

## PROGRAM DAY 1 – 16 FEBRUARY

8.00 am REGISTRATION AND COFFEE

8.45 am PLENARY SESSION 1

8.45 am **Welcome** – Peter Bird, Senior Regional Manager West, GRDC  
**Future directions for GRDC investments** – Sharon Starick, GRDC Chair

9.10 am **GRDC award presentations** – Gary Lang, Chair GRDC Western Panel

9.25 am **What grain markets want; and how Australia delivers** - Richard Simonaitis, Grains Australia

10.05 am **Looking forward, looking back – 30-year anniversary panel**

Chair – Pip Courtney

Panel members

- Geoff Fosbery
- Juliet McDonald
- Mark Sweetingham
- Nicole Kerr

10.50 am MORNING TEA

### CONCURRENT SESSIONS

11.30 am

#### SESSION 1

##### Soil Amelioration

**Tricks and tips for re-engineering soils across different environments**  
Gaus Azam, DPIRD

#### SESSION 2

##### Legumes and Pulses

**What is stopping us from growing more pulse crops and the influence of geopolitics on marketing pulses from WA**  
Kadambot Siddique, UWA

#### SESSION 3

##### Management Practices

**Improved management of herbicide residues in soil**  
Gavan McGrath, Ishka Solutions

**NR - Fixing nitrogen while dodging herbicide residues**  
Riley Drage, Murdoch

#### SESSION 4

##### Disease

**CCDM in the spotlight**  
Chair – Mark Gibberd  
**NR - Uncovering genetic resistance to Spot Form Net Blotch in barley**  
Sundara Link  
**NR - The gene *Cyc8* is essential for the development and pathogenicity of the necrotrophic fungus, *Sclerotinia sclerotiorum***  
Thomas Hill  
**NR - Multi-species pangenomics provides insight to virulence and fungicide resistance**  
Naomi Gray  
**NR - The involvement of protein kinases in wheat disease susceptibility - a case study of *Septoria nodorum* blotch (SNB)**  
Asiri Padukka Vidanalage

12.05 pm

#### 5-minute moving

12.10 pm

**Setting up for success: Reaching and sustaining yield potentials in ameliorated sands**  
Therese McBeath, CSIRO

**Grain legume D&E in WA**  
Daniel Kidd, GGA

**NR - The barriers and opportunities for canola-legume intercropping in WA**  
Chloe Rout, UWA

**Australian grain growers' perceptions of the definition of regeneration agriculture, changing agricultural practices and indicators to support farm practices.**  
Jacqueline Williams, Southern Cross Uni

**The Australian Fungicide Resistance Extension Network: Promoting effective fungicide resistance management in Australian grains.**  
Nola D'Souza, CCDM

