

What drives practice change? Influence, not information

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Summary Our job, as communicators, is to filter information, and then present it to farmers. We don't do away with the data, we filter it and present it in a way that makes sense, utilising the power of influence. Data communication is best done between scientists. Practice change is not about scientists giving the answer to farmers, it is about working with farmers to come up with the solutions. Do with, not for.

We are all in a world of information overload. There is more information than ever, and there are more platforms to communicate this information than ever. In the world of agriculture, the latest science is communicated to farmers to encourage practice change to improve their profitability. In this saturated world of information, how do we best communicate with farmers to drive practice change in the right direction? The answer is to think influence, not information.

There is an extensive world of scientific research going on that is aimed at improving agriculture. If all of the data from this science is presented to farmers as information, it is overwhelming and difficult for farmers to adopt. We need to we filter this data and present it to farmers in a way that makes sense.

AHRI is a research group based at The University of WA and is focused on sustainable cropping and herbicide resistance in broad-acre farming. Significant AHRI funds are directed to the communication program, and AHRI's communication activities are enhanced by WeedSmart, which is managed by AHRI on behalf of the WeedSmart stakeholders. WeedSmart is an industry funded herbicide stewardship initiative

Both AHRI and Weedsmart communication are in the world of influence, however there are differences.

As can be seen in the table below, a good communication program has many facets, all of which are linked.

In the same way that researchers are the best people to do research, communicators are the best people communicate research. Many communication programs of research organisations are left up to researchers. We at AHRI believe that we are reaping the rewards of investing in a dedicated communication team and we encourage other research organisations to consider doing the same. Influence, not just information.

Keywords Communication, resistance, crops, weeds, AHRI, WeedSmart.

	AHRI	Weedsmart
Primary target audience	Agronomists/Industry	Farmers
Level of information	Often high level science simplified as well as practical solutions	Awareness/practical solutions – herbicide resistant weeds
Main activities	AHRI insight newsletter, Twitter, media, science articles, workshops, website, conferences	Diversity era online learning, media, case studies, champion farmer presentations/ video, workshops, website, social media