



Greetings from Queensland

Graham Harris, APEN President

Sometimes our body tells us ('forces' us might be more relevant) to stop, listen, accept and adapt. The busyness of our lives need to be addressed. This is one such time for me. I have taken some sick leave. Fortunately, my APEN life is supported by a hardworking Board and a very efficient Executive Officer. This issue of ExtensionNet

captures a wide range of activities as we continually strive to reach and engage our members. I urge you to take time to reflect and see where your talents will make a difference as APEN continues to flourish.

Graham Harris

APEN President

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ACROSS THE EDITOR'S DESK



Extension plays a critical role in promoting agricultural productivity, increasing food security, improving rural livelihoods and promoting primary production as the engine room for economic growth. A key part of any extension program is the message it seeks to deliver to the audience. In this issue, our guest is Chris Reichstein, a Nuffield Scholar and a key note speaker in APEN's 2015 Conference whose project to empower, equip and enable farmers to become more productive by adopting and adapting to change, challenges us to take action, "as it became apparent [through his research] that significant and valuable research and development was not resulting in practice change at the farm level". APEN's new Director, Jeanette Gellard, talks about leadership, influence and building the capacity of individuals to engage effectively in decision-making processes and asks a burning question. Achieving gender equality across the

globe through addressing 17 Sustainable Development Goals is the burning issue on many fronts at present. Pat Hamilton shares with us her experiences as one of two Australian official civil society representatives to the United Nations to reach agreed conclusions by the 193 Member States on gender equality at the Commission on the Status of Women in New York. Keep up to date with the activities of the Board as it works hard to deliver APEN's Strategic Plan. Share the activities of the various committees. Note the upcoming events to reach and engage our members as we implement our 'new' communications strategy which builds on existing well-established communication channels. Enjoy, think about and action the challenges that this issue of ExtensionNet identifies.

Warm regards

Dr Patricia Hamilton
ExtensionNet Editor

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Adopting Research on the Farm

Meet Chris Reichstein 2014 Nuffield Scholar author of “How Farmers Learn: Getting better value for research and development dollars through better extension” – a project to empower, equip and enable farmers.

Chris is a grains farmer on the south coast of WA – 50Ks from Esperance. Following tertiary studies, Chris returned to the family farm where he was very keen to adopt best practice in agricultural research, development and extension.

As a lifelong learner, Chris is passionate about involving groups of people to collaborate and share their skills, knowledge and experiences on practice change at the farm level. He connects with people through community industry functions, field days, local grower groups and participated in the DPIRD/DAFWA Bridging the Yield Gap project and the GRDC's Regional Cropping Solutions Network. These activities highlighted his strength as an 'enabler' – a person who is very good at connecting and linking people to achieve productive outcomes. Chris believes that farmers should not operate in a vacuum.

However, the big question 'why' kept nagging him. 'Why' are some farmers more willing to adopt practice change and innovations based on sound research than others? What are the most effective extension methods to implement practice change on-farm? How do you motivate farmers to overcome the impediments that stop them from exploring the valuable research and development? These burning issues were the catalyst for Chris's proposal to Nuffield – 'how best to deliver information to farmers to effect practice change and improve farm profitability and sustainability.' "[Chris has] always been concerned about farmers not adopting practice change and innovations, and part of this report is therefore aimed at investigating the drivers and impediments to adoption".

Chris's report is a very comprehensive study that examined two models of agricultural Research Development and Extension (RD&E). The Top-Down approach in which organisations and scientists, external to the farm, plan,



implement and review agricultural RD&E. These were case studies in the American system of research and extension, Monsanto as an example of a major corporation via the 'Field Scripts' program and the United Kingdom's 'Monitor Farms', developed as "an extensive benchmarking program based on productivity and profitability" (more on this later). The Bottom-Up method, which uses local knowledge and dialogue between scientists, organisations and farmers to build agricultural RD&E programs, examined the New Zealand Dairy Industry, successful knowledge transfer in the NZ Kiwi fruit industry (APEN Director Chrissy Stokes works for Zespri in NZ) and CRE, an Argentinean not-for-profit organisation.

Chris challenges industries to drive practice change to achieve productive business health by

- Bringing formal grower groups together via peer learning – this creates a strong sense of ownership of outcomes – team building brings together different skills, different points of view and different experiences. A successful team is never afraid to respectfully challenge each other
- Catering for the diverse requirements of the target audience through different adult learning styles (flexible learning) – diversity, in thinking and

practice, is critical for new ideas and innovation

- Benchmarking of agricultural enterprises – elements include the size of the database (the larger leads to more accurate results); the geographical spread (different landscapes make benchmarking comparisons difficult); and the integrity of the data collection (the accuracy of the data input is vital and 'data sets need to be compared on a common basis')

Chris's comprehensive research is driven by his passion that people need to work collaboratively and cooperatively to embrace change. Although he laments the cuts to public sector funding over the past decade, his research is a positive account of how farmers, through a range of extension practices, are relying on paid consultants and industry grower groups to access agricultural knowledge and innovations to bring farmers and researchers closer together. Combining this strategy with benchmarking of agricultural enterprises "can be a powerful driver of practice change".

