FINAL REPORT

GRDC
GRAINS RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

DAN00199

Building Pulse Agronomy Capacity in NSW - Succession Plan for Dr Eric Armstrong

PROJECT DETAILS

PROJECT CODE:	DAN00199
PROJECT TITLE:	BUILDING PULSE AGRONOMY CAPACITY IN NSW - SUCCESSION PLAN FOR DR ERIC ARMSTRONG
START DATE:	30.06.2014
END DATE:	30.06.2015
SUPERVISOR:	LUKE GAYNOR (LEADER SOUTHERN CROPPING SYSTEMS)
ORGANISATION:	NSW DEPARTMENT OF PRIMARY INDUSTRIES
CONTACT NAME:	LUKE GAYNOR

Summary

This project's aim was to recruit a new research agronomist for pulse crop research in southern New South Wales (NSW). The new position was advertised across Australia with 24 applicants applying for the position. Interviews and referee checks took place shortly thereafter. Mark Richards was offered and accepted the role.

Report Disclaimer

Old or Archival Reports (Projects that concluded in 2007 or earlier)

The information contained in these older reports is now several years old, and may have been wholly or partially superseded or built upon in subsequent work funded by GRDC or others. Readers should be aware that more recent research may be more useful for their needs. Findings related to agricultural chemical use are also potentially out of date and are not to be taken as a recommendation for their use.

Conclusions

This short project has been considered a success and has allowed a critical position to be replaced whilst allowing mentoring of the new research agronomist by the outgoing officer. The pulse research team will meet all of its outputs in all other projects as a result of this project.

Recommendations

It is recommended that GRDC considers this type of project for other retiring project leaders. It allows ongoing projects to continue with little interruption and facilitates a smooth handover of research to the new officer.

Outcomes

This project has allowed the successful handover of pulse agronomy research in southern NSW. The project's momentum has continued without any interruptions to project outputs and there were no trial failures. Despite the need for a second appointment (Mark Richards) (due to the resignation of the first candidate), pulse research specifically related to southern NSW has been delivered and has resulted in the continued expansion of pulse production in southern NSW, namely the significant increases of faba beans and lentils.

Economic Benefits: Research has delivered knowledge to agribusiness and growers to improve crop rotations, increase pulse yields, improved non-pulse crop nitrogen (N) usage and overall farming system profitability.

Environmental benefits: Improvement in grower adoption of pulse crops in southern NSW with growers understanding the benefits of pulse crops on subsequent cereal grain yield and protein.

Social benefits: Growers gaining confidence to grow a wider range of grain crops that traditionally have not been grown in southern NSW and ensuring the profitability of their business and support to surrounding communities.

Achievements/Benefits

The project has ultimately achieved its aim of a seamless changeover of leadership in the area of pulse research for southern

NSW. The advertising and interviewing process identified several suitable candidates capable of fulfilling the role and as such, a suitable applicant was appointed to the role.

This method of recruiting suitably qualified and experienced staff prior to the departure of the incumbent is one of merit due to the ability of a handover period and a period of mentorship by the outgoing staff member. There has been insignificant interruption to the productivity or outcomes achieved by the pulse research team at Wagga Wagga Agricultural Institute.

The project has delivered on all outputs with the exception of the journal paper. This is targeted for completion by June 2016. The new research agronomist has engaged with industry, regional agronomists and growers in southern NSW. With the steady increase in pulse crop area in southern NSW, it is critical for NSW DPI and GRDC to continue research in these highly beneficial break crops.

Additional information

Publications

1. Brown manuring pulses on acidic soils in southern New South Wales - is it worth it? 15th Australian Agronomy Conference (Attachment 1).
2. Crop-topping and desiccation are valuable tools for weed control in pulses. 15th Australian Agronomy Conference (Attachment 2).
3. Faba beans for acidic soils in southern NSW: Yields and time of sowing effects (Attachment 3).
4. Pulses: Faba beans and pulse contributions to farming systems (Attachment 4).
5. Faba beans for acidic soils in southern NSW: Yields and time of sowing effects. Griffith paper (Attachment 5).

All papers by Eric Armstrong, Luke Gaynor, Gerard O'Connor, Sarah Ellis and Neil Coombes.