12.45 pm

LUNCH

\*NR – indicates New Researcher presentation

# GRAINS RESEARCH UPDATE

# 2026

1.40 pm	<b>SESSION 5</b> Soils	<b>SESSION 6</b> The future of canola	<b>SESSION 7</b> Rotations	<b>SESSION 8</b> The future of Agriculture
	<b>Progress on soil water repellency</b> David Henry, Murdoch University	<b>GRDC's Low Carbon Liquid Fuels Feedstock Roadmap</b> Cameron Begley, Spiegare	<b>Development of a Soil health framework for Australian agricultural production systems</b> Mark Farrell, CSIRO	<b>What can grains learn from other industries about the adoption of digital technology</b> Roger Lawes, CSIRO
2.10 pm	<b>5-minute moving</b>			
2.15 pm	<b>Gravel mulch improves cereal yield and water use efficiency on alkaline sodic soils in the eastern wheatbelt of WA</b> Glen Riethmuller, DPIRD	<b>How to increase canola production without increasing disease risk. Is it possible?</b> Steve Marcroft, Marcroft Grains Pathology	<b>Species by TOS trials evaluates performance of major crops in WA</b> Stephanie Boyce, DPIRD	<b>Nanoscale solutions to a really big problem: A nanoparticle-based approach to fighting fungal pathogens</b> Liz Cziolowski, CCDM
2.45 pm	<b>5-minute moving</b>			
2.50 pm	<b>NR - Amelioration of aluminium toxicity in wheat using silicon</b> Suma Karki, UWA  <b>Amendments for sandy soils</b> Richard Bell, Murdoch Uni	<b>Understanding the driving factors leading to fungicide resistance in the blackleg pathogen of canola</b> Angela Van de Wouw, Uni of Melbourne	<b>WA Farming Systems Trials: Rotation by nitrogen responses</b> Martin Harries, DPIRD  <b>NR - Cross trial analysis of rotation by environment interaction in the WA Farming Systems project</b> Ben Nestor, DPIRD	<b>Smart Sprays</b> Chair – Daniel Murphy, Murdoch <b>NR - SMART SPRAYS: Developing biodegradable films for broadacre cropping</b> Alexandra Gulizia <b>NR - How mulching practices shape soil chemical and biological processes</b> Samantha Viljoen <b>NR - Advanced water barrier spray for soil application in grain production</b> Annachiara Codello <b>NR - SMART SPRAY: Adhesive spray for frost protection</b> Hussain Alattas
3.25 pm	<b>AFTERNOON TEA</b>			
4.00 pm	<b>SESSION 9</b> Nutrition	<b>SESSION 10</b> Abiotic Stressors	<b>SESSION 11</b> Management decisions	<b>SESSION 12</b> Sustainability
	<b>Predicting nitrogen cycling and losses in Australian cropping systems - augmenting measurements to enhance modelling</b> Graeme Schwenke, DPIRD NSW	<b>Frost and Heat Management and Analytics (FAHMA)</b> Randall Donohue, CSIRO	<b>Influence of soil amelioration and amendment practices on <i>Rhizoctonia solani</i> AG8 in Western Australian cropping systems</b> Ahmed Saad, DPIRD	<b>Introducing GRDC's Sustainability Initiatives</b> Tom Giles, GRDC and Louise Barton, UWA
4.30 pm	<b>5-minute moving,</b>			
4.35 pm	<b>Scaling precision agriculture: How hyperspectral satellites unlock dynamic nitrogen management for Australian wheat farms</b> George Marangos-Gilks, Messium	<b>Management of ice nucleation bacteria to mitigate frost</b> Amanuel Bekuma, DPIRD	<b>What soil properties predict crop response to management practices for alkaline-sodic-saline soils of the eastern wheatbelt?</b> Geoff Anderson, DPIRD	<b>A review of grain emissions and gross margins across rainfall zones: Practical insights for 2026</b> Christophe d'Abbadie, DPIRD
5.05 pm	<b>NETWORKING SUNDOWNER</b>			

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## PROGRAM DAY 2 – 17 FEBRUARY

8.30 am WELCOME COFFEE

9.00 am **Welcome Back** – Peter Bird, GRDC

9.15 am **PLENARY SESSION 2**

**Nitrogen fertiliser decisions – the good, the right and the risky**, James Hunt, University of Melbourne

10.00 am

10-minute moving

### CONCURRENT SESSIONS

10.10 am

**SESSION 13  
Nutrition**

**Residual fertiliser nitrogen:  
Will this year's cereal crop  
use it?**  
Louise Barton, UWA

**SESSION 14  
Wheat agronomy**

**Yield and protein  
determination in wheat:  
Lessons from cultivar  
selection and nitrogen  
management from Kansas, US**  
Romulo Lollato, Kansas State  
University

**SESSION 15  
Pest Management**

**The end of an era?  
Understanding the decline of  
neonicotinoid seed treatment  
efficacy on green peach  
aphids**  
Paul Umina, Cesar Australia

**SESSION 16  
Weed Management**

**How to make glufosinate work  
against key Australian weeds**  
Roberto Busi, DPIRD

10.40 am

5-minute moving

10.45 am

**Advancing nitrogen-use-  
efficiency in the Geraldton  
Port Zone in high-fertility  
environments**  
Nick Eyres, GSA Consulting

**Managing pre-harvest  
sprouting in wheat: From  
physiology to agronomy**  
Jeremy Curry, DPIRD

**Predators and Beneficial  
Insects**  
Chair – Helen Spafford  
**NR - Training ladybird beetles  
to improve biological control  
in canola**  
Ali Zahid, Murdoch  
**NR - Modifying natural  
enemies' behaviour for better  
biological control in field**  
Jhon Avellaneda Nieto, Murdoch  
**NR - Managing Russian wheat  
aphid: Predatory potential of  
native ladybirds**  
Chloe Elsegood, Murdoch  
**NR - When could less spray  
mean more pay? Monitoring  
beneficial parasitoid wasps  
working to benefit your farm**  
Amber Balfour-Cunningham,  
UWA and DPIRD

