

Community Landcare Grants

Final Report



CARING
FOR
OUR
COUNTRY

Project ID	CLG13-434	
Grantee Name	Eyre Peninsula Agricultural Research Foundation Inc	
Project Name	Improving management practices of Rhizoctonia 'bare-patch' on upper EP soils	
Project Description	<p>One of the main factors limiting productivity and therefore sustainability of cropping on upper Eyre Peninsula is the incidence of the soil borne disease, Rhizoctonia 'bare-patch'. Research has demonstrated that a number of practices can significantly reduce the impact of the disease, but this has been difficult to demonstrate on a broad acre scale due to lack of technical support to farmers who are dealing with the issue. This project provided technical support to establish five large scale best practice demonstration sites across the region that supported and promoted the wide spread adoption of practices that will improve sustainable farming in the region. The demonstrations were integrated with a comprehensive communications and extension program.</p>	
Project completion date: 30 Dec 2014	Project final report due date: 30 March 2015	
Program Outcomes: (as per Program Logic)		
Outcome 1		
Improved skills and knowledge to enhance understanding of the issue and increase confidence to implement best practice.		
Immediate Project Activities : (include specific activities as per Deed and Program Logic)		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Activity 1 Selection of five large scale demonstration sites across the region in consultation with farm advisors. 2. Activity 2 Establishment of five demonstration sites across the region and monitoring with assistance of a field technician. 3. Activity 3 Current best farming practices for disease management highlighted and discussed at pre-seeding meetings. 4. Activity 4 Spring field day conducted, field assessments completed on each of the five demonstration sites 5. Activity 5 Communications and extension activities completed including three farm case studies. 		

A) Achievements:

- 5 paddock demonstration sites were established across different regions of upper EP (Buckleboo, Lock, Cleve, Piednippie, Mudamuckla). Fungicide products within broad acre paddocks were applied using fluids systems and different nutrient mixes and compared against an untreated control. Sites were monitored and measured throughout the season.
- Latest information and research on Rhizoctonia management presented at farmer meetings (March 2014 and 2015). These meetings were attended by 234 farmers and 20 industry representatives at 13 locations across upper EP in 2014.
- Results of demonstration sites published in EP Farming Systems Summary 2014 (article titled 'Farmer fungicide demonstration strips').
- Results of the demonstration sites published and distributed to all farmers on the EP via EP Farming Systems Summary 2014 (1100 copies), as well as agronomists, researchers and agricultural representatives.
- Case studies prepared for publication and distribution to farmers and via website www.eparf.com.au

If outcomes were unable to be met, please supply details.

N/A

B) Please complete the project outcomes measures listed below that were addressed in your contract as well to the Program Logic. Please enter the quantities achieved and also record any additional outcomes.

Program Outcomes	Measure (eg Hectares, No of landholders)	
Improved skills and knowledge	>234	75 land managers

C) Monitoring and Evaluation

Please attach and provide evidence (data/information) needed to demonstrate activity completion and/or achievement of outcomes as per the Program Logic. For example; data collection of pasture quantity, photopoints, records of attendance, published reports etc.

Type of evidence as per program logic

13 Eyre Peninsula Farming Systems meetings were attended by 234 farmers and 20 industry representatives (attendance lists available upon request).

- Penong/Charra/Goode/Ceduna - 32 growers, 4 reps
- Wirrulla/Mudamuckla - 18 growers, 1 rep
- Port Kenny - 10 growers, 2 reps
- Elliston - 12 growers, 2 reps
- Lock - 21 growers
- Streaky Bay/Piednippie - 8 growers, 2 reps
- Minnipa - 19 growers
- Crossville/Cleve - 30 growers, 6 reps
- Buckleboo - 14 growers
- Wudinna/Kyancutta/Warrambo - 20 growers, 1 rep
- Franklin Harbour/Cowell - 24 growers
- Darke Peake/Tuckey - 13 growers, 1 rep
- Wharminda - 13 growers, 1 rep

Rhizoctonia presentations at farmer meetings including strategies for Rhizoctonia management (Powerpoint presented to farmers attached in Appendix 1 and 2).

