



The Hon Katrina Hodgkinson MP Minister for Primary Industries

MEDIA RELEASE

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PULSES BRING LIFE TO FARMING SYSTEMS

Minister for Primary Industries, Katrina Hodgkinson, has visited the Yanco Agricultural Institute to launch a new guide for farmers and farm advisers, which highlights the benefits of integrating pulse crops in southern NSW farming systems.

“Using farmer case studies, *Pulses – putting life into farming systems*, outlines the valuable role pulses play as break crops and shows how they have been used in mixed farming systems,” Ms Hodgkinson said.

“Southern NSW farming systems are unique, with acidic soils under a mixed farming system, which includes pastures, livestock and cereals.

“Now that many farms have moved to intensive cropping, focussed on rotations of cereals, oilseeds and pulses, the pulse component, which can be profitable in its own right, has become increasingly important in managing the whole farming system.”

Pulses help get the balance right by breaking disease cycles, fixing nitrogen and reducing dependence on fertiliser – they offer weed management opportunities, conserve soil moisture and allow the efficient use of farm machinery and labour.

Ms Hodgkinson said the Department of Primary Industries (DPI) guide, which was last week welcomed by growers at a Grains Research and Development Corporation (GDRC) update in Wagga Wagga, was developed to support farmers in maximising long-term profitability.

The guide brings together case studies and stories from leading NSW growers, including:

- Gary and Heather Drew, Brocklesby;
- Digby and Denzil Graham, Coolamon;
- Nick Eckermann, Rankin Springs;
- Murray Scholz, Culcairn; and
- Neil Schirmer, Lockhart.

“DPI’s Wagga Wagga Agricultural Institute research team are working to improve and strengthen the reliability of the pulse cropping component and the flow-on benefits to the farming system,” Ms Hodgkinson said.

“Through Pulse Breeding Australia, DPI is developing superior, reliable pulse varieties supported by agronomy packages to maximise production and profit.

“The aim is to improve adaptation, seed quality, plant types and disease resistance of five winter pulses – field pea, narrow leafed and albus lupin, desi and kabuli chickpea, faba bean and lentil.”

This initiative delivers on Goal 2 of the NSW Agriculture Industry Action Plan launched last year to deliver a profitable and productive industry in NSW.

The strategic roadmap was developed between industry and the NSW Government and ensures the continued growth of the State's \$12 billion primary industries sector.