GRAINS RESEARCH UPDATE 2026

The Grange Estate
4A Commonwealth Lane, Campbell Town

Wednesday 24 June 2026

9.00 am to 1.00 pm followed by lunch
(doors open at 8.30 am for a 9.00 am start)

Cost:
Free

Morning tea, lunch and
proceedings included.

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Discuss the latest farm-ready information to improve profit with researchers, agronomists and leading growers at the Campbell Town GRDC Grains Research Update.

Topics:

- The current drivers of global grain and input markets
  Andrew Whitelaw, Episode3
- Beneficial insects to aid pest control
  Lilia Jenkins, Cesar Australia
- From data to decisions: getting automation farm-ready at paddock scale
  Tim Neale, DataFarming
- Improving fungicide spray decisions in wheat
  Tom Price, FAR
- Faba bean agronomy for better crops
  Grace Evans, SFS

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The current drivers of global grain and input markets

Andrew will unpack the key forces shaping global grain and agricultural input markets, from geopolitics and trade policy to weather volatility, production costs and demand shifts. Drawing on data-driven analysis, he will explore how fertiliser, fuel and logistics markets interact with grain prices, and what this means for growers and agribusiness. The session will provide practical context for current market movements and highlight the risks and opportunities likely to influence prices in the near term and improve decision-making outcomes.

Beneficial insects to aid pest control

Lilia will present practical insights into the role of beneficial insects in supporting crop productivity and integrated pest management. The presentation will explore key beneficial species, how they function in Tasmanian farming systems, and ways growers can encourage and protect them. This work is proudly funded by GRDC and Hort Innovation.

From data to decisions: getting automation farm-ready at paddock scale

Tim will explore how automation and digital technologies are reshaping modern crop management, turning data into practical, farm-ready decisions. Drawing on real-world examples, he will demonstrate how sensors, satellite imagery and artificial intelligence can be used to reliably detect weeds across large and complex farming systems. Tim will also examine how these insights move beyond maps and monitoring, integrating directly with autonomous and precision machinery to enable targeted, timely interventions. The presentation will focus on scalability, adoption and how automation can help agronomists and growers manage bigger farms with fewer people, while improving efficiency, sustainability and decision-making confidence.

Improving fungicide spray decisions in wheat

Improving disease management in wheat is rarely about a single decision, but rather a series of judgements made under uncertainty. In this presentation, Tom will examine whether decision support tools can strengthen those judgements by assisting with disease risk assessment, fungicide timing and product selection. He will explore where current forecasting models and decision frameworks add real value, their limitations under variable seasonal conditions, and how they can be practically integrated into everyday agronomic practice to support more confident, timely and cost-effective disease management decisions.

Faba bean agronomy for better crops

In this session, Grace will talk through the growing opportunity for faba beans in Tasmanian farming systems, and where they realistically fit in the rotation. She'll share what SFS is seeing on the ground as interest builds in the crop. Grace will talk through key results from the 2025 variety-by-fungicide trial, showing how current faba bean varieties are performing under different disease management strategies. She'll also cover findings from a spring sowing by variety trial, highlighting which varieties cope best and where the risks and rewards sit are.

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