Root washing and trays with infected roots as a discussion tool at Ag Bureau Sticky Beak days with a total of 182 farmers.

- Wirrulla - 22 growers, 6 rep
- Lock - 20 growers, 2 rep
- Cleve - 35 growers, 18 rep (some Central Eyre farmers also attended this day).
- Rudall - 16 growers, 7 rep
- Buckleboo- 40 growers, 9 rep
- Streaky Bay - 27 growers, 10 rep
- Central Eyre - 8 growers
- Mount Cooper – 14 growers, 18 rep

Results of demonstration sites written up and published in Eyre Peninsula Farming Systems Summary 2014. This book is distributed to 1100 farmers, advisors, researchers and agricultural representatives. (Article attached in Appendix 3).

Case studies written and will finalised for publication and distribution to farmers and via website www.eparf.com.au.

Were other organisations involved in the project? If yes, please provide details	No
Were there any Indigenous groups / organisation participation? If yes, please provide details	No

E) Financial Information

Please complete the attached Financial Report for your project.

If your project was supported by other sources please tell us about them. This could be an estimate of the hours of labour contributed by volunteers, materials donated by a business, a consultant who donated their time etc.

F) Did you experience any problems during the delivery of your project?

No

(Please let us know if you came across any hurdles during your project. This can include any challenges you have identified with the Community Action Grants process.)

The 2014 season with early summer and good autumn rains allowed adequate soil moisture and early seeding, providing exceptional conditions for early crop growth. Plants were not limited by moisture and the increased availability of nutrition enabled greater root growth. This allowed the plants to grow through the impact of Rhizoctonia root infection as soil moisture and nutrition were not as limiting as in other seasons.

G) Your Project as a Case Study for Community Landcare Grants

Your project was an important part of the Community Landcare Grants. We would appreciate you telling the story of the project which can be shared with the wider community through the NRM website (around 1 page).

1. Please describe "what was the problem/issue for this project and how did you identify the issue?" *If you have a photograph of the area prior to work beginning please include.*

One of the main factors limiting productivity and therefore sustainability of cropping on upper Eyre Peninsula is the incidence of the soil borne disease, Rhizoctonia 'bare-patch'. Over the last decade understanding of this difficult to manage disease has increased substantially with research demonstrating that a number of practices can significantly reduce the impact of the disease. However this has been difficult to demonstrate on a broad acre scale due to lack of technical support to farmers who are dealing with the issue.



Aerial photos of Rhizoctonia damage in paddocks taken earlier in 2014 growing season at Penong by Brian Smith.

2. Please describe what you did – e.g. work/workshops/trials. *If you have a photograph of the beginning of the work please include here.*

This project provided technical support to establish five large scale best practice demonstration sites across the region that supported and promoted the wide spread adoption of practices that will improve sustainable farming in the region.

At five farmer demonstration sites, farmer co-operators applied fungicide products within broad-acre paddocks using fluids systems and different nutrient mixes. Within each of the treated areas of the paddock and an untreated control treatment, four sampling lines were established to measure and collect data. Plant establishment, dry matter, rhizoctonia seminal and crown root scores were measured.



Buckleboo field demonstration site (29 May 2014) and Piedhippie (27 August 2014).



Farmer Sticky Beak Days, Rudall (Cleve site) and Streaky Bay, October 2014.

3. How did you measure/record your project activities?

Project activities were measured and recorded per site both as a discrete trial and also as an extension tool. At local field days and farmer meetings progressive results and progress reports of the demonstration sites were provided. General information regarding rhizoctonia was also given with root washing and infected roots on display to encourage discussion. Attendance for these events was recorded to indicate the number of farmers exposed to the rhizoctonia extension messages.

4. What do you think was the most significant outcome of your project?

The most significant outcome of this project has been the establishment of the 5 broad-acre demonstration sites. This has enabled a regional focus and discussion tool at farmer meetings and field days. In addition, case studies have been developed regarding the use of fluids (and fungicides) which will be published and available for farmers who may be considering changing systems.

5. Please describe any unexpected outcomes of the project

If available, please include any photographs that show what you have achieved.

H) How can this program be improved?

Do you have any comments or feedback on the delivery of the CLG Program?