

# Grazing Crops

## Our Experiences

Caelli Family, West River





# Farm Outline

- **“West River Downs”- Daniel & Brenda, Luke & Annette Caelli**
- **South Coast Highway, 32km W of Ravensthorpe**
- **Adjacent to Fitzgerald River National Park & West River.**
- **2200ha (1900ha arable)**
- **Rainfall 400mm (approx. 40% occurring in summer).**
- **Mix of approximately 40% crop, 30% perennial, 30% annual.**
- **Running 4500 – 6500 merino sheep along with a few cows.**



# Why We Graze Crops

- Fill May-July feed gap.
- Flexibility to build stock numbers as well as crop area.
- Reduces need to hand feed.
- Allows pastures to be spelled.





# Crops We've Grazed

- Wedgetail Wheat
- Gairdner Barley
- Wandering Oats



# Our Experience / Lessons Learnt

- Early sowing gives longer grazing, and also the possibility of getting crop in before the winds get stronger.
- Wedgetail, a long season variety, **MUST** be sown early if you are to avoid the impact of a dry Spring.
- Grazing of crops allows you to spell pastures, which improves their establishment and production.
- Broadleaf weeds can be spray/grazed out, however, ryegrass control remains an issue.
- Graze through tillering stage, ending once stem elongation begins.
- Grazing seems to have a limited impact on final yields.
- Younger sheep may be prone to scouring.



# Where To Next?

- Continue to experiment.
- Lambing into crop.
- Looking at options with other crops and varieties.
- Sowing into perennial pastures.