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2017 | GROWING EXPECTATIONS

A NATIONAL GROWER GROUP SUMMIT

17-18TH AUGUST PAN PACIFIC HOTEL, PERTH WA

Where do farming groups need to be in the next 5 years?

2017 Growing Expectations is a national summit hosted by the Grower Group Alliance (GGA) in WA. It will set the scene for national investment trends in the research, development and extension landscape and present the opportunities for regional and local economies through farming group networks.

The GGA is a farmer-driven initiative that has been connecting grower groups, research organisations and the agribusiness network across the broadacre, mixed farming and livestock grower groups in WA for the past 15 years.

Master of Ceremonies: Bridget Fitzgerald, ABC Country Hour WA presenter.

Thursday 17 August 2017

From

7.45am Registrations. Tea and Coffee on arrival.

8.30am **National Summit Opening** by Dr Kelly Manton-Pearce, Grower Group Alliance Chairperson
Welcome address by Hon Mia Davies, Leader of The Nationals WA

Session 1: Investment across the agricultural R&D supply chain – past, current and future

Extension frameworks for adoption of research and development in agriculture has evolved over time, as have farming groups across Australia. How have these developments influenced the current landscape for farming groups, their value and how will these networks fit in the future with increases in private sector extension investment.

9am **Richard Heath**, General Manager Research, Australian Farm Institute

9.20am **Ruth Nettle** Rural Innovation Research Group, University of Melbourne

9.40am **Jan Paul van Moort** Principal, Acil Allen Consulting

10am **Peter Cooke** Director, Agknowledge

10.20am Audience Q&A

10.30 – 11am Morning Break

Session 2: Strategies for increasing Australia's return on ag-industry R&D Investment

A "fireside" discussion on strategies for increasing returns on investment in R&D within the agriculture industry. What is the future of R&D investment and strategies to maximise adoption across private industry, government and for RDCs and the role of farming system? What collaboration models are needed to improve extension and adoption on farm by producers to better translate research and development outcomes and maximise return on this investment? An keynote overview and facilitated Q&A covering:

1. Delineation of extension for organisations
2. Roles organisations have in relation to extension and future policies on extension and strategies to maximise producer profitability through extension of R&D investment
3. Delivery mechanisms that will achieve extension strategies and how is this will be coordinated

11am **Key Participants**

Dr Steve Jefferies Managing Director, Grains Research and Development Corporation

Ralph Addis A/Director General, Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development

Michael Crowley, General Manager Producer Consultation & Adoption, Meat and Livestock Australia

Caroline Welsh Chairperson, Birchip Cropping Group

Sue Middleton Facilitator, WA Grassroots Development

12.10pm Audience Q&A

12.40pm **Chris Reichstein** Mt Burdett Farming Company, Nuffield Scholar, Grower Group (SEPWA) & Grower Group Alliance Strategic Advisory Group Member

1-2pm Lunch Break

Session 3: Role of farming groups in business, governments and community

Farming groups have become central to local and regional communities. In the absence of core support networks these agri-clusters of farming groups provide integral services to their economies. Hear how groups can evolve to build business through collaboration while maintaining the social structures they support.

- 2.10pm **Cindy Cassidy** Chief Executive Officer, Farmlink
2.30pm **Liam O'Connell** General Manager WA Open for Business, Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development
2.50pm **Brendan Nicholas** Esperance Manager Agriculture and Food, Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development
3.10pm Audience Q&A

3.20-3.50pm Afternoon Break

Session 4: Innovation and disruption for farming group networks

There is increased focus on innovation and accelerated investment combined with significant interest from commercial fund managers looking for opportunities in the agriculture sector. In this session, hear about cutting-edge research and innovation that will influence future technologies for mixed farming enterprises and the industry.

- 4.00pm **Mat Regan** General Manager People, Technology & Innovation Organisation, CBH Group
4.20pm **Annie Brox** Managing Director, Origo
4.40pm **Nathan Cattle** Managing Director, Clear Grain Exchange
5.00pm Audience Q&A

Thursday Evening 17 August 2017

- 6.30pm **Origins Restaurant Cocktail Dinner, WA Grower Group Award & Network Showcase**
Evening address by Leadership WA, Chief Executive Officer Robyn McClellan
Announcement of the 2017 Grower Group of the Year Award, sponsored by the Grain Industry Association of WA



8.30pm - Close

Friday 18 August 2017

- 8.30am Registrations. Tea and Coffee on arrival.

