



# Why celebrate our Great Grains at Woomelang?

## 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'.

Many of the children and adults at the Woomelang celebration came from farming families, but the younger ones did not yet know a lot about their great grains.

Facilitator Jeanie Clark, said, "It was wonderful to work with these children and help them grow their knowledge of the grain groups and some products specific crops are made into. As some of the children could identify some crops by their size, shape and colour features, these were good science observations to share that with the other children."



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

The children thought about this and came up with the following reasons:

- It's our food,
- We make them in to food products.
- The grains and the food products are healthy foods.
- They also feed our animals, e.g. pigs.
- We are lucky to have them in our land.
- They help our soils.

As a National Science Week event, the celebration introduced some sciences involved in the grains industries, especially plant breeding. Its scientists give us crops to grow in our environment and market around the world for differing food needs.

Plant breeding science overcomes hurdles from the environment and diseases to bring farmers good crops to grow and make their living. A simplified Slasher Chick Pea Breeding History was acted out by the children to show some of these hurdles. It begins in the 1970's when the first 'migrant' desi chick peas were brought into Australia to start this industry. New varieties develop and are grown by farmers. Then the 1998 Blight disaster occurs. Some varieties are wiped out, but 1/10<sup>th</sup> of the Desavic variety survived and that was enough to become the basis of the next generation, Slasher."

Our toasting glasses are full of different types and varieties of 'great grains'. They remind us of the reasons we have above for celebrating our 'Great Grains' and for the science and scientists who have contributed to this over our history as grain growers.



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