"It is not the strongest of species that survives, nor the most intelligent but the one most responsive to change"
(Charles Darwin 1809)

NB "The Nuffield organisation brings together an extensive range of people from broadacre agriculture, horticulture and aquaculture, all with a common interest in advancing their industries through innovation and practice change."

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APEN Ltd Board Activities

F2F Meeting in Sydney

A Face to Face meeting of the Board and the Regional Activities Committee (RAC) to do strategic planning for APEN was a busy and motivating time! Horticulture Innovation Australia kindly provided the venue in Sydney for the meeting.



We discussed a lot of exciting things under APEN's strategic plan for the next five years

APEN's Strategic Plan

Corporate Statement: The organisation for extension professionals working with people to enable change and innovation in primary industries, natural resource management and communities.

Vision: To be the leading professional organisation for extension.

Mission: Supporting professional development, networking and a voice for those who work in extension and related fields in Australia, New Zealand and the broader Asia Pacific region.

Strategic Goals

1. To influence the extension agenda and reputation of the profession
2. To broaden APEN's base and reach
3. To provide relevant services to extension professionals
4. To deliver effective targeted communications, that meet members needs and enhances the APEN brand

We enjoyed meeting each other and hope you "met" the Board and the RAC through the ExtensionNet which was sent to you before Christmas!



Treasurer's Report: Are you good with numbers? Are you willing to stretch your thinking?

The APEN bank balance is in good shape, thanks to the hard work of the 2017 Conference Committee. Having a sound cash position will enable us to thrive in the future. As we move into a new era for APEN our strategies include:

- increasing the number of members,
- delivering services that meet members' needs, and

- considering new models to achieve that.

So, the questions are: Who are our potential members? What do members / potential members want? How we can deliver that without being all things to all people.? Could we do less but do it better? Let us know your ideas for new ways of doing things.

If you're interested in getting involved, we are looking for a new Treasurer. We'd love to hear from people who like working with numbers and also willing to contribute new ideas and thinking.

*Regards,
Donna Lucas
Treasurer*



A New Era of Communications for APEN

Dr Anthony Kachenko



Over the past three months, the APEN Board and Communications Committee have worked tirelessly to develop a

communication strategy for APEN to provide guidance for communication activities aligned with the APEN Strategic Plan 2017-2022.

This strategy has been developed to build on existing well-established communication channels such as ExtensionNet and eBulletin. In developing the strategy, it was recognised that APEN had a sound track record in servicing the primary industries sector. However, there was heightened opportunity to leverage the natural resource management and community-based sectors. The strategy also identified some significant opportunities to better engage with external stakeholders, including government departments, rural and

general media. After all, APEN is a network representing over 500 extension professionals across Australia, New Zealand and the broader Asia Pacific Region.

The strategy highlighted the need for better targeted communications through appropriate channel and tool selection to increase external stakeholder engagement and enhance the merit of APEN and the professionalism of the extension industry. Opportunities also exist to increase audience levels for the existing APEN social media channels, by more regular posting of content, greater use of photos, increasing the use of video and using targeted advertising on Facebook.

The success of this strategy will be measured through increased engagement and awareness of APEN activities by members and key stakeholders. It is hoped this greater awareness will attract, retain and develop members.

An annual review will measure the success of the activities including previous activities and those introduced as part of this strategy. Recommendations will be made on whether any changes should be considered regarding the outputs covered by this strategy, or the proportion of resources allocated to each of them.

I look forward to working with the Board and Communications Sub-committee to execute this strategy. If you are interested in contributing to the success of this strategy, please contact Dr Roe Currie at info@apen.org.au. This strategy will cement APEN as the largest network of extension professionals in the Southern Hemisphere, advocating the betterment of extension professionals across the broader Asia Pacific Region.



Welcome to Jeanette Gellard

APEN Ltd Director



Jeanette Gellard, the Principal Consultant and Owner of Innovative Influences, is the latest 'addition' to APEN's Board. Jeanette brings a wealth of skills, knowledge, experience and passion to the direction of our organisation. Her passion for life-long learning spills over into encouraging and enabling others to expand their knowledge and understanding of the world in which they live and the people who inhabit it.

I asked Jeanette a series of questions and was taken on a journey full of wonderful intersections and turns as Jeanette shared with me certain aspects of an interesting life of challenges and opportunities from suburbia to farming on Kangaroo Island.

Jeanette has worn (and still wears) many hats over a period of twenty-five years working with established organisations and emerging leaders through motivation, advocacy, stakeholder encouragement and engagement and supporting the

development of skills, mindsets and sometimes behaviours to help them reach their goals to be more effective. Jeanette uses all her creativity, her energy and her significant governance and strategic planning experience to be an influential leader. In 2011, Jeanette established Innovative Influences to focus her work around three key areas – Coaching, Stakeholder Engagement and Strategy Development. Her strong facilitation, communication and extension skills provides a complete package of workshop planning and delivery expertise to clients. Jeanette bases her successes on blending theory and technical knowledge with people-centred practice. Her initial qualifications in agriculture and business administration (MBA) have been complemented with further study and training in stakeholder engagement, facilitation, leadership and coaching.

