

# Ready for Seeding

Like most farmers in the wheat belt, staff and students at the WA College of Agriculture Morawa are optimistically preparing for opening rains. The seeder bar is undergoing annual maintenance, the overhead diesel fuel tank has been filled and fertilizer not used in the 2006 programme has been uncovered ready for use.

Some dry seeding of barley has been completed in an endeavour to provide early green feed for stock and to replace the seed burden lost in summer dust storms. The 2007 seeding programme will include 770 ha cereal crops, 60 ha lupins and 264 ha of mixed pasture.

The College will continue to plant Nungarin clover and Herald medic in line with the long term plan to increase the nitrogen content of the soil. The high cost of fertilizer has resulted in an economic decision to rely less on applying fertilizer and more on improving the soil fertility. Sub clovers and Medic suitable for lighter soil types have been planted to create a fertile legume pasture base. 211 ha will be set aside for fallow. Over the past 5 years the College has adopted the strategy of fallowing, either by chemical or mechanical means to conserve moisture and allow early seeding also reducing input costs and risk.

At the commencement of each season the Farm Manager addresses the students, outlining the year's cropping programme and explaining decisions on variety, sowing times, fertilizer, pest and weed control. Students then monitor various crops as part of their Plant Production and Marketing studies, recording operations and treatments to become familiar with the requirements for paddock record keeping and Quality Assurance.

Students are rostered in shifts to participate in all facets of the seeding programme. The Case tractor used for spraying is fitted with a Farmscan guidance system allowing students to experience up to date technology and learn precision farming skills.



*Krystal Allen from Narngulu and Jared Ash from Northampton servicing the air seeder bar.*

The College offers nationally recognised certificate training in Agriculture, Automotive and Construction and have become a school of preference for discerning students. Prospective students are invited to come for a one week free try out. For more information please phone 99711158 or visit the website [www.morawaag.wa.edu.au](http://www.morawaag.wa.edu.au)