



Press Release

Tuesday 13th May, 2008

Iraq learns from the Mallee

Mallee Sustainable Farming will be showing Iraq the no-till ropes this week when it hosts a visit to the region by a researcher and lecturer from Iraq.

In conjunction with the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR), this researcher is one of 12 Iraqis involved in a project studying germplasm and no-till farming methods in Australia.

Iraqi farmers are struggling to adapt to a freemarket economy. In the past 2 years, the price of fuel has increased ten-fold, hence the interest in no-till farming. This method of cultivation requires less use of a tractor, so consequently uses less fuel.

The Mallee has many similarities with the farming areas of northern Iraq. Both exist on sandy soils and low rainfall. (There are three bands of farming areas in northern Iraq with annual rainfall of 400mm, 300mm and 200mm respectively.)

The researcher along with Nick Paltridge from ACIAR will be in Loxton on Tuesday 13th May (afternoon) and Wednesday, 14th May (morning). They will be talking to MSF researcher Richard Saunders about risk management practices and new technologies. They will also be visiting several properties currently using no-till methods.

On Thursday 15th May, they will be in Mildura. MSF extension officer Nicole Dimos will be taking them to the NSW DPI at Dareton where they will be briefed on the latest developments in germplasm. They will then visit properties in the area currently using no-till methods.

For more information or to arrange an interview, contact Nick Paltridge from ACIAR on 0434 076 508