

e-news

www.agex.org.au



Australian Government
Department of Agriculture,
Fisheries and Forestry
National Landcare Program

The Ag Excellence Alliance is supported by the

February 2009

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Congratulations to
MacKillop on securing
funding from the 1st
round of Caring for our
Country

[Award for AEA Groups](#)

The Ag Excellence Alliance is calling for nominations in the second year of the Ag Ex Grower Group Awards. The award is open to all groups affiliated with the Ag Excellence Alliance, which includes all Agricultural Bureau Branches in SA. Grower Group Award judging criteria will include;

- Level of involvement with NRM Boards
- Successfully engages and delivers information to young farmers
- Delivers training in and adoption of business risk strategies
- Manages the group's succession of volunteers and staff.

Entries close 9th March 2009 with the winning Group receiving \$3000 to assist with Group activities, and 2nd place receiving encouragement award. The winners will be announced at the Ag Excellence Forum Dinner on the 6th April 2009 .

Application forms on Ag Excellence Alliance website www.agex.org.au Further information:
Sharon Honner 0438 322251

[AEA Forum & Dinner](#)

The annual Forum will be held on Monday April 6th, 9.15am for 9.30am start at the Edinburgh Hotel, Mitcham.

The day will be opened by Premier's Special Advisor on Drought, Hon Dean Brown, who will also provide a summary of the current State Drought situation. The morning's program will include reports by all affiliated grower groups.

After lunch key note speaker, Lauren Rickards will address the gathering on "**What are the Real Lessons from the Tough Times**". There will also be a facilitated session on change, and "where will you be in 3 - 5 years time / what will Groups be doing in 3 - 5 years time"

The afternoon session will wrap up with AEA committee nominations by about 5.30pm and the Awards Dinner will follow at 7pm.

Invitations will be going out shortly. If recipients of these are unable to attend, the AEA committee would be pleased if invites could be passed onto other group members to come along.

Please notify Heather Baldock heather.agex@bigpond.com or 0428 101 416 if someone has been inadvertently left off the invite list.

NRM News

Adelaide and Mt Lofty Ranges Natural Resources Management Board

The Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges region supports a mosaic of bushland remnants, farming land, urban development, rolling hills and plains, diverse marine environments and more than 200 kilometres of spectacular beaches and coastline.

Covering nearly a million hectares, just over half of which is land, the Board's region extends from the Barossa Valley through Freeling, Two Wells and the Northern Adelaide Plains, to Cape Jervis, Middleton and the Southern Vales on the Fleurieu Peninsula. July 1st will see the expansion of the Board's northern boundary – to include the Mallala and Light Regional council areas.

The marine environment also makes up a significant part of the Board's area (44%). It extends out to the middle of the Gulf and Backstairs passage, and includes the eastern side of Investigator Strait and Southern Ocean, out to state coastal waters.

AML NRM Land Management Program

The Land Management Program is an established team of staff (Project officers and Land Management Advisers) who offer expert guidance to assist in the conservation and restoration of land and all natural assets.

As well as some elements of enforcement of the NRM Act 2004, the Land Management Program now incorporates a larger suite of NRM services to assist landholders and the wider community to take positive steps in managing the regions natural resources.

These include:

- Targeted education and training opportunities in land management (i.e. workshops, field days and courses).
- Producing and dispersing publications on sustainable land management principles (i.e. Small Talk, Fact Sheets).
- Property visits and assistance with natural resources management planning.

- Financial Incentives for on-ground works that deal with priority threats to priority natural assets. In particular, there is a focus on actions that protect and enhance
 - Surface and ground water quality
 - Biodiversity conservation
 - Sustainable productivity

For more information call Claire Stephenson at AML NRM on 08 8391 7504

EP NRM working towards a sustainable future for agriculture

The Eyre Peninsula Natural Resources Management (NRM) Board is currently conducting community workshops across the peninsula to inform people on the contents of the draft EP NRM Plan and to obtain feedback. The Plan recognizes the importance that agriculture plays in NRM, and ensuring agriculture remains viable on the Eyre Peninsula is a key part of the Plan. The Plan also recognizes the importance of working with the key industry organisations in achieving a viable and sustainable future for the agricultural sector. The profitability of agriculture and the protection of the regions land, water and native vegetation are interdependent.

To this end, the EP NRM has engaged the Ag Excellence Alliance to facilitate workshops on the Eyre Peninsula that target the key agricultural industry groups. These workshops have been held at Minnipa and Cummins, and have resulted in some clear direction for the Board in the development of the Plan. Decisions on moving towards sustainable farming systems are limited by lack of knowledge, skills and good advice. There needs to be greater understanding of the production limits in current systems. To get true integration between farming and natural systems there needs to be a value put on biodiversity and ecosystems services. Understanding the factors in community that will drive people to change is crucial for moving forward.