Session 5: Co-ops and partnerships to maximise adoption

Across the ag-extension communities of Australasia there are contemporary collaborations leading the agri-industry sector in adoption. These range from profit partnerships directly linking industry and farmers in the pre & post competitive spaces, collaborations accessing specific markets to creation of "value" to support management decision making in the abundance of precision agriculture data. Hear about how others in the industry are collaborating across the sector to drive productivity.

- 9am **Richard Fitzgerald** Project Manager – Extension Design, Red Meat Profit Partnership (NZ)
9.20am **John Foss** Founder & Chairman, The Chia Co
9.40am **Chris Sounness** Chief Executive Officer, Birchip Cropping Group
10.00am Audience Q&A

10.10 – 10:40am Morning Break

Session 6: Changing the model but maintaining the integrity

How can the model of farming groups evolve? Change is inevitable but the integrity of peer to peer extension networks can be maintained. These networks are the closest line of sight for industry and investors to access farmers so how can these be optimised? This session shares options for agri-clusters with proposed and existing models of regionalised operating hubs.

- 10.50am **Ruth Klingner** Farmer & Board Member, Central West Farming Systems
11.10am **Dr Christine Kershaw** Chief Executive Officer, Stirlings to Coast Farmers
11.30am **Niki Curtis** Executive Officer, SEPWA & **Elisa Spengler** Executive Officer, RAIN
11.50am Audience Q&A

12 – 1:00pm Lunch Break

Session 7: Connecting the supply chain

Shortening the relationship between farmers and industry within the supply chain will lead to greater transparency and clearer market indicators for the industry. Hear from industry about the benefits of having a coordinated supply chain for industry, what this translates to for producers and is there a role for farming groups?

- 1.10pm **Professor Simon Cook** Western Australia's Premier's Fellow in Agriculture and Food, Curtin and Murdoch University & Food Agility CRC
1.30pm **Dale Miles** Supply Chain Manager, V&V Walsh
1.50pm **Larissa Taylor** Chief Executive Officer, Grain Industry Association of WA
2.10pm Audience Q&A

Session 8: Future directions

- 2.20pm The final session of the Summit discusses key learnings from the Summit with audience participation on next steps moving forward for farming group and ag-extension communities across Australia.

3.00-3.30pm

Summit close

SPEAKER PROFILES



Bridget Fitzgerald
Master of Ceremonies

Bridget Fitzgerald began presenting the WA Country Hour program on ABC Radio after working as a rural reporter in Gippsland, eastern Victoria and Bunbury in south west WA. Originally hailing from Melbourne, she began her career as a journalist with Fairfax and a producer with ABC Melbourne. But she later joined the ABC Rural team, looking for an adventure. She loves exploring rural and regional Australia, meeting wonderful people and telling their stories. She is passionate about rural journalism and believes it is vital as a means to connect Australians living in major cities with the third of their peers that live in the bush.



Hon Mia Davies MLA
Leader of The Nationals WA

Mia was first elected to represent the Agricultural Region at the 2008 State election. At the 2013 State election, Mia successfully contested the seat of Central Wheatbelt for The Nationals WA. In November 2013 Mia made history when she became the first female party member to be appointed Deputy Leader of The Nationals WA. A month later she was appointed to Cabinet as Minister for Water; Forestry and in late 2014 added the Sport and Recreation portfolio to her Ministerial responsibilities. She has a particular interest in education and health and has been working to improve these services throughout the Wheatbelt region. Prior to entering Parliament, Mia worked as a policy adviser for the Leader of the Parliamentary National Party, executive officer at the Chamber of Minerals and Energy and as a communications consultant. Mia holds a Bachelor of Marketing and the Media from Murdoch University. She is a member of the Northam Chamber of Commerce, Avon Tourism Board, Wheatbelt Business Network, Avon Community Development Foundation, Country Women's Association, Youth Advisory Council, Country Arts WA and the Royal Agricultural Society. Following the 2017 State election, Mia was elected Parliamentary Leader of The Nationals WA.



