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## Changing climate, changing practices!

Australia's agricultural climate is changing with increased variability in rainfall, temperature and the global environment. The marketing and consumer environment is changing. There are strong drivers and incentives for farmers to adapt and alter their management strategies to cope with and take advantages of such changes. Many of the options available for adapting to anticipated changes involve modification of current practices employed for managing new variability's.

The BCG theme for 2008 is "Changing Climate, Changing Practices" and the group will provide farmers with information and tools to be better able to manage risk and ensure future sustainability. BCG will focus on new and available options that will maintain and increase profitability, competitiveness, and sustainability of agriculture in this changing climate.

Adaptation strategies may vary according to location as climate change will have different impacts in different regions. The successive years of variable climate conditions has already prompted many Wimmera/Mallee farmers to make decisions to be more opportunistic and low risk. Other changes in practices include using seasonal climate forecast information to vary planting times, sowing rates, nitrogen application, row spacing, tillage techniques and crop varieties.

Yield Prophet<sup>®</sup> is an invaluable tool for managing climate variability and its impact on many aspects of management. During 2008, a new climate change report will be added that will allow users to assess how climate change forecasts developed by CSIRO and the BoM, based on climate change scenarios for 2030 will impact on likely yields for their farm. Yield Prophet will make these reports specific to paddock locations, soil type, and sowing time and will be an invaluable tool for managing climate change into the future.

Agriculture is vulnerable to climate change and climate variability and deciding which adaptation options to pursue in response to change remains difficult due to the uncertainty associated with the extent of the change predicted. However, farmers are currently increasing their expertise and knowledge at managing climate change and climate variability, so as to ensure their farms remain sustainable and profitable.

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