Jeanette's excitement in creating change reaches another level when she talks about leadership, influence and building the capacity of individuals to engage effectively in decision making processes that impact their lives and livelihoods. "I embrace change as it offers opportunities to encounter something new or different where I can grow and learn new skills, develop my strengths and discover some new ones." Her curiosity knows no bounds. Her philosophy acknowledges that taking time for reflection can produce

new insights. Jeanette suggests that if we approach our past experiences with curiosity and a desire to learn from them, our future can be incredibly enriched.

Her burning question she is still seeking answers to – "How do we keep the ripples of influence (the pebble in the pond effect) flowing and not diminishing over time and distance?" *[Anyone with an answer – is it the size of the rock we drop; the size of the pond it falls into; or what obstacles may lie beneath the pond's surface.....]*

Jeanette is positive about the future of an organisation like APEN with its wide-ranging network of diverse researchers, practising farmers, extension officers, industry and business bodies. One of the Board's tasks is to continually engage with its members to share extension research, to encourage interactions and to share best practice throughout primary production. Jeanette's experiences and talents will enhance this process as we strengthen our connection to others.

Her tip to cope with change that can make it feel less scary and allow you to be transformed in the process: "Never underestimate how influential our strong network can be. Never waste an opportunity to influence by planting a seed in a conversation – you never know where it will grow."



Life Membership



In 2018, the APEN Board passed a resolution to create and award APEN Life Memberships.

The process will run parallel with the APEN awards for Excellence in Extension – nominations will be called six months prior to a conference, the Board will make the selection based on a number of criteria and it will be awarded at the conference. A Life Member will then have free membership and appropriate recognition.

To celebrate our 25 years, the Board would like to present our first Life Membership at the 2018 AGM.

Please nominate an APEN member (past or present) who has made a substantial contribution to the development of extension that has made a significant difference.

Nomination form is available from info@apen.org.au or the APEN website and includes the reason why you consider them suitable and their contribution to extension (-> 200 words) and is due by 29 June 2018.

Dreams Can Come True

Dr Patricia Hamilton



Pat at UN CSW62

It has always been a dream to represent my country on the International stage – albeit, I thought it might be as a musician or a sports person - CSW62 gave me that privilege at a different level – to represent and be an advocate for rural women and girls. The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) is the principal global intergovernmental body exclusively dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women.

The journey on the official Australian Government delegation to the 2018 UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW62) from 12 to 23 March at the United Nations in New York, has been an amazing unique experience to listen to the presentations from Ministers, Ambassadors, NGOs and Civil Society on a wide range of topics that impact on women and girls throughout the world including land and inheritance rights, politics, access to information technology, education, access to water, reducing isolation, child marriage, the importance of family, violence against women and children – the list is endless.

I am deeply grateful to the Australian Government and the Office for Women for the opportunity to both learn from, and contribute to, the diverse voices in the negotiations concerning the CSW62 priority focus: "Challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls" and the review theme of "Participation in and access of women to the media, and information and communications technologies and their

impact on and use as an instrument for the advancement and empowerment of women".

After months of preparation via lots of reading, attending webinars hosted by two of the National Women's Alliances (Equality Rights and the National Rural Women's Coalition) and meetings with the Office for Women, I finally landed in New York for two intensive weeks. My 16 days in New York were packed with meetings, discussions and connecting with people from the UN 193 Member States to adopt a document known as the Agreed Conclusions, which set forth commitments for States to address gender justice and human rights issues. It seemed such a daunting task and my thoughts concerning arriving at this document during the negotiations fluctuated between success and failure as each country has its own development priorities, geographical, cultural, and territorial disparities and there are layers of discrimination to overcome. We had an amazing facilitator, Mauricio Carabali Baquero from Columbia – a truly powerful man. He ensured through hard work, patience, tenacity, persistence and flexibility, where countries worked together and partnered with other groups, 'we' arrived at a document that contains recommendations that can lead to tangible benefits.

There were so many highlights as we listened to women telling their stories everywhere. I was so privileged to be involved with the official Australian delegation as one of two non-government civil society selected to

represent rural women and girls living in Australia, (Australia is one of the few countries who send civil society women to be part of the negotiation team) accompanying Minister Kelly O'Dwyer, Ambassador Gillian Bird, Kate Jenkins, Sex Discrimination Commissioner, June Oscar ASTO Social Justice Commissioner, Trish Bergin, First Assistant Secretary of the Office for Women, Rachael Farrell, OfW and Jo Stewart-Ratray, the other non-government person, as we moved from one event to another, including walking into the United General Assembly, attending a YWCA breakfast, attending parallel events, such as the NZ 125 Suffrage celebration, the Male champions of Change, Women in Leadership: lessons from Australian companies leading the way and Bridging the Digital Gender Divide.

