April 2007
18th Edition
The LFGN Newswire provides information about a range of local group activities, training, field days and funding opportunities for the benefit of local farmer groups. You are welcome to forward this Newswire to others who may be interested and encourage them to join the email list by emailing admin@lfgn.org.au Visit www.lfgn.org.au for previous editions of Newswire.

REGIONAL LFGN MARCH-APRIL BREAKFAST MEETINGS ROUNDUP
Regional meetings bring together local grower groups for the purpose of exchanging information between groups on their activities and opportunities and developing regional networks.

An Executive Summary of the following meeting reports is now available for Geraldton 20th March; York, 28th March; Merredin 29th March, and Esperance, 12th April (Katanning, May 1st).

Go to the LFGN website to download the Executive Summary or for more information on these meetings please email info@lfgn.org.au

THE BROOMEHILL TAMBE LLUP LOCAL FARMER GROUP EVOLVES
The Broomehill - Tambellup Local Farmer Group recently held a public meeting (March 29) which was facilitated by LFGN. As a result the group invited Gordon Wilson, Northern Agri Group, to speak to them about setting up their group. DAFWA and SCRIPT offered to fund Gordon’s travel costs to Tambellup for the 11 April meeting which was attended by nine very enthusiastic farmers.

This group originated due to the loss of the local Natural Resource Management Officer and a sense that direction was needed in order to bring resources to the area. Gordon voluntarily shared his experience with the Broomehill Tambellup grower group on the formation of the Northern Agri Group. For a copy of the notes from his http://www.lfgn.org.au/__data/page/1524/April_11sum-notesBroomehill07.pdf

GROWING SEASON OUTLOOK – APRIL 2007
The April Growing Season Outlook is now available on the DAFWA climate http://www.agric.wa.gov.au/climate

- ENSO state is neutral
- DAFWA’s ESS indicates a high chance of a La Niña developing in autumn
- April to June and May to October rainfall outlook for WA is average
- April to June and May to October rainfall outlook for eastern Australia is average to above average
INSTITUTE LAUNCH AT UWA
The Institute of Agriculture was launched on the 30th March at UWA to an audience which included Dr Michael Chaney the Chancellor, Dr Alan Robson, Vice Chancellor, The Honourable Kim Chance, State Minister for Agriculture, the Director of the Institute Prof Kadambot Siddique and many prominent researchers, farmer group representatives and agricultural industry representatives.

Amongst those from LFGN groups attending were David Leake, Kellerberrin; Kelly Patterson, West Wagin; Owen Brownley, Jerdacuttup; Keith Wilson, Freebairn.

The Institute is based in The University of WA’s Faculty of Natural & Agricultural Sciences and is The University’s gateway to education, training and research in agriculture and resource management. Its main objectives include to “strengthen the reputation of UWA in agriculture by further enhancing links with industry, farmer groups, the community, national and international organisations”.

To view the Institute of Agriculture’s inaugural Newsletter go to http://www.ioa.uwa.edu.au/?f=150085

JERDACUTTUP TOP CROP GROUP TRIAL PLANS IN PLACE
The Local Farmer Groups in the Ravensthorpe district have already in the process of implementing planned trials. The district was one of the few regions to have reasonable success with their trial last year. For a summary list planned trials visit the Jerdacuttup Top Crop and Pasture Group website to view their trial plans for 2007.

LFGN GROUP LEADERS SKILLS WORKSHOP – 6TH AND 7TH MARCH
For a short summary of the workshop note go to http://www.lfgn.org.au/__data/page/3185/Group_Leaders_Workshop_Notes.pdf

NINGHAN FARM FOCUS GROUP TRIAL RESULTS 2006
The Ninghan Farm Focus Group in the Mukinbudin district is already in the process of implementing planned trials. The district was one of the few regions to have reasonable rain and collected an enviable amount of data from their trial, thanks to the efforts of Vanessa Stewart, committee member of the group. For a report on the group’s trial results http://www.lfgn.org.au/__data/page/1529/ninghan_farm_focus_group_trial_results_2006.pdf

