



MEDIA RELEASE

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NEW REPORT HIGHLIGHTS NOODLE WHEAT INDUSTRY AND URGES INDUSTRY DISCUSSION TO SECURE ITS FUTURE

The Western Australian grains sector is being urged to consider the future direction of the State's noodle wheat industry in a new report commissioned by the Wheat Council of the Grain Industry Association of Western Australia (GIWA) Inc.

The report, *Western Australia's noodle wheat industry – Current status and future challenges*, looks at the current and future demand for Australian Noodle Wheat (ANW) and the challenges potentially affecting its future.

GIWA President and Quairading grower Sean Powell said a decline in the production of ANW – most usually the variety Calingiri – in preference for higher yielding wheats was challenging WA's ability to meet global demand for ANW.

"In recent years the price premium for ANW over Australian Premium White (APW) has been insufficiently enticing for wheat growers to sow Calingiri, with growers instead opting for the harder, higher yielding variety Mace."

"As a result we've seen noodle wheat plantings on the whole decline. Moreover, more variable seasons have caused big swings in yields and production volumes have varied," Mr Powell said.

Annually Japan and Korea import about 1,700,000 tonnes of a blend of ANW and APW for Udon and instant noodle production – making up about 20 percent of the WA wheat crop. The ANW component of the blend changes year-to-year depending on supply; however on average, makes up about half of the Australian Standard White (ASW) blend.

Mr Powell said the industry was at a turning point and the objective of the Report was to act as a reference document to generate industry discussion among growers, breeders and traders regarding ways to secure the valuable udon and instant noodle trade.

"As a grower I understand the need to improve the value proposition for growers to sow noodle wheat and GIWA understands the pressure to do this, as a whole-of-sector, in order to maintain the unique noodle markets."

The Report was developed by the Australian Export Grains Innovation Centre (AEGIC). AEGIC Chief Economist and co-author Professor Ross Kingwell said with challenges also came opportunities.

"Japan currently imports wheat via a tender held by the Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF). However the market is on a path to partial deregulation with recent approval being granted for the import of APW and Australian Hard (AH)."

"The relatively large existing noodle wheat trade flow into Japan puts WA growers in an enviable position with regards to capturing this potential new hard wheat market, via combination cargo and blending opportunities to complement noodle wheat exports from WA," Prof Kingwell said.

The GIWA Wheat Council is seeking industry feedback on the Report and the future of the noodle wheat industry from all members of the WA grain sector. The Report, an explanatory factsheet and a feedback form is available at giwa.org.au and aegic.org.au. Industry feedback is invited for a four week period to 5pm, Friday 2nd October via info@giwa.org.au. All feedback will be published on the GIWA website unless requested to be kept confidential.

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