

Wheat Falling Numbers in 2021

Nathan Dovey, CEO, SCF

Did you have trouble with wheat falling numbers last year? Did you notice any patterns such as variety, time of sowing or paddock location? If so, Stirlings to Coast Farmers want to hear from you!

Stirlings to Coast Farmers (SCF) were recently awarded a GRDC project to collect data from wheat growers across the southern wheat belt titled "Understanding trends in falling numbers in the medium to high rainfall zones of WA". We will be working with the following grower groups to survey at least 60 farmers and 120 paddocks.

- Facey Group
- Fitzgerald Biosphere Group (FBG)
- South East Premium Wheat Growers Association (SEPWA)
- Southern Dirt

The data will be collected via a survey created by the Mingenew Irwin Group (MIG), who are completing a similar project in the northern wheat belt. The data collected will assist growers in the medium to high rainfall zones of WA to better understand how environmental, agronomic and varietal aspects impact falling number test results at harvest and will also inform future research.

The surveys will collect the following data:

- Time of sowing
- Variety sown
- Rainfall events and timing
- Temperature and humidity
- Frost events
- Flowering date
- Maturity dates
- Grain quality at receival site
- Long term history of falling numbers on the property

The data will be collated and analysed with advice from DPIRD and SAGI West (Statistics for the Australian Grains Industry) to identify falling number trends associated with any of the above aspects. The information will be extended to SCF members and made available to DPIRD to guide future research.

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

We are especially looking for wheat growers located near a weather station, be that a DPIRD or BOM station or on-farm weather station installed by SCF in recent years. Sammy Cullen or Dan Fay will be calling members to go through the survey on the phone, where most answers will be off the top of your head. In the case of growers who experienced falling number issues in 2021, we will ask for some CBH loadnet data from affected loads which will need to be looked up at a later date. For the weather data, staff will be able to access a weather station close to your wheat paddocks in question, even if we have to ask for permission from a neighbour. If you would like to register your interest in the project, please send a text to Dan Fay (M) 0498 278 177 or Sammy Cullen (M) 0417 605 784, and they will be in touch shortly.

SCF hopes to collect survey data from up to 15 wheat growers, so please consider helping us to complete this project. As mentioned earlier, the data will be analysed by SAGI West, and SCF researchers will present the findings to our members later.

For more information on what the wheat falling numbers test is, please head to the link below.

<https://bit.ly/wheatgrainquality>

