

Articles from IREC Farmers' Newsletter – edition 207 – Autumn 2022, with a quick overview.

To be able to read the full article you must be a member of IREC. [JOIN NOW](#) and become a member.



THE OTHER SIDE OF THE COIN – SEASON 2022

Robert Houghton - Chairman IREC, Irrigator Gogelderie

QUICK TAKE

- One of the refreshing things about working in an industry that relies on water and other essential inputs is that nothing stays the same! Farmers are getting better at reducing their exposure to large swings in the availability and price of these inputs.



IREC UPDATE

Iva Quarisa – Executive Officer, IREC

QUICK TAKE

- Introducing Rachel Diversi – IREC's newest team member!
- COALA – newest IREC project.



IRRIGATORS FLOCK TO ANNUAL IREC FIELD DAY

Rachel Diversi – Project Officer, IREC

QUICK TAKE

- Egg and bacon rolls and hot coffee fuelled some 90 irrigators and farm advisors for a full morning's agenda at the annual IREC Field Day. Held on 19 January 2022, attendees were shown the full program of trials and demonstrations at the IREC Field Station at Whitton.



CHARTING THE HIGH SEAS OF INPUT COSTS

Andrew Whitelaw – Manager, Commodity Market Insights | Thomas Elder Markets, Melbourne

QUICK TAKE

- Fuel prices are at their highest since 2008 due to increasing demand and geopolitical tensions.
- Fertiliser prices are significantly higher, due to the energy-intensive manufacturing processes and the increasing cost of energy.
- Chemical prices, like fertiliser prices, are also high due to increased costs of production.
- This article outlines some the key issues and drivers of the price of fuel, fertiliser and chemicals paid by Australian farmers

To be able to read the full article you must be a member of IREC. Please go to [JOIN NOW](#) and become a member.



GETTING NITROGEN BUDGETS TO MATCH COTTON CROP REQUIREMENTS

Kieran O’Keeffe – Regional Extension Officer, CottonInfo, Southern NSW

QUICK TAKE

- Know your soil and conduct pre-season soil tests.
- Set a realistic yield target and do a simple nitrogen budget.
- Split applications of nitrogen show the highest gross margins.
- Over-supply of nitrogen after cut-out, leads to a lint yield penalty, delays maturity and reduces fibre quality.



GETTING NITROGEN RIGHT FOR IRRIGATED WHEAT

Lucy Kealey – Editor, IREC Farmers Newsletter

QUICK TAKE

- Just as Goldilocks wanted it, nitrogen management for irrigated wheat has to be just right. Too much increases the risk of lodging and disease; too little limits plant biomass and yield.
- The potential for good winter crops and the high price of fertiliser in 2022 make it timely to have a good plan for nitrogen management for irrigated wheat this season. Getting it ‘just right’ means working towards a target and understanding the variables of the season and the paddock you are working with.



IRRIGATED CANOLA: A BIG WINNER IN 2021 BUT WHAT ABOUT 2022

Don McCaffery – Technical Specialist (Pulse and Oilseeds) NSW Department of Primary Industries, Orange

QUICK TAKE

- In a near ideal season in 2021, many irrigated canola crops in the Murrumbidgee Valley exceeded 4 t/ha, and some were close to 5 t/ha.
- Every season is different when growing canola, so calculate your break-even yield each year.
- Record-high canola prices in 2022 can offset target yields that are less than yields of 2021.
- Nitrogen is the biggest factor in determining yield, assuming crop management is sound and there is good water availability.

To be able to read the full article you must be a member of IREC. Please go to [JOIN NOW](#) and become a member.



SHIFTING FROM DEPENDENCE ON FERTILISER NITROGEN TO BIOLOGICAL NITROGEN FIXATION

Phil Bowden and Paul McIntosh – Pulse Australia

QUICK TAKE

- With current extraordinarily high prices for fertiliser nitrogen, it is timely to revisit the role and potential of legumes in cropping systems.
- In addition to fertiliser being a costly input, there is need to consider the impact of poorly timed or excessive applications of nitrogen fertiliser and consider alternatives.
- A 2022 report calculates that the average legacy of pulse crops in the dryland farming system for subsequent canola crops is worth \$237/ha from both higher grain yields and savings in urea costs.
- In an irrigation cropping system, legume crops hold potential for both summer (mung beans and soybeans) and winter crops (faba bean, chickpeas and lentils).



NITROGEN CONTRIBUTION OF POULTRY LITTER

Lucy Kealey – Editor, IREC Farmers Newsletter

QUICK TAKE

- In times of high fertiliser prices, other nutrient sources are put under the microscope. Poultry litter is frequently used by crop producers of the Riverina. What is its value as a fertiliser?



GROWERS' ATTITUDE TOWARDS AREA-WIDE MANAGEMENT OF WEEDS IN THE RIVERINA

Silja Schrader –Researcher, University of Wollongong

Gina Hawkes –Researcher, University of Wollongong

Sonia Graham –Senior Researcher, University of Wollongong

QUICK TAKE

- University of Wollongong researchers continue to study weed management in the Riverina, Sunraysia and Darling Downs regions.
- Riverina growers were most concerned about the financial cost of weed management and the presence of weeds on their land, including those with herbicide resistance.
- Growers from the Riverina largely agreed that benefits can come from working together on weeds, such as increased awareness of weeds and herbicide resistance.
- Common concerns among Riverina growers about area-wide management include time spent in meetings, limited options for organic growers and being restricted to specific herbicides.

To be able to read the full article you must be a member of IREC. Please go to [JOIN NOW](#) and become a member.



STOP OFF-TARGET SPRAYING RIVERINA – A GRASSROOTS APPROACH ACROSS INDUSTRIES

Annette McCaffery – Coordinator, Stop Off-target Spraying NSW

QUICK TAKE

- Spray drift damage is an issue across all agricultural industries – and never more so than in a cropping season like 2022, with large areas of crops being sown.
- Stop Off-Target Spraying NSW (SOS NSW) is a grassroots program initiated by a group of farmers in the Macquarie Valley, in the summer of 2017–18, who were concerned about the damage being done by chemicals not compatible with sensitive crops.
- The SOS Riverina Valley branch was established as a direct result of the issue of off-target spraying being raised at IREC breakfast meetings in 2019. A committee was established from a CRDC-funded forum and has been active since.

To be able to read the full article you must be a member of IREC. Please go to [JOIN NOW](#) and become a member.