



MEDIA RELEASE – 16 November 2017

REPORT UNVEILS WA GROWER GROUP \$3B VALUE

GROWER groups have contributed \$3 billion dollars to the WA economy over the past 25 years, according to a study commissioned by the Grower Group Alliance (GGA) of WA.

The study report, which was officially launched today, is the first of its kind to determine the economic and social value that grower groups provide to farmer members, research & development corporations, sponsors and the wider WA agriculture industry.

As part of this ground-breaking study conducted by Agknowledge and Advanced Choice Economics, industry-wide surveys with grower group members and staff, research and development corporations, consultants, sponsors and non-member farmers were conducted to develop a clearer picture of the economic value grower groups the WA economy.

GGA strategic advisory group chairperson Kelly Manton-Pearce said the report provided a compelling case for the importance of grower groups as an economic driving force in regional WA.

“This study has highlighted the significant value that grower groups deliver in WA to their members and the agricultural industry but also the wider WA economy,” she said.

“On average over the past 25 years, grower groups have provided \$120 million per year of value to the WA economy through accelerating the adoption of new technologies and farm management practices.

“If you consider that grower groups in total invest approximately \$12m/per year in local research, development and extension activities, that represents a 10:1 cost benefit ratio.”

Dr Pearce said as well as the valuable economic benefit, grower groups played a vital role in building social capital and in many cases were a strong support network for rural communities.

“Grower groups are an incubation hub for the next leaders in agriculture, providing skills and opportunities for staff and members to learn skills in governance, finance, sponsorship and funding,” she said.

“As well as aiding farmers in adopting new practices or technology, grower groups are strong collaborators with the public and private sector to drive regional development, advocate for the industry and their communities and are a strong support network in times of adversity or emergencies,” she said.

Dr Pearce urged government and the wider agriculture industry to continue and strengthen their investment in the grower group network.

“Across the agriculture industry there is strong support for grower groups in WA as the groups play a crucial role and are a valued local conduit between farmers and the agricultural research and development sector,” she said.

“However, the need remains for the ongoing investment in the extension network by government, R&D companies and industry partners foster the adoption of new technologies and practices which in turn will help drive the profitability of WA farmers.”

The full report can be downloaded from the GGA website at www.gga.org.au.

KEY FINDINGS FROM ASSESSING THE VALUE OF GROWER GROUPS REPORT

- WA grower groups have generated a cumulative total economic value of \$3 billion dollars in direct and indirect benefits over a 25 year period, which equates to approximately \$120m/year for the WA economy.
- Grower groups in WA invest \$12million dollars (both monetary and in-kind contributions) in research, development, extension and adoption activities each year and provide a 10:1 cost benefit on this investment
- Across the agricultural RD&E sector there is strong support for grower groups in WA as the groups play a crucial role and are a vital part of the structure for primary industry in WA
- As well as providing a strong economic benefit to local and regional communities, grower groups play a vital role in building social capital and a support network which contributes to general well-being and mental health in rural communities.
- For members, grower groups provide significant value to members through peer-to-peer learning including sharing resources and collaborating to deliver local research projects that may assist to improve productivity and/or profitability.

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