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Media Release

9/12/2022

Phase two of GRDC's Harvest Losses project announced

For a second successive year, the Grains Research and Development Corporation (GRDC) has invested in an assessment of harvest losses in the Western region to understand the optimum balance between acceptable grain loss and operational efficiency to minimise cost and maximise profits.

Led by the Grower Group Alliance (GGA), the project will quantify the front and back harvest losses in nine cereal and grain legume crops across 65 cropping paddocks from all five port zones in WA.

Three local grower group partners, the LIEBE group, Corrigin Farm Improvement Group (CFIG) and Stirlings to Coast Farmers (SCF) will collaborate in the project, undertaking the critical on-ground measurements.

GRDC Grower Relations Manager – West, Jo Wheeler, said the continued investment would help determine where grain losses occur, calculate the amount and cost of lost grain to growers, and identify solutions to improve harvest efficiency.

“Findings from last year’s project confirmed that measuring the grain thrown out of their harvesters is one of the single biggest things growers can do to put more profit in their pockets at harvest,” Ms Wheeler said.

“This project will measure front losses including data on front type, set-up and any additions such as knife guards or air reels, and back losses with consideration to travel speed, rotor clearances, fan speed and sieve settings.

“Understanding these factors helps us to unpack the efficacy of existing solutions or settings for growers to reduce harvest their losses.”

Industry experts Ben White (Kondinin group) and Peter Broley (Primary Sales) are supplying on-site training for harvest loss measurements and providing feedback to growers on their harvest configurations.

Mr White will collate and analyse the data for the final harvest loss report.

The 2021/22 project report suggested harvest losses in WA were up to \$300M annually but varied significantly with crop type and where the losses occurred in the harvest setup.



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“This GRDC phase two investment will build on the 2021/22 data and demonstrate the benefit of measuring harvest losses to growers to mitigate their grain losses,” Ms Wheeler said.

“By conducting this study over a second year, we’re building a more robust data set, both as a benchmark for WA growers and also to assist with national modelling on harvest losses and efficiencies for all grain grower regions in Australia.”

GGA Project Manager Daniel Kidd said growers would be able to use these findings to deduce where these losses occur and be able to calculate acceptable losses irrespective of varying yield.

“The data generated from this project will allow growers to benchmark their grain losses and understand where these losses are likely to occur for their particular harvester setup and by crop type,” Mr Kidd said.

Beyond the 2022/23 harvest season, growers will have access to locally generated harvest loss data from two of the highest yielding seasons on record for WA.

“This investment also supports industry experts like Mr White and Mr Broley to train grower group staff in the measurement of harvest losses which gives them the skills needed to support their local growers to make improvements to their harvest setups going forward,” Mr Kidd said.

Results from the Harvest Losses Project across two sequential seasons will inform a GRDC sister project, the Regional Harvester Set-Up Workshops.

Research findings from for the 2022/23 harvest will be available to grain growers in the Western Region by June 2023.

-ENDS-

Contact

Daniel Kidd
Grower Group Alliance Project Manager
M 0428 925 663
E daniel.kidd@gga.org.au

Jo Wheeler
GRDC Grower Relations Manager – West
M 0438 292 167
E jo.wheeler@grdc.com.au



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GRDC Project Code: GGA2110-001SAX