



Conservation Agriculture & No-Till Farming Association Inc.

The Bulletin

January 2010

## From the Chair



Anne Williams

Happy New Year and welcome to another e-Bulletin from CANFA. I hope you had a very happy Christmas and New Year and that you managed to get under some of the beautiful rain!

### Frogs

I have read that frogs, because of their thin porous skins, are a very good indicator of environmental health. Well, if the number of tadpoles in the the puddles in our district since the New Year floods is any indication, we must be living in an extremely healthy environment! We now have little brown and green frogs everywhere, which is great to see. Another observation during the recent floods was the beautiful, clear water coming off the no-till paddocks. Congratulations to no-till farmers for keeping our environment healthy and clean!

### Northern NSW and Central Qld Farm Tour

We are still in the planning stages of the August bus trip and should have the itinerary later this week to help those who have expressed an interest - keep an eye on the website for the finalised itinerary. We are hoping to visit many of the great farmers up that way who will challenge and inspire us. Extra bits will include a sunset river cruise at Longreach, an overnight stay at the wilderness centre in Carnarvon Gorge, farm stays at Brewarrina and Gladstone and a free day at Hervey Bay. If you would like more information or to add your name to the list of possible travellers, please let me know at [magomadine@esat.net.au](mailto:magomadine@esat.net.au) or on (02) 6825 6212.

All the best for the coming cropping season and I hope to see you all at the 2010 NSW Conservation Agriculture Field Day at Trangie Agricultural Research Centre on February 18. It is looking to be another great event.

**Anne Williams - 02 6825 6212**

**0428 177 225**

[magomadine@esat.net.au](mailto:magomadine@esat.net.au)

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## From the Executive Officer



Neville Gould

What a great reminder over Christmas and New Year of what a big rain can do. It not only sounds good on the roof for a change, but the impact looks good too with the fantastic response of the country and hopefully it will set us up for a good year in 2010.

We have a big year planned, starting with the annual Conservation Agriculture Field Day on February 18, many workshops, bus tours, trials and demonstrations and the prospect of our annual Conference being held in southern NSW for the first time ever later this year.

### Young Conservation Farmer Prize

We are indeed fortunate to be given the opportunity again to give away a GPS guidance unit. This unit, a Raven Cruiser donated by [gps-Ag](#), was originally won by John and Robyn Ive at our 2009

Conference. John has decided that he can't effectively use the unit on his property and has graciously decided to donate it back to CANFA. At John's request, we are seeking entries from young (under 35 year-olds) conservation farmers to provide details of their farming operations and their need and proposed uses for such a unit. Application forms will be posted on our [website](#) and in *The Land* newspaper with the winner being announced at the Trangie Agricultural Field Day. I hope to see you there!

#### **Top 40 innovations in conservation farming**

As a subscriber to the USA-based *No-Till Farmer* I often come across articles which catch my eye and that might prove interesting to CANFA members. Have a look at the latest one from *No-Till Farmer* editor, Frank Lessiter, titled [Top 40 Ag Countdown...40 Years of Change](#). I'd be interested to know what your thoughts are on it.

**Neville Gould, CANFA EO**

**0427 452 488**

[canfa@bigpond.com](mailto:canfa@bigpond.com)

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## News

### **[Active demos at Conservation Agriculture Field Day](#)**

Arrangements for the 2010 NSW Conservation Agriculture Field Day at Trangie Agricultural Research Centre on February 18 are well underway with a very good number of exhibitors already booked in.

Good rain in recent weeks has enabled the field day committee to establish a new active demonstration area, including canola and millet stubble (to simulate the heavy stubble loads that farmers can encounter during sowing), lime (to provide an indication of the level of incorporation of soil applied pre-emergent herbicides), and stock (to see how well equipment handles soil compacted by stock movement).

Active and static sites, with a full range of machinery and conservation farming components will be on exhibition.

Gates open at 8.30am, entry is \$5 (members of CANFA, Farmlink and CWFS), \$15 (non-members) and free for students. Demonstrations start at 9.30am.

(Download the latest [media release](#))

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## Events

### **[2010 NSW Conservation Agriculture Field Day](#)**

18 February, 2010

Trangie Agricultural Research Centre

See the CANFA website for [more information](#) and to download a [flier](#) with directions to the site.

