

January - March 2019



AgriFutures™
Pasture Seeds

AgriFutures™ Industry update



Current
Projects



Invested
in RD&E
January -
March 2019



Forecast
investment
from 1 January
2019 onwards

Upcoming events

14 Jun

2020 Nuffield Scholarship applications close

10 Jul

AgriFutures™ Pasture Seeds Program Advisory Panel meeting

AgriFutures™ Pasture Seeds Panel

- Lisa Anderson (Chair)
- Joe Cook
- Brian Fields
- Dr Mary-Jane Rogers
- David Brown
- Annelies McGaw (AgriFutures Australia Manager, Research)

Project spotlight: Lucerne Variety Trial – Assess optimum plant stress levels for seed production

Project ID: PRJ-010959

Principal investigator: Jenny Aitken

Research organisation: Lucerne Australia



Lucerne variety trial field day



Lucerne variety trial plots

Almost 60 people including growers, agronomists, seed marketers and associated industry representatives attended the recent Lucerne Australia Variety Trial Field Day and info session in February 2019 at Keith, South Australia.

The trial, planted in June 2018, has been the subject of much interest as it has been some years since an independent trial of so many varieties has been undertaken. Twenty nine proprietary varieties from nine companies, plus two public varieties have been sown in three bays which have different watering schedules applied. This is to ascertain the optimum stress levels, which create better seed production.

The seed has just been harvested, but not cleaned, so no yield data is

available, but the field day attendees were able to see on site the effect of the water treatments.

A herbage trial is also underway and data from this was discussed on the day. The trial is being funded from grower levies through AgriFutures Australia and will run over three years.

After the site visit, Lucerne Australia presented guest speakers who spoke on topics such as the adaption of digital imagery to track farm equipment and cropping data, certified seed production area and unbundling of water licences.

Many of the attendees reported that the afternoon was very worthwhile and they look forward to future data from the trial.

Researcher spotlight: Wesley Moss

University of Western Australia PhD student for PRJ-011096 Profitable and environmentally sustainable sub clover and medic seed harvesting.

1. How did you identify this project for your PhD studies?

This project provides the opportunity to work across both engineering and agriculture. On the engineering side, there is a great deal of opportunity to be innovative and explore different ideas that could have real practical benefits. This flows into agriculture where we are able to collaborate with farmers and industry in order to develop tangible solutions with positive outcomes. My ultimate motivation is to help improve agricultural practices and advancements toward a more sustainable future.

2. What inspires you to work in the Pasture seeds industry?

The coolest thing about the pasture seeds industry is its uniquely Australian history. Subterranean clover, in particular, has had a significant impact in improving pastures over the last century and its success was rooted in the efforts of innovative Australian farmers, inventors and pioneers. Australia is essentially the only country in the world with a commercial production of these seeds and the technology which supports the industry was developed right here in Australia. I feel very privileged to be working in this industry and to be involved in the next chapter of its rich history.

I am also very passionate about sustainability. The pasture seeds industry plays a very important role in the productivity of other agricultural sectors and is a key part of farming systems

in Australia and around the world. Continuing research and development in this industry is crucial to help increase productivity and sustainability to meet the needs of a growing population and changing climate.

3. Tell us something the average person would not know about you?

I am a big believer in space exploration and hope to one-day use my knowledge of engineering and agriculture to be involved with the cultivation of other planets.

Wesley will be conducting an online survey to gather the experiences of subterranean clover and annual medic seed harvesters. If you would like to receive the survey and have your say, please send him an email at wesley.moss@research.uwa.edu.au



Wesley Moss

Project ID	Project Name	Start	Finish	Principal Investigator	Research Organisation
PRJ-011096	Profitable and environmentally sustainable sub clover and medic seed harvesting	28/09/2018	22/04/2022	Erskine, William	University of Western Australia
PRJ-010959	Lucerne Variety Trial – Assess optimum plant stress levels for seed production	8/05/2018	30/09/2021	Aitken, Jenny	Lucerne Australia Inc.
PRJ-010875	Ensuring Lucerne seed production in the absence of bees	1/05/2017	31/07/2020	Hamblin, John	University of Western Australia
PRJ-010449	Lucerne Seed Wasp management	1/07/2017	11/03/2019	Seago, Ainsley	NSW DPI
PRJ-009750	Molecular markers for cultivar ID and seed certification in pasture legumes	15/07/2015	15/05/2020	Ghamkhar, Kiomars	AgResearch Limited
PRJ-009750	Potential exotic virus threats to Lucerne seed production in Australia	1/06/2015	30/04/2019	Dietzgen, Ralf	The University of Queensland
PRJ-010760	Siriver – producing lucerne breeders seed	25/06/2017	30/05/2020	Aitken, Jenny	Lucerne Australia Inc.