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Friday 22nd October, 2010

CROPPING PROFITS EATEN AWAY WITHOUT IMPROVEMENTS IN EFFICIENCY SAYS NEW NUFFIELD SCHOLAR

Paul Adam, from Tottenham in New South Wales, will tonight be awarded the prestigious Nuffield Scholarship supported by Macquarie Agricultural Funds Management. Paul is planning to study cost efficiencies in no-till cropping systems.

He says no-till has generally proven to be very efficient when compared to conventional systems, generally not resulting in any great yield increases, but giving major savings and benefits in sustainability.

Paul says “such systems tend to require less fuel, time and machinery, all of which provide huge savings in dollar terms. However, I am concerned that farmers have hit a ceiling with savings and ever-increasing expenses will again start to eat into profit margins.”

Paul would like to focus on machinery cost efficiencies, including machinery requirements, fuel efficiency, hectares to hour of operation, ability to multi-task and the minimum amount of capital outlay needed to operate a broad-acre no-till farm business, saying “this gives the potential to decrease fixed and variable expenses, without sacrificing your capability to still do the task in timely manner. I believe this area alone could provide some major leaps forward in overall farm profitability.”

He is hoping to visit Canada, America, Brazil, France and Germany to investigate his topic, including visits to machinery manufacturing facilities, field days and as many farms as possible.

With his wife Meggan he runs a no-till continuous cropping enterprise on controlled traffic, planting 2000 hectares of mainly cereals over two properties, “Dysart” and “Lansdale”.

Nuffield Australia is an organisation which provides an opportunity to Australian farmers to travel overseas on an agricultural research scholarship. It is a 16-week program which consists of both group and individual travel. The next group will be travelling through New Zealand, North America, Brazil, Mexico and France in February-March 2011.

Paul is available for interviews to talk about his planned study.
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A high-resolution photo of Paul is available for download from nuffield.com.au/gallery.html