

Media Release

Friday, November 16, 2007

A new force is emerging in the grains industry as the Grains Research Foundation Ltd (GRFL) sets out to deliver real outcomes for growers in the northern grains region of eastern Australia.

GRFL is a not-for-profit incorporated company that was established at the request of the grains industry to replace the Grain Research Foundation (GRF).

The assets and liabilities of the GRF, including the four Research Advisory Committees (RACs), were transferred to the new body in January 2007 with the support of Queensland Primary Industries Minister Tim Mulherin.

GRFL members will meet for an inaugural Annual General Meeting (AGM) in Toowoomba on November 26, 2007.

GRFL Chairman and Goondiwindi district grain grower, Damien Scanlan said the Board was planning to use the AGM to kickstart some healthy debate about research, development and extension (RDE) in the grains industry.

“Our aim is to achieve profitable and sustainable grain production and we will be actively encouraging research, development and extension investments to help achieve this,” he said.

“We are very optimistic about the future of the grains industry but there are challenges ahead. We want to engage as many grain growers as possible to help meet these challenges head on.”

The GRFL Board has recently completed a review of the northern grains industry and developed a Strategic Plan to 2010 for the region.

The Plan sets out four key objectives and identifies the strategies that need to be implemented to achieve the following objectives;

1. Facilitate a strategic approach to research development and extension (RDE)
2. Build the capacity of grain growers and service providers
3. Provide strong linkages between grain growers and service providers
4. Ensure that sound commercial outcomes are delivered from research

Mr Scanlan said the Strategic Plan aimed to highlight the efforts of the four RACs, which have been in place for 25 years.

“The delivery of leading edge technology from well targeted RDE is crucial for the sustainability of our grains industry,” Mr Scanlan said.

“Our Research Advisory Committees (RACs) represent the foundation blocks of industry needs and we will now more strongly represent their views with research agencies.”

“When RDE issues impact on growers we will do something about it. We welcome the view of growers and together we plan to move grain RDE into the future.”

The GRFL Board comprises seven directors, including four elected grain growers and three independent directors appointed by the elected directors.

In addition to Mr Scanlan, the current Board includes Dalby grain and cotton producer Wayne Newton, agribusiness specialist John Moloney, University of Queensland’s School of Land, Crop and Food Sciences Principal Prof Kaye Basford, and Goondiwindi grain grower and agronomist Peter Mailler.

Two new board members will be elected and appointed at the AGM. They are expected to be grain grower David Lund and former Seed Technology and Marketing Pty Ltd general manager Mark Sowerby..

GRFL has a growing membership base that includes grain growers, consultants, researchers and service providers.

Mr Scanlan said anyone with a keen interest in the grains industry is welcome to become a GRFL member.

Membership Forms and further information on the AGM can be downloaded from the GRFL website at www.grf.org.au

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