



Welcome to the October 2023 SPAA e-news



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A note from SPAA President, Philip Honey

During the recent SPAA symposium in Perth, I participated in a panel and roundtable workshop, representing the Stirlings to Coast Farmers. The topic was data compatibility and interoperability, an issue I've observed directly in the field. This challenge often deters farmers from embracing PA technologies. Read further about how you can contribute to the discussion paper and recommendations to the government.

This month, the SPAA team are also gearing up to deliver another bumper edition of PAN magazine, SPAA's signature publication, which is available to members in either online or printed format. The Spring 2023 edition includes a wrap-up of the 2023 Australian Precision Ag Symposium and farmer perspectives from the event.

If you are sitting on the fence about becoming a SPAA member, take a look at the

"taster" **Article - InFocus** further down the newsletter, which deep dives into how variable gypsum can reduce costs and improve yields on a sugarcane farm in Queensland.

We are pleased to share an interview with Bindi Isbister, recorded as part of a GRDC & SPAA VRT project aimed at educating growers and agronomists on the foundational methods of precision ag and VRT. Be sure to wrap your ears around the podcast at the link below.

I also recommend reading the **National Farmer Priorities Survey report** undertaken by the NFF and Seftons below, which outlines the current sentiment and the issues & priorities of Australia's farmers.

Finally, I would like to highlight the Agricultural Digital Support Work Placement Program undertaken by the Queensland Farmers Federation. This wonderful program connects graduates and those in IT to training, mentorship, and professional networks.

I hope you enjoy the newsletter.



Phil Honey - SPAA President

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Variable Rate Podcast with Bindi Isbister

Bindi Isbister from Agrarian Management was recently interviewed for a GRDC podcast at SPAA's VRT workshop in Merredin.

In the podcast, they discuss:

- How precision ag helps to manage variability in soil types, yield performance and measuring inputs so fertiliser application can be adjusted accordingly.

- Variable rate vs blanket rate.
- What are the different forms of variable rate?
- How can growers get started with variable rate?
- What are the challenges of precision ag?

The workshop was part of a [Grains Research and Development Corporation](#) investment, which included 12 events to educate growers and agronomists on foundational precision agriculture methods and VRT. A big thanks also goes out to our delivery partners who conducted the workshops nationwide:

- Colin Hinze, Pinion Advisory
- Tim Neale, Data Farming
- Reuben Wells, Ag Logic
- Alice Butler, FARMANCO
- Bindi Isbister, Agrarian Management.

[Listen to the podcast here.](#)

Roadmap to Interoperability Industry Round Table



Roadmap to Interoperability - 5 September 2023

More than 50 delegates attended the break-out workshop *Roadmap to Interoperability* on 5 September as the SPAA Symposium concluded following two very engaging days.

Following a presentation from Bindi Isbister (DPIRD) on the interoperability journey so far, a panel session was held with John Deere's Jake McHugh, Matt Stewart of NGIS, Nuffield Scholar Andrew Sargent and Phil Honey (Stirlings to Coast Farmers). The panel discussed the difficulties of multiple file formats, different interpretations of ISOBUS as a standard, format-agnostic data storage, mixed fleets with hardware of different ages and field reliability across the board before breakout sessions among the delegates.

With a variety of sectors represented from research, government, software, manufacturing and precision ag consulting, the conversation on where the industry needs to get to was lively and productive. Major themes from the workshop facilitated by Julia Easton (CCDM, Curtin) included:

- More operations included in one pass
- Remove human error as a factor
- Increase connectivity across the regions
- Develop cost-effective, automated data collection
- Single points of truth for data, including boundary runlines
- Standards for data storage to allow cross-platform connectivity
- The industry is capable of interoperability, it comes down to an issue of investment

The next step in the project is publishing a discussion paper and identifying key stakeholders and recommendations to government and industry. If you would like to be involved in the project as it progresses, contact jennifer@southernforestsfood.com.

Precision Ag News **ARTICLE - InFocus** VR gypsum reduces costs and improves yields on sugar farm

Earlier this year, second generation sugar cane grower, Denis Pozzebon was interviewed for SPAA's signature magazine **Precision Ag News (Summer 2023)**.

Denis is a SPAA committee member, and produces about 15,000 tonnes/year of sugarcane over 128 hectares in the Burdekin in northern Queensland. He has a reputation for being an innovator, including using precision agriculture (PA) technologies in sugarcane production

Read about how Denis uses variable-rate gypsum to reduce costs and improve yields on his QLD sugarcane farm [here](#).

SPAA members have a choice of receiving PA News every quarter, either online or printed via post. If you would like to become a member, [find out more here](#).

National Farmer Priorities Survey

OCTOBER 2023



Passionate farmers' outlook for the future wanes

The national farmer priorities survey, undertaken by the NFF and Seftons highlights the sentiment of 1,600 Australian farmers.

While there is little doubt about the passion and commitment to people on the land, farmers have highlighted a number of key areas of concern going forward. Of key concern are:

- government policy
- overseas trading relationships
- the market power of major processors/supermarkets
- roads and transport infrastructure.

[Click here](#) to read the survey report.

Become an Agtech officer or host



Agricultural Digital Support Work Placement Program

Are you interested in being an AgTech Officer or an AgTech host?

The Queensland Farmers' Federation (QFF) is connecting graduates or people working in IT/technology and agriculture related fields to accredited training, mentorship, and networking opportunities – commences January 2024.

