



Media release

20 November, 2008

Grants boosts grains benchmarking and weeds projects

A project that is setting the benchmark for sustainable grain production across central Queensland has received a funding boost from the Australian Government.

The Grains Best Management Practice (BMP) project received \$194,778 under Caring for our Country grants announced today by Environment Minister Peter Garrett and Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Tony Burke.

The Grains BMP project is joint venture between Fitzroy Basin Association Inc (FBA), AgForce, and the Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries.

The project allows grain growers to undergo a comprehensive assessment of their cropping practices against industry benchmarks, and then develop plans and access training to address identified gaps.

FBA Chief Executive Officer Suzie Christensen said the new funding would enable the continued roll out of the project, which has been making gains over the past three years.

“Up to this stage the project has been about developing benchmarks and pilot assessment programs and testing these with growers,” Ms Christensen said.

“FBA and our sub regional groups have worked with four groups of landholders to complete a pesticide application pilot module and deliver customised training,” she said.

“This initial work has been met with enthusiasm by growers, who are keen to see how they ‘measure up’ and what they can do to improve the sustainability, productivity and resilience of their businesses.

“This new money will ensure Grains BMP can achieve more widespread coverage of cropping areas, to help more growers voluntarily adopt best management practices and improve their chances of running a viable enterprise into the future.”

Ms Christensen said the FBA also supported a successful application under the Caring for our Country grants by their partner organisation, the Capricorn Pest Management Group (CPMG).

“It was great to see CPMG receive \$345,280 to implement the Fitzroy Basin Weeds Management Strategy, a significant planning document funded by the FBA that prioritises local weed control activities,” Ms Christensen said.

CPMG Coordinator Trudy Baker said the money would be used to implement projects designed to tackle weeds of national significance (WoNS) threatening central Queensland.

Fitzroy Basin Association Inc.

PO Box 139, Rockhampton Qld 4700, Ph: (07) 4999 2800, Fax: (07) 4921 2860

“Our region is under threat from nine of the twenty WoNS species. Through the strategy we have determined the most efficient and cost effective controls needed at the regional scale to limit the spread and reduce the impact of these weeds species,” Ms Baker said.

“Nine sub regional projects have been chosen as priority areas for control and will include control measures such as mechanical and chemical application, as well as education and awareness raising activities with land managers,” she said.

For further information or interviews contact: Jody McDonald, Media and Communications Co-ordinator, 4999 2816, 0429 992 808, jody.mcdonald@fba.org.au.

Fitzroy Basin Association Inc.

PO Box 139, Rockhampton Qld 4700, Ph: (07) 4999 2800, Fax: (07) 4921 2860