

## "25 Years & Flourishing"

### APEN Ltd Board Structure and Strategic Plan 2018

In 2017, APEN became a company limited by guarantee. After consultations with members, Directors have updated the Constitution, Board Structure and Strategic Plan to reflect our current situation.

**Vision** The Australasia-Pacific Extension Network (Ltd.) is the organisation for extension professionals working with people to enable change and innovation in primary industries, natural resource management and communities.

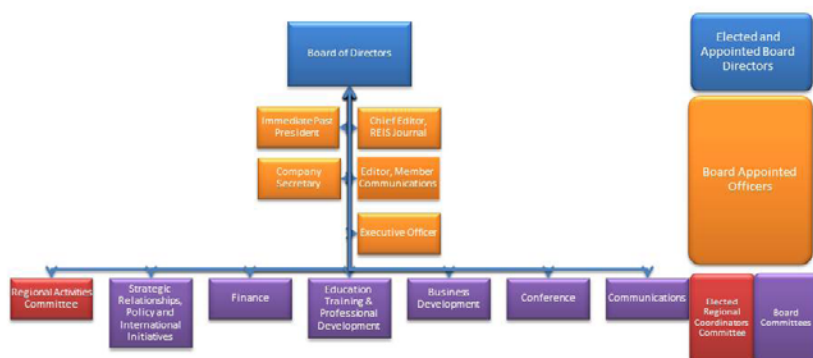
**Mission** Supporting professional development, networking and a voice for those who work in extension and related fields in Australia, New Zealand and the broader Asia Pacific region.

#### Goals:

- To influence the extension agenda and reputation of the profession
- To broaden APEN's base and reach, providing relevant services to extension professionals
- To deliver effective targeted communications that meet members needs and enhances the APEN brand
- To maintain good organisational governance

The Board seeks to continually improve APEN as a professional organisation and welcomes any feedback on the [Strategic Plan](#) and any aspect of the organisation.

APEN Ltd Board



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# A message from the President

Graham Harris

I recently attended the final team meeting of the “Stimulating private sector extension in Australian agriculture to increase returns from R&D” project. This project was supported by funding from the Australian Government Department of Agriculture and Water Resources as part of its Rural R&D for Profit program. The project addressed cross-sectoral R&D in four areas, involving quantitative, qualitative and participatory social research methods in data collection and analysis. This project clearly demonstrated the value in a broad range of interest groups working together to achieve a positive outcome. It also clearly highlighted the diversity of extension providers now operating within Australia. Government extension providers are no longer the sole provider of extension services, with significant involvement and opportunity now existing with the Research and Development Corporations, farm input suppliers, fee-for-service advisers, farmer-owned support organisations,

processing companies and community organisations for the delivery of extension services.

Additionally, the project found an increasing use of private sector advisers by farmers, although 70% didn't always know where to source the information, advice and support they needed. Private sector advisers felt that their current engagement is ad hoc and would like more opportunity to be involved in RD&E. At the same time, they see value in cross-industry engagement.

The diversity in extension is increasingly reflected in the membership of APEN. It is important for us to embrace this diversity and take the opportunity to participate in future activities to further enhance the private sector engagement in extension.

Further detail about the outcomes of this project can be found at the project website - <https://rirg.fvas.unimelb.edu.au/ag-extension> - it is well worth the time to reflect upon the project findings and recommendations.

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## ACROSS THE EDITOR'S DESK

“When it comes to the future, there are three kinds of people: those who let it happen, those who make it happen and those who wonder what happened.” (John M Richardson Jr) Which one are you?

Most of us will acknowledge that we live in an ‘instant age’. But is this ‘world of instant’, creating unrealistic expectations that at times impede our growth, limit our opportunities and cause us to lose rather than gain perspective?

And so, what are the drivers of change: New ways of doing things? New technology? Critical uncertainties? New values or beliefs?

Each of our guest writers for this issue of ExtensionNet is a change agent. Dr Jess Jennings reminds our members of the importance of capturing the research and experiences of extensionists and what might happen in the future, Jeanette Gellard shares her change experience from living in South Korea, John Stantiall looks at best practice of engaging people in the primary production sector in New Zealand, Lucy Hyde unlocks some mysteries of motivation, while Jeanette Long has some great tips for facilitation, and Lucy Broad shares a GRDC perspective. We have gathered a wealth of experiences from a broad

cross-section of disciplines to share knowledge, skills and experience about more effective ways to facilitate change.

