



The Hon Katrina Hodgkinson MP

Minister for Primary Industries

Minister for Small Business

MEDIA RELEASE

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New crop app takes the guess work out of crop selection

In an Australian first, the Minister for Primary Industries Katrina Hodgkinson has today launched an innovative new smartphone app to help producers access the latest crop information in the paddock and choose the right crop variety to sow.

“The pilot app will take the guess work out of selecting the best suited variety and helps farmers improve yields and profitability,” Katrina Hodgkinson said.

“‘Variety Chooser’ allows producers to quickly and easily input a range of crop factors and get advice on the best suited crop variety for their own unique situation.

“In selecting the best suited variety, Variety Chooser brings together key considerations on regional, climatic and grain quality factors.

“Drawing on NSW Department of Primary Industries’ *Winter crop variety sowing guide*, Variety Chooser currently profiles some 214 crop varieties across a number of crop types, including barley, canola, chickpea, oats, triticale, and wheat.

“The smartphone app will work anywhere in the field and does not require mobile reception, allowing farmers to make quick, well informed, decisions on the run.”

Katrina Hodgkinson said selecting the best crop variety is critical and can make all the difference at harvest time.

“Getting the crop variety right has bottom line implications for producers and can impact yield and profitability, reduce disease impacts and help manage climatic factors,” she said.

Following a trial throughout 2011, Katrina Hodgkinson said the tool has the potential to be expanded nationally and incorporate additional crop varieties.

“We’re keen for farmers, agronomists, consultants and others to get out and test Variety Chooser in real life situations and give us feedback on how it can be further improved.”

“As we trial the new technology, the app will be initially available for iPhones and will be available to producers at no cost.

“The launch of Variety Chooser app builds on a successful online version which was developed by the NSW DPI using GRDC National Variety Trials data.

“With a growing number of farmers using smartphone technology, it’s an exciting new option and something that could have broader applications for NSW DPI’s advisory and other information services.”