



Why celebrate our Great Grains at Beulah?

What are the Great Grains?

When you eat food products made from cereals (like wheat, or oats), or pulses (like lentils or chick peas) or oilseeds (like canola), you are eating a 'Great Grain'.

Our toasting glasses are full of different types and varieties of 'great grains'.

Why did we think we should celebrate them for National Science Week 2014?

We had a wonderful celebration of our great grains hosted by Beulah CWA. Most people had some farming background to base the activities and anecdotes on, while still learning some new things about the great grains. Why was Beulah named as the "Centre of the Barley Belt"? Barleys were grown around Beulah, north of the netting fence, where they are better suited to the salinity of the soils.



We had many reasons for celebrating science for our great grains:

- Foods for us all, for our families, for the world.
- A great food source, with the best nutrition coming from these natural grains, giving a healthier diet, e.g. "You can't beat porridge."
- We have such a variety of foods to share with the world.
- Scientists try to keep in front of problems, so seed varieties keep changing with new ones added.
- For example in the 1920's, Smut was a fungus disease problem in wheat. Farmers would pick the best heads to grow them next year, to try to reduce it from their farm. Hannaford's Pickler was a 1940's solution to this.
- Barley heads were a problem recalled from the 1940's – they hung down and snapped off with the first big wind, if you hadn't harvested them.
- To overcome problems, plant breeding scientists also choose varieties from different countries to improve what we grow here.
- So our seed varieties have been made to fit our climate and soil conditions.
- They have also been made to cope with pests and diseases.
- We farmers do science experiments every time we try new types and new varieties on our land to see how good they are, and sometimes they aren't, e.g. in the 1990's we "gave field peas a go". They looked great, grew beautifully, got hit by frost and had no grain when it was time to harvest.
- The Grains are our main industry, providing 'securely based occupations'.
- Most of our population makes its living in growing grains or based on them.
- We have (science) improvements in transport of the grains, like bulk handling, to support us.
- That makes it easy to distribute our produce around the world to feed people who are unable to grow enough for themselves.
- This is a great industry from which we want the government to hear the voices of us farmers.



"We should be grateful that we are living in such a wonderful society and bountiful farm land which gives us the opportunity to grow great grains," said one participant, summing up that these great grains we celebrate are the basis of our community, as society and industry.



is funded by  An Australian Government Initiative



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with grain donations by: **Wimpak** (Minyip), **Viterra** (Dooen), **Graincorp** (Murtoa), **Wilkins** (Warracknabeal), and **the Australian Grains Genebank** (Horsham) and **Burrum Biodynamics** (Burrum).

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