KELLERBERRIN DEMONSTRATION GROUP TRIAL RESULTS 2006
Like the Ninghan Farm Focus Group, reasonable rain during 2006, allowed planned trials to proceed and meaningful data was collected with the assistance of Farm Focus consultants. For a report on the group’s trial results go to the following http://www.lfgn.org.au/__data/page/1531/Trial_Data_Booklets_2006_Final_Draft.pdf

FUTURE GM CROPS AROUND THE WORLD
Professor Stephen Powles, WAHRI provided an over-view of the decade of adoption and impact of GM crops around the world, at UWA on 19th April. GM soybean, maize, cotton and canola dominate American, Canadian, Brazilian and Argentinean agriculture. Indeed, GM crop adoption in the America’s is the fastest adoption ever of an agricultural
innovation. Similarly, the Australian cotton crop is now nearly all GM. Adoption of GM crops in China and India is well underway and production of GM maize is occurring in some European countries. Notwithstanding this demonstrated grower enthusiasm for GM crops, consumer opposition to GM crops persists in some parts of the world, particularly Europe. [http://www.lfgn.org.au/resources/reports]

RURAL YOUTH ADVISORY GROUP
The Rural Industries Youth Advisory Group is seeking nominations from young people (18 to 35 years) who want to make a difference to agriculture, fisheries and forestry related industries. The role of the Advisory Group, formerly known as the National Council of Young Farmers, is to advise the Australian Government from a youth perspective on issues affecting agriculture, fisheries and forestry related industries and the young people within them. Participation on the Advisory Group also presents a tremendous opportunity for young people to develop their skills, networks, and build their reputation and ability to influence positive change in Australia’s industries. Young people from agriculture, fisheries, forestry and all supply chain and related industries such as agribusiness, processing, research, retail, natural resource management are encouraged to apply.

Applications close 5.00pm AEST, Thursday 3 May 2007
For further information and nomination forms please visit www.yarn.gov.au, email industrypartnerships@daff.gov.au or call 02 6272 4125.

GRAINS COUNCIL NATIONAL FARM PRACTICES DATABASE
Farmer Groups are encouraged to access the National Farm Practices Database because it can help them establish local benchmarking data from their crop or stock production. The database is coordinated by Grains Council of Australia with the support of GRDC. The Grains Council is a non political organisation whose main aim is to foster and assist the development of the grains industry and to maximise economic returns for Australian grains producers.

The Grains Council initiated this project to demonstrate how grain producers across Australia are improving their productivity and sustainability by using modern farming practises such as minimum tillage, controlled traffic and stubble retention. They need Local Farmer Groups and farmers to update their databases on current farming practices. For more information on the National Database visit The Grain Council of Australia [http://www.grainscouncil.com/]

SOIL HEALTH FORUM PRESENTATIONS ONLINE
The presentations from the inaugural WA soil health forum held on 6th March 2007 at UWA are now available to view and/or download from the web. Follow the link below to the Soil Quality website to choose the presentation. You will then be directed to the UWA “lectopia” site where you will be able to choose your desired format to access the presentation.

For more information about the Forum and future Soil Health workshops contact Jessica Sheppard, Soil Health Extension Officer, 08 6488 3756 or 0428 777 287

MANAGING THE CARBON CYCLE, KATANNING WORKSHOP
Recently Christine Jones presented her ideas and work on carbon cycles and the possibility of establishing a soil carbon “bank” for trading at Katanning. Christine is available for further workshops. The proceedings of the recent Katanning workshop can be found at http://www.amazingcarbon.com

2007 GRDC AGRIBUSINESS TRIAL NETWORK PROJECT - CORRECTION
In the March edition of Newswire the successful candidates for this season’s GRDC Agribusiness Trial Network grants were listed. The Synergy project had the wrong title and it should have read;

- **Facey Group** to support their work on non wetting soils
- **Morowa Farm Improvement Group** to work with Neil Ballard in evaluating cereal responses following different pasture species.
- **Synergy Consulting** to work with 3 groups in the Goomalling, Dowerin and Wyalkatchem regions looking at control of resistant ryegrass in no till systems.
- **Kaylx** (formerly Agric Tech) to work with the **West Wagin Group** to develop better area specific agronomy varieties.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