**Demonstrating effective  
management of Matricaria  
species in the low and medium  
rainfall zones of Western  
Australia.**  
Andrew Wherrett, Living Farm

11.15 am

**MORNING TEA**

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# GRAINS RESEARCH UPDATE

# 2026

11.45 am	<b>SESSION 17</b> <b>Nutrition</b> <b>NR - Improving early-sown legume nodulation by establishing rhizobial inoculant in the prior year</b> Jake Taylor, Murdoch Uni  <b>Nitrogen contributions from harvestable annual legumes: Implications for WA farming systems</b> Robert Harrison, DPIRD and Murdoch	<b>SESSION 18</b> <b>Crop Management</b> <b>Understanding how fungicides move inside plants</b> Jordi Muria-Gonzalez, CCDM	<b>SESSION 19</b> <b>Pest Management</b> <b>Slug and snail management</b> Michael Nash, AIM  <b>NR - Role of dietary calcium on the growth of grain pest snails</b> Muhammad Zubair, Murdoch	<b>SESSION 20</b> <b>Weed Management</b> <b>Fleabane is getting worse - but here's what to do about it</b> Harmohinder Dhammu, DPIRD
12.20 pm	<b>5-minute moving</b>			
12.25 pm	<b>NR - <i>Austroboletus occidentalis</i>: A generalist biofertiliser for crops and pastures.</b> Yasodhini Liyanage, UWA  <b>30 years of soil testing and plant nutrition</b> Craig Scantlan, UWA	<b>Managing grass weeds in oats for grain and key agronomic levers</b> Garren Knell, ConsultAg	<b>Pre-conditioning generalist predators: A novel approach for precision pest management</b> Shovon Sarkar, Murdoch  <b>NR - Investigation of wheat resistance mechanisms to the Russian wheat aphid (<i>Diuraphis noxia</i>)</b> Ayesha Warnasooriya, Murdoch	<b>Herbicide programs for button grass suppression in summer fallows</b> Arslan Peerzada, DPIRD
1.00 pm	<b>LUNCH</b>			
1.50 pm	<b>FOCUS SESSION 1</b> <b>USING BIOLOGICALS</b> <b>Convenor</b> David Bowran  <b>Panel Discussion</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lyn Abbott</li> <li>Chris Poole</li> <li>Helen Spafford</li> <li>Daniel Dixon</li> <li>Michael Lamond</li> </ul>	<b>FOCUS SESSION 2</b> <b>IS THERE A FUTURE FOR PULSES IN WA?</b> <b>Convenor</b> Ruth Young  <b>Panel Discussion</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Barry Mudge</li> <li>Erin Cahill</li> <li>Quenten Knight</li> <li>Dan Mullan</li> <li>Mark Seymour</li> <li>Peter Wilson</li> </ul>	<b>FOCUS SESSION 3</b> <b>MEASURING AND MANAGING EMISSIONS</b> <b>Convenor</b> Douglas Rodgers Maddison McNeil  <b>Panel Discussion</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rikki Foss</li> <li>Ed Scott</li> <li>Danielle Gale</li> <li>Larissa Taylor</li> <li>Nicole Batten</li> </ul>	<b>FOCUS SESSION 4</b> <b>FINDING WHEAT'S SWEET SPOT YIELD VS QUALITY VS PRICE VS RISK</b> <b>Convenor</b> Richard Williams  <b>Panel Discussion</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Romulo Lollato</li> <li>Dion Bennett</li> <li>Daniel Kidd</li> <li>Jules Alvaro</li> <li>Gerard Paganoni</li> </ul>
3.20 pm	<b>15-minute moving</b>			
3.25 pm	<b>PLENARY SESSION 3</b> <b>Beyond Perception: Connecting through trust and transparency</b> Chair - Pip Courtney Panel members <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Courtney Bailey, Voconiq</li> <li>Mitch Hooke AM</li> <li>Deanna Lush, AgCommunicators</li> </ul>			
4.25 pm	<b>GRDC closing comments</b> Peter Bird, GRDC			
4.35 pm	<b>SPONSORS AND SPEAKERS' SUNDOWNER – All attendees welcome</b>			

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