



## Southern Weekly Mag (insert)

Monday 1/03/2010

Page: 4  
Section: General News  
Region: Wagga-Wagga NSW, AU  
Circulation: 48500  
Type: Regional  
Size: 284.52 sq.cms.



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■ Cootamundra farmer Andy Roberts inspects Monola 77TT after it was windrowed last season

## Monola 77TT the right option

Cootamundra district farmers Andy and Murray Roberts chose to grow Monola 77TT on their mixed farming property 'Hillside' as it provided a good fit for their overall farm management.

It also gave an opportunity to increase their farm income by growing a high yielding, premium oilseed crop that gave them a bonus payment.

"The bonus premium is important.

"We can follow our normal management for a TT canola variety and receive a bonus for the oil," said Andy Roberts.

Cootamundra is one of the later cropping districts in south west NSW, and their Monola 77TT was not sown until late May at 2.8 kg/ha using a Great Plains Disc Seeder fitted with press wheels.

The crop was sown into a spring fallowed paddock that had been sprayed with Roundup Power Max in both October 2008 and April 2009.

This management strategy provided excellent weed control prior

to sowing and ideal soil conditions saw the crop establish quickly, despite the later planting and cooler temperatures.

"We did sow the crop later in the season, but its establishment was tremendous, showing the versatility of Monola 77TT," said Andy.

Using a TT crop, the Roberts' were able to use atrazine and a selective grass herbicide in crop to control the major broadleaf weeds and annual ryegrass.

"Monola 77TT gives us those options for weed control in our oilseed crop and fits in well with our overall plans," said Andy Roberts.

Weed control was excellent and in August the Monola 77TT showed great yield potential.

The crop height was also seen as a distinct management advantage during the season.

"We closely monitor all our crops during the year and the medium crop height made the inspections easier and it was easier come windrowing," said Andy.

After an excellent start to the

season, the negative impacts of a hot, dry October and November took a toll on final crop yield and oil content.

"We only got 30 mm of rain in late September and this was not enough to overcome the effects of a dry and hot October and November," said Murray.

In early spring the potential yield was estimated up to 3 t/ha, but the crop's eventual yield was down to 1.2 t/ha with an average oil content of 40.5 per cent, showing the impact of the poor spring finish.

"In summary the Monola 77TT performed well considering the very disappointing end to the season in our district," said Murray.

After being in farming for a lengthy time Andy Roberts sees the real advantage in growing Monola 77TT.

"We are in the business of growing crops that provide extra income for the farm.

"Monola 77TT does that and we will be giving it another go," Mr Roberts said.