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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Back to school: Lessons to be learnt from 2007!

The Birchip Cropping Group will host its annual Members Only Trials Review day this Monday 18<sup>th</sup> February 2008, at the Birchip Leisure Centre. Registration kicks off at 9am, with sessions commencing at 9.30am. BCG's most interesting and relevant results from 2007 will be presented from a range of speakers endeavoring to ensure that every opportunity is being capitalized on and assist with management strategies for 2008.

The substantial increase in fertiliser and glyphosate prices has generated increased awareness of minimizing costs where applicable without comprising yield and quality. Brooke White, Crop Facts, will discuss ways on how to refine our phosphorous and nitrogen management strategies even further. James Jess, BCG, will discuss the importance of controlling summer weeds through cultivation or spraying and which is better in terms of soil health, economics, and the amount of water conserved under each system.

David Moody (ex BCG), Rob Wheeler (SARDI), and Kristy Hobson (DPI), will discuss the potential of the latest barley, wheat and chickpea varieties and which are the best bet varieties for the Mallee and Wimmera for 2008. David will also talk in depth about barley agronomy; the interaction between row spacing and pre-emergent herbicides in ten different barley varieties in the Mallee and whether we are trading yield for convenience.

Another hot topic from 2007 to be presented by Kate McCormick is the Hay story. This was a big issue in 2007; what is the optimum time of cutting, the profitability of hay compared to grain production, does variety make a difference and the management requirements for maximising quality and dry matter.

In 2007, some farmers made considerable losses with futures and contracts, and as a result said they would never get caught out again. "Grow it first and then sell it!" However with grain prices still at record highs, are farmers missing out by dismissing the opportunities of forward selling grain? Ron Storey (Australian Crop Forecasters) has been set the challenge of discussing the benefits and risks associated with forward selling grain. This discussion will be complimented by a presentation from David Cornish – are our farming businesses flexible enough?

The day will conclude with Ben Jones (BCG), discussing the keys to modest, less variable profits with minimal complexity and less reliance on skill or luck using 2008 prices and data from the Farming Systems site (2000-07) and well-known agricultural consultant Nigel McGuckian talking about complex decision making and providing some strategies for farmers to use this year in the planning and business decision making process.

Entry is \$10 for current BCG members (to cover lunch). If you are not a member but are interested in attending this and other BCG events throughout 2008, memberships may be purchased on the day for \$275 (inc GST). BCG looks forward to seeing you at this fantastic event!!!

For more information contact BCG on (03) 54922787 or [info@bcg.org.au](mailto:info@bcg.org.au)

Enquiries: Kellie Matthews