My two free days of sightseeing were mind boggling as I explored all the icons (Statue of Liberty, Word Trade Memorial, Empire State Building, Times Square, Broadway, Central Park, Libraries and Museums and observed the St Patrick Day March). I also watched snow fall for the first time and attended a Broadway show.

Over many decades, I have built on the achievements of many women through observation, listening, learning and then acting. I have learnt much from participating in CSW62 which I will continue to build on and share with colleagues in Australia. CSW62 has also taught me that 'agreed language' matters. Language is not just semantics. Language has political power and is the lifeline that can transform the way we think and act – especially the intent of how words are delivered. I have had an unforgettable experience – one to be treasured – and I trust that in some small way, I will continue to make a difference to positively address the specific needs and challenges faced by rural women and girls in accessing services and resources in achieving gender equality.

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Pat at the Australian Consulate

Engaging Members

2018 Roadshow



Preparations are underway for the 2018 APEN Roadshow coming to your region between May and October 2018.

The presenter is Greg Mills, Kondinin Group and ABC Rural 2017 Consultant of the Year.

The Workshop title: Tips, Tricks and a little bit of Extension Magic.

Dates and locations in each region are being determined for this one-day workshop.

The information will be sent via the eBulletin very soon so that you can spread the word and come along too!

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Mentoring

This year's mentoring program is well underway with Mentees matched with Mentors, introduction video conferences delivered to both groups and initial mentoring sessions taking place. All of this has taken place with the support and coordination of Roe Currie and program facilitator, Jeanette Gellard. The APEN Extension skills mentoring scheme is designed as a low-cost peer mentoring system, which benefits the individuals involved, the extension profession and APEN. This is supported by feedback received from past Mentees.

"Program is useful and provides value for money"

"Teleconferences allow you to connect with other mentees and extend networks"

Mentors repeatedly identify the opportunity to give back to the profession as a key motivator for their involvement. Some changes have been incorporated into this year's program following feedback from past participants. The program will increase the value of video conferences held throughout the year by using several of them to deliver training to the Mentees on a range of extension topics. The topics will be determined by the Mentees with presenters offering to share their insights and experiences. If you would like to know more about

What's planned

Date	Activity
18 April	Checking Progress – email/telephone
23 May	Training Webinar
18 July	Training Webinar
1 August	Checking Progress Zoom meeting
19 September	Training Webinar
28 November / 5 December	End of Scheme Wrap Up – Zoom meeting



the Mentoring Program visit the APEN website or get in touch with **Roe (info@apen.org.au)** or **Jeanette (jeanette@innovativeinfluences.com.au)**

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Website

Our website is our most important tool to reach and engage people in the practice of extension. A team of volunteers has been working with Snap to revitalise and develop the existing website so that it will reflect the changes we wish to see as we adapt to change. We hope to launch the 'new' website soon. It will continue to be mobile-responsive.



Webinars: Making Extension Sexy

There have been 3 great webinars this year

- Heather Collin, 2017 APEN Award for Excellence in Extension for an Experiences Profession winner, had a group of nearly 40 people for her 2 part series: Part 1 – *The unwritten code: how social norms can operate in a rural community* and Part 2 : *Cracking the unwritten code*
- Webinar 3 was presented by Dani England, APEN SA Regional

Coordinator, who shared with us: *How does risk effect the adoption of on-farm practices? And how can you tailor your package to address this risk?* – sharing some of the exciting extension practices she has been involved with.

The link to the APEN webinar replays is <http://www.leanneisaacson.com/apen-webinar-replays/>

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2019 APEN Conference

Watch this space!

October 2019 here we come!

Engaging Members



Connecting with your Regional Coordinator (RC)

If you have any ideas for a social function or day out with a guest speaker; If you would like to share an extension story, have held a successful event, like to share extension information or would like APEN to share the details for an upcoming event please contact your RC – see back page of this issues for details. Remember to follow APEN on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn and keep an eye out for the 2018 roadshow details!!!

APEN's Monthly eBulletin

APEN's Monthly eBulletin keeps you informed and up-to-date with extension activities and issues. Please note that we appreciate hearing from members about what is going on so events, ideas, articles etc can be shared through the network.



APEN eBulletin April 2018

Connect with APEN on Social Media

Twitter: Follow us @APENenews

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Australasia-Pacific-Extension-Network-APEN-177134159021677/?ref=hl>

LinkedIn: there are over 500 members on APEN's LinkedIn group – widen your horizons



Need information?

Contact our Executive Officer

Dr Roe Currie
info @apen.org.au

Regional Roundup

The group of Regional Coordinators (RC), known as the Regional Activities Committee (RAC) has the primary function of delivering activities and events for members across all the APEN regions. Its secondary function is to keep the Board informed and advised on regional issues and interests.

