

# Figures support PA

Malcolm Sargent, SPAA President

This years SPAA EXPO attracted over 130 current and potential PA practitioners

Increasing the adoption of PA is one of the key objectives of SPAA so I am delighted to report that two economic case study research reports, one of which was commissioned by SPAA, have demonstrated that investment in PA technologies pays. Both projects are detailed in this issue of Precision Ag News. This information, together with that from the SPAA variable rate trials (Vol. 3 Issue 2), should help broadacre croppers when making decisions about investing in PA technologies.

However, SPAA is not only focused on broadacre applications of PA. With assistance from Dr Rob Bramley and his colleagues at CSIRO much information on the use of PA in the wine industry and livestock industries has been disseminated through our publications. Recently we have been in discussions with individuals in the sugar industry who are keen to work with us on sharing current PA knowledge of relevance to their industry. SPAA is keen to work with all production sectors using or potentially using precision production technology.

Under the guidance of Dr Allan Mayfield, SPAA's research coordinator, a range of projects are being pursued, many in collaboration with other organisations. With Vic NoTill, Birchip Cropping

Group, Hart and SANTFA, trials are being conducted on soil moisture monitoring, combined with zone management. In collaboration with SANTFA, Topcon (Kee Technologies), Nufarm and Croplands trials have been established to compare injection systems for variable rate herbicide applications.

Work continues on testing in-crop sensors for different uses, and the PA Groups supported by funds from SA Grains Industry Trust, and the National Landcare Program are proving to be popular.

For those of you who could not make it to this year's EXPO at Cleve, you missed a great event. Credit for this must go to Kirstie Murphy, SPAA Executive Officer, and to Pam Pilkington, Peter Cousins, the Bammans and the Baldocks who helped with setting up and clearing away. More details about the EXPO are in Kirstie's EXPO report and in the article about Clive Blacker, a PA farmer and consultant from the UK who presented at the EXPO.

The SPAA AGM occurred at the EXPO. By now you will have gathered that I am continuing as President for another year. I would like to thank all members of the SPAA committee for their input in the past 12 months. The strength of the committee comes

from their diverse range of skills and backgrounds and I believe this strength has been increased by the addition to the committee of Leighton Wilksch and Ed Cay.

Leighton works for Landmark; he is based at Paskeville, SA but has a state-wide role as Product Development Agronomist. Leighton has a special interest in PA and is currently testing crop sensing devices. Ed Cay works for gps-Ag, is also based on Yorke Peninsula and has a particular interest in variable rate technology.

Craig Humphries has not continued on the committee and his input will be missed. His background in farming combined with his knowledge of PA software has been invaluable to the committee. Craig was a foundation committee member and I hope he will continue to be involved with SPAA, particularly as a member of a PA Group.

I encourage you to share your ideas and feedback with the Executive and committee members to help ensure that SPAA remains focused on its three objectives of: increasing grower adoption of PA across Australia; being a significant source of PA information; and maintaining and developing a stable professional organisation.