

5 minutes with David Cameron, Growth Awards Productivity Winner

Broadacre
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Each month in Cereals News, we will be showcasing the outstanding work that our Growth Awards Winners are achieving out in the field. This month we talk to 2016 winner in the Productivity category, David Cameron, a Partner/Agronomy Consultant at Farmanco Moora, WA.

David Cameron is passionate about the biology and chemistry behind agronomy and is driven by seeing his clients reach their objectives. He is able to combine the extensive Farmanco economic acumen with the latest research data to develop tailored management plans that aim to achieve the highest profitability for all of his clients.

David works with his client's on their whole business to achieve productivity and profitability. He set goals within the limitations of client resources and works with clients to reach their commercial objectives.

He has a deep understanding of agronomy in the area in which he works and is confident in making the difficult decisions when it comes to strategy. David is actively involved in a number of panels and grower groups, and currently has three R&D projects he is watching closely this year. He believes extension is a two-way-street and feels a social responsibility to stay up-to-date on the latest research as well as provide groups and organisations with local field information.

Though David's knowledge and understanding of his field are extensive, he doesn't pretend to know everything; and because he is dedicated to providing the most comprehensive advice for his clients, seeks out other industry experts to supplement his team. For example, he has recently encouraged a spraying application consultant and a precision agriculture consultant to join the Farmanco business to ensure his client's achieve their objectives.

How do you help growers to drive their land productivity?

I place a strong focus on proactive, planned agronomic advice as opposed to reactive methods as I believe this delivers a more strategic sound management. I carry out extensive soil and nutrition work and work through each client's logistical capabilities to fully understand the resources available and match the management plan to suit.

As a result, a number of my clients see great success in their land productivity and I find that two to three clients each year will look to expand their land area.

How do you help growers to grow quality crops and improve returns?

To drive productivity and improve returns, I first work to understand the yield potential of every farm I work with and develop a plan to set achievable goals within their framework. In general, I'm able to achieve high quality crops for my clients through strategic management of soil health and nutrition, especially nitrogen. My nitrogen strategy aims to deliver increased ROI for my clients by managing yield and quality.

I'm mindful of trace elements and work to ensure optimal pH levels in the soil while strategically balancing higher cost-per-hectare nutrients to ensure client returns are improving.

How do help your growers make efficient use of crop protection and fertiliser inputs?

I invest a great deal of time in professional development, learning about crop protection and fertiliser products. I utilise models to predict responses and make recommendations.

My expertise lies in the biology and chemistry of crop protection and fertiliser inputs. To meet the application requirements of my growers and utilise the technology available, I ensure my clients are receiving the best expert advice by employing an application specialist consultant to join us at Farmanco. This way I can ensure crop protection products are applied effectively through correctly set-up boom sprayers.

Over the past 18 months, I've seen an improvement in the effectiveness of my clients' use of inputs. I've also just contracted a precision ag specialist consultant to work with him to ensure seeder, spreader and spraying equipment is able to apply variable rates of treatments recommended.

David will join the Growth Awards Study Tour of the UK and Europe in July this year.

Learn more about the Growth Awards and read the profiles of other winners here.

<https://www.syngenta.com.au/growthawards>

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