The Chair of the current group is APEN Director Chrissy Stokes (NZ). The group meets at least 6 times a year and reports on regional activities such as workshops and networking meetings. RCs are expected to attend the RAC meetings – usually held on the fourth Friday of a month by web conference (Zoom.us), 2pm Melbourne time for 1 to 1.5 hours. Planned meetings for 2018 at this stage are: 23 March, 25 May, 27 July, 28 September, 23 November. Currently, all states and territories have a coordinator [except WA and Tasmania – any volunteers?]. The latest activities are highlighted below.

New Zealand

Regional Coordinator Chrissy Stokes

Autumn has hit in a hurry here in New Zealand, after an Indian summer. Cyclone Fehi caused havoc across the country in February cutting off Golden Bay at the top of the South Island and stranding up to 6000 residents and holiday makers and has been followed by several other significant storms bringing a dramatic start to autumn. One of the biggest issues for growers of horticultural crops has been the availability of labour for harvest, with official seasonal labour shortages declared in Hawke's Bay and Tasman, and another on the cards for the Bay of Plenty. These declarations allow visitor visa holders (including those from visa waiver countries) to apply for a variation of conditions which will enable them to undertake seasonal work for up to six weeks in the region. Seasonal work includes planting, maintaining, harvesting and picking crops in the horticulture or viticulture industries. Combined with an early start to the season (for example, grape harvesting started at least two weeks early in most areas), the shortage has put real pressure on growers and support services.

New South Wales

Regional Coordinator Adrian Englefield

Hello from Adrian Englefield, APEN's NSW regional activities coordinator (RAC).

While travelling around NSW and visiting the state's wine regions I have seen the diverse range of agricultural commodities grown in NSW and notice we have a diverse range of APEN members from different backgrounds from (and not limited to): grains, cotton, dairy,

government agencies (Local Land Services and DPI). Such a diverse group will make the APEN 2018 roadshow a not-to-miss event. This year's NSW workshops will be held in Armidale and Wagga Wagga. Titled 'Tips, tricks and a little bit of extension magic' the workshop will focus on extension strategies and methodologies for experienced and new extension professionals alike. Final dates are yet-to-be confirmed. Please keep an eye out for APEN updates via APEN news bulletins or the Facebook page.



Recently I attended Forage, a four kilometer food and wine event, as part of Orange Food Week. Sponsored by the DPI (and having some knowledge in viticulture), I was lucky enough to outline DPI's research, development and extension activities on a number of bus trips, including to the Hon. Niall Blair, NSW Minister for Primary Industries. The 1500 attendees also heard about the importance of Biosecurity and how everyone plays apart in safeguarding NSW agriculture. Recently, a delegation from the Myanmar Department of Agriculture visited the Griffith DPI research station to hear about DPI Riverina viticulture and citrus RD&E (pictured). Being involved in development and extension activities, I spoke about the importance of industry liaison and information when extending research findings. I will also be attending the Farmer Exchange roadshow and official launch in Wagga on 26 April. Farmer Exchange sounds like a fantastic resource for farmers to share information and ask questions between Australian farmers. For further information visit <https://farmtable.com.au/>

Connecting with NSW members during 2018. If you have any ideas for a social function or day out with a guest speaker; If you would like to share an extension story, have held a successful event, like to share extension information or would like APEN to share the details for an upcoming event please contact me via adrian.englefield@dpi.nsw.gov.au. Thank you and until next time remember to follow APEN on Facebook and keep an eye out for the 2018 roadshow details!!!

NT Regional Coordinator Jake Betros

The Northern Territory had some great monsoons in January this year, before Cyclone Marcus came and made his presence felt across the Top End on March 17. The category three cyclone wiped out thousands of trees, and left tens of thousands without power for up to a week. A month later and the clean-up is still continuing, with green waste facilities struggling to keep up with demand. This event has pushed many events back and reduced the resources available for a lot of agriculturalists and natural resource managers in the region. Most agricultural commodities are expected to come through relatively unscathed. We were fortunate Marcus only strengthened into a category five when arriving deep in the Indian Ocean.

Within my work as the Regional Landcare Facilitator, I have spent a lot of time since the start of this year focusing on the Regional Land Partnerships bid for Territory Natural Resource Management. This is part of the Australian Government's National Landcare Programme and will ensure funding for sustainable agricultural and environmental activities for another five years. On the other end of the spectrum, we are currently wrapping up four years' worth of projects and programmes which were delivered through the initial National Landcare Program, as well as reviewing the Northern Territory Natural Resource Management Plan.

For APEN, I continue to find my feet on the Regional Activities Committee and helping others out wherever possible. This will include organising the roadshow event later this year, and perhaps discussing options for the 2019 APEN Conference. It is gratifying to see the organisation's communication plan developed, and there are some great initiatives beginning to be implemented. Hopefully this will lead to further engagement with our members, so everyone can reap the benefits of APEN's resources. Lastly, I have begun to link APEN with the Young Professionals for Agricultural Development (YPARD) network. Approximately 10% of our members are under the age of 35, and a working relationship with YPARD will help enhance the networks and experience these members can access, increasing their career development.

