forum has been designed as a snap-shot of what is happening within sustainability programs within WA agriculture and food industries. The forum is intended for key farmers, facilitators, group coordinators, and agribusiness.

The forum is aimed at updating the audience in the current work that is happening in WA and Australia regarding demonstrating on-farm sustainability and it is being funded as the final activity of the WAFarmers Pathways project. It will highlight the results of work undertaken in the DAF Pilot and Pathways projects, as well as some regionally funded projects. It will also take a look at market/consumer drivers for demonstrating sustainability.

Please respond to Ross Hardwick, 9486 2106 or email rosshardwick@waff.org.au with your registrations by Tuesday 24th July for catering and dietary requirements.

**2007 GROWER GROUP FORUM – Wednesday 15 & Thursday 16 August**

The amalgamation of the LFGN and GGA will be celebrated at the inaugural Grower Group Forum to be held in Perth at the Vines Resort. Two representatives from each of the GGA and LFGN groups have been invited to this event along with researchers and industry representatives. The forum will allow grower group members to: meet other groups from around the state; mix with people from research organisations and agribusiness, and discuss the potential for collaborative projects involving their group in the future.
On Wednesday afternoon, growers, researchers and industry representatives will discuss agronomic issues and examine the possibilities to develop collaborative projects with other forum participants. In the evening, there will be a networking dinner. Thursday will be a grower group only day where topics such as motivating your group and avoiding burnout, sponsorship negotiations and engaging with GRDC and MLA will be covered. You can view the agenda here or ask your group for details. For more information email Lisa Mayer or phone 6488 7937.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

To view the GGA Calendar of Events go to http://www.lfgn.org.au/calendar/months

KELLERBERRIN GROUP FIELD WALK (members only) - 31 July
The morning will run from 9am sharp - 12 noon, starting at the intersection of Doodlakine South and Stone Giles Roads (just south of Doodlakine). From there, we will travel to Matt Stebers’ Brown Manure trial, where we discuss the trial and do some plant counts. We then head to Kevin Walsh’s Barley Variety and Barley Fungicide trials on Barnes Rd, and then on to Scott Dixons’ Boxer Gold vs Trifluralin trial on Goldfields Rd, where we will finish the morning.

NORTHERN AGRI GROUP – CARNARVON GASGOYNE REGION TOUR 6 – 10 August
High Stocking Rate Project Study tour will depart on Monday 6th and return Friday 10th August 2007 (depending on final itinerary). The itinerary will be similar to last year – topics include rotational grazing, horticulture, irrigated pastures, paddock set-up and visited sites including Wooramel, Wahroonga, Cheela Plains and Yanrey Stations, with overnight stops in Carnarvon and Coral Bay. For more information contact Fleur Porter 9921 3937 or fleur.porter@bigpond.com

‘GROWER GROUP NETWORK’ FORUM, THE VINES RESORT, 15-16 August
The amalgamation of the LFGN and GGA will be celebrated at the first whole network forum to be held in Perth in August 2007. Two farmers from each of the GGA and LFGN groups will be asked to attend this event which will provide an opportunity to network with researchers and industry representatives as well as other groups. Make a note in the diary now. For more information contact Lisa Mayer on 08 6488 7937 or lisa.mayer@uwa.edu.au

WHEATBELT WOMENS DAY, BRUCE ROCK, 14 August
Guest speaker Leanne Preston Wild Child Lady will talk about creating her own business. To be held at Bruce Rock Golf Club, entry $30 includes three course meal and wine tasting. For more information contact Lara Currie (08) 9061 1660 brucecurrie@bigpond.com

BEAUMONT BETTER FARMING GROUP TECHNOLOGY DAY, CONDINGUP, 15 August
To see where farmers and companies are pushing the boundaries using Precision Agriculture including the trials and tribulations, associated costs and benefits returned but also provide an opportunity for those at entry level to see what technology is available. Contact John Hyatt Ph 9078 7000 or email jtdhyatt@bigpond.com.

NORTHERN AGRI GROUP, BINNU 21 August
Contact Rohan Ford Ph 99331045 or email nookanderri@bigpond.com

13TH AUSTRALIAN BARLEY SYMPOSIUM, FREMANTLE 26 – 30 August
This event comes to WA once every 10 years. Growers are encouraged to attend and take the opportunity to network with Australia’s principal barley researchers and breeders, maltsters, brewers and barley marketers.

and select 'registration information' to download a registration form or call Linda Price on 0429 919 797 or email linda.price@barleyaustralia.com.au

ARAB CONFERENCE IN GERALDTON, 10 – 14 September
Australia Research Assembly of Brassica is coming to Western Australia this year. This is a biennial conference for researchers, consultants and growers with a particular interest in the latest canola and mustard research and development. The Conference is being hosted by Oilseeds WA and the Department of Agriculture & Food. A field trip will include some of the grower group trials which will be established for the event. Grower groups are encouraged to participate in the field tour if not the entire conference. Go to the website for more information.

SOIL PIT DAY, KATANNING, 17 September
Sub Soil Constraints team will be running a soil pit day being hosted by the Katanning Landcare Group. For more information contact is Ella Maesepp 08 9821 4327 or landcarekat@westnet.com.au

RAIN SPRING FIELD DAY, RAVENSTHORPE, 19 September
Contact Jenny Chambers Ph 08 98381018 or email rlcdc@wn.com.au

NINGHAN FARM FOCUS GROUP FIELD DAY, MUCKINBUDIN, 20 September
Contact Ryan Lamond 0428 50-1855 or email ryanlamond79@hotmail.com otherwise contact Luke Sprigg 0428 470041

JERDACUTTUP TOPCROP GROUP SPRING FIELD DAY, 20 September
Contact Julie Ann Hill Ph 08 983811997 or email jrhill@agric.wa.gov.au