



PA on the up

Kirstie Murphy, SPAA Executive Officer

The SPAA Expos and Forums provide a great place to exchange ideas on PA. Chris Slade (L), Rinex and Lamerogrian grower Gary Flohr.

If the demand for copies of the SPAA publication 'PA in Practice' is anything to go by, the interest in adopting PA is increasing dramatically. As Malcolm Sargent noted at the 2008 AGM, the dramatic changes in input and commodity prices are in part fuelling this interest. However, improved knowledge and understanding of PA, technological developments and more accessible pricing are all likely to be playing a part.

In this issue of Precision Ag News we report on some of the papers that were presented at the SPAA Crop Scanning Forum and AGM, and at the 12th Annual Symposium on PA Research and Application in Australasia, held in Sydney in October 2008. If you missed attending either of these events, papers and presentations can be found on the web. For the SPAA Crop Scanning Forum visit www.spaa.com.au and for the Sydney symposium visit the Australian Centre for Precision Agriculture's website at www.usyd.edu.au/su/agric/acpa.

For the first time data generated by a SPAA research project supported

by the SA Grains Industry Trust was presented at the International Conference on Precision Agriculture, held in Denver, USA, in July 2008. The Grains Research and Development Corporation supported two SPAA grower members to attend the conference. In addition to presenting the paper, SPAA committee members Malcolm Sargent and Ashley Wakefield met with farmers, agronomists and researchers using and developing PA technologies in the USA (see page 6).

AGM 2008

At the 2008 AGM five long-standing committee members retired, Brian Tiller, Peter Cousins, Allan Mayfield, Matthew McCallum and Richard Turner. Our appreciation is extended to all of them, as they have been instrumental in steering the direction of SPAA and increasing the adoption of PA. Mark Branson was elected as SPAA's new President, replacing Malcolm Sargent who has done a great job leading SPAA for the past two years. You can learn about how Mark is using PA and his hopes for the industry's future, in the article on page 8. A big thankyou must go to

Pam Pilkington for her past efforts. She has decided not to continue as the Administration Officer, but is instead taking the opportunity to spend more time with her growing family. Three new members have joined the committee: viticulturist Hans Loder, agronomist Sam Trengove and grain grower Grant Pontifex. We look forward to their involvement (Table 1).



Ivan Di Federico, Topcon with the Crop Spec™ sensor that will be launched in 2009.

MGA Crop Insurance - members offer



WE WORK FOR YOU!

SPAA has negotiated a crop insurance package on behalf of its members with MGA Insurance Brokers Pty Ltd. The major feature of this policy for SPAA members is the After Harvest Declaration where the crop insurance premiums are based on the actual crop yield at harvest, as recorded by a yield monitor. A traditional pre-harvest final estimate is also available upon request.

Other benefits of this offer include:

- An agreed value per tonne
- Seed and grain in transit
- Seed and grain in storage
- Chemical overspray
- Straying livestock

This crop insurance package offers SPAA members the opportunity to: access competitive insurance rates, have their premiums based on actual yields and support SPAA.

For more information contact Chris Noonan at MGA Insurance Brokers on 08 8632 5588 or Chris.Noonan@mga.com.



Ben Mitchel (L), Taylors Wine and Colin Booth, Fairport.

Electronic communications

I want to make sure that SPAA has your correct email address, as during the coming year more use will be made of electronic communications to keep you up-to-date with the latest events and developments in PA. If you have changed your email address recently or are unsure if it is in the database please let SPAA know by emailing info@spaa.com.au.

Precision Ag News will now be published three times per year, and continue to feature a broad range of articles about PA research and adoption.

2009 European Conference on Precision Ag - 6 to 8 July 2009

A joint international conference that brings together the European

Conference on Precision Agriculture, the European Conference on Precision Livestock Farming and the European Federation for Information Technology in Agriculture, Food and the Environment will be held at the campus site in Wageningen University, Netherlands, in July 2009. There will also be some pre- and post conference activities. One of them will be the international Field Robot Event. <http://www.jiac2009.nl/Organization/Program/tabid/387/Default.aspx>

If you are interested in attending please let me know as SPAA will consider applying to GRDC for a travel grant.

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SPAA Executive Officer.
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Table 1: SPAA Committee and Officers 2008/09.

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|---------------------------------|---|
| President | Mark Branson - Grain Grower, Stockport SA markb@spaa.com.au 0417 832 776 |
| Vice President | Randall Wilksch - Grain Grower, Yeelanna SA |
| Treasurer | Ed Cay - Technician gps-Ag, Adelaide SA |
| Immediate Past President | Malcolm Sargent - Grain Grower, Crystal Brook SA |
| Committee Members | |
| Sam Trengove | Agricultural Consultant, Clare SA |
| Rob Bramley | Principal Research Scientist - CSIRO, Adelaide SA |
| John Heap | Senior Research Scientist - SARDI, Adelaide SA |
| Hans Loder | Viticulturist, Wingara Wine Group, Coonawarra SA |
| Colin Hinze | Viticulturist, Taylors Wines, Auburn SA |
| Grant Pontifex | Grain Grower, Kadina SA |
| Ashley Wakefield | Grain Grower, Urania SA |
| Leighton Wilksch | Product Development Agronomist, Landmark, Paskeville SA |