

BIOLOGICAL BENCHMARKING

an independent biological evaluation network



June 2025– Protocol

An Industry Innovations (II) initiative



SOWING THE SEED FOR A BRIGHTER FUTURE

BIOLOGICAL BENCHMARKING- FIRST IN ITS FIELD







Biological Benchmarking, developed by FAR Australia, is a brand-new initiative launching in 2025 to independently evaluate biological crop protection and productivity-enhancing products under Australian conditions. As interest in sustainable farming practices grows, so too does the demand for reliable data on the performance of these products. This initiative aims to provide side-by-side comparisons of new biological options against conventional synthetic controls to support confident decision-making by growers and advisers.

It is:

- independent
- scientifically robust and replicated
- aligned with real-world agronomic practice
- focused on productivity, sustainability, and profitability

Collaborating Industry Stakeholders

This program is designed for biological product developers, distributors, agronomists, private consultants, and farming groups seeking to better understand the performance and positioning of biological products and demonstrate them to the wider industry.

BACKGROUND

FAR Australia has been working with agrichemical and biological developers for over five years to help bring innovative, non-synthetic products to the grains industry. Through targeted trials, FAR has built a reputation for delivering independent and practical insights into product performance under Australian growing conditions.

With increased availability and global interest in biological inputs—from microbial inoculants to plant defense stimulants and biopesticides—there is a growing need for rigorous testing. The Biological Benchmarking series will provide that platform, offering clarity and confidence in a rapidly evolving product space.

The Biological Benchmarking trials will test biological products designed to boost plant health, improve nutrient efficiency, and reduce disease or pest pressure. Trials will be conducted in parallel with conventional management strategies to enable fair, comparable evaluations of efficacy, yield benefit, and economic return.

Submissions from biological manufacturers, consultants, and resellers will be benchmarked against standard synthetic and untreated controls, with data made available to partners, FAR Australia subscribers, and via FAR's website.

This initiative allows biological products to be evaluated under identical field conditions to synthetic standards, accelerating industry understanding and adoption of effective biological solutions.

OVERALL OBJECTIVE

To generate independent, high-quality trial data on the performance of biological products aimed at improving crop health and productivity in cropping systems, with comparisons to conventional synthetic strategies across key High and Medium Rainfall Zone (HRZ & MRZ) environments.

Individual objectives specific to the trial are:

- To evaluate the efficacy of biological products (e.g. biostimulants, microbial inoculants, biopesticides) in promoting plant health, disease suppression, and/or yield response.
- To benchmark biological treatments against conventional synthetic standards across different HRZ and MRZ environments.
- To assess the consistency of biological product performance across long- and shortseason cropping regions.
- To provide an independent platform for manufacturers and resellers to test new biological technologies prior to commercial release.
- To allow pre-commercial biological products to be entered under a FAR Australia code, with identity disclosed upon commercial launch.

LOCATIONS & CULTIVARS

Gnarwarre, VIC

SQP Revenue (feed wheat) & Minotaur (barley)

Wallendbeen, NSW

Scepter (AH wheat)

Millicent, SA

DS Bennett (ASW wheat) & RGT Planet (barley)

Frankland River, WA

Kinsei (Noodle wheat) & Minotaur (barley)

ASSESSMENT PROFILE

FAR Australia understands that biological products encompass a wide range of uses and therefore **assessment methods will be tailored to each product's intended mode of action and nominated benefit.** Standard assessments will include starting soil analysis, NDVI drone imagery, canopy photography, and grain yield and quality. Additional assessments—such as GS39 and GS71 disease ratings, crop structure measurements, tissue testing, dry matter cuts and harvest index—will be conducted where relevant to the product's target activity.

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COSTS

Manufacturers are invited to submit biological product strategies based on up to two application timings. Entries are based on supplying a minimum of two (or alternatively four) treatments for one or more of the four trial locations.

The cost would be

- \$3300 for two entries or \$5300 for four entries + GST for each trial location per crop.
- \$6300 or \$10,000 + GST if the two or four entries were placed at two trial sites per crop type.
- \$11,600 or 19,000 + GST if the two or four entries were placed at all four trial sites per crop type.

A report would be provided that included all treatments funded by the client and the FAR Australia controls.

Should you wish to invest in entries into FAR Australia's Biological Benchmarking evaluation network, please contact Darcy Warren darcy.warren@faraustralia.com.au (0455 022 044) or Nick Poole nick.poole@faraustralia.com (0499 888 066)

CONTACT US



VICTORIA (HEAD OFFICE)

Shed 2/ 63 Holder Road, Bannockburn, Victoria 3331 +61 3 5265 1290

NEW SOUTH WALES

12/95-103 Melbourne Street, Mulwala, NSW 2647 +61 3 5744 0516

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

9 Currong Street Esperance, WA 6450 +61 3 5265 1290

www.faraustralia.com.au



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