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MEDIA RELEASE

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Workshops to help farmers maximise spray coverage and minimise loss in 2024

A new workshop will be held in the Mid North next month to help unravel the keys to current best practice spray application, and the tools to achieve it.

The 'Maximise coverage – minimise loss: making every spray drop count' interactive workshops will be held at Balaklava, Spalding and Hart, and are a joint initiative of the Hart Field-Site Group and GRDC.

Hart executive officer Sandy Kimber said the free workshops would provide farmers with practical information to support spraying best practice in 2024.

"Importantly, we'll be placing a strong emphasis on how to achieve that," she said.

"The reality is, there are a number of variables that add complexity to each spray application, so we'll work through various real-life scenarios during the course of the day.

"If we can arm farmers with the tools to make the best possible spraying decisions every time, we'll see positive outcomes for everyone in terms of pest, weed and disease control, farm economics, the community and the environment."

Guest speakers will include Bill Gordon (ICAN); Andre Sabeeney (Nufarm / Hart); Dennis Hoiberg (Lessons Learnt Consulting); Michael McManus (PIRSA); John Nairn (CoTL – operators of Mid North Mesonet); Leet Wilksch (agbyte); Damien Sommerville (Spalding/Burra farmer and ex spray contractor); Andrew Mitchell (Mintaro farmer and vigneron).

Highlights will include:

- On-site demonstration - spray quality and droplet behaviour
- What does spraying best practice look like in 2024?
- Strategies to implement it, maintain it and enhance your productivity
- Crucial weather tools
- Gain confidence in compliance and record keeping
- First-hand local farmer experiences.

Workshop participants will be encouraged to ask questions throughout the sessions, raise any specific challenges encountered on their own farms, and share tips and tricks with the rest of the group.

Guest speaker, ICAN senior consultant, Bill Gordon (pictured below) has extensive experience and is well-known for his work in pesticide application and drift management.



He has developed and delivered workshops to more than 10,000 growers and advisors across Australia.

Mr Gordon said that while 'maximising coverage and minimising spray drift' had always been important, it was now more vital than ever to get it right.



"The cost of inputs, the cost of farming and the consequences of getting it wrong have increased," he said.

"We can't afford to waste any of our product and more importantly, we can't afford to impact other growers and the community because a lot of them are doing it tough.

"The expectations of community, of markets, of regulators – that standard has been increasing and we talk about things like social licence and expectations, but we should also expect that of other growers in terms of having clean product and guaranteeing access to markets.

"A lot of things have changed over time, it's always been important to get it right, but there's greater expectation to do a good job and hopefully not impact others.

"And what's more important is that we do a good job for ourselves now too because of those high input costs."

Presenting alongside Mr Gordon will be Hart Field-Site Group chairman and Nufarm Australia representative Andre Sabeeney, and together they will provide some thought-provoking questions for participants to consider.

"Have you thought about how you want to do the job? And that usually starts well before the season," Mr Gordon said.

"Have you got a good picture of what you're trying to achieve and how you're going to do it?

"Have you got the gear on hand to be able to change set ups if you need to?

"Have you got access to the best information? Are you utilising good weather forecasts to understand when conditions are too hazardous to spray?

"Most importantly, do you have everything you need to get the job done as efficiently as you can without creating extra risk?

"Everyone should be trying to do the best job they can, it comes back to everyone doing as much as they can to minimise the amount of product they leave in the air from a drift point of view, but also understanding those conditions when we definitely shouldn't be spraying."

Maximise coverage – minimise loss: making every spray drop count: Interactive workshops

- Balaklava, July 2
- Spalding, July 3
- Hart, July 4

Free event, including workshop, morning tea, lunch and refreshments - 8.30am-4.30pm.

Full details and registrations available at www.hartfieldsite.org.au or phone 0427 423 154 for more information.

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