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**Foreword**

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FOREWORD

By G. K. BARON HAY, B.Sc. (Agric.), DIRECTOR OF AGRICULTURE

A GRICULTURE, from its very nature, must be a living, growing force that is always seeking to advance. Any approach to a feeling of self-satisfaction and a readiness to merely maintain the existing conditions must lead to stagnation and eventual retrogression.

Historically, a sound, progressive and prosperous agricultural industry is an integral part of an economically sound State; any departure from a healthy condition in agriculture is rapidly reflected in the general well-being of the community.

It is a recognition of this special place occupied by agriculture which has influenced the community to undertake, on behalf of the farmer, certain activities not normally granted to other industries.

The existence of a Department of Agriculture in almost every country—with trained staffs to investigate problems affecting the industry and to make the resulting information readily available to the farmers—is one of the practical illustrations denoting the importance of the farming industry to the general community.

The achievements of research in agriculture are enormous and could be still greater if the knowledge gained was universally put into practice. However, it is not unusual to regard somewhat lightly those things which may be obtained with little or no expense and a major problem has always been to find the most effective method of extending technical advances into the practical field.

Here in Western Australia, our farmers—in close co-operation with the technical services provided by the State—have developed a system of agriculture particularly suited to conditions in this corner of the Continent, but even today, in every district, there is an astonishing difference in average output between farms of similar productive capacity.

This is a challenge, not only to the Department of Agriculture, but to all agriculturists, and its solution would add immensely to both our rural production and the economic stability of the industry.

Success depends upon creating a demand from farmers for the knowledge which is available, and this may be achieved in full only by the closest co-operation of the research and technical staffs of the Department of Agriculture, farmers' organisations and individual farmers.

It is conceded that this desire to keep abreast of ever-changing techniques in agricultural practices has existed, in some measure, for many years. It is my hope, however, that by expanding the services through which the farmer obtains his information, the average levels of agricultural production in Western Australia may be raised still higher.
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