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Media Release

Research collaboration welcomes grower insights

Grower Group Alliance has joined forces with the WA Agricultural Research Collaboration bringing producer insights, industry networks and funding to help drive research extension and adoption across the state.

Launched last July, the WA Agricultural Research Collaboration will build on scientific research efforts that underpin our State's agricultural industry success and high productivity by applying cutting-edge science to WA's unique challenges and opportunities.

GGA is among seven Collaboration participants including the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD), Australia's national science agency CSIRO, and WA universities: Curtin, Edith Cowan, Murdoch and The University of Western Australia.

Grower Group Alliance Chair Peter Roberts said their vision for a producer-led system of agricultural innovation, adoption and collaboration aligned with the WA Agricultural Research Collaboration's purpose and programs of work.

"WA needs a strong innovative research sector closely linked with growers, to meet the challenges of agriculture now and in the future," Mr Roberts said.

"The Grower Group Alliance (GGA) has a network of 88 organisations (over 4,500 farm businesses across the WA agriculture industry) and it is uniquely placed to strengthen the relationship between the research sector and producers, enhancing the opportunity for both public and private investment."

GGA has already been instrumental in providing access to leading grower groups and industry contacts for the development and co-design of Collaboration programs.

Its first three programs - Northern Agriculture, Grains Transformation and Climate Resilience – are focused on boosting agricultural productivity and profitability in a changing climate.

The remaining cross-cutting programs – Agricultural Technologies, Aboriginal Participation and Capacity Building and Extension – will support growth and long-term sustainability in WA's agricultural industry.

DPIRD representative on the Collaboration Steering Committee Cec McConnell said GGA would be an asset to the group and an important point of contact to ensure the Collaboration had support and representation from the industries it served.

“Involving industry in the co-design of research programs on industry challenges is essential to ensure research is relevant and to drive development, extension and adoption,” she said.

“Grower groups deliver research extension to support the on-farm decision making of their members and are seen as a valuable source of localised information.”

Participants are working together to finalise the Collaboration’s governance structure, industry engagement and employment of leadership and operational staff.

The initiative is backed by \$25 million in WA Government investment over three years and a \$10 million commitment from the Grains Research and Development Corporation.

The Collaboration will attract additional funding from collaborators and industry-based research and development corporations.

Photo caption: *WA Agricultural Research Collaboration Steering Committee representatives, Grower Group Alliance (GGA) Chair Peter Roberts and DPIRD Deputy Director General Primary Industries Cec McConnell, with Agriculture and Food Minister Jackie Jarvis, GGA Chief Executive Officer Rikki Foss and DPIRD Chief Primary Industries Scientist Ben Biddulph.*

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