

## CHAIRMANS REPORT

The irrigation and Extension Committee has had another year of building our capacity to deliver on our **Vision** of 'Working together for profitable and sustainable irrigated agriculture.' The **Mission** 'to support and enhance research and extension for continual improvement of irrigated agriculture' will be achieved through the five **Goals**:

- Promote new and existing research for irrigated agricultural systems
- Provide a network for irrigated research, development and extension
- Influence research and extension policy
- Be a recognised information hub for irrigated agriculture
- Provide a forum for irrigators to share new and innovative research ideas.

We will hear in more detail about IREC activities in Iva Quarisa's EO report and research updated later in the agenda.

I would like to highlight that the areas IREC have made progress in have been determined largely by our Farmer 'members' and others attending our 'breakfast meetings'.

Key areas are

- Demonstration of current 'best practice' irrigation layouts
- Irrigation automation
- Nitrogen efficiency
- Use of animal manure for crop nutrition and soil amelioration
- Herbicide resistance/Spray Drift
- Crop rotations

Irrigators attendance at forum's, field days and workshops that IREC have run independently or in collaboration with the cotton and rice Industries and other grower groups, has been very good this year. The feedback we have received is extremely positive. Given our current outlook for the coming summer cropping season I urge you to take part in our IREC program this year. This will include our annual field day out at the field station and the Northern tour which will both be on again early in the new year. There will also be 'topical' pop up workshops and forums to address issues that invariably arise in difficult times.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our IREC committee for their input this year. We farewell Lindsay Golsby-Smith and thank her for her time on our committee. Her commitment, energy and skill will be sorely missed.

Being a not for profit organisation, IREC relies heavily on our sponsors and partners for assistance. I would like to make special mention of Murrumbidgee Irrigation, Coleambally Irrigation, Deakin University and Southern Cotton for their ongoing support.

The cotton crop at the field station has been supported with in-kind contributions from Incitec Pivot, Nufarm, Ag Guard, Sipcam, Codemo Machinery Services, Hutcheon & Pearce, Back Paddock, Elders and a big shout out to Emma Ayliffe from Summit Ag for her commitment to the field station.

Last but not least I would like to thank Iva and Hayley for their efforts throughout the year. Their commitment to making our events possible and covering the wide range of tasks is admirable.

I am looking forward to our Industry and Research updates and our panel discussion later in the program today.

**Robert Houghton**