Richard Heath
General Manager Research, Australian Farm Institute

Richard grew up on a family farm on the Liverpool Plains in north west NSW and he managed the cropping operations of the farm for nearly two decades. Crops grown included wheat, barley, chickpeas, faba beans, canola, sorghum, sunflowers, mung beans and cotton. Richard has been an early adopter of new farming technologies and travelled on a Nuffield Scholarship in 2003 researching precision applications of fertiliser. He has had extensive off-farm consulting roles including working with the Grains Research and Development Corporation advising on research priorities for Australian grain growers. Richard is now the General Manager of Research for the Australian Farm Institute where he is responsible for carrying out research projects and compiling reports on a range of farm and agriculture-related issues. Previous to this role Richard held an academic position with the University of Sydney as Associate Professor of Agronomy and Farm Management responsible for the management of the Universities North West farms group. Richard also is a director of Nuffield Farming Scholars Australia.



Ruth Nettle
Associate Professor, University of Melbourne

Following an earlier career in agricultural extension, Ruth leads the Rural Innovation Research Group (RIRG) at the University of Melbourne in the Faculty of Veterinary and Agricultural Sciences. The group conducts research, development and teaching associated with the critical issues of innovation and change in agriculture and in rural communities and the management of human and natural resources. The work of the RIRG ensures people and social issues are viewed by industries and policy-makers as 'core business' to innovation through applying engaged research practices. Ruth supports agricultural industries and natural resource management agencies design, implement and evaluate research, development and extension programs and was the national research leader for *The People in Dairy* program (Dairy Australia). Ruth's research work into the changing role of public and private sector extension and farming networks has attracted interest from many primary industries, culminating in a current project within the Federal governments Rural R&D for Profit program regarding research into agricultural extension systems in Australia in collaboration with six rural industries and two state governments.



Jan Paul van Moort
Principal, ACIL Allen

Jan Paul leads ACIL Allen's agribusiness where he specialises in facilitating, developing and evaluating the strategies, collaborative structures and finance pools underpinning industry development. He has a deep understanding of both strategic and operational dimensions of primary industries, public policy, regional communities and associated challenges and opportunities based on 25 years' of consulting and public sector experience.

Jan Paul has been integrally involved in developing the case for change requiring support and partnerships with multiple industry and Government stakeholders from regional to national levels. Jan Paul works extensively with local group to develop structures linked to national systems. This includes scoping industry biosecurity funds, transferring irrigation schemes to community ownership, re-establishing cotton extension networks and creating a new dairy herd improvement service. He recently developed the successful Export Wine and Regional Support Package business case. Last year he reviewed the 263 agricultural levies operating across Australia to support industry RD&E and biosecurity. Jan Paul also developed the northern WA beef industry infrastructure plan and reviewed MLA. Jan Paul started his career as a development officer working on agricultural productivity, farm planning and natural resource management with farmer groups for the WA and NSW governments.



Peter Cooke
Director, Agknowledge

Peter has had a range of roles from farmer to agribusiness consultant and policy contributor for Federal and State governments. He began his career as a broadacre farmer in the Great Southern of WA in the 1970-80s, was the chief executive officer of the Kondinin Group in the 1980-90s, and since 1997 has been an agribusiness consultant and director of Agknowledge, a small company providing management advice to a range of agribusiness companies and farming enterprises across Australia. Peter is a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, and currently a board member of Landcorp and the Western Rock Lobster Council. He has completed director roles for Landgate, the Rural Adjustment and Finance Corporation of WA and the International Institute for Agrifood Security, was the chair of the WA FarmBis program 1998-2008, and currently is the independent chair of four family farm boards. In 2016, Peter chaired the Ministerial Review Panel for the Future Directions Report for the Department of Agriculture and Food on WA. In 2016, Agknowledge delivered agribusiness consultancy reports including the WA Wild Dog Action Plan, a Skills Analysis for the Grains Industry, a Risk Analysis for the Western Rock Lobster Industry, the agriculture background for the Broome Growth Plan and a business plan for Pardoo Beef Corporation.



