

# Foreword

Integrated Pest Management is a relatively new concept for Australian broadacre crop and livestock producers, despite the fact it has been employed within the horticultural and intensive agricultural industries for many decades. I suggest that some of the reasons why broadacre cropping and livestock producers have not adopted an IPM approach in the past, have been the fear of catastrophic financial loss, limited understanding of the principles of IPM and a near total domination by the chemical companies as to how pest species should be controlled.

Meeting with Paul Horne and Jessica Page some seven years ago opened my mind to alternative approaches to controlling insect pests. At the time our farmers in the western districts of Victoria were losing the battle against slugs, with many canola crops being badly eaten at emergence resulting in depressed yields and a loss of faith in the crop. At the time we had tried alternative baiting strategies, principally relying on different products, rates and timings. We were making limited progress and needed a fresh approach. This was where Paul and Jessica came in, along with Dr Jim Fortune from the Grains Research and Development Corporation who showed real vision and was willing to fund an alternative approach to controlling the pest problem. This was the start of the Integrated Pest Management approach to controlling slugs and other insect species in crops in south-west Victoria.

The journey with Paul and Jessica in developing an IPM approach to pest control over the last few years has been an extremely exciting one, albeit somewhat nerve-racking at times. We were unsure just how effective an IPM approach was going to be, given the limited knowledge and un-chartered waters we were operating in. The pioneering farmers such as Rowan Peel and John Hamilton who committed significant areas of their farm to the new IPM system, showed extreme courage, however they knew that their total reliance on chemical control had to cease because of escalating costs and failure to adequately control the pests.

Paul and Jessica were very ably supported by Peter O'Loughlin from Agvise P/L who encouraged many of his clients to take on this new approach. Paul and Jessica