

GRAINS RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

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INTRODUCTION

The Grains Research and Development Corporation (GRDC) is one of the world's leading grains research organisations, responsible for planning, investing in and overseeing research and development to deliver improvements in production, sustainability and profitability across the Australian grains industry. The GRDC is a statutory corporation, founded in 1990 by Australia's Commonwealth Government. Funding is provided through a levy on grain growers (currently 1% of the value on 25 leviable crops). The Commonwealth Government matches this funding, up to an agreed ceiling. The crops include temperate and tropical cereals, pulses and oilseeds.

The GRDC has developed a dynamic research partnership with the grains industry. This partnership now underpins the industry's drive towards higher profitability. The GRDC integrates grains research across production, processing, environmental and marketing sectors to enhance marketability, productivity and sustainability of Australia's grains industry. Investment by the GRDC in 1999-2000 will be almost \$100 million.

RESEARCH PRIORITIES

GRDC investment is divided into four objectives that address long-term issues facing the industry. The four investment objectives are:

Meeting quality requirements – strengthening the links between researchers, producers, processors and marketers to ensure the industry continues to meet the requirements of discriminating buyers.

Increasing productivity – introducing improved plant varieties, production methods and farming systems that increase yield and reduce the cost of farm inputs.

Protecting and enhancing the environment – improving the industry's capability to produce grain of a consistent quality and yield over a long period.

Delivering outcomes – integrating research outcomes into user-friendly information packages, to be marketed through the most effective delivery networks.

The R&D programs carried out by the GRDC have been crucial in helping the growth of the industry and in increasing the profitability of graingrowers. It is providing a competitive edge to the industry enabling continued success on world markets, in variety development and in delivering agronomic advances benefiting farmers.

Canola production has grown significantly in Australia in the last five years and is now seen as an important component of the Australian farming system. The increased GRDC investment in canola has paralleled the production increase.

The priority areas for GRDC investment in canola are:

- Disease resistance
- Improved product quality
- Improved weed control
- Improved adaptation to low rainfall areas
- Better management practices.