

GRDC and SAGIT strategizes farm management by investing in South Australian grain ecosystem

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Australia's Grains Research and Development Corporation (GRDC) is extending support for South Australian grain growers through new research co-investments in collaboration with the South Australian Grain Industry Trust (SAGIT).

SAGIT is the unique state-based grains research body that administers funds gathered through a voluntary levy on South Australian grain receivals. The Trust is investing a total of \$2.6 million in new projects this year, with GRDC co-contributing \$333,324 to three projects.

In collaboration with SAGIT, GRDC will help support a new project managed by the Upper North Farming Systems group aiming to identify farm management strategies for mitigating frost damage.

While the project is targeting this local issue in the Upper North region, it will also contribute to the national body of knowledge regarding management of frost supported by GRDC and SAGIT over many years.

GRDC is also co-investing in work on appropriate fertiliser strategies for on-row sowing of lentils in saline soils, which is being led by Sam Holmes from Central Ag Solutions. This work will adapt learnings from the Yorke Peninsula and Mid North to other parts of SA, including the Mallee and Eyre Peninsula where lentil production has recently expanded.

A third co-investment, led by Trengove Consulting, will help growers make the most of phosphorus fertiliser inputs, with a focus on managing spatial variability and long-term strategies.

The increasing cost of fertiliser and seasonal supply constraints across the country mean these two projects also have potential to benefit growers in other regions, by developing benchmark strategies that can be tested and adapted elsewhere.

GRDC senior regional manager â?? south Stephen Loss says South Australian wheat, barley, canola and pulses make a significant contribution to the national harvest, and research that helps improve their productivity is good for all grain growers.

â??GRDC and SAGIT have a shared interest in improving profitability and sustainability for SA growers, so it makes sense for our organisations to combine our resources. We have been working together to coordinate our research, development and extension investments for more than ten years, and have helped deliver significant improvements in a number of farming practices, including management of soils, fertiliser inputs and frost under SA growing conditionsâ? he says.

Co-investing allows both SAGIT and GRDC to maximise the value of their RD&E investments and increases the ability of South Australian researchers to build capacity, actively address local issues, and help growers adapt to changing climate and market forces.

SAGIT chair Dr Andrew Barr says GRDC is an important partner for the state body said â??GRDC co-investment adds significant leverage to SAGIT funding for projects that target the needs of South Australian grain growers. It also allows GRDC to extend its RD&E investment in local challenges that often have national relevance, while reducing the risk of research duplication between our organisations.