



RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

The role of decision support tools in farm decision making

The role of decision support tools in farm decision making (2008-11)

Funding CSIRO

Investigators/Researchers

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Description

This study is investigating whether farmers and agronomic advisers understand analytical information about climate related production risk and whether any of the different formats used to represent probability is more effective. It also investigated how well the Yield Prophet program fits farmers' and advisers' decision environment and whether they are inclined to be sceptical about science-derived probabilities and prefer to trust their own intuitive judgement about the uncertain production future.

Respondents were also presented with descriptions of particular seasonal scenarios and asked to provide their responses to these scenarios. Responses to these questions were generally consistent with the Yield Prophet approach in that they mostly referred to the same data inputs that were required for Yield Prophet analysis.

Other considerations were complementary to rather than conflicting with or alternative to the Yield Prophet analysis. Significantly, there was little evidence that respondents rejected the idea of responsive management or considered each season as a singular event rather than as one of many.

Outputs

Draft paper written:

Hochman, Z., McCown R.L., Hunt, J., Parton, K.A. and Whish, J. (2011), Climate Risk Management and Probability: Probing Farmers and Advisers Understanding of Yield Prophet® Reports.

Outcomes

The study found very little evidence one way or the other that farmers used a heuristic approach to risk management rather than an analytical approach. Also, if farmers were using heuristics, there was no evidence that use of heuristics was in conflict with the use of an analytical input to risk management. Similarly there was little evidence that respondents rejected the idea of responsive management or considered each season as a singular event rather than as one of many.

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