



MEDIA RELEASE – Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> March, 2010

## Condingup farmers dominate SEPWA leadership

The reins of the leadership of the South East Premium Wheat Growers Association have been handed over from one Condingup farmer to another.

Immediate Past President, Andrew Fowler stood down from his role at the election of office bearers at the SEPWA Executive meeting today to allow Lyndon Mickel to step up to the position.

Mr Fowler said it has been a privilege to serve and I feel I have gained personally from the experience and hope that SEPWA is moving along in the right direction.

“It is very positive for SEPWA that we have people in the Executive who are prepared to step up and have a go at the senior roles.”

The new Vice President is Greg Curnow who farms at Cascade, fellow Cascadian Wayne Walter retains the role of Treasurer and Neridup farmer, David Cox has been elected as Secretary.

Other Executive members include Sam Guest, Andrew Heinrich, Andrew Fowler, Chris Reichstein and Steve Tilbrook along with newly elected Executive members Leon Bowman, Andrew Chambers and Craig Newman.

In reflecting on the past 12 months, Mr Fowler said last year was a very positive year with the financial position of SEPWA improving dramatically due to improved profits from our operations and events and also a major lift in sponsorship.

Mr Fowler said the highlight of his term has been the development of the relationship with Interflour to support SEPWA’s trials program and the introduction of the Eagle Rock stack for the 2009 harvest.

He said the major challenge for SEPWA is to maintain a strong financial position at a time when the group doesn’t have a major funded project running.

“One of the goals of the group is to develop a project that fits strongly with our strategic plan and that helps to add capacity to the group.

The longer term focus for SEPWA is to continue to look at improving the quality of grain leaving the Esperance Port Zone, and working with groups like Interflour is at the heart of SEPWA goals”, said Mr Fowler.

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SEPWA's new President, Lyndon Mickel and his wife Nikki along with children Kiara and Tiahn farm 6000 ha at Condingup and Beaumont in partnership with Lyndon's parents.

Mr Mickel attended Narrogin Agricultural College and Muresk Institute of Agriculture where he received a Bachelor of Business in Agriculture and then returned home to the family farm.

Thirty-seven year old Mr Mickel joined the SEPWA Executive in 2005 and he has been Vice President to Andrew Fowler for the last two years.

Mr Mickel said he is extremely honoured to be voted in as the new SEPWA President and looks forward to leading such a dynamic organisation.

He said with the grains industry going through a period of change, he feels that the role that SEPWA maintains within the industry, particularly with the trials that we conduct, will become even more important for the grain growers in the Esperance Port Zone (EPZ).

"I believe SEPWA plays a very important role within the region as it gives grain growers a united voice within the industry and provides our members with an independent analysis of wheat, barley and canola variety trials which are conducted throughout the port zone.

Mr Mickel said SEPWA will continue to promote the quality of grain coming out of the EPZ and strengthen the links along the supply chain, with groups like Interflour, as it assists with information transfer between customers and our members.

He said he is looking forward to continuing the lead set by previous Presidents and guiding SEPWA to become one of the best and most productive grower groups in Western Australia and Australia.

"I would also like to acknowledge the great contribution that Andrew Fowler has made to SEPWA, not only in his tenure as President but throughout his time on the Executive.

I thank Andrew for this and look forward to working closely with him during my time as President", said Mr Mickel.

*PHOTO – (from left to right), SEPWA's new Office Bearers - Secretary David Cox with Immediate past president, Andrew Fowler congratulating fellow Condingup farmer and newly elected President, Lyndon Mickel and Wayne Walter, Treasurer.*

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