



## ANNA BINNA update

### Rain halts the harvest

We've had a pretty good run at the harvest so far with reasonably cool conditions, managing to complete about 75% of our program in the last month.

A cold front has pulled up harvesters with 25mm of rain at Maitland and 16mm in the coastal areas. The Peninsula has been belted with winds up to 70kph during the recent bad weather. Thankfully, we have finished the standing barley, lentils and canola. We have 600 hectares of windrowed barley and 1,000 hectares of wheat left to harvest which should take around 10 days. Our harvest contractor Tim Schwartz is working with us again this year. After the recent rainfall event, we are likely to keep him on with the increased risk of weather damage in the remaining crop.

Given the low rainfall this season, the grain quality and yields have been pretty good overall. A neighbour at Ardrossan recalls that back in 1982, they had more rainfall than we've had this year yet only managed to harvest a single truckload of grain



Great to have the lentils done before this wild weather



from the entire farm. This year the barley could produce 2.5 tonnes per hectare (15 bags per acre) in this environment. Thankfully, our cropping systems of today are more efficient in producing reasonable yields despite minimal rainfall.

This year we are operating two CLAAS harvesters. These machines are produced in the UK and they perform very well harvesting large crops with high stubble loads in cool conditions. They are fitted with tracks instead of the traditional dual wheels. The tracks reduce the compaction of the soil in the paddocks and the grain tank can hold 12 tonnes of wheat, which is 25% more than the machines on tyres.

We opted to have the machines fitted with a new automation package called CEMOS AUTOMATIC. This technology only became available this season and it uses a high definition camera system to monitor the quality of the grain by taking a snapshot every 15 seconds. The CEMOS system automatically controls the thrasher, concave and separation system to ensure the machine produces a perfect grain sample all day, in any conditions, with no input from the operator. It also monitors any grain loss and the machine continually updates aiming to increase its ground speed and limit grain loss all day. It's amazing technology that reduces the reliance on the operator. We feel it increases our work rate by around 25% – it's physically impossible for an operator to match this performance as well as focus on the grain quality and limit any grain loss.

## Commodity markets

Our commodity markets continue to be highly volatile. Up until this week, the prices for both wheat and barley were still \$40 a tonne above the export market, with strong demand for grain for use in the domestic market on the east coast of Australia. This week, the barley market has dropped \$60 a tonne with China launching an anti-dumping investigation into barley imports from Australia. This was politically motivated after the Australian government signed a security and infrastructure deal to counter China's influence in the

Tim Schwartz helping out with his Case machine



This year we harvested the canola standing instead of windrowing, delivering higher yield



The CEMOS auto is delivering great productivity gains & a great grain sample



Tom tipping lentils into the grain shed

Pacific.

The lentil market is very quiet with limited demand from India as their government continues to have a 50% tariff on imported lentils due to an election coming up and they are looking for support from local farmers.

Traditionally, we focus on the global supply and demand of our grain as we look to chip away at the market to achieve a good average price. Unfortunately, all of these strategies go out the window when the market is influenced by politics, which really has nothing to do with the price of our grain. Whilst its always great to push on, this recent weather event gives us an opportunity for everyone to recover and spend some time at home with our families. We choose to outsource a lot of the maintenance on the trucks and machinery during harvest so our staff can enjoy some time off – then the machines are ready to go when the weather improves.

Last but not least, I found some time to celebrate my 50<sup>th</sup> birthday recently. The boys had some fun in the paddock, as you can see!

As always, we thank you for your support of Anna Binna.

Regards,  
Ben Wundersitz



Simon smashing up a limestone whilst harvesting lentils



The team celebrates Ben's 50th in the paddock!



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