**Contact Neville Gould on (02) 6845 1044 or 0427 452 488**

### **[Women Winning in Agriculture](#)**

NSW Women in Agriculture Country Conversations 2010

15th Annual Conference & Symposium

26 - 28 March, 2010

Wagga Wagga

**Contact Danielle Anderson, Secretary, NSW Women in Agriculture on 0428 417 548 or**

[danielleanderson@bordnet.com.au](mailto:danielleanderson@bordnet.com.au)

### **Serafin No-till Conservation Information Night and Broadacre Field Day**

11-12 February 2010

[www.serafinmachinery.com.au](http://www.serafinmachinery.com.au)

### **Viterra 12th Annual SANTFA No-Till Conference**

*What Lies Beneath*

26 February 2010

[www.santfa.com.au](http://www.santfa.com.au)

### **GRDC Updates**

16-17 February, CSU Wagga Wagga

24 February, Dubbo RSL Club

[www.grdc.com.au/director/events/researchupdates/](http://www.grdc.com.au/director/events/researchupdates/)

### **WANTFA 2010 Conference & Annual Dinner**

*Machinery matters - beyond knife points*

[www.wantfa.com.au](http://www.wantfa.com.au)

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## **Projects**

### **New projects**

We have been successful with two recent proposals. Whilst only small projects, they will be particularly helpful with progressing a number of our major activities.

#### **Community Action Grant – Educating farmers in conservation agriculture**

We have received funding through the Australian Government's Caring for our Country Initiative to assist with the Conservation Agriculture Field Days at Trangie in 2010 and Lockhart in 2011. In addition, the projects allows for funding of bus tours to enable remotely-located farmers to travel and attend the field days as well as visit leading farmers along the way.

#### **Landcare Australia and Woolworths Ltd**

We have received funding through the Woolworths Sustainable Agriculture grants program to assist us in building a demonstration disc planter unit. This planter will be fitted with a range of commercial disc openers units which will enable us to plant a range of crops in a range of situations and study the results. The planter unit will hopefully be very portable and so we are keen to see it used across our membership area in Central and Southern NSW. We are already collaborating with a number of other groups, namely Temora Agricultural Bureau, Mid-Macquarie Landcare and Little River Landcare on the project but would welcome other groups being involved in demonstrating the technology and studying the results. It is hoped to launch the planter unit at the Conservation Agriculture Field Day at Trangie.

### **On-going Projects**

#### **Caring for Our Country project**

We will be continuing our program of workshops throughout the next 6 months, starting in March. Workshops will again include "Why No-Till?" precision agriculture, soil health, controlled traffic and other important topics. The CANFA [website](#) will display the time and location details shortly.

#### **GRDC Cover Cropping and Stubble Management project**

The two aspects of this project are entering their final phases. Matt McNee is due to submit his PhD thesis later this year and the cover crop experimental area has been recently planted to cowpeas and French white millet. Stubble management treatments will soon be employed on existing barley stubble in readiness for a canola crop.

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## Research trials & demonstrations

### 2009 Results

Results from the research trials and demonstrations at Wellington Research Services Centre and Cadonia will soon be posted on the website for members to assess for themselves.

Whilst it was a difficult year and some results were expectedly poor, others were very satisfying and showed where appropriate timing of planting and attention to detail can produce unexpectedly good results.

### 2010 trials & demonstrations

The CANFA Cropping Committee met recently and has a substantial program planned for 2010, with a range of businesses (AgNVet, Agrichem, AWB Seeds, D&J Rural, Elders, gps-Ag, Pioneer Seeds and Syngenta) and organisations (I&I NSW, Grain Orana Alliance) willing to sponsor and/or collaborate on these activities. Other businesses are also looking to add value to this program.

Chesterfield Australia has again agreed to come on board with a tractor for this year's program which will be a huge bonus in establishing our controlled traffic program at Wellington.

Final details on the cropping and demonstration program have yet to be decided but will soon be posted on our website.

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## Communications

It is the start of another year of exciting events and activities in the world of conservation agriculture and there will be plenty of things to let you know about as the year progresses. Make sure you keep an eye on the [website](#) for updates in between e-Bulletins and newsletters. At this stage you should be checking for e-Bulletins in your email inbox in late February, early May, July and September, with hard copy newsletters scheduled for March and November. Back issues are available on the website on the [Publications](#) page.

### Let us know what's happening in your area

If you know of something happening in your local area that you think would be an interesting or inspiring story for other farmers and would like to share it with fellow CANFA members or gain some media interest, let us know by contacting Kim Goldsmith on (02) 6887 2288 or at [kim\\_ochre@bigpond.com](mailto:kim_ochre@bigpond.com).

### Case studies

After delaying the start of our case study project late last year, we're now ready to get started on talking to conservation farmers who are doing good things and are happy to share how they got started, what they're doing now and planning to do in future. We'll be starting interviews on February 18 at the Trangie field day. If you know of someone who would make an interesting case study - let us know. These stories will be available on the website in the next couple of months. We'll also showcase them in future e-Bulletins.

### Kim Goldsmith, Ochre Communications

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