Queensland

Regional Coordinator Andres Jaramillo

The extension community in North Queensland has continued to be very active in 2018. A number of events have taken place at different locations in the State organised by different entities and industries. A number of events where

Regional Roundup

extension play a crucial part took place in the region in the first trimester of 2018 were: Women in sugarcane; Irrigation workshops; Burdekin Cane extension group; Pesticide group; Herbert “walk and talk”; NextGen Bus trip; Several Shed meetings



Sugar Research Australia held in February the Introductory Sugar Advisors Workshop which provided participants with foundations in the sugarcane industry. SRA has also held several Six Easy Steps workshops across the sugarcane industry during the first trimester of 2018. SRA has offered two Soil health and soil biology masterclasses. In April the Australian Society of Sugar Cane Technologist (ASSCT) conference took place in Mackay. The Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, held a workshop to evaluate their activities and achievements over the past year, plan future activities and assess their networking between science, extension and policy across regions and disciplines. A Reef Taskforce report produced in 2016/17 recommended that the Queensland Government restored capacity in extension service across the reef catchments, formalised extension and advice networks. A project to enhance extension coordination across the Great Barrier Reef catchments has also been developed. QFF, using Reef Taskforce funding, is currently organising a one-day Monitoring and Evaluation workshop for extension providers across all the Great Barrier Catchments. The QFF and Queensland Government partnership provide important and relevant training for agriculture extension officers and advisors.

North Queensland Dry Tropics (NQDT) which works with farmers, graziers, schools, families, community groups, indigenous groups, business, industry and the general community continues to support and fund Natural Resources Management related projects in the region. NQ Dry Tropics are one of the “go-to” organisations for the delivery of projects and support in the NRM in the Dry Tropics in QLD.

In the far north, the Wet Tropics Sugar Industry Partnership (WTSIP) which was formed to provide industry-led extension and training services to growers in the Wet Tropics, has also been very active.

Further north, an onset of the Panama disease was discovered in two properties. Biosecurity Queensland has assessed the potential risk of disease pathways from these infested properties in the Tully Valley.



Upcoming events: Whether you're a seasoned extension practitioner or new to the field, a one-day training course organised by QFF will take participants on a journey of professional development on project and program's monitoring and evaluation activities. WILMAR is holding grower tours at their Burdekin mills in May. Besides this, Water Quality Day, Harvesting Forums, Field days and Trade expos will take place in our region in June.

This year has seen two new APEN Members from the region: a member from the University of Queensland and another from the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries. We look forward to welcoming more members this year.

For our QLD members, let's actively participate in the several events scheduled to occur in the second semester of 2018 in the different regions of our State. Let's stay connected and take opportunities to upskill through the number of events around us.

South Australia Regional Coordinator Danielle England, AgInnovate

One of the key events in the SA Calendar for extension agents is the Ag Excellence Alliance (Ag Ex) Annual Forum. It is an opportunity to network and learn with like-minded change agents from across the State and Australia. Governance and the Value of Grower Group were two inter-related themes at this year's Forum. Grower groups (or farming systems groups) are a key part of the national extension landscape, used by many researchers and funders for on-ground delivery of extension activities and research communication. The role and governance of grower groups has changed dramatically over the past 5-years, and many volunteer boards are struggling to find governance models that will ensure their group can continue to provide the existing level of delivery into the future. The industry discussion is not about funding. It is about

the correct business systems, processes and skilled people that will ensure the on-going success of these groups.

A Grower Group Alliance study undertaken by AgKnowledge showed that WA's 45 grower groups contribute \$120m per year to the WA economy and had a Cost Benefit Ratio of 10:1. (See diagram 1) This study, and one presented by Dr Ruth Nettle, University of Melbourne, showed grower groups are in the top 3 for 'influencing change on-farm' (preceded only by family and friends and paid advisors). But the kicker is how these groups now fund themselves. According to the WA study the average WA grower group has a membership break-up of project funds (62%), partnerships/sponsorship (24%), membership (4%), events (3%) and other (2%). Cindy Cassidy, Farmlink NSW, strongly encouraged groups to keep project management funding to <60% of total revenue to ensure that a grower group's reliance on industry projects doesn't detract from delivery of local issues. She encouraged grower groups to look at increased membership, sponsorship, partnerships and other profit-making ventures that add-to, rather than distract from, the bread and butter activities. She finished by saying that - "Yes grower groups are not-for-profit organisations, but this just means that any profits generated by grower group activities need to be funnelled back into grower group activities. Groups need to make a profit to survive."

The Ag Ex Forum clearly reinforced 1) the importance of grower groups in the extension landscape; 2) the need to value grower group extension activities at a market rate (eg it can no longer be free); and 3) grower groups need to continue to upskill in governance and business management to maintain their competitive advantage.

I've had it outlined to me that the role of an extension agent is to network; to bring together different bits of the puzzle to form a whole picture. The highlight of these days is always the networks you create, and the ability for all parts of the extension chain to work together to create value. United we are stronger than working alone.

