

Communiqué 5

Soil Research, Development and Extension Strategy Implementation Committee meeting – Lancefield, February 2016

The Soil RD&E Implementation Committee held its fifth meeting in Lancefield on the 4th February 2016 with representatives from CSIRO, Federal and State agencies, Research and Development Corporations and Universities.

Appointment of a new Chair

The recent appointment of Iain Young, 2015 Chair of the Soil RD&E Implementation Committee, to a Senior Position at the University of Sydney led Iain to resign as Chair. The Committee acknowledged the major contribution made by Iain in the development and implementation of the National Soil RD&E Strategy.

Members unanimously supported the appointment of Georgina Kelly, DPI NSW, as the new Chair of the Soil RD&E Implementation Committee for a period of two years.

Soil RD&E planning forum

Soil RD&E Implementation Committee members attended a planning forum in Lancefield on 3rd- 4th February. The forum's purpose was to develop a clear narrative for Soil RD&E that can be widely understood and to begin development of a strong and unified action plan to enable implementation of Soil RD&E priorities that are acceptable to all parties (universities, RDCs, industry, CSIRO). The output from the forum will provide input to a presentation at the Outlook 2016 Conference on the potential benefits from Soil RD&E. Neil McKenzie will present on behalf of the Soil RD&E Implementation Committee.

Overall, there was good buy-in from participants, and a good degree of sharing of ideas and views. A great deal of work has already been done to define the high-level vision, the mission, relevant policy issues, and the problems to be addressed. At the same time, there were diverse views on how to proceed given the limited resources and requirement for demonstrable benefits in the short term.

The Committee will continue its deliberations and develop practical investment plans for each of the five RD&E priorities in the coming months.

Rural Research and Development for Profit – Round 2

The \$100 million Rural R&D for Profit program will provide grants to Research and Development Corporations (RDCs) for collaborative research that enhances farm-gate profitability and supports continuing innovation in Australia's primary industries. The program implements the Australian Government's 2013 election commitment to provide additional funding to the RDCs. The research is

to focus on delivering cutting-edge technologies and making research findings more accessible for primary producers. It must also improve coordination and cooperation between stakeholders.

Rural R&D for Profit Round 2 announcements for successful projects will be made in April 2016.