



CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Matt Toscan – Chair IREC and Irrigator

QUICK TAKE

- Farmers' Newsletter turns 80 in 2024!
- Promising cotton crop at IREC Field Station
- IREC working on a number of projects - RiskWi\$e, Flexible Farming Systems and Cool Soil Initiative 2.0



IREC UPDATE

Iva Quarisa – Executive Officer, IREC

QUICK TAKE

- IREC attends 100 years of Kellogg's celebration in Sydney
- New project – Carbon Farming Project. Focus will be to enhance carbon literacy among farmers & industry professionals through delivery of workshops.
- Save the date – IREC Irrigation Update in Griffith Thursday 4 July!



SHOWCASING THE BEST IN OUR FIELDS

Monica Armanini and Sarah McCaskie –Engagement Manager and Project Officer, IREC

QUICK TAKE

- The 2024 IREC Field Day showcased the farms of the Rice Grower of the Year and the Southern Valleys Cotton Grower of the Year.
- IREC extends sincere gratitude to the Andreazza and Bellato families for opening their farms to us and sharing their knowledge and experiences.
- IREC also thanks sponsors, Omnia Nutriology, Padman Group and INCYT AgTech, for their generous support, which helped make this event possible.
- Overall, the IREC Field Day was a resounding success, bringing together farmers, industry experts and sponsors to celebrate and learn from the best in the field

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THE COOL SOIL INITIATIVE: TURNING 6 AND GROWING STRONG

Fiona McCredie, Alice Melland and Cassandra Scheffe – Cool Soil Initiative

QUICK TAKE

- Now 6 years old, the Cool Soil Initiative works with farmers to improve soil health and environmental outcomes, as well as provide impact reports on greenhouse gas emissions associated with crop production.
- The program is a collaboration between farmers and food companies to ensure emissions reporting from farms through the supply chain is scientifically credible and recognised in domestic and global markets.
- IREC leads the program in the southern irrigation areas, working with irrigators who grow maize, canola and wheat.



NEW VARIETIES AND TECHNOLOGY FOR COTTON GROWERS

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

QUICK TAKE

- A new technology trait in cotton provides growers with a new tool for managing difficult weeds such as fleabane and ryegrass.
- The new XtendFlex® cotton was evaluated in 6 variety trials in southern NSW in the 2023–24 season.
- Spray applicator training will be a requirement for access to varieties with the new trait



CREATING A FOCUS FOR SHARING KNOWLEDGE

Mark Groat and Virginia Porcile – Grower Services and Extension Manager, SunRice and Field Extension Officer, SunRice

QUICK TAKE

- Rice Extension established 4 Focus Sites in 2023, one in each of the Riverina irrigation areas.
- The Focus Sites are used to demonstrate, monitor and evaluate the impact of combined applied research technologies and tools on commercial farming systems. These tools help to identify and address constraints, as well as monitor crops, enabling timely and informed decisions to maximise crop yield, and nutrient and water use efficiency.
- Through regular monitoring, data collection, research insights and personal experiences, local farmers and advisors come together to discuss options when making key decisions about crop management. This peer learning process promotes knowledge sharing within the rice community.

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RESEARCH ROUND-UP LITTLE CRITTERS TO KEEP ON THE RADAR

Lucy Kealey – Freelance Writer

QUICK TAKE

- Redlegged earth mites are not a frequent problem in the irrigated cropping areas of southern NSW but they are a common problem in neighbouring regions.
- Recent research confirms rising resistance of the mite to one or more commonly used insecticides, in South Australia and Victoria.
- Farmers are encouraged to use prediction tools, developed from regionally based research, to determine the risk of infestation and plan management programs.
- A critical factor of frequent or infrequent pest management is to follow integrated pest management protocols.

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