To find out more, scan the QR code in the image above, visit www.qff.org.au/agtech/ or speak with the program coordinator, Tim Bradley: agtech@qff.org.au or call 07 3837 4729.



Agtech alley – Australian National Field Days – 26 - 28 October

Explore cutting-edge technologies at Agtech Alley and engage in stimulating discussions at the Agtech Talk Hub. The event takes place from Thursday, October 26th to Saturday, October 28th 2023, in Borenore, NSW, as part of the Australian National Field Days. Register your interest below. Tickets to Agtech Alley are free.

[Register](#)

Grain Traceability Survey: WA Grain Growers



THE UNIVERSITY OF
**WESTERN
AUSTRALIA**



**GROWER
GROUP
ALLIANCE**
Together we grow



South-West WA
Drought Resilience Adoptix
and Innovation Hub

Are you a grain grower in WA?

Our farmers often are aware of emerging trends and innovations and are prepared to trial and test the possible opportunities. One emerging trend is traceability.

But is traceability worthwhile? Is it practical?

We want to know what you reckon about traceability. Jump in; give us your views. What you say and what consumers say will influence what might unfold regarding traceability:

<https://tinyurl.com/graintraceability>

Grants and other opportunities



 AgriFutures
Rural Women's
Award

Applications for the 2024 AgriFutures Rural Women's Award and Acceleration Grant are now open. If someone you know is making a difference in Australia's rural and emerging industries, businesses, and communities, encourage them to apply!

Applications are open until Wednesday, 25 October 2023.

[More information](#)

Ag Events & Field Days

Australian National Field Days, including Agtech Alley, 26 - 28 October in Boremore, NSW. [Details](#)

NFF 2023 National Conference, 26 and 27 October. [Details](#)

Gatton Agtech showcase, 1 and 2 November. [Details](#)

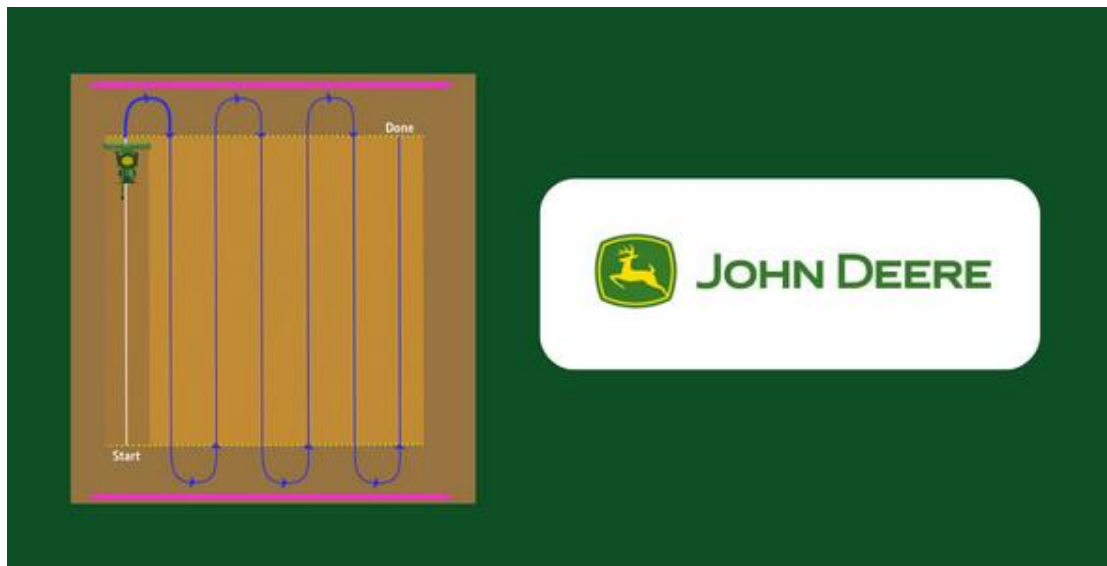
Young Beef Producers Forum (YBPF), 16 and 17 November in Roma. [Details](#)

International Conference for On-farm Precision Experimentation, 8 - 11 January 2024, South Padre Island, Texas USA. [Details](#)

eVoke AG. 2024, 20 and 21 February 2024. [Details](#)

Bring on Beef Australia 2024, Rockhampton 5-11 May 2024. [Details](#)

Partner News



Let Turn Automation transform your Combine Harvester's workload

The launch of John Deere's latest round of software updates for Gen 4 Displays and John Deere Operations Center™ has come at the ideal time for farmers to get more from their equipment this season, with the introduction of turn automation for Combine Harvesters.

AutoTrac™ Turn Automation (ATTA) for Combine Harvesters is part of the 23-2 Display software bundle that was released in late September and is compatible with Gen 4 Displays and the new G5 Display on X9, S700 and even S600 combines. The ATTA feature can also support multiple harvesters working in the same field, to increase overall productivity, while reducing stress throughout the entire harvest season.

John Deere Production System Manager, Ben Kelly, said ATTA will play an important role in simplifying harvester operation throughout harvest 2023-24.

"Automating the headland turns makes operating the combine easier and more precise. Customers will see consistent, repeated and optimised end turns across the field, while the operator will experience less stress and fatigue throughout the day," Mr Kelly said.

"Where possible, we want to ensure all customers have access to technology improvements like ATTA, not only because it delivers clear safety and productivity improvements, but also because it is another step in the road to full autonomy – and we want to help our customers prepare for that future."

For further information and to understand the application of the full suite of upgrades contact [your local John Deere dealer](#).

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