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GRDC Southern Regional Panel chair Keith Pengilley (left) with Hart Field-Site Group's research and extension manager Dr Sarah Noack and GRDC deputy chief executive Dr Steve Thomas at the Hart Field Day

The Grains Research and Development Corporation (GRDC) today announced the Hart Field-Site Group had been awarded a grant for development of a new field research facility.

GRDC Chairman John Woods said the Hart Field-Site Group had received a GRDC Grains Research and Development (R&D) Infrastructure Grant for more than \$71,000 to enable the Mid North farming systems group to build and fit-out a structure. The Hart Field-Site Group has contributed an additional \$7900 to the project which will also involve installation of solar panels and battery storage units.

Mr Woods said the GRDC Grains R&D Infrastructure Grant was part of \$15 million the GRDC Board had agreed to invest in a strategy to build national research capacity.

"The purpose of the grant program is to boost capacity and capability in Australian grain research and development through funding key infrastructure, and to create enduring profitability for grain growers," Mr Woods said.

The new shed will enable the Hart Field-Site Group to undertake grains research activities – such as soil and plant sample preparation, seed storage and packing, and preparation of treatments – in a more efficient manner.

The grant was officially announced at the Hart Field Day by GRDC deputy chief executive Dr Steve Thomas, who is also a member of the GRDC's Southern Regional Panel which visited the field day during its annual spring tour.

Dr Thomas said the Hart Field-Site Group had been an important research partner of the GRDC for many years and that its research, development and extension (RD&E) activities – many of which are GRDC investments – continued to generate beneficial outcomes for growers.

“The GRDC’s primary purpose is to invest in RD&E to create enduring profitability for Australian growers, and the undertakings of the Hart Field-Site Group have contributed significantly to that cause.

“The group is well recognised and respected, not only throughout the Mid North but well beyond, for its commitment to the grains industry. Its field trial site hosts relevant and innovative research that each year plays a valuable role in informing growers’ agronomic decisions.”

Hart Field-Site Group’s research and extension manager Dr Sarah Noack said the organisation was excited to partner with GRDC to continue to deliver high quality grains research to growers.

“For 35 years, Hart has conducted research and trials to improve productivity and sustainability for growers,” Dr Noack said.

“The new field lab facility will improve the efficiency of our operations, including processing soil, plant and grain samples throughout the season. Having permanent access to power will allow us to run research equipment on-site, an option not previously available to us without this grant.”

The GRDC recently conducted an open, competitive process seeking applications for grants between \$20,000 and \$3 million for the construction of new, or enhancement of existing, infrastructure primarily used for R&D in the grains industry in Australia.

The grants can be also used for procuring building materials and services associated with the infrastructure's construction, as well as the purchase of plant, equipment or fittings.

Successful applicants are required to contribute to their projects either themselves or through other third party contributions. The amount of the co-contribution must be equal to or greater than 10 percent of the grant from the GRDC.

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