



on track to improved profit and lifestyle

CTF UP-2-DATE *newsletter*

May - Jun CTF Solutions team highlights

1. NSW trip to visit farmers
2. GIS training course for QDPI
3. CQ bus trips
4. Eastern Darling Downs & CQ projects
5. Sydney training from UNSW GPS experts
6. UAVs

NSW trip to visit farmers

At the beginning of May, **CTF Solutions** travelled through NSW, visiting new and existing grain grower clients on the Liverpool Plains, around Parkes, Condobolin, Warren, Coonamble and Moree. The trip looked at farm layouts, machinery (focusing on planters prior to winter planting), and soil conditions in CTF and in random-traffic systems. In Coonamble, **CTF Solutions** conducted a presentation at a local grower group meeting, promoting adoption of CTF, zero-till, machinery modifications for CTF, and precision guidance systems utilising community/shared base stations. Farmers, agronomists and consultants attended the presentation and **CTF Solutions** received positive responses which will drive further adoption of CTF systems. In response to this meeting, Coonamble Elders agronomists are organising a bus tour for the local growers to visit CTF farms in QLD.

Basic GIS training course for DPI staff

CTF Solutions conducted an introductory GIS course in Emerald for QDPI staff. GIS (Geographical Information System) is computer software capable of capturing, storing, analysing and displaying geographically referenced data. **CTF Solutions** uses GIS for property maps and plans, satellite imagery, topography surveys, yield maps, and for relating these data layers to each other. These data are all location specific (geographically referenced) and spatially distributed, and the GIS ensures that we are comparing data from the same spots (within a metre or so). Because CTF growers have high accuracy and repeatability in their farming operations, our GIS can line up with wheel tracks and planter widths to provide an understanding of crop and management responses that is not confused by random wheel tracks, overlaps or misses. There is also huge potential for GIS to play a major role in farm record keeping since we can now record farming operations and layouts with GPS, crop growth with satellites, yield

with yield monitors, etc.

The 2-day theory and practical course covered basic GIS concepts and skills, with practical training in the use of ESRI ArcGIS9.1 software. The course focused on GIS applications with remote sensing (aerial & satellite imagery), yield mapping, topography mapping, and spatial data management. Course participants were also encouraged to geo-reference much of their field work, such as research trial sites and soil sampling points, and were shown how to import GPS data into the GIS. DPI staff from Biloela and Goondiwindi also attended the training course. **CTF Solutions** thanks Troy Jensen (Engineer and PA expert from the QDPI in Toowoomba) for his assistance and contribution to the training course.

CQ Grain bus trip

In early June, the GRDC project team with Nancy Rowe (QDPI Moura) ran the Inter-generational Study Tour through the Central Queensland Highlands. The inspiration of the study tour was the fact that many young people are entering agricultural industries – either back onto family farms, into agronomy groups or agricultural service industries. Opportunities exist to strengthen inter-generational relationships and encourage succession planning in agricultural business enterprises. The tour visited four grain/grazing properties to look at innovative machinery and farming practises, and the use of high resolution satellite imagery and high accuracy topographic maps for farm layout planning and design for CTF systems. Waterlogging and erosion control were major resource management issues. Around 40 people participated in the bus tour, including farmers and their sons (or successors), agronomists, FBA/Landcare representatives, QDPI&F extension staff, and **CTF Solutions** consultants. Victorian DPI Agronomist, Andrew Whitlock, also attended and provided valuable insight into support groups for young farmers and agricultural professionals.

CQ Sugar bus trip.

CTF Solutions took a group of Mackay cane farmers to visit CTF grain farms near Duaringa and Wowan, and an interesting visit to a pineapple farm near Yeppoon. In recent years, these cane farmers have adopted 2m CTF cane production systems that include grain legume break crops. Although their CTF systems have delivered substantial benefits in production efficiencies and cost reductions, they have not achieved significant yield increases. The trip aimed to educate the growers in the successes of CTF in the grains industry with increased yield and profit, and inspire them to make changes to increase their yields and profit.

Eastern Downs & CQ Projects

GPS topography mapping on the Eastern Darling Downs and in the Don River area of CQ has continued as part of the catchment projects for Condamine Alliance and Fitzroy Basin Association. The Eastern Downs project is now completed with the topo data contributing to detailed plans for CTF systems on each farm, including layouts, machinery, crop management and adoption plans. The topo data set for the Don River area was completed by growers collecting data during winter crop planting. The next steps are data analysis, contour mapping and area wide drainage designs.

CTF Solutions team receive GPS training in Sydney from UNSW experts

The **CTF Solutions** team met with the University of New South Wales (UNSW) GPS team led by Dr Craig Roberts. The training aimed to further educate us in the functionalities of RTK GPS, and to receive expert advice on the potential and possibilities of sharing or networking base stations between multiple brands of GPS rover units by providing area-wide real-time GPS correction signals (similar to that of the CORS network in Victoria and SunPOZ in Queensland). High accuracy GPS can be utilised anywhere in the area and by multiple industries (agriculture, surveying, construction, transport, mining etc.). The outcome should be cheaper and better GPS with ensured quality control and up-grading. Watch this space and talk to us before you buy a base station.

Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs)

CTF Solutions discussed the potential of UAVs for agricultural remote sensing with the University of Southern Queensland (USQ), the National Centre for Engineering in Agriculture (NCEA) and QDPI. UAVs were originally designed for military reconnaissance and have potential in agriculture for remote sensing applications such as in-season, multi-temporal crop monitoring. V-Tol Aerospace in Brisbane has UAVs designed by the US military. The UAV can be autonomously or manually controlled from the ground and is tracked by GPS positioning transmitted via a radio link to a laptop with moving map software. The challenge is the remote sensing equipment and at this stage we still favour satellite imagery.

CTF 06 Conference Reminder

Just a quick reminder that this year's **Controlled Traffic Farming Conference (CTF06)** is being held on **27-29 September in Ballarat, Victoria.**

Register now at www.actfa.net or contact Sally Brown at sally.brown@uq.net.au or phone 07 3201 2808.

Look out for group tours, e.g. catchment groups such as FBA and CA in Queensland, and Conservation Farmers (CFI) in northern NSW. Let us know of other groups and we will advertise them here.

July - August, CTF Solutions Activities

- **Mackay trip to develop project on optimising CTF, and Land & Water Management Plans.**
- **Develop sugar projects around satellite imagery for mapping and monitoring farm performance**
- **Advanced CTF Workshops in CQ and western Victoria**
- **Intro to CTF Workshop on the Darling Downs**
- **Present to Global Navigational Satellite Systems (GNSS) conference at Gold Coast**
- **Present to Remote Sensing Conference in Brisbane**
- **ISTRO conference in Germany (Jeff and Don travel to UK, Europe for global CTF)**

CTF Solutions is a grower-orientated organisation. We need your support and input to provide the service excellence that we strive for.

Please contact us with your comments and ideas. This is your Newsletter, please tell us what you'd like to see more (or less) of!

To contact the **CTF Solutions** team, or to arrange a visit, logon to www.ctfsolutions.com.au

General enquiries

56 Iona Tce.

TARINGA 4068

Phone: (07)38710359

Fax: (07)38710356

Email contacts :

Tim Neale

tim@ctfsolutions.com.au

0428 157 208

Don Yule

don@ctfsolutions.com.au

0427 113 127

Jeff Tullberg

jeff@ctfsolutions.com.au

0417 134 372

Wayne chapman

wayne@ctfsolutions.com.au

07 46273434

Blue Perkowicz

blue@ctfsolutions.com.au

07 46623913

Peta Neale

peta@ctfsolutions.com.au

07 46623913