ROUND 9 ENVIRO FUNDS APPLICATIONS OPEN TILL APRIL 27TH
Eligible projects include native vegetation planting, fencing to protect remnant vegetation, monitoring water quality, species, habitats or other natural resources, indigenous projects that pass on caring for country techniques and traditional knowledge, projects that increase the community’s skills and knowledge for undertaking on-ground projects, as well as demonstrations of new techniques for sustainable farming, forestry or fishing, are also eligible.


GREENING AUSTRALIA’S EXCHANGE INCENTIVE FUND – NO DUE DATE
The Exchange Incentive Fund is a small funds grant managed in partnership between Greening Australia and Land & Water Australia and funded through the Australian Government’s NHT. The aim of the fund is to help regional practitioners better research their natural resources by increasing access to current knowledge and generating new knowledge on native vegetation. Funds are available to regional groups and networks, and researchers, for events or activities to be carried out before 1 January 2008. Further information including guidelines and application forms can be accessed at www.lwa.gov.au/Apply_for_Funding/Exchange_Incentive_Fund/indexdl_3694.aspx

SEEDS OF RENEWAL (FUNDED BY FRRR & ANZ) – DUE BY 30 APRIL
A small grants program providing funding to small, rural and regional not-for-profit organisations for projects and activities to aid the growth of their community? This program aims to be simple, with a straightforward and swift application and approval process. What can be funded?

- Projects with a charitable purpose
- Applications from not-for-profit organisations with an ABN; and
- Communities that have a population of 15,000 people or less.
- Drought affected communities in an EC (Exceptional Circumstances) declared region.

(Please go to the following link if you are unsure about your circumstances) www.daffa.gov.au/drought/ec
THREATENED SPECIES NETWORK COMMUNITY GRANTS – DUE BY 1 JUNE 2007
The Threatened Species Network (TSN) is a community-based program of the Australian Government and WWF-Australia.

Round 10 of the TSN Community Grants program is now open. Community groups are invited to apply for up to $50,000 to conduct on-ground conservation work for the ongoing health of our natural environment, specifically targeting the needs of nationally threatened species and ecological communities. Funding is available for activities such as habitat restoration, weeding, feral animal control, population surveys and monitoring, fencing, and fire management.

Copies of the Program Guidelines, Application Form and Guide to Completing an Application may be obtained from www.wwf.org.au or by contacting Kat Miller, TSN Coordinator for Western Australia, on 08 9387 6444, or kmiller@wwf.org.au.

LEARN TO IMPROVE YOUR BUSINESS – AN OPPORTUNITY FOR MANAGERS
Are you a manager interested in gaining insight into your staff views on the following?: Can your staff identify the needs of significantly important customers and do they perceive these customers are satisfied? Can your staff identify the names or categories of significantly important downstream customers of your customers as your products move to the final end consumer? In this fast changing world, do your staff understand customers changing needs and how changes by final end consumers may affect what their jobs and your business? What are the most effective ways staff communicate with customers and suppliers to ensure performance meets expectations and determine opportunities to do business better. What suggestions to staff have to improve these systems? If you are interested to find answers to questions like these contact Christine Storer to participate in research being conducted at Muresk Institute, Curtin University at c.storer@curtin.edu.au

CO-OP LOAN SCHEME
The Loans (Cooperative Companies) Act 2004 enables loans to be made by the WA State Government to certain cooperative companies. The Scheme is administered by the Department of Agriculture and Food Western Australia. For further information about the cooperative loans facility contact Rodger Crossman, Cooperative Loans Manager on (08) 9368 3872 or email rcrossman@agric.wa.gov.au

For more information on available grants go to http://grantsdirectory.dlgrd.wa.gov.au/

WORKSHOP OPPORTUNITIES
More details on the following workshops can be found on the LFGN website at http://www.lfgn.org.au/current_opportunities