If you want further information on the EP NRM Plan contact Prabodh Das, Planning and Technical Officer for the EP NRM Board, or Mark Stanley, EP NRM Board Deputy General Manager.

2009 SANTFA Conference "No-Till: Barely Scratched the Surface"

The SANTFA Conference on the **6th March** promises to offer the grower valuable insight for maximising your cropping programs.

International Keynote Speaker: Mr Rick Bieber - 21 years No-Till Farmer, Trail City South Dakota and President of South Dakota No-till Farmers Association

National Keynote Speaker: Mr Hugh Ball – New Generation Corporate Farmer who operates on the premise that ‘agriculture is a business and management is the driver’. **REGRETTABLY**, Hugh is unable to attend at this time due to sudden illness however this position has been filled by **Brendon Smart** who is an owner manager of a diversified range of agricultural pursuits based over three properties covering 5000ha. Brendon will offer us his experience and knowledge of conducting the family farm under corporate conditions using sound management and business strategy.

With forum Topics covering stubble management, weed control, agri-business and working with and without stock and rocks together with soil moisture and biology you are sure to be kept up to date and well informed.

Conference Venue: AAMI Stadium, West Lakes SA from 8.45am, Member Cost: \$150 pp
Pre-conference Dinner Venue: The Lakes Resort Hotel, West Lakes, Thursday 5th March from 6.30 pm, Special Guest Entertainment: Chris McDonough, Cost : \$40 pp bookings essential seats limited

Check out www.santfa.com.au for a program and registration details or call the office on 08 88424278.

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Victorian Bushfire Support

Donations can be made to the Redcross Victorian Bushfire Appeal on 1800 811 700 or go to www.redcross.org.au/vic/services_emergencyservices_victorian-bushfires-appeal-2009.htm

Calling for Volunteers to aid in the relief effort

SA Farmers Federation are coordinating donations of **fodder, grain, hay and labour** for Victorian Bushfire Relief. Contact ph 8410 7233 (SAFF's new number), or go to www.saff.com.au,

YPASG has registered with SAFF as a supporting organisation, so for members in that area, if you would like to contribute fodder, grain, hay or labour please contact the office on 8853 2241 or email leanne.asg@netyp.com.au

Offers of voluntary help can also be made by calling the **Victorian Bushfire Volunteer Hotline 1300 366 356** or www.govolunteer.com.au

MacKillop Farm Management Group Activities

Precision Ag "Yeild Mapping" with Felicity Turner

- ✍ What can we learn and use from last year's maps going into this year's seeding?
- ✍ Presentation of results from farmer trials throughout the South East using Precision Ag technology
- ✍ Establishment of farmer focus groups
- ✍ What trials would you like to see performed this year?
- ✍ Requirements of setting up Precision ag trials on-farm

AND Presentation of 2008 / 09 NVT and Agronomic Trial Results

Presenters include Trent Potter

Wednesday 11th March 4pm at Wolseley or

Thursday 12th March 8 am at Frances or **4pm at Lucindale**

Entry Free to MFMG members / \$25 for non members

Breakfast / Dinner available at each venue at attendees expense

2009 Study Tour - Irrigation Systems & Precision Ag in South East Queensland

Sun 16th August - fly to Moree from Adelaide at 1.30pm

Mon 17th - Cubbie Station at Dirranbandi via coach. Dinner & guest speaker Ian Todd (irrigation & dry land farmer, shareholder of Case dealership) at St George

Tues 18th - Moonrocks Tour (pioneer fruit & veg grower specialising in marketing strategies & WUE)

Wed 19th - Tour of Simplicity Australia and Daybreak Equipment in Dalby; Visit local property

Thurs 20th - visit Uni of Qld for Precision Irrigation Application presentation. Visit properties using pivots and lateral movers for irrigation application

Fri 21st - free morning in Brisbane before flying back to Adelaide arriving 6pm

Cost per person (twin share) covers all flights, coach travel, all breakfasts, 2 lunches, 2 dinners, transfer from accommodation to Brisbane airport

MacKillop Group Members \$1500, Non-members \$1700. Numbers limited, \$200 deposit on booking, final payment due July 5th

For further information contact Krysteen McElroy, MacKillop FMG on mfmg@bigpond.com

Minalaton Ag Bureau

Minlaton Ag Bureau held a successful fishing trip on Monday, with 7 boats and 18 participants.

Despite the seas being rougher than ideal all had a good time & enough fish were caught for tea,

Casualties were limited to a lost sea anchor, two sea sickness victims and some wet clothes on the journey (race) back in.

Combined YP Updates & Other News

These were held at Kadina on Wednesday 25 Feb & Yorketown Thursday 26

Speakers included , Rob Rees: Marketing, Andrew Polkinghorne: Production & Financial Risk, Neal Dalgliesh: Water use efficiency, soil organic matter, benefit of stubble retention and early summer weed management on soil water across variable soil types. Chris Toms: Wind/Solar generators and equipment, costs, returns, regulations.