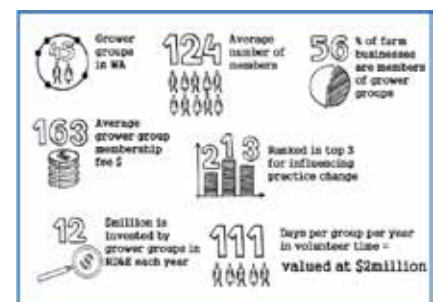


Diagram 1: "Value of WA Grower Groups"; AgKnowledge Ag Excellence Alliance - <https://agex.org.au/you-can-now-download-presentations-from-the-recent-2018-ag-excellence-forum/>

Regional Roundup

Victoria

Regional Coordinator Shayne Hyman

In preparing this Roundup, I hope it in no way resembles the herbicide named Roundup, the “quick death for weeds, slow death for you” (<https://www.thehealthyhomeeconomist.com>) in a spray bottle. Rather, let me regale you with: What has happened; what is happening; and, what I hope will happen.

Last December I introduced myself by email to APEN members practising extension in Victoria and asked what you wanted most from your membership in 2018. The 10% who responded want:

1. Networking opportunities, preferably across industries
2. Updates on extension issues and opportunities
3. Case studies & examples of work that informs and/or challenges
4. One face-to-face event per year

I took this to January’s face-to-face meeting of the APEN Regional Activities Committee (RAC) in Sydney and shared it with the APEN Board and other regional coordinators. The good news is it’s achievable; in fact, plans are afoot as evidenced by the butcher’s paper and sticky notes in Image A (I loved the photo so much – it is on p3 Board activities).

At the March RAC telemeeting, we learned that the Board had selected GoAhead Business Solutions’ Greg Mills, Kondinin Group & ABC Rural 2017 Rural Consultant of the Year, to deliver the regional roadshow workshops on his “Tips, Tricks and a little bit of Extension Magic”. This full day workshop comes to Melbourne in September (October at the latest) so stay tuned for more details. It’s tricky to get together when extensionists

are spread all across Victoria (let’s be grateful & respectful we’re not in WA) so I’ve put it out there to see if we’d like to meet for drinks, dinner and a guest speaker on the same day as the workshop. An email requesting feedback has been sent.

Recruiting new APEN members seems like a great way that we in Victoria can further our professional organisation’s strategic goals. Just a reminder, they are:

1. To influence the extension agenda and reputation of the profession
2. To broaden APEN’s base and reach, providing relevant services to extension professionals
3. To deliver effective targeted communications, that meet members needs and enhance the APEN brand
4. Maintaining good organisation governance

I’m calling on Victorian members to spread the word about the fabulous work APEN is doing, extending horizons, and sign up a colleague before the roadshow comes to town. There’s a great brochure on the website and \$99 is outrageously inexpensive for membership to a professional association in Australia. In this way we can all build the organisation, profession and contribute to the renaissance in extension.

In the brief time I have been the Industry Development Officer for VegNET Victoria Gippsland (a capacity building project delivered by the East Gippsland Food Cluster and funded by Horticulture Innovation Australia and the Australian government) I have met a couple of dozen extension professionals and I’m beginning to feel more like I’m part of the fraternity. Last week, I met Penny Shaw who works as a Program Manager for Agriculture

Victoria. We were learning heaps on the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority Sustainable Agriculture Bus Tour. I’ll close with some snapshots from the tour.



Paynter’s Dairy, Ellinbank



Centenary Lookout, Toora



Inspecting pasture, Perry Bridge

APEN's News Update

APEN has a proud record of consultative and collaborative professional development and representation and sharing evidence-based research with state, national and international networks. APEN members are involved in community and rural development, adult education, in and off-line communications, industry collaboration, industry development, industry services and other related fields.

APEN Celebrating 25 Years!

October 2018 marks 25 years since the formation of the Australasia-Pacific Extension Network was instigated at a breakfast meeting of an extension conference on the Gold Coast in 1993. Payment of membership fees started in September 1994 and a core of 30 early members are continuing to support APEN as members. APEN continues to change and grow ***In fact it is flourishing!***



HELP!

We would like your help in gathering a collection of photos depicting APEN activities and achievements over the last 25 years. Can you please send to info@apen.org.au with the heading "Capturing APEN's History" – date, event, name etc would help.

APEN Committees



Committees are useful for building expertise and alleviating the workload of the entire board, but they are not a substitute for the collective decision-making power of the Board (AICD, 2004).

Currently, APEN has a Finance, Communications, International Initiatives, Business development, Education & Training, Extension/Policy/Strategic Relations.

The Board encourages members with energy and enthusiasm to submit an expression of interest to the Executive Officer [info@apen.org.au] in becoming a member of one of these committees.

New APEN members

APEN continues to grow as we welcome recently joined members from around the country and overseas. It is a great opportunity for other members to connect and share experiences with them.



