

# Fish grains and game on UWA agriculture open day menu

**A**quaculture and native fish breeding, alternative oilseeds, salt tolerant wheats, new legumes, emus and game birds, turf and super brassicas were topics on the menu at the 2008 Agriculture Open Day held by the The University of Western Australia (UWA) Institute of Agriculture (IOA).

Variety was the defining characteristic of the smorgasbord of research presented to more than 75 visitors, including farmers, industry groups, students and scientists, at UWA's Shenton Park Field Station.

Opening the event, newly appointed Dean of UWA's Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences, Professor Tony O'Donnell said it was important because of the many challenges facing farmers, including escalating input costs, climate change and global food shortages.

"We want more events such as this, where the IOA reaches out and opens its door to the agricultural community," Tony said.

"It's important we interface with the agricultural sector locally, nationally and internationally."

IOA Director, Professor Kadambot Siddique said the field station, established in the early 1960s, had been instrumental in developing and releasing numerous varieties of cereals, pastures, oilseeds and legumes and was still developing and advancing agricultural practices and plant types.

"IOA, which aims to strengthen UWA's linkage to rural communities, is already home to the Grower Group Alliance, Western Australian No Tillage Farmers Association and Food Industry Association WA.

"At Shenton Park there are about 25 hectares of land, including five hectares of arable irrigated plot land, numerous glasshouses, growth room, quarantine facility, poly plant houses and laboratory," he said.

UWA has also recently purchased a

large farm, 'Ridgefield' at Pingelly, to expand its animal, crop, soil and pasture related teaching and research.

Professor Siddique said IOA intends holding an Open Day at Shenton Park every two years, with researchers showcasing their projects, recent developments and future work.

The Open Day attracted many farmers from WA's grainbelt, including Dalwallinu farmer and Liebe Group committee member, Keith Carter, who was particularly interested in Dr Ping Si's Grains Research and Development Corporation funded project at the Centre for Legumes in Mediterranean Agriculture at UWA on metribuzin tolerant lupins.

"We really need a herbicide resistant lupin and it's good to see what's being done at IOA," he said.

The Crawley campus was also open to prospective students and the public on Sunday, August 10, as part of UWA's Open day. ■



**Dr Jens Berger of the CSIRO Pulse Ecophysiology group speaking to visitors about lupin adaptation at the UWA Institute of Agriculture Open Day at the Shenton Park Field Station.**



**Professor Tony O'Donnell, newly appointed Dean of the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences at The University of Western Australia (UWA), Nils Blumann, Esperance grower and Professor Kadambot Siddique, Director, Institute of Agriculture (IOA), UWA, at the Open Day in Shenton Park.**