THE BIG 12 LESSONS LEARNT FROM 2020

1. Make your cropping rotation plan and stick to it, try to avoid making drastic changes to rotations in response to market changes, as this has implications for crop choices in the subsequent year.

2. Barley is more frost tolerant than wheat. It is OK to sow barley early and plant wheat at a time that reduces frost exposure.

3. Baiting for and controlling mice prior to cropping and/or at sowing proved to be more beneficial and economical than in-season.

4. Apply fertiliser blends with higher amounts of N at sowing to avoid the inability of incorporation (in dry winters) but take into consideration that you can't respond to seasonal conditions.

5. Every year there will be shortages of some products. You shouldn't count on your agents to provide everything you need when you need it, when supply is tight, paddock history is important, understand the priorities and plan accordingly.

6. Blackleg was evident in some varieties of early sown canola. If major gene resistance is present, fungicide is unlikely to be required.

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Canola desiccation and windrow timing is crucial to ensure you don't compromise on yield and oil, whichever method you choose, timeliness is key.

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Weed seed destructors have proven their worth as they are controlling more grass weeds than hay in the rotation.

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You don't need to be physically present to absorb new information. There is a wealth of information that can be accessed remotely, and time spent driving machinery is the ideal opportunity.

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Silo bags were a worthwhile investment for timeliness of harvest and staff wellbeing however you need a plan and ability for moving grain in season.

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Lamb marking rates improved for Merinos and held for non-Merinos but are still well below scanning rates and would benefit from greater use of scanning for multiples, condition scoring and targeted nutrition for ewe and lamb survival.

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Don't be complacent when it comes to fertiliser planning after two good years (2019 and 2020).