

Under embargo to Wednesday 30th June 2021

Tasmania kicks off national roadshow with the announcement of HYC's inaugural award winners

The enthusiasm and clear vision, combined with the determination to reach high productivity goals are just some of the remarkable traits of the GRDC's Hyper Yielding Crops (HYC) inaugural award-winning growers.

Kicking off the roadshow saw the presentation of the Tasmania HYC Awards on 30th June as part of the Grains Research & Development Corporation's (GRDC) Campbell Town Grains Research Update.

Simon Burgess farms at Vacluse Estate, Conara. Harvested on 3rd February 2021, Mr Burgess achieved his hyper yielding crop of 11 t/ha off 18 ha of the wheat variety DS Bennett, which was just enough to take out the HYC Award for the 'Highest Yield' category in Tasmania.

Due to record rainfall in March and April, the crop was sown on 7th May 2020 into a clay loam following faba beans with a Horwood Bagshaw tine seed drill. Despite some crops suffering from early waterlogging, winter was drier than average, helping to minimise the potential widespread possibility of badly waterlogged paddocks.

Inputs included four applications of nitrogen-based fertiliser with carefully considered and strategic timings for fungicides and plant growth regulators. A total of 101mm of irrigation was applied in November to compensate for the below average rainfall for the month.

Taking out the HYC Award for 'Highest % of Yield Potential' in Tasmania was James Clutterbuck who farms at Summerhill Farms, Hagley. His dryland crop of the wheat variety RGT Calabro yielded 10.8 t/ha.

The crop was sown on 18th April 2020 following poppies with a 6m Vaderstad Rapid disc drill and harvested slightly late due to above-average summer rainfall on 23rd January 2021.

Three applications of nitrogen fertiliser were applied throughout the season with three fungicide applications and one plant growth regulator (PGR).

The end of the year continued with above-average rainfall through December and early January which may well have assisted in the high yields from the dryland paddocks.

GRDC Grower Relations Manager, Randall Wilksch, said the early success demonstrated by the 2021 HYC Award winners would inspire others to push crop yield boundaries in their region.

"This national investment continues to support growers who are keen to push yield to the next level in high yield potential grain-growing environments," Mr Wilksch said.

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“The award winners have clearly demonstrated the kind of drive and vision that will hopefully encourage others to consider adoption of different agronomic management tactics aimed at delivering greater productivity and profitability.”

Nick Poole, FAR Australia’s Managing Director said it was great to be leading a project which links field research with adoption on farm through schemes such as the HYC Awards.

“We hope that the HYC awards create an opportunity across Australia to get growers and advisers involved in a community that is networked by their interest to increase productivity,” Mr Poole said.

“The first year of results both on the in-field research and focus farms have been really encouraging with 10 t/ha crops being achieved in a number of regions, including Tasmania. Initial project results have emphasised the importance of farming system fertility in producing good results and the simple fact that high yields cannot always be achieved by simply applying more nitrogen fertiliser.

“I would like to add my thanks to all the growers who have entered the HYC awards in our pilot season and congratulate our two Tasmania winners for becoming the first recipients of the HYC’s ‘Highest Yield’ and ‘Highest % of Potential Yield’ Awards. Our aim was to develop a participatory approach to the project to enable growers interested in increasing productivity to become involved. We were delighted with the interest in year one and hope we can only build on this participation over the remaining years of the project.”

Jon Midwood of TechCrop is the national Extension Coordinator for HYC and oversees for the HYC Awards component of the project. He says the first year has delivered some pleasing results for growers involved in the HYC Awards.

“All those who have participated in the HYC Awards are presented with a report, which not only assists with identifying the different agronomic decisions made throughout the season’s growing conditions, but also provides growers with the ability to benchmark these key decisions with other growers in their region. Nominations are now open for the 2021 season and we would urge growers to contact their respective project officers for more information.”

Hosted by FAR Australia, project lead for the GRDC’s \$7.9 million Hyper Yielding Crops project, a six-week national roadshow will recognise a number of hard-working and innovative cropping farmers who have achieved some of the highest yielding wheat crops across the high rainfall zones of Australia. To ensure you don’t miss out on the opportunity to hear first-hand what results were achieved and how, register now for an event coming to your region.

Details of upcoming HYC Results and Awards events:

Hadspen, Tasmania – Tuesday 13th July: https://faraustralia.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/210713_TAS_HYC-RESULTS-AND-AWARDS-REVISED-DATE-FINAL.pdf

Green Range, WA - Wednesday 14th July: https://faraustralia.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/210714_WA_HYC-RESULTS-AND-AWARDS-REVISED-DATE-FINAL.pdf

Rutherglen, NSW/NE VIC - Tuesday 17th August: https://faraustralia.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/210817_NSW_HYC-RESULTS-AND-AWARDS-REVISED-DATE-FINAL-2.pdf

Millicent, SA – Wednesday 18th August: https://faraustralia.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/210818_SA_HYC-RESULTS-AND-AWARDS-REVISED-DATE-FINAL.pdf

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Skipton, VIC – Monday

23rd August: https://faraustralia.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/210823_VIC_HYC-RESULTS-AND-AWARDS-REVISED-DATE-FINAL.pdf

For further information on the Hyper Yielding Crops project, please visit <https://faraustralia.com.au/hyper-yielding-crops/>

A full list of events can be viewed at <https://faraustralia.com.au/event/>

For a full set of provisional Hyper Yielding Crops 2020 trials results, please visit <https://faraustralia.com.au/resource/>

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About Hyper Yielding Crops (HYC)

The GRDC's Hyper Yielding Crops (HYC) initiative, led by FAR Australia, is a four-year GRDC investment spanning five states (Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania, New South Wales and Western Australia) which aims to push the economically attainable yield boundaries of wheat, barley and canola.

The HYC initiative involves five research centres of excellence, and attached to each of these are five focus farm paddock trials and an innovative grower network charged with taking research and development learnings from small plot to paddock scale. Growers are able to join these networks and host paddock-scale trials on their properties to enable a "seeing is believing" participatory approach to the research.

Through this investment, high yield potential cultivars suited to local environments are being identified and the most appropriate agronomic management tactics – including paddock selection and preparation, canopy management, disease, weed and pest control, and crop nutrition strategies – are being explored to assist grower and adviser decision making.

To underpin the "whole community of interest" concept, the HYC awards program has been established to encourage everyone with an interest in increasing productivity to get involved and to enable growers to benchmark the agronomic performance of their own crops.

The HYC awards, Focus Farm paddock strips and the innovative grower network involves TechCrop working with the Centre for eResearch and Digital Innovation (CeRDI) at Federation University Australia and four farming groups across the country; Southern Farming Systems (SFS) in Tasmania and Victoria, MacKillop Farm Management Group (MFMG) in SA, Riverine Plains Inc in NSW, and Stirling to Coast Farmers in WA. Growers, advisers and others wishing to become involved in the HYC initiative can contact their respective state project officers:

Victoria – Ashley Amourgis of SFS, aamourgis@sfs.org.au

Tasmania – Naomi Hender of SFS, nhender@sfs.org.au

SA – Jen Lillecrapp of MFMG, jen@brackenlea.com

NSW – Kate Coffey of Riverine Plains Inc, kate@riverineplains.org.au

WA – Nathan Dovey of Stirling to Coast Farmers, ceo@scfarmers.org.au.

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