Issue 5

Precision Agriculture Association New Zealand
TECHNOLOGY FOR SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

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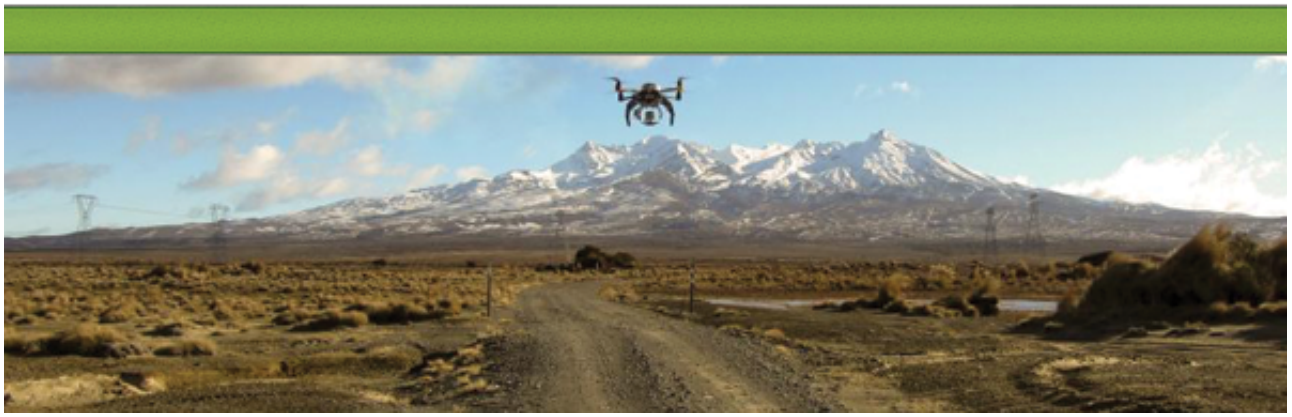

FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the first edition of the newsletter for 2015.
You'll notice a new format and greater use of links to full articles on line. I hope this will help you to focus on the content of most interest to you and that you will enjoy the new look.

Best regards,
Roger Williams, Editor.

IT-BASED AGRICULTURE A BOON FOR FARMERS

Source: Faculty of Environment, Society and Design, Lincoln University

With IT-based agriculture changing the way farming can be done, Lincoln University has developed a new programme to teach people the latest techniques.

IT-based farming, known as precision agriculture, involves using technologies such as sensors to carry out soil or crop mapping. This allows farmers to use real-time data to place nutrients, fertilisers and chemicals with much more accuracy than would otherwise be possible.

The University has recently begun offering a specialised second-year course in precision agriculture, currently the only course of its kind in the country. "This new IT world is more than just computerising existing farming," says adjunct professor Dr Armin Werner, who runs the course and also works as the precision agriculture group manager at Lincoln Agritech Limited. "New approaches and tools are available to be used in all agricultural production

systems, leading to important changes in the way farms are managed."

Dr Werner says precision agriculture improves profitability and benefits the environment, because water, nutrients and energy can be used exactly where needed and nowhere else, which enhances efficiency and reduces losses.

To read more, click here.

BECOME A MEMBER OF THE ASSOCIATION

For information on the range of memberships we offer and to join the Precision Agriculture Association of NZ.

CLICK HERE

MONTHLY UAV FORUM IN CHRISTCHURCH

Anyone with a research or commercial interest in Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) technology should consider attending the monthly UAV Forum organised by the Spatial Engineering Research Centre (SERC; http://www.serc.canterbury.ac.nz), an academic research centre hosted by the University of Canterbury's College of Engineering.

Kelvin Barnsdale is a Senior Research Engineer at SERC and chairs the monthly UAV Forum, which is held in their premises with a web link to external participants. "Our members recognise that the science of UAV technology is a rapidly growing area, with the potential to bring enormously positive benefits to a wide range of commercial industries," he says.

Click on 'Read More' below for more information on the UAV Forum.

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MEASURING ANNUAL PASTURE YIELD: IT CAN BE DONE

For years arable farmers have mapped variation in crop yields. Now, new research shows farmers can also measure variation in pasture yields, using readily available tools.

Mike Manning, Ravensdown General Manager of Strategy and Innovation, says the research takes precision farming to the next level, with immediate practical applications. “This work is in the early stages but already we can see how it will benefit farmers, particularly around identifying areas of pasture that are underperforming and places where avoidable problems are emerging.”

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LANDWISE 2015: THE FARM OF 2030

Dan Bloomer reports that registrations for the 2015 LandWISE Conference are higher than ever before. The Callaghan Innovation Special Technical Session is well oversubscribed with people on a waiting list. The whole event has attracted the attention of lead farmers, technologists and researchers from Australia and New Zealand.

Entitled “The Farm of 2030”, the conference aim is to inform farmers and other industry people of new developments becoming available to increase farm efficiencies and productivity. A key aspect is managing variability; immediately critical for nutrient management, and essential for to stay competitive long term.

Dan notes that the next big thing in farming may be small. Imagine “The Farm

of 2030": gangs of autonomous machines monitoring paddocks and applying custom treatments to individual plants. Presenters will discuss identification, causes and management of variability and outline progress in farm automation, sensing and control. Think automated pruning, weed control, crop protection, irrigation, quality assessment and harvest segmentation.

In Havelock North on 20-21 May, you can join an "Ag-Bot Design Team". Mix with lead farmers and technologists, meet the researchers developing the tools of 2030.

For more information and registration details, click on 'Read More' below.

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PAANZ Membership

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PA Events

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PA In Action

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NEW NAME FOR SPAA

SPAA – (the) Society of Precision Agriculture Australia is the new name of this group. The name change means the organisation can focus on their strategic mission "to be leading advocates for PA across Australia" and to provide representation and advocacy for precision agriculture on a national and

international level rather than a site specific region.

SPAA Executive Officer, Dr Nicole Dimos says, “Whilst the SPAA brand is strong in the Southern grains region [of Australia], increasing our audience capture and representation across industries will provide numerous benefits for us and offer greater services to stakeholders in the delivery of precision agriculture communiqué across Australia. It also offers greater opportunities to learn from other industries”.

For more information on SPAA, click here.