



Providing context for (climate) change

Helen Burns

Research Liaison Officer
EH Graham Centre

Points of clarification

- Focus on mixed farming zone of south-eastern NSW
- **Farmers** – landholders whose major source of income is from primary production

Aims of projects

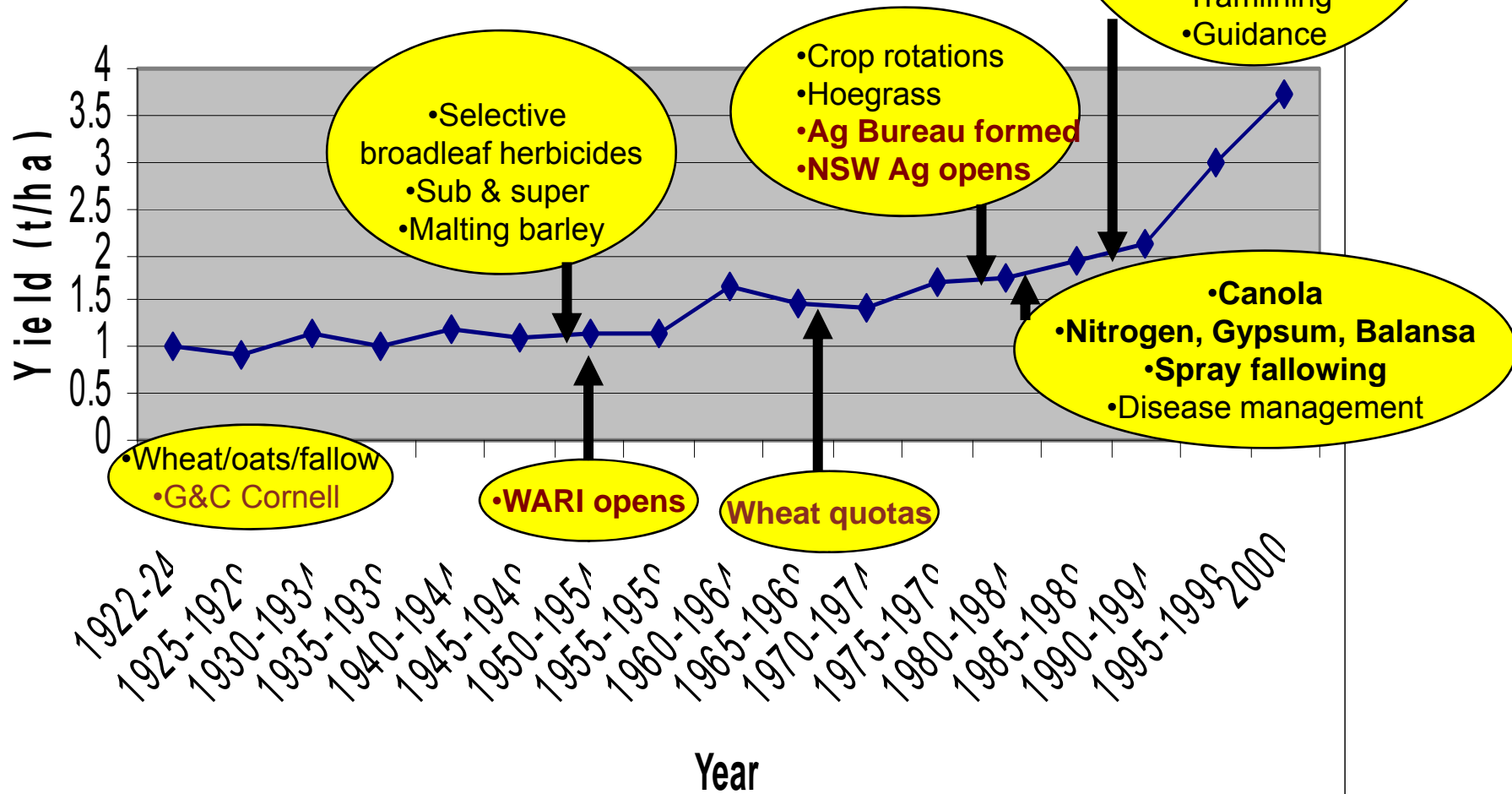
Part A

- ID **typical** farming systems
- Understand the rationale & drivers for change
- ID impediments to change & issues that need to be resolved to fast-track change.