Dr Steve Jefferies AM
Managing Director, Grains Research and Development Corporation

Steve has more than 32 years of experience working in the Australian grain industry predominantly in research management. From its inception in 2002 until June 2016, Steve was the CEO of Australian Grain Technologies (AGT), Australia's largest and market leading wheat breeding company. From 1996 to 2002 Steve was a wheat breeder, barley breeder and Senior Lecturer with the University of Adelaide. From 1984 to 1996 Steve held several positions in research management and Ministerial liaison in the State Government of South Australia. In July 2016 Steve commenced as Managing Director of the Grains Research and Development Corporation (GRDC).

Until taking his current position at the GRDC, Steve was also a non-executive Director of Birchip Cropping Group, non-executive Director of Barley Australia, Chairman of the Australian End Point Royalty Steering Committee, member of the Waite Institute Strategic Leadership Committee, and member of the Australian Wheat Quality Classification Council reporting to Wheat Quality Australia and responsible for managing the wheat quality class system in Australia.

In June of 2016 Steve was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia in the Queen's birthday honours list for significant services to primary industries.



Ralph Addis
A/Director General Primary Industries and Regional Development

Ralph brings a wealth of experience from the private, not-for-profit and government sectors to his new role as the Acting Director General of Primary Industries and Regional Development. He has a natural affinity for regional WA having grown up on a farm at Cranbrook and spent much of his working life in Kununurra, where he worked across business and farming.

Ralph was the founding chief executive of the Wunan Foundation, an Aboriginal development body set up in the East Kimberley in 1997, and the chairman of the Kimberley Development Commission for more than two years, contributing to progressive strategies in housing, education, employment, and welfare reform. In addition, Ralph has held a range of commercial, not-for-profit, and local government board positions.

Since November 2014, Ralph has been the Director General at the Department of Regional Development where he has driven an outcomes based approach with a focus on jobs and economic growth.

Ralph's immediate focus is delivering significant reform agendas to bring the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development in to operation from 1 July 2017. Ralph is a Chartered



Michael Crowley

General Manager - Producer Consultation and Adoption, Meat & Livestock Australia

Michael joined MLA in February 2009 to manage the Meat Standards Australia program. In 2012 he moved with his family to Brussels taking on the role of International Business Manager for EU and Russia with MLA. He returned from Brussels in 2015 as the Program Manager – Meat Standards Australia. Michael is now General Manager Producer Consultation and Adoption, with this business unit is responsible for MSA, Genetics, Adoption and the Regional Consultation Model. Prior to joining Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA), Michael ran his own business marketing livestock, running beef processing for branded beef exporters and he held his own meat export license. Michael has held a range of commercial positions in the meat industry including livestock procurement, processing plant quality assurance, supply chain management and processing plant management.

Michael was raised on a beef cattle property at Barraba in northern New South Wales, where his family run a stud and commercial beef cattle operation. He has a Bachelor of Rural Science through the University of New England and a Graduate Certificate in Business Administration from QUT.



Caroline Welsh

Chairperson, Birchip Cropping Group & Grain Farmer

Caroline is Chair of the Birchip Cropping Group (BCG), a farmer led research and extension organisation in the Wimmera Mallee region of Victoria.

BCG specializes in on-farm research trials, variety trials, risk management, precision agriculture, and crop forecasting and managing climate variability for cropping and livestock farmers.

Caroline is a partner in the family grain farm, a board member of GMMWater and has a degree in Agricultural Science and a Master of Marketing (Agribusiness).

She worked in the Irrigated Horticulture Section of the Department of Primary Industries (Vic) for 19 years in the areas of industry development, export marketing, extension, irrigation and climate.

Caroline received a Churchill Fellowship in 1998 to investigate markets and competitors of Australia's fresh stone fruit exports.



Sue Middleton

Sue with her husband Michael manage a diversified farm in WA Wheatbelt growing grains, oaten hay and pork. They have also developed Moora Citrus, a 210 ha citrus orchard in the new horticulture growing area near Dandaragan and through their businesses they employ over 30 fulltime staff.

As well as managing the finance, administration and human resources hub for the farming businesses, Sue manages a rural community development consultancy which provides facilitation, project development and planning services to regional communities and groups.

Sue has been actively involved in many leadership roles across industry, leadership, agriculture and rural community development. Current roles include board member of Landcorp and National Chair of the Landcare Advisory Committee.

