

MARF

'growing a partnership'
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Mallee Agricultural Research Foundation (MARF)

“To promote the advancement and practical application of scientific research and related activities to agricultural industries in the Mallee region of Victoria and neighbouring states.”

MARF wishes to invite all people who have an interest in the future of dryland agriculture in the Mallee to become a member of the Foundation and support its activities wherever possible.

Vision

That the Mallee Agricultural Research Foundation is a leader in the management of cutting edge research, development and information transfer to the Mallee Region of Victoria and neighbouring states, in a way which is both profitable and sustainable in the long term, and provides an example to other regions.

MARF was formed as an independent legal entity with representation along the lines of: Six farmers to include representatives of organizations such as Birchip Cropping Group, Mallee Sustainable Farming Vic No Till and Victorian Farmers Federation. Representatives of PIRVic and Universities who would be of such standing that they have power to implement decisions. Two industry persons such as agribusiness or persons with special skills and the Manager of MRS. The selected group to elect one farmer member as Chair

The Foundations priority is to focus on maintaining the Mallee Research Station as an innovative leader in agricultural research. Partnership relationships are to be pursued with organisations of mutual interest with regards to membership, research and extension activities.

Background

The MARF board believes that given the current issues facing the profitability and sustainability of farming in low rainfall areas, the need for the Mallee Research Station is as strong as it has been at any time in its history.

It also believes it is essential to have land resources where control and security are necessary. Although some areas of research and demonstration can be pursued on farm properties the MRS is necessary to test systems which farmers may not be prepared to undertake due to risk.

Walpeup is not just of importance to the Victorian Mallee, it is the only centre undertaking research for the low rainfall cereal/livestock zone of South Eastern Australia. This is important given the strong trend towards a broad regional approach to projects by the funding bodies.





The Station

The Mallee Research Station (MRS) was established in 1932. For many years it has been a leader in scientific research. The main issues for research include, varieties suited to the area, cultivation practices to prevent erosion, rotations, cereal diseases, weed control, pastures, fertiliser use and other agronomic practices, sheep management, and financial management. MRS also had an important direct extension function.

The results of the work at Walpeup not only contribute to farming efficiency in the Victorian Mallee but to similar low rainfall dryland farming areas in Australia.

Walpeup has excellent facilities and resources. It has 700 hectares of arable land with a further 300 hectares of remnant vegetation, is centrally located within its client area, has committed management and staff as well as an excellent track record. It is well placed to continue to address the sustainability of the Mallee region.

Goals and Objectives (adapted from Strategic Plan 2006-9)

- *Identify and secure opportunities for research and demonstration in sustainable farm management for the low rainfall Mallee Region and to integrate MRS into comprehensive regional and state research initiatives.*
- *Provide opportunities to develop joint programs with universities and agribusiness in research and adoption of technologies.*
- *Establish closer working relationships complementary with other farmer groups in the area with similar objectives e.g. Mallee Sustainable Farming and Birchip Cropping Group.*
- *Develop funding and other partnerships to diversify the financial base and secure the future of research and associated activities in the Mallee, including MRS.*
- *Utilise the facilities and networks in the Mallee to establish new education, training and extension opportunities at all levels.*

MARF

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