



SAGIT
25 YEARS
1991-2016

FAST FACTS

THE DATES:

Start: January 2014
Finish: December 2019

PROJECT PARTICIPANTS:

SARDI: Kathy Ophel-Keller.
2018 intern: Melissa McCallum
2017 intern: Danielle Allen.
2016 intern: Jamie Fortune.
2015 intern: Brooke Schofield.
2014 intern: James Walter.

THE PROBLEM:

There is a grains industry skills shortage in applied research.

THE RESEARCH:

The internship includes a full year research traineeship placement in SARDI for graduates and work experience for several undergraduate students each year in research and commercial organisations.

SAGIT RESEARCH SUMMARY

S1513 and S916: Grains research internships

IN A NUTSHELL

With the grains industry suffering a skills shortage in applied research, a SAGIT-funded internship is encouraging graduates to take up a career in the agriculture sector.

This traineeship program is designed to encourage more agricultural students to continue with a career in agricultural research, and offers one graduate internship and several undergraduate work experience opportunities within SARDI each year.

The 2017 intern was Danielle Allen. Previous interns were Jamie Fortune, Brooke Schofield and James Walter. Previous interns and work experience students have excelled in their studies, including winning academic awards, honours and PhD projects.

BACKGROUND

There is a skills shortage in the grains industry in applied research and development.

The project *Internships in applied grains research* (S1513) ran from 2014 to 2016, with *Grains research internships* (S916) to run from 2017 to 2019.

RESEARCH AIMS

The traineeship program is designed to encourage more agricultural students to continue with a career in agricultural research. Each year it includes:

- A full year research traineeship placement in SARDI for graduates, and
- Work experience for several undergraduate students each year in research and commercial organisations.

IN THE FIELD

The 2017 intern was Danielle Allen. Danielle has worked in the Pulse and Oilseed Pathology group, the Cereal Pathology group, the New Variety Agronomy group, Climate Applications and the Biometry hub. Danielle has spent most of her internship at the Waite Research Precinct, with some time at Port Lincoln, working on her major project and assisting researchers with field work on monitoring soil moisture.

The 2016 intern was Jamie Fortune. Jamie worked in the Entomology program, including field work on the Yorke Peninsula. He also spent time with the Molecular Diagnostics Group assisting in the training program and manual on Soilborne disease management.

The 2015 intern, Brooke Schofield, was based largely with the New Variety Agronomy Group at Clare. Her experiences included computer modelling, data analysis, lab and field work.

She undertook a project evaluating remote sensing tools to assess crop growth in the field.

The inaugural intern in 2014 was James Walter, who was primarily based with the cereal and pulse pathology programs. James undertook a research project on white grain disorder and went on to become the inaugural recipient of the Peter Waite Centenary Scholarship for Excellence in Agriculture, studying his PhD.

The program also supports a work experience program. This program is aimed at second year Agricultural Science students to give them an introduction to applied research. Depending on the research area, these may be offered as an ongoing project throughout the university semester or as an intensive vacation placement.

Work experience students:

- 2017: Benjamin McGorm, Bethany Sleep, Matthew Cadd, Mark De Lisio and Katelyn Heinrich.
- 2016: Caitlin Thompson, Angus Butler, Vanessa Seppelt and Ben Pratt.
- 2015: Brody Lock, Melissa McCallum and Heather Feetham.

RESULTS TO DATE

The first intern, James Walter, is now completing his PhD.

Three of the work experience students, Brody Lock, Melissa McCallum, and Angus Butler, were awarded undergraduate prizes in May 2017 at the University of Adelaide. This included the highest academic award, the Peter Waite medal, being awarded to Brody.

Melissa McCallum is undertaking Honours in 2017 on white grain disorder in wheat.

Brody Lock and Melissa McCallum have continued to be ambassadors for the way in which the Graduate Traineeship program fosters links between SARDI, the University of Adelaide and the Grains Industry. Both Brody and Melissa have made major contributions to GRDC and SAGIT funded projects by working in a casual capacity with the cereals pathology group after completing their Traineeships.

Melissa has been selected as the 2018 research intern and will be working in cereal agronomy.

VALUE FOR GROWERS

The students who have participated in the internships and work experience programs represent the future of grains industry research. With participants currently completing honours and PhD projects, they are already contributing to research to improve profitability for grain growers in SA.



2017 intern Danielle Allen at Karkoo on the lower Eyre Peninsula.

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