

# "I WORK IN AG" INTERVIEW

*HI, MY NAME IS JULIA AND I WORK  
IN GRAINS & HORTICULTURE.*



## *1. WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT JOB TITLE?*

Research Fellow and Innovation Manager

## *2. HOW LONG HAVE YOU WORKED IN AGRICULTURE AND HOW DID YOU GET STARTED IN THE INDUSTRY?*

I have worked in agriculture for 20 years. I trained in Environmental Biology and did a PhD (Doctor of Philosophy) in seagrass physiology, but there were few jobs available when I graduated. I began my career in agriculture on a research project using the techniques I developed in my PhD to create new germplasm for pulse crop breeding (chickpeas, field peas and lupins).

## *3. WHAT JOBS HAVE YOU HAD IN THIS TIME?*

All of my jobs have been in the research side of agriculture and I have been lucky to have the opportunity to do a number of roles. These include: Research Scientist in pulse pre-breeding at the University of WA Research Manager for a National Cooperative Research Centre for Future Farm Industries Regional Manager (WA) for Grains Research and Development Corporation (GRDC) Program Manager (WA) Grower Services for GRDC Program Manager (WA) Agronomy, Soils and farming Systems GRDC Research Fellow, Digital Agriculture and Agribusiness Analytics Curtin University Innovation Manager, Food Agility Cooperative Research Centre Research Theme Convenor, Food Agility Cooperative Research Centre

## *4. WHERE IS YOUR WORK LOCATED? (I.E. REGIONAL OR METRO)*

I have been based in Perth for my entire career and spend a lot of time travelling to farming areas in WA and Nationally. In recent times, I have held national roles that could be delivered from a city or regional base.

**5. PLEASE GIVE A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF A TYPICAL DAY IN YOUR JOB.**

When I am in Perth, I have lots of meetings, work on developing project proposals for research projects, mentor staff and Post-graduate students, write research papers and collaborate with colleagues in research and industry roles. When I am regional, I talk with farmers and industry experts about the problems they have and work with them to design research projects that can overcome these problems. Most recently, this includes how they can use their data and digital technologies on farm to save time, make better decisions or improve their profit. My favourite part of my job is the opportunity to visit farms and see their operations in person.

**6. WHAT QUALIFICATIONS OR TRAINING HAVE YOU COMPLETED WHICH HAS HELPED YOU TO GAIN OR PERFORM WELL IN THIS JOB?**

Work in research requires a degree, honours and a PhD. I have also had a lot of on-the-job training in how to talk to people, how to facilitate conversations, how to unpack farmer problems and barriers to adopting new research and technologies. Growing up in the city meant that I had to learn a lot about what farmers do on a day to day basis and to understand the complexities of their business and the many decisions they make everyday.

**7. PLEASE DESCRIBE WHAT THINGS YOU ENJOY ABOUT YOUR JOB.**

My favourite part of the job is getting out into regional areas and visiting farms. This includes watching the machinery in action, talking to farmers and the experts that support their businesses, deploying technology to collect data to support decision making for both practical purposes (i.e. irrigation) and the business side of operations.

**8. PLEASE LIST SOME OF THE CHALLENGES YOU FACE IN YOUR JOB.**

The best part of the job comes with a downside – travel and time away from my family.