After lunch concurrent sessions were run: Jeff Braun / Mick Faulkner - Early sowing/Frost management; Peter Treloar- Variable rate; Andrew Makin - Plastic film to enhance germination, Spray shop trace elements in furrow ; Michael Tonkin - Hay demand (volume), End uses, Profitability ; (Kadina) Darren Schilling, & (Yorketown) Bill Long - Chemical residue limitations 2009.

YPASG has sought representation from N&Y Natural Resource Management Board on the YPASG Management Group.

YPASG trials on plastic soils covers on dry land salinity patches in the Wallaroo area has significantly increased crop establishment and yield, farmers are interested in participating in farmer scale treatments in 2009.

Key grower groups and organisations in the Northern & Yorke region are collaborating to prepare a CFOC submission. Mary-Anne Young SA Rural Solutions and Michael Richards Ag Ex N&Y Sustainable Officer are preparing the proposal to be lodged by the Northern & Yorke NRM Board.

Precision Ag and Vit EXPO

There was a real buzz at the SPAA and MacKillop PA Expo held at Keith in February. This was the first time SPAA had organised an event in the south east of SA. Over 150 participants attended from a range of industry sectors and about 20 per cent of the audience was from the grape industry. Considering the event coincided with vintage this turnout is an indication of how keen the grape industry is to embrace PA.

The range of exhibitors was excellent and we were pleased to welcome some new PA companies and look forward to their involvement with future SPAA Expos. The SE Natural Resource Management Board was an event sponsor and SPAA looks forward to working with NRM boards to promote PA as an agronomic tool that can also help improve environmental management.

The next SPAA Event will be held in August 2009. The date, location and topics have yet to be finalised but will be widely promoted and posted on the SPAA website soon.

www.spaa.com.au

PA Grower Group Meetings South Australia 2009

16th March - Lower Eyre Peninsula, Cummins & Eastern Eyre Peninsula, Cleve

17th March - Northern, Crystal Brook & Yorke Peninsula, Kadina

18th March - Lower North, Roseworthy

23rd March - Northern Mallee, Loxton

24th March - Southern Mallee, Pinnaroo & South East, Keith

Following the PA grower group header set-up and yield monitoring meetings held in late 2008 the next group meetings will focus on turning successful yield maps collected during the 2008 harvest into variable rate seed and fertilizer maps for the coming 2009 season. PA specialist Sam Trengove as well as PA technicians for John Deere, New Holland and Case IH will be attending.

Group members will learn how to create prescription maps for variable rate controllers from their yield maps, for example how to make a phosphorous replacement map based on the previous years yield map. Topics to be covered include: cleaning out incorrect high and low data points, creating smooth maps and converting yield maps into prescription maps with zones defined for different fertiliser or seed rates.

For more information contact Sam Trengove on mobile 0428 262 057 or email

samtrenny34@hotmail.com or www.spaa.com.au

Diary Dates

March

6th SANTFA No-till Conference, AAMI Stadium, Adelaide
11 - 12th Precision Ag & Trial Results Day, MacKillop Farm Management Group
13th Ag Ex Alliance Committee Meeting @ Waite, 8.30am
16 - 27th Annual Farmer Meetings Upper Eyre Peninsula
17 - 19th Sheep Connect field days on Eyre Peninsula
20 - 21st South East Field Days @ Lucindale, www.southeastfielddays.com.au

April

3rd Caring For Country Grant Applications Close
3-4th Karoonda Farm Fair
6th AEA Forum 9.15 for 9.30am start, Edinburgh Hotel, Mitcham with Awards Dinner, 7pm
7th Minnipa Ag Centre Discussion Group @ Minnipa
7 - 8th Advisory Board of Agriculture meetings

July

28 - 29th Proposed YPASG / SANTFA / Ag Bureau Crop Walks
29th EP Agricultural Research Foundation (EPARF) Field Day

August

16 - 21st MacKillop FMG Study Tour - Irrigation Systems & Precision Ag in Sth East
Queensland
17th Advisory Board of Ag Annual Dinner & AGM @ Victor Harbour

The next Ag Ex e-news is planned for late April, so if your group has an activity to report, or a date for the diary please contact Project Manager Heather Baldock as per details below

AEA Contacts & Committee

Chair - Mick Faulkner, 0428 857 378, faulkner@sa.chariot.net.au

Vice Chair - Jeanette Long

Committee: Peter Cousins, Mark Stanley, Leighton Pearce, Sharon Honner, Kieran Wauchope, Nigel Wilhelm, Bill Long, Deb Baum, Michael Richards

Project Coordinator - Heather Baldock (08) 8627 4056, 0428 1010 416, heather.agex@bigpond.com