Sue is passionate about the future of agriculture and the growth potential for the industry and the supply and value chains and has a clear vision for its development. She has 'skin in the game' with investments across a number of agricultural sectors, and has a deep commitment to the growth of agriculture in Western Australia. For her work, Sue has been awarded the Centenary Medal for Service to Regional Australia in 2002 and was awarded the 2010 RIRDC Rural Woman of the Year for Australia and Western Australia.



Cindy Cassidy

Chief Executive Officer, FarmLink

Cindy is currently chief executive officer of FarmLink, a not-for-profit farming systems group based in the Riverina in southern NSW. FarmLink undertakes RD&E activities to facilitate adoption of research outcomes on farm and in the farm businesses. The group has eight staff, 800+ members representing 300 farm businesses over 1.2million hectares of arable land.

FarmLink has an annual turnover of \$800k-\$1mill and it also manages the Temora Agricultural Innovation Centre with an annual turnover around \$500k.

Prior to FarmLink her career included roles as Executive Officer of Wheat Quality Australia and Industry Development and Technical Services Manager with AWBI (Australian Wheat Board).

Cindy has a Science degree in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology and a Master's Degree in Agriculture in Crop Breeding. She is also a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors (GAICD). In 2015 Cindy was named RIRDC NSW/ ACT Rural Woman of the Year and used the award, in part, to examine international approaches to agricultural extension with a view to understanding successful policy frameworks, investment strategies and practices which could inform activities implemented at a local level. Cindy currently sits on the NSW Primary Industry Ministerial Advisory Committee and the Graham Centre Industry Advisory Panel.



Liam O'Connell

General Manager - WA Open for Business, Primary Industries and Regional Development

Liam is passionate about supporting investment into Western Australian agribusinesses and food industries. With a background in agribusiness, Liam has more than 20 years' commercial, trade and investment experience, both locally and internationally.

Before heading up the WA Open for Business office, Liam spent five years as EY's Western Australian Agribusiness Leader, managing a range of transaction and advisory projects. For the five years prior to this, Liam set up and led KPMG Ireland's Commercial Due Diligence offering, which involved extensive experience in the agribusiness sector.

Liam has worked on a variety of European Commission and World Bank funded economic development projects and for 10 years worked with a consultancy linked to the Irish Trade Board and Shannon Development – a semi-state regional economic development agency – gaining extensive international trade and investment experience in emerging markets.

A member of various national agribusiness groups, Liam has published a series of trade/press articles and thought-leadership pieces in Australia and Ireland.

Liam is a Chartered Management Accountant and has business and economic qualifications from Harvard Business School and University College Cork (Ireland).



Brendan Nicholas

Esperance Manager, Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development

Brendan has 24 years' experience in agriculture and natural resource management in research and management positions. He commenced with the Department of Agriculture in 1993 conducting soil survey and land capability projects in the Esperance region and subsequently moved into environmental reporting for the Recovery Catchment Projects for the Western Australian Salinity Action Plan. Brendan also participated in developing the first South Coast Regional Initiative Strategy for SCRIPT, now known as South Coast NRM.

He has since changed roles to the Agriculture and Food Esperance District Manager and became more involved with grower groups as a local point of contact for between DAFWA and local grower groups such as SEPWA, RAIN and ASHEEP. As District Manager he is involved in incident/emergency management with local emergency manager committees (LEMAC) and involved in responses for the Esperance 2015 fires and the floods in 2017 around Ravensthorpe when grower groups featured as representatives of their members.

He continues to work with grower groups locally as well as an involvement in a number of grower group related DAFWA projects.



Annie Brox

Director, Origo

Annie has spent 28 Years in the Information and communication technology (ICT) and telecommunications industry both in Australia and overseas. She is the founder of Origo, a WA Ag Tech services company now providing ag-tech solutions in Queensland, Victoria and WA.

Annie grew up on a mixed farming, grains and dairy farm in Norway and her family have been in farming for generations in Germany as well as pre-communism Romania.

In the past she has held executive and managing roles in operations and business support systems in large Nordic Telco operations, analysis of business processes and implementation of value chains for large ICT Services and Fiber Optics to the Business Internet services, product management and development of one of Scandinavia's largest business-to-business communications services, founder and managing director for an internet security operations business acquired by an international ICT Company.