NEW ANNUAL LEGUMES FOR MEDIUM & LOW RAINFALL OPPORTUNITY
WA team for Pastures Australia Initiative are looking to work with local farmer groups to overcome the constraints to adoption of new annual pasture legumes in the medium and low rainfall mixed farming zone of southern Australia.
Funded under the Pastures Australia Initiative (GRDC, AWI, MLA) for three years, they are calling for expressions of interest from Local Farmer Groups for testing of these new legume species. For EOI details visit [http://www.lfgn.org.au/current_opportunities](http://www.lfgn.org.au/current_opportunities)

**INTERNATIONAL GRAIN EXPERTS TO VISIT PERTH** on 26 - 27 July 2007 to speak at WA’s third Grains West Expo.

Tony Temple and Marlene Boersch from Mercantile Consulting Venture Vancouver and Winnipeg, Thomas Mielke of Oil World based in Hamburg and feed specialist Dr Rex Newkirk from the Canadian International Grain Institute Winnipeg.

The Expo will be kick started with an exciting panel session titled “beyond the rear view mirror”. Panel guest speakers include Gordon Davis CEO of AWB, Robert Green of Cargill Australia, Alick Osborne Louis Dreyfus Australia and Josh Roberts Grain Pool WA.

Neil Warden chairman Walgett Special One Co-op NSW will explain how a group of growers from a drier western region of NSW succeeded with their own grain marketing cooperative. FarmBis will subsidise growers 50% for the cost of the workshop. Two representatives from LFGN or GGA will receive a further incentive to attend. Contact John Duff or Charlene Kolman on 08 9475 0753 for further information.

**SUBSOILS TEAM CONTINUE UNDERLYING TRUTH**

DAFWA and UWA representatives, together with LFGN were instrumental in providing an excellent series of workshops over the last two years. Now Local Farmer Groups will have the opportunity to tap into these workshops once again. The Subsoil Constraints research team are rolling out another series of soil pit days. Over 120 soils pits have been dug across the wheatbelt in the last two years which have provided researchers with some interesting trends but more are needed. For an opportunity to participate in these workshops go to [http://www.lfgn.org.au/current_opportunities](http://www.lfgn.org.au/current_opportunities)

**GRAIN MARKETING WORKSHOPS – MAY 2007**

Groups interested in improving their grain marketing skills can register for a regional workshop in May 2007. Many workshops have already been locked in for April. Associate Professor Dennis Wise from Muresk, is an experienced grain market analyst who will host up to 10 courses throughout the West Australian grainbelt for farmer groups. For more information contact Fabiola Cousins, 08 9690 1530 or email F_Cousins@curtin.edu.au or go to [http://www.lfgn.org.au/current_opportunities](http://www.lfgn.org.au/current_opportunities)

**CSIRO PLANT AVAILABLE WATER WORKSHOPS ONE AND TWO – APRIL AND JUNE 2007**

A limited number of workshops on managing your soil water are available in April and June 2007 for groups who would like to find out more about this concept. For those groups who have already completed the Plant Available Water Workshop with Neal Dalgliesh, a follow-up workshop is available to interpret and discuss collected data. If your group is interested in participating in either the April or June/July series, please contact Yvette Oliver from CSIRO on (08) 9333-6469. For more information visit [http://www.lfgn.org.au/current_opportunities](http://www.lfgn.org.au/current_opportunities)

**GRAIN CONTAMINATION AND RESISTANCE STATUS OF WEED SEEDS SOWN INTO MAJOR CROPS OF THE WA WHEATBELT – EOI DUE BY 1ST MAY**
Preventing the introduction of weeds into the farming system through sowing of clean seed is an essential component of integrated weed management. As well as adding to the weed burden already present, foreign seed contamination may also introduce unwanted species and herbicide resistant biotypes into farming systems with potentially devastating consequences.

