



# Why celebrate our Great Grains at Rupanyup?

## 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?



The Activities Rupanyup session was with a lovely gathering of ladies, with a lot of farm knowledge amongst them and memories stretching back to childhood's between world wars. Over a cuppa and delicious chocolate sponge cake, fit for a celebration, our discussion of reasons to celebrate our great grains for NSWk 2014 developed into a bigger list than any would have expected:

- Firstly we recognise that grains lay at the origins of farming, agriculture and civilisations.
- They were the base of farming which began around Rupanyup from about 1857.
- In the 1940's, when horses were still in use, harvest started after Christmas, and the food grown on farm went first to feed the family, it was hard physical work to produce cereals to sell.
- Today, with tractors, machinery, computers, and plant and method advances through science, we are not reliant on farm produce to feed our family and we grow 'grains' to feed the world.
- We are in a lucky country where we have rain and good soil to grow grains, and room to do so.
- We have an amazing history of how grains have developed, and continue to do so, in Australia.

Grains are good to eat:

- They taste great, e.g. in soups.
- They are good for health – they are a necessity in our daily intake for our body's systems.
- Vegetarians can live off them for their protein.
- There is great diversity amongst the grains, so that they can be made into many foods, and we are developing new recipes and foods for new crops, e.g. chick peas.
- We are a grain storage for the world, producing good food for the world.
- They are also food for stock.

Grains have other non-food uses, which science has also developed–

- 'waste' stubble can go into bio-diesel- also better for the environment than burnt stubbles
- 'reject' grain can be used for fuel for heating in combustion stoves – better than fossil fuels.
- use in craft and art!

Science is in everything – but may also bring potential side-effects with changes e.g. any long-term dangers from farming with chemicals compared with the damage done to soil structure by repeated ploughing of soils in the 1940's, especially with bulldozers.

"Grains are an integral part of our existence," said one lady. "and of my life as a partner in the farming of great grains," replied another.



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