She was also program manager for the global United Nations environmental network and involved in the establishment and operations of a global satellite based Internet dedicated to environmental data and services.



Nathan Cattle

Managing Director, Clear Grain Exchange

Nathan is a WA country boy from a family farm at Lake King and has been working in the Australian grains industry since graduating from university in 2006.

Nathan holds a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture with first class honours, a Bachelor of Economics from the University of Western Australia, a diploma in Applied Finance from Kaplan and completed his RG146 compliance to provide Derivatives and Foreign Exchange advice with Financial Education Professionals. Nathan has worked in a number of roles through the supply chain from the farm gate to the end-user. He is now managing director of Clear Grain Exchange, a technology company that builds and operates markets to improve economic returns at the farm gate.

The exchange recently won the AgTech pitch night hosted by Start-up Victoria recognised as the leading start-up community in Australia. Clear Grain Exchange operates nationally and has traded more than 1.15 million tonne this harvest. The office is based in Melbourne and continues to innovate its technology and partner with organisations that can help it return value to the farm gate.



Richard Fitzgerald

Project Manager – Extension Design, Red Meat Profit Partnership

Richard currently works within the Red Meat Profit Partnership as the Extension Design - Project Lead. This is an industry and crown funded collaboration of ten organisations aimed at improving the profitability of the New Zealand red meat sector. He leads a nationwide pilot involving 75 farms which are testing different extension approaches, in order to establish a national extension system for the Red Meat Sector.

Formerly, he was the chief executive officer for New Zealand Young Farmers and the Primary Industry Capability Alliance, where he established a number of new capability development programs, such as AgriKids, TeenAg, Get Ahead, and the Rural Business Network. He holds a non-executive directors position on the electricity transmission network co-operative Electricity Ashburton, is a trustee of NZ Rural Games and a member of Beef and Lamb NZ Farmer Council. Recently Richard has become involved in an aid project in southern Malawi. Richard is also a NZ Nuffield Scholar and graduate from the Royal Agricultural University Institute of Agricultural Management Leadership program.

He is married to Ruth where they run an intensive 253ha, irrigated mixed cropping property near Methven on the Canterbury Plains of the South Island of NZ. They have three children Megan - 21, Rhys - 19 and Samantha - 15. They finish sheep and cattle, rear bobby calves and grow cereals and small seeds. Ruth runs the farm with sporadic assistance from Richard. In his spare time Richard is refurbishing a 1972 Mk4 Triumph Spitfire convertible.



Chris Sounness

Chief Executive Officer, Birchip Cropping Group

Chris has spent twenty years in development and extension to drive innovation and research on the farm. Chris grew up on a family farm in WA, however he has worked in the Wimmera Mallee region of Victoria since 1992, firstly in private breeding canola research and then a long stint with Victoria's agricultural department. During this time he worked with farmers and their advisers to increase uptake of agricultural research particularly through building farmers knowledge and skills in agronomy and seasonal climate risk. In 2014 he joined the Birchip Cropping Group (BCG) as chief executive officer. BCG is a not-for-profit agricultural research and extension organisation led by farmers from the Wimmera and Mallee regions of Victoria. Recognised both nationally and internationally by the industry as a credible independent and innovative organisation, BCG's research and communication activities provide evidence, support and tools for improving farm management practices and profitability. BCG has been integral in the adoption of new agronomic technologies and farming practices and continues to help farmers make decisions, develop risk management strategies, increase profits and operate sustainable farming operations.

Chris Sounness is on the provisional board of the High Performing Soils CRC. He is an Advisory Member of the Farming Together Program, the Federal Government's Agricultural Competitiveness White Paper on agricultural co-operatives. He is on the Mallee Sustainable Agricultural Strategy development supported by the Mallee CMA and on the steering committee of the Farming Smarter CRC.

GGA would like to thank our conference sponsors:



Register for the 2017 Growing Expectations, National Grower Group Summit at www.gga.org.au/growing-expectations-2017

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It is funded by the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development through Royalties for Regions and hosted by the Grain Industry Association of WA (GIWA).



For more information please contact the Grower Group Alliance (Western Australia) on (08) 6180 5759 or admin@gga.org.au