



RICE EXTENSION

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Rice Industry Field Day a Success

The rice industry's premier research showcase, the Rice Field Day, was hosted at 'Old Coree' Jerilderie on Thursday 9 March and attended by more than 350 rice growers and agribusiness professionals.

The theme for 2017 was 'Tradition, Technology, Productivity – A Balancing Act'. Participants said the event was beneficial to their business and reflected the importance of continual innovation in the Rice Industry.

The field day, designed to showcase the latest in rice research and technological advancements in rice growing, for the second year running had a business and innovation forum.

According to Rice R&D Committee Chairman, Ian Mason, the event was structured to reflect the importance of the industry's R&D program for grower profitability.

"Some of the highlights this year at the field day included the latest information on rice R&D, innovation, new perspectives on agriculture and a SunRice grower update."

"R&D topics such as the evolution to aerobic rice and remote sensing for nitrogen management were covered throughout the morning's field visits and proved to be of interest to growers who attended."

"This is a very important date for rice growers every year and this year we had a fantastic range of speakers to assist Australian rice growers to be smarter farmers and better equipped to make decisions, both in the paddock and the office," Mr Mason said.

One of the day's presenters, Brian Dunn, spoke of remote sensing for nitrogen management.

"The day was a great opportunity to interact with growers and discuss some of the innovative uses growers can use drones for. The use of drones and remote sensing in agriculture is promising many benefits, but it is important that their use can provide increased productivity and profitability in the rice industry. "

The importance of innovation ecosystems for entrepreneurs was highlighted by SproutX General Manager, Sam Trethewey. Mr Trethewey said that the opportunities for innovation in agtech are endless. However, Australia needs an ecosystem that allows entrepreneurs and start-ups to collaborate and connect to enable their businesses to grow.

RICEGROWERS' ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA INC

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A member of National Farmers' Federation, National Irrigators' Council and NSW Irrigators' Council

Following the field tour and business forum, participants heard from SunRice CEO Rob Gordon and Chairman Laurie Arthur. Mr Gordon outlined global market conditions. Despite downward global trends, SunRice pricing has held relatively well.

Participants then had the opportunity to enjoy the social aspects of the day viewing the displays from resellers and industry groups. A cooking demonstration of a simple, healthy and quick Mediterranean Chicken with Rice and Quinoa by television cook, Zoe Bingley-Pullin was also enjoyed by the large crowd.

The number of people attending the field day demonstrated the passion and commitment growers have to the rice industry. The positivity of growers was evident through the lines of questions and interactions with presenters and fellow growers.

This year the Rice Industry Field Day was held in conjunction with the International Temperate Rice Conference, with many international guests attending the Field Day and Sundowner Dinner.

“International guests enjoyed both the International Temperate Rice Conference and the Rice Industry Field Day. The Sundowner Dinner was a great opportunity for conference delegates, industry members and rice growers to further socialise and was enjoyed by all who attended,” Mr Mason said.

The field day is a joint initiative of Rice Extension, Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation, Ricegrowers’ Association of Australia, NSW Department of Primary Industries, Rice Research Australia Pty Ltd and SunRice. The Rice Industry Field Day is supported by Local Land Services through funding from the Australian Government.

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