

AMID the fog created by a global pandemic, state government argy-bargy, border closures (and occasional openings), an erratic spring season, worsening China – Australia trade relations and a US Presidential election, the October release of the Federal Government's Ag2030 Plan, has largely flown under the radar.



But it's well worth being aware of what this plan entails. Ag2030 is essentially about how the Federal Government plans to provide the farm sector with the important policy, legislative and financial support mechanisms needed to travel along the road to an industry farm gate output value of \$100 billion by 2030. This is the ambitious target set by the National Farmers' Federation in their 2018 launch of the *2030 Roadmap*.

What will drive the value of Australia's agriculture sector from its current level of around \$60 billion a year, to \$100 billion by 2030? The industry obviously has some work to do in the next 10 years if this target is to be realised. And how do we know that this is not just another vacuous Canberra feel good document and that actual progress is being made along the way?

Each year, the NFF completes a report card outlining the progress towards \$100 billion outlined in their *2030 Roadmap*. NFF President Fiona Simson says it's essential that there is similar reporting against the identified deliverables within the Federal Government's Ag2030 plan. "We must all be accountable for our part in the task to achieve \$100 billion by 2030," Fiona says.

The NFF report card for 2019 projected a farm output value of \$84.3 billion by 2030, leaving a shortfall of \$16 billion to achieve the NFF Roadmap vision. The report card identified the major headwinds faced in achieving the \$100 billion target included global trade tensions, weather impacts, water issues, national energy policies and skilled labour shortages.

Priority areas to achieve \$100 billion by 2030

It's a positive sign that the Federal Government's Ag2030 Plan recognises these headwinds. Ag2030 outlines seven key priority areas: Water infrastructure; Trade and Exports; Innovation and Research; Stewardship; Strong Supply Chains; Human Capital; and, Biosecurity.

You only need to have a quick look at the first two of these priority areas to realise how strong these industry headwinds can and will be. There have been only 20 dams built in this country since 2003 – and 16 of them in Tasmania. State government intransigence and opposition from environmental groups have to this point in time, put paid to investment in water infrastructure.

And the ongoing trade spat with China – most of it targeted at Australian farm products – could very well have a long way to go yet before common sense prevails and politicking stops.

But at least we do have a plan and hopefully one that is pointing our farm sector towards a more profitable future.

From everyone at *Australian Grain*, we hope you, your families and your businesses have managed to track your way happily and healthily through a year like no other. Merry Christmas and a very Covid-free New Year. ■

In this issue...

A weed fighting revolution

In Western Australia's northern wheatbelt – where yields are relatively low and the seasons highly variable – Mullewa growers Andrew and Rod Messina have been on a long and dedicated journey of weed management.



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Exciting time to be in agriculture

The words grateful, excited, amazing and lucky sit comfortably amongst family farm, regenerative ag, compost, healthy soils, nutrients and fresh air in conversation with young farmer Tara Hindson from Victoria's West Wimmera.



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A cup of tea

The other day, my young son Grant, rang to motivate me into getting stuck in to the new post-and-rail fence I should have completed a week ago. Well you see we had hurriedly demolished a pretend stable, in which a family of termites had quite discourteously taken up residence. Anyway, a short fence was required to fill the resulting gap, left by the now non-existing stable.



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Strategies for managing high moisture grain

Recent rain and forecasts for a wetter than average few months ahead may contribute to a frustrating grain harvest for some growers. Recognising that, the challenges facing growers could extend beyond harvest if high moisture grain is coming off crops.



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Improving wheat establishment with deep sowing

In rainfed environments typical of the eastern and southern wheatbelts, crops are typically sown on the first breaking rains but sometimes soil moisture accumulated on the last rainfall event(s) prior to sowing is too deep for sowing with conventional varieties and drilling systems.



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