

Expert Systems

Conveners — Paul Flinn, Barry Longstaff and Lincoln Smith

The expert systems workshop began with demonstrations of three expert systems: the 'Stored Grain Advisor', which is a decision-support system designed for use by farmers in the USA; 'PestMan', designed to be used by the large central grain-handling authorities in Australia; and a Chinese system based on PestMan. As well, a sophisticated simulation model from the USA that considered the influence of ambient conditions on the cooling of grain by aeration was demonstrated. There was a general discussion on what people wanted to see in expert systems. These included the incorporation of information about mycotoxins, the need to allow the user to make the final decision, the incorporation of some sort of risk-benefit analysis, and integration with real-time pricing, marketing and weather data. There was also interest in using these tools, or their components, for training managers. The workshop ended with a suggestion that some sort of electronic stored product information exchange system be set up. Contact Paul Flinn on flinn@crunch.usgmrl.ksu.edu or Paul Fields on pfields@mbrswi.agr.ca for details.