

## **Developing pigeonpea as a new profitable and resilient summer pulse crop for Queensland**

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Pigeonpea (*Cajanus cajan*) is gaining attention as a potential new pulse crop for summer production in Queensland and northern NSW. Current summer pulse options such as mungbean, peanut and soybean each have their specific niches. However, growers also need a resilient, drought-tolerant grain legume like pigeonpea to increase broad-acre pulse production. Pulse exporters are also seeking a reliable supply of high quality pigeonpea to service expanding and potentially lucrative market opportunities in South Asia.

Pigeonpea as a crop is currently not without its problems for mechanised agriculture. Small areas are already grown to provide insect refuges within GM cotton, but not for premium grain.

In response, the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF) in Queensland is undertaking a major initiative to develop the potential of pigeonpea as a new pulse crop. This project is delivering an integrated platform of R&D to identify potential genetic options and management strategies that could maximise crop yields, reduce production risks and ensure reliable supplies of high quality pigeonpea for premium commodity exports and food.

This highly focused 'proof of concept' R&D is also identifying the key research questions, opportunities and targets for a larger and more comprehensive project on pigeonpea. This is also fostering vital collaboration between researchers, research agencies, growers and industry to ensure potential benefits from pigeonpea as a new pulse crop can be realised.

Developing pigeonpea as a resilient and productive new summer pulse crop for Australia promises to underpin enhanced productivity, profitability and sustainability for our northern grains region.