Ashiegbu Gloria Nwakaego

Ashiegbu Gloria Nwakaego is a Lecturer and Bachelor degree holder in Agriculture from Ebonyi State University Abakaliki Nigeria and obtained her Master of science and is currently a PhD student in Agricultural Extension Communication, Department of Rural Sociology and Extension, Michael Okpara University of Agriculture Umuahia Abia State Nigeria. Gloria is married to Diamond Ashiegbu and they are blessed with three children (one boy and two daughters). Gloria was born in Onitsha Anambra State Nigeria. Her state of origin is Imo state. Gloria was the founder of DIAGLO Mega Services LTD aimed at training women and youth in agriculture and empowerment and her interest is on rural development. Gloria joined APEN because of her desire to collaborate with other researchers in her field of study and to improve in her profession.



Christopher Rotilles Vicera

Christopher Rotilles Vicera is the Director of Extension and Community Engagement from 2013 to present of Naval State University, Naval, Biliran Philippines. He finished his Master of Arts in Educational Management and Doctor of Education major in Higher Education Management both at Naval State University. He is a recipient of scholarship from Ford Foundation International Fellowship Program (FF-IFP) and Finished the Graduate Program on Intercultural, Leadership, Services, Management at World Learning, School for International Training in Brattleboro, Vermont, USA. Currently, he is also teaching Social Sciences, Professional Education and Management subjects both Graduate and Undergraduate Education at Naval State University-College of Education. 'I joined APEN for international linkages and partnership and perhaps enhance my knowledge about extension and community engagement'.



Dr Erdenebolor Baast

Dr Erdenebolor Baast is director of the Centre for Sustainable Rural Development of Mongolian University of Life Sciences. He obtained a Ph.D. degree from University of Hohenheim and worked at universities in Mongolia, Austria and Australia. His research and advisory work is focused on agricultural extension, rural livelihoods and dairy farming. Recent projects with his major involvement pioneered participatory extension service models for livestock herders in Mongolia and introduced the undergraduate course "Communication and Innovation" at Mongolian University of Life Sciences. Erdenebolor is currently assigned by the government of Mongolia to lead a task force for elaborating a law on agricultural extension and undertaking a visiting fellowship program at the Rural Innovation Research Group of the University of Melbourne in order to utilise learnings from Australian experiences in stimulating private sector extension in the planned legislation of agricultural extension in Mongolia.



Thivahary Geretharan

My name is Thivahary Geretharan. I am from Sri Lanka and work as a Senior Lecturer in Agricultural Extension at the Faculty of Agriculture, Eastern University, Sri Lanka. I received my Bachelor's Degree in Agriculture at Eastern University, Sri Lanka and Master of Philosophy in Agricultural Extension at University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka. Presently, I am pursuing my Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Agricultural Extension at Massey University, New Zealand. APEN is a professional organization for Agricultural extension workers. As my work and interest are also in the same area I joined APEN to extend my extension professional network.

APEN is providing a platform for networking, professional development and representation of members across Australia, New Zealand and countries in Asia. The Board welcomes the diversity of our networks as we support and include people of different backgrounds and perspectives. We appreciate the openness of all our members to different thoughts, styles and backgrounds as we connect with like-minded people who are interested in extension.

We extend a warm welcome to our latest members and we look forward to sharing their knowledge, skills and experiences.

Laura Cunningham	<i>NT</i>
Alison Carmichael	<i>NSW</i>
Lauren Wilson	<i>NSW</i>
Zenal Asikin	<i>NSW</i>
Cheryl Thomas	<i>Qld</i>
Kate Brown	<i>Qld</i>
Sarah Stevens	<i>SA</i>
Mary Johnson	<i>VIC</i>
Tara Slaven	<i>WA</i>
Karen Smith	<i>WA</i>
Norman Welsh	<i>CAMBODIA</i>
Sarva Venku Reddy	<i>INDIA</i>
Ram Hari Timilsina	<i>NEPAL</i>
Jacob Taru	<i>PAPUA NEW GUINEA</i>
Maria Shanks	<i>NEW ZEALAND</i>
Ayodeji Araba	<i>NIGERIA</i>
Gloria Ashiegbu	<i>NIGERIA</i>
Faheem Khan	<i>PAKISTAN</i>
Christopher Vicera	<i>PHILIPPINES</i>
Thivahary Geretharan	<i>SRI LANKA</i>
Erdenebola Baast	<i>MONGOLIA</i>

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RC - Regional Coordinator

Guidelines and Deadlines

Submissions should be made in MS Word 6.0 with minimal formatting. A portrait photograph of the author is required. All photographs, figures and/or tables ought to be provided as separate files (preferably TIF or JPEG; photos scanned at 300 dpi). Feature articles should be around 1000 words and minor articles 500 words. The editor reserves the right to edit submitted material to meet space restrictions. Letters to the editor or general items of news of interest to the network are welcome. Articles should be submitted at least four weeks prior to publication.

Preference is given to articles that are grounded in some form of project or event.

Editing: Dr Pat Hamilton

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Opinions expressed in ExtensionNet are not necessarily those of the Australasia-Pacific Extension Network (Ltd.) unless otherwise stated.

Stories and photos (next edition) due to Editor 8th June 2018