This project will benefit WA grower groups by enabling growers to identify the extent of weed seed contamination present in their farming systems and the level of herbicide resistance within these weed seeds. The influence of seed sources and cleaning methods on overall contamination levels will also be examined. For more information visit [http://www.lfgn.org.au/current_opportunities](http://www.lfgn.org.au/current_opportunities) or call Pippa Michael, 9690 1444 pmichael@curtin.edu.au

**GROUP SKILLS COURSE**
Understanding our stakeholder groups is one of the key challenges facing professionals like you. Helping our stakeholder groups to achieve their goals is equally important. Every stakeholder group is different. They have different needs, demands, attitudes and behaviours. On the surface, dealing with stakeholders and especially groups of stakeholders can seem pretty daunting. Unless you know a few ‘secrets’. Some of these ‘secrets’ are revealed in the upcoming ‘Group Skills’ course.
For more information contact Brigette Lacey on 9690 1550 or 9690 2128, blacey@curtin.edu.au or blacey@agric.wa.gov.au

**PUBLIC SPEAKING TO BUILD YOUR GROUP – 8TH MAY**
Tom Murrell (ex ABC presenter) now Media Motivators is running a public speaking workshop for business people in Perth this May. What are the secrets of using public speaking to build and grow your business?
The three benefits of public speaking are; increasing credibility, visibility and profitability. Learn how to:

1. Transform your current fear of speaking into one of positive self-belief that will allow you to boost your career, have more influence and communicate your ideas.
2. Turn your current knowledge, ideas and expertise into a powerful and persuasive presentation that even the most cynical and sceptical audiences will take notice of.
3. Put these together in my simple system that will allow you to have more influence and grow your business.

Places are limited so [book now](#). This seminar is part of the Australian Innovation Festival. Tuesday, May 8th 2007, The WA Club, Perth Western Australia

**CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

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

**Kalgoorlie Child Safety Forum – 10th May 2007**
A joint project between Farmsafe WA Alliance, Kidsafe WA and Royal Life Saving Society WA. See the [flyer](#) or contact Michelle Darrington 9359 4114.

**Agribusiness Livestock Updates (Perth) – 24th and 25th July 2007**
Over the last four years, the Agribusiness Sheep Updates has been the leading source of the latest information in sheep production research and development. The Sheep Updates is now forging new ground by incorporating the research and development from
the beef industry. In 2007 the event will be known as the Agribusiness Livestock Updates. The invitation to submit abstract to this event is now open. Send abstracts of up to 100 words to Anne Jones at ajones@agric.wa.gov.au by the Friday 23rd February 2007. Although "feed" topics will be the main focus of this event, submissions from other topics are welcomed. For further information visit www.agric.wa.gov.au/livestockupdates

Grain West Expo 2007 (Perth) - 26th and 27th July 2007

Wheatbelt Women’s Day 18 August 2007
Bruce Rock for more information contact Lara Currie (08) 9061 1660 brucecurrie@bigpond.com

Northern Agri Group Spring Field Day 21 August, Binnu
Contact Rohan Ford Ph 99331045 or email nookanderri@bigpond.com

The 13th Australian Barley Technical Symposium (Perth) – 26th to the 30th August 2007
This is an event that rotates around Australia and ends up in Perth approximately once every 10 years. It is an excellent opportunity for participants in the international grains industry to focus on barley happenings in the southern hemisphere. This event will be a gathering of internationally-recognised experts who will examine issues surrounding barley, malt and beer. The Symposium will provide insight into the supply chain from the farm gate to the brewery doorstep. There will be a strong Australian and southern hemisphere focus in this coming forum. Make a note in the diary now for August 2007 in Fremantle, Western Australia. For further information contact Michelle Ainsworth at michelle@promaco.com.au or on 08 9332 2900.

ARAB Conference in Geraldton – 10th to the 14th September, 2007
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 http://www.lfgn.org.au/__data/page/4051/ARABConfAnnoucement_10-14Sept07.pdf

13th International Lupin Conference which will be held on the 14-18 September 2008 in Fremantle. For more information go to http://www.lupins.org/contact/

Jerdacuttup TopCrop and Pasture Group Spring Field Day 20 Sept, Jerdacuttup
Contact Julie Ann Hill Ph 08 983811997 or email jrhill@agric.wa.gov.au

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