



SJ Dec 07

- \* SANTFA celebrates 10th anniversary
- \* New date and venue for the conference
- \* Dynamic and challenging speakers

## No-tillers celebrate 10 years

The title of the 10th Annual SANTFA Conference 'Got the points - kick the goals' will not be lost on any footy fan. While points can win games, it is goals that make a substantial difference in margin.

Over the past 10 years SANTFA has provided grain growers with information on no-till machinery, soil management, innovation and integrating no-till into the farming system. To achieve this SANTFA has sourced the best operators and researchers in Australia and from across the globe to share their knowledge and experience with SANTFA members in the quarterly journal, during the regional winter/spring tours and at its flagship event the annual conference.

While the 10th Annual Conference for SANTFA members introduces a new date (7th March) and a new venue (AMMI Stadium, West Lakes), there is no change in the high calibre of local and international speakers who will provide information to help SANTFA members improve their margins.

Using intercropping to reduce nitrogen and fungicide inputs, Saskatchewan farmer Colin Rosengren has seen increases in yield and net profit. Colin is one of the three keynote speakers at this year's conference and will explain how he manages the seeding, agronomy and harvesting of his 1600 hectare cropping program. This includes chickpeas intercropped with flax (linseed) (32 hectares) and canola intercropped with peas (345 hectares).

Colin says the main driver for doing anything on his farm is economics and that includes being a Director of Western Ag Crop Fitters, a group marketing their crops under the Pesticide Free Production trademark. Other business interests include involvement with a start-up company, 'Canpressco' that is pressing a new low input oilseed Camelina for oil and meal. He also owns Western Ag Microwave Technologies, which is researching the use of microwaves for weed control.

Since Scott McCalman presented at the 2002 SANTFA Conference he has won NSW Department of Primary Industries 'Farmer of the Year'. Operating two properties that total 5000 hectares, near Warren, NSW, Scott and wife Jo use no-till, permanent stubble cover and opportunity cropping to help achieve their goals of sustainability, soil quality and moisture conservation.

Scott regularly develops and custom-builds machinery and this is a great opportunity to hear how Scott's system has evolved since 2002.

Greg Butler, SANTFA's Research and Development Manager will give the third keynote address on the outcomes and progress of SANTFA's research program. This will include details on the innovative moisture monitoring project using in paddock soil moisture sensors.

In the forum program Mike Ashworth, WANTFA and Dr Jack Desbiolles, University SA, will discuss machinery modification and the progression of discs and tines; Dr Bill Brown, Aurora Group and Nuffield Scholar and Mallee farmer John Gladigau will present on corporate farming models, while other topics will include controlled traffic, integrated pest management, innovative cropping concepts, the biology of non-wetting soils and skills for diversification.

It is hard to believe that in the past 10 years crop management has evolved so rapidly. As past president Riverton farmer Steve Ball recently commented, "No-till is not just about seeding, it's the whole package including harvesting, stubble management and weed control."

In the past ten years SANTFA's focus has evolved to ensure it is able to provide members with the support they need in relation to integrating no-till into their farming system.

Initially SANTFA concentrated on providing information about seeding machinery to help growers implement no-till, today its focus is much broader supporting members with information on issues from soil biology and weed control through to stubble management, implement set-up and even climate change. More than anything else SANTFA provides a forum for sharing experience. The Farmers Helping Farmers is a more formalised delivery method for this philosophy.

SANTFA is proud of its founding philosophy of farmers helping and encouraging one another in the pursuit of improving their production and maintaining their soil for future generations and continues to build on it for the greater benefit of the farming industry.