



**MEDIA RELEASE – FRIDAY 26 MAY 2017**

## **GROWER INNOVATION HIGHLIGHTED AT THE GGA INDUSTRY LINKAGES FORUM**

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The Grower Group Alliance (GGA) Industry Linkages Forum impressed a crowd of over 80 people at The Platform in Perth on Friday 19 May.

This first of its kind event brought together grower groups, researchers, government, agri-food industry partners and innovators in an effort to improve collaboration across agricultural sectors and throughout the supply chain.

The purpose of this new-to-industry event was to spotlight innovative and leading-edge projects happening in the sector, as well as grow the future networks and linkages required to help grower groups and their partners increase the value of agriculture in WA.

With guest speakers from groups, industry bodies and commercial business, the forum gave listeners insight into the trends, methods and opportunities available in the agri-food sector to create value driven and market leading initiatives.

Keynote speaker Cameron Syme of Limeburners Whisky (Great Southern Distilling Company) inspired the crowd with messages of hard work, focus and determination. He focused on the crucial element human resources in ensuring business success, and emphasised key success factors of keeping on top of strategy, making the most of opportunities, and most importantly building and maintaining relationships.

Other presentations showcased projects from the wine, honey, grains and livestock sectors, shining the spotlight on the importance of collaboration with partners, stakeholders and throughout the supply chain. Consumer trends and market development to meet the needs and desires of consumers are essential elements of any successful product – agri-food being no exception to the rule.

GGA Project Leader, Sarah Houston, said the forum emphasised the desire of WA growers and the grower group network to expand and grow as new opportunities for investment become available.

“As a first event of this type, we were overwhelmed by the interest from groups and industry in connecting with and forming linkages with new partners and players in the agri-food sector,” she said.

“Interest seems to continue to grow in this space for grower groups and partners alike, so after such a response we would hope to keep this as an annual event in the calendar.”

The GGA team are also well underway in planning this year’s Annual Forum which in 2017 will coincide with the National Grower Group Summit to be held in Perth.

“We are excited to be continuing the conversation and industry linkages on a national scale at a National Summit for grower groups this August right here in Perth,” said GGA Executive Officer, Annabelle Bushell.

“The event will focus on the dynamic interaction of investment, innovation and collaboration in the Australian agri-food sector and the emerging opportunities this presents for grower groups around Australia.”

Details of the GGA Annual Forum & National Grower Group Summit will be released at the end of June.

The Grower Group Alliance is a project hosted by the Grain Industry Association of WA (GIWA), funded through DAFWA by the Royalties for Regions program.

**For all media enquiries contact Sarah Houston, T: 0408 602 269, E: [shouston@gga.org.au](mailto:shouston@gga.org.au)**

**Photo captions:**

*Image One*

L-R: Kelly Pearce (GGA Chair), Sarah Houston (GGA Project Leader), Cameron Syme (Great Southern Distilling Company) and Annabelle Bushell (GGA Executive Officer).

*Image Two*

Cameron Syme of Great Southern Distilling Company presenting at the GGA Industry Linkages Forum at The Platform in Perth.