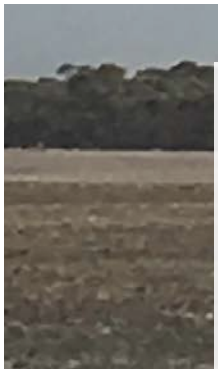

SW WA Drought Hub – Great Southern & South Coastal Node Update

Stirlings to Coast Farmers, as a 'Drought Hub Node', provides guidance to the nationally coordinated 'Future Drought Fund' on drought & climate resilience issues for the Albany Region through the South-west WA Drought Resilience Adoption and Innovation Hub.

Local mini-projects for drought preparedness in your patch!

With support from the SW WA Drought Hub, SCF is partnering with neighbouring grower groups to deliver 'mini projects' that build on existing FDF funded projects or drought hub priorities with the aim of ensuring that the Drought hub activities are meeting the needs of all farmers in the Great Southern and South Coast.

For own own 'mini project', SCF has been looking at 'Mapping summer weeds using drones to reduce on-farm water use, labour, and chemical costs' to test the efficiency and effectiveness of utilising drone imagery data for the targeted ground spraying of summer weeds. It also aims to quantify the potential saving in water use and labour efficiency and saving in costs of blanket spraying paddocks.

Results show that it is very possible to save both water and $ using targeted ground spraying of summer weeds based on drone imagery data (Table 1).

Model	Weed Area %	Water Requirement (Savings)	Chem Costs (Savings)
AI – 50cm	4.7%	253.8 L (+ 5,146.2 L)	$63.45 (+ $1,286.55)
AI – 100cm	8.6%	464.4 L (+ 4,915.6 L)	$116.10 (+ $1,286.55)
Indices – 50cm	6.0%	324.0 L (+ 5,076.0 L)	$81.00 (+ $1,233.90)
Indices – 100cm	10.9%	588.6 L (+ 4,811.4 L)	$147.14 (+ $1,202.86)
Blanket	100%	5,400L	$1,350

Table 1. Water requirements, chemical costs and area of weeds sprayed (as a % of paddock) for 4 different drone map models compared to blanket spraying the whole paddock.

Stay tuned for complete results in our case study, coming soon!

Great Dry Season Resources – agronomic practices to manage dry seasons

Dry Season Podcasts – back for 2025! Find information on the latest episodes below and you can take a listen on the Hub website (https://hub.gga.org.au/podcast/) and subscribe on Apple Podcasts, Spotify or wherever you get your podcasts.

- Optimising farm decisions in mixed farm operations - Dr Michael Young, from Farm Optimisation Group and Johno O'Halloran, a farmer from Kojonup, discuss the use of a farm optimisation model to support data-driven decision making in mixed farming. This model allows farmers to test different scenarios and can help improve outcomes and reduce decision fatigue.
- WaterSmart Dams: Understanding dams with the Water Evaluation Platform - Dr John Duncan from The University of Western Australia and Dr Daniel Kidd from the Grower Group Alliance discuss the recently released Water Evaluation Platform (WEP). Created as part of the WaterSmart Dams project, WEP is a web application that simulates the performance of a dam and its catchment allowing the landholder to understand and analyse the different options available.

Dry Season Shorts: fast, practical tips for dry times -short on time? So are we. That's why the SW WA Drought Hub's Dry Season Shorts video series delivers quick, practical advice from people tackling dry seasons head-on.

Watch the latest clips here - https://hub.gga.org.au/resources/video-library/:

- Keeping dams full: insights from the WaterSmart Dams project | Associate Professor Nik Callow, University of Western Australia
- Planning for dry years in the good years | Richard Brake, Richard Brake Consulting
- Managing infrastructure, land and grazing pressure | Nicholas Forrester, Kanandah Station
- Mental wellbeing during dry seasons | Louise O'Neill, Farm Life Fitness
- On-going condition of stock in the Rangelands shows good drought management | Ross Wood, grazier and GNRBA