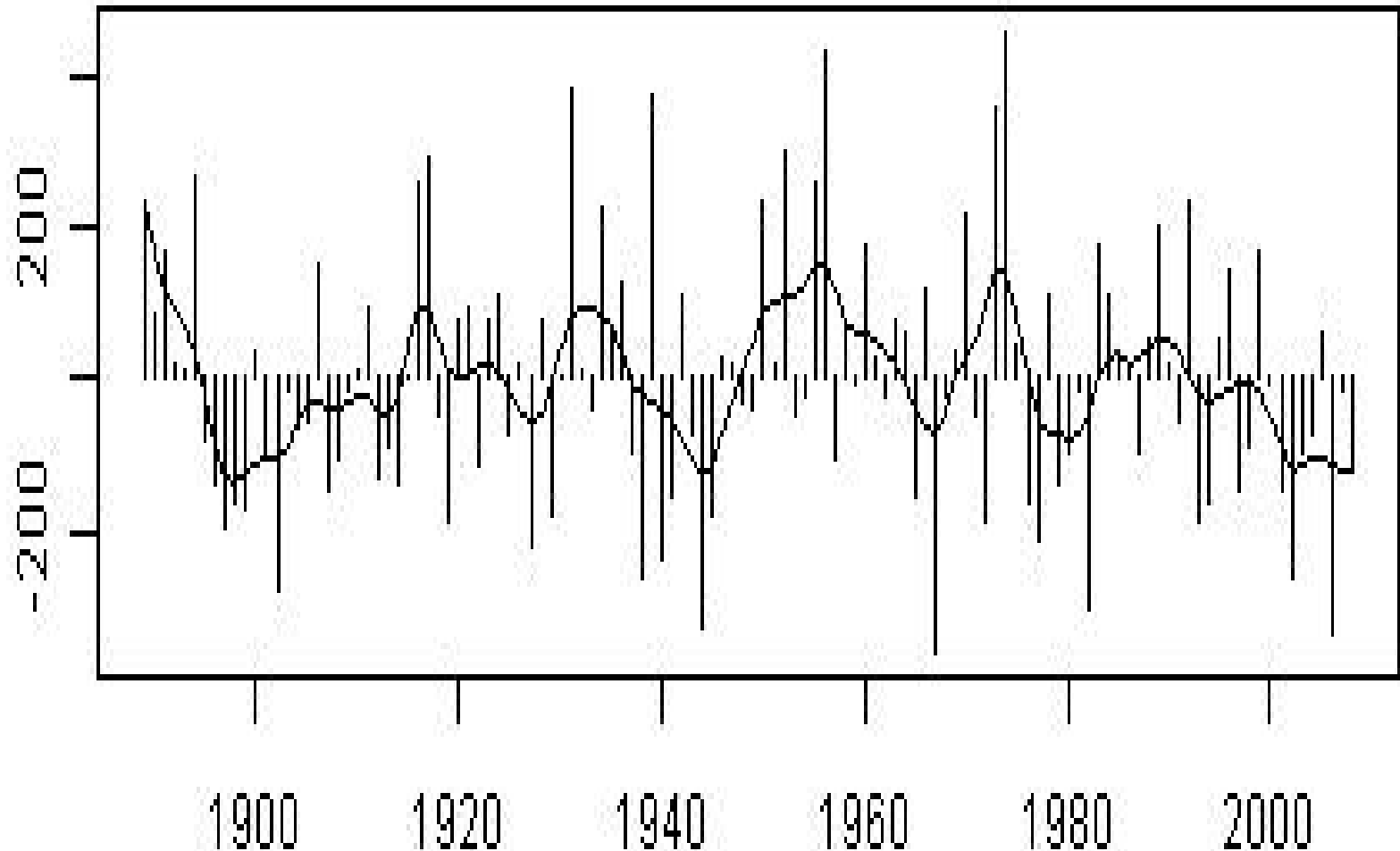
Part B

- Compare profitability across soil type, enterprise mixes and rainfall scenarios.

Events and innovations



Anomaly of annual rainfall (mm) Henty, NSW



Loss of confidence

Riverina farmer

**“Every time we came up against a brick wall
there was a door to go through.**

**Now we hit a brick wall and we can't find any
doors.”**

Birchip farmer

“I know how the settlers felt”

Factors influencing response

- Economic
- Social
- Environmental
- Political

Response will be different depending on which factor is driving the decision. Climate change add another level to the decision process.

What has changed?

- Attitude to farming - business not lifestyle
- Declining terms of trade
- Increased complexity of systems
- Multiple information providers/ conflicting messages / information overload
- Declining investment in R, D & E
- Loss of confidence

What are the expected responses

Multiple demands on limited resources:

- food security
- environmental
- social

Serious consequences as result of the cyclical debate and the mixed messages the farmers receive. It affects the decision process and the feeling of worth or purpose farmers have.

What is needed to initiate change?

Pannell *et al* (2006) suggest change requires:

- Learning opportunities and experience (to build knowledge)
- Short-term, observable outcomes
- Relative advantage – rarely see economic analysis
- Trialability

Are we ticking the boxes?

No

Any

Questions