Over the last 25 years, APEN has been the repository of a lot of hard earned knowledge and wisdom about effective ways to collaborate to build capacity. APEN, also, provides you, our members, with networking, professional development and representation opportunity – so let us know what you need!

**Warm regards**  
**Dr Patricia Hamilton**  
**ExtensionNet Editor**



# Extension is an educational process

<http://www.apen.org.au/extension>

Extension is about working with people in a community to facilitate change in an environment that has social, economic and technical complexity. This is achieved by helping people gain the knowledge and confidence so that they want to change and providing support to ensure it is implemented effectively by:

- Helping people to work together more effectively and to establish a common commitment to the goals
- Assisting people to better utilise existing knowledge, skills and resources
- Facilitating access to new knowledge which resides outside the community
- Encouraging people to take responsibility for the change process
- Working with the community to identify barriers to progress and developing, with the community, ways of overcoming them

APEN offers communication and support between people and organisations sharing similar aspirations and challenges and a desire to improve the practice of extension. Ultimately this enables members to achieve better outcomes for the research, development and extension organisations, departments and companies for whom they work.

Extension provides many benefits for the people involved such as improved networking and better understanding of: the problems that affect them; how their community works; how to better use the resources available.

A series of principles aim to improve the capacity of people to change and maintain the momentum of the process. How these principles are applied differs in each situation as every community is different and every problem has more than one solution. The best approach is the one that works for the community and the extension worker in the most efficient and effective way.

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Visit the website for an explanation of these principles.  
<http://www.apen.org.au/extension>



# Shaping Change and the Shape of Things to Come

Dr Jess Jennings, Lead Editor, "Shaping Change"



To order: Please complete the order form on the back of the [Shaping Change Flyer \(click here\)](#)

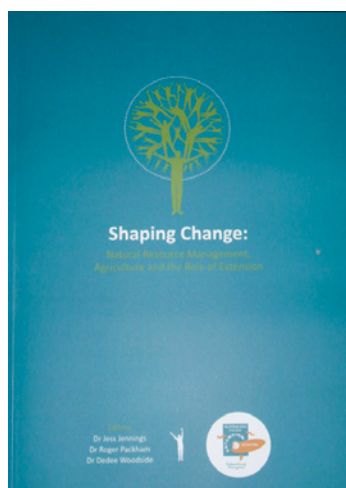
The cost per book (including GST) is:

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Postage is to be added to the cost (\$14.80 within Australia, otherwise ask for details [info@apen.org.au](mailto:info@apen.org.au)) and payments can be made by credit card, cheque or money order and by EFT. Details are on the order form. Please contact APEN Ltd [info@apen.org.au](mailto:info@apen.org.au) if you would like to purchase a "class set".



Call it what you will, but extension as a practice and discipline is an increasingly critical part of the Australian landscape.

The value of extension to society increases the more change we face, and there's no risk of the rate of change dropping off anytime soon, be it technological disruption, global markets, climate variation, institutional change or policy direction to name but a few of the variables that must be managed in the daily life of an extension professional.

This continued growth in the rate of change of seemingly everything around us was the catalyst for *Shaping Change* back in 2011: to provide a broad structure of knowledge for our craft for both new and experienced practitioners alike to readily access peer reviewed, professional contributions of the history, theory and practice of extension.

Providing a practitioner aid was probably the primary driver, particularly given my perspective as a relatively young extension professional at the time of its publication – I recall wanting such a text before I started my doctorate not after it! But another agenda lurked between the lines of *Shaping Change*, that of raising the professionalism and research standards of the extension community to better stand its ground, and maybe grow its patch just a little, in the highly competitive marketplace of ideas and industry relevance.

I've heard *Shaping Change* referred to as 'the Bible of extension', which is pleasing as a KPI of being 'fit for purpose' but there was also an expectation that it be a watershed moment that laid a platform for further editions to reflect the on-going development and evolution of ideas, methods and practices. This challenge remains and serves as a golden opportunity for any suitably keen members of the extension community to take up, particularly when you contemplate the range and scope of disruptions coming straight at us, like autonomous electric vehicles for example.

There are massive implications of safe and legal self-driving, electric vehicles and how

the transition takes shape in Australia will be intriguing, but it's their cost-effective boost to economic productivity that will wipe the floor with so many current norms.

Will the national road toll be virtually eliminated with no autonomous vehicles that don't speed, get tired, run red lights, text, talk on mobiles, have 4 pairs of "eyes", and don't drink or get road rage? Think of the human and health benefits.

Electric vehicles obviously don't use petrol or oil or LPG, and they have only 20 or so moving parts compared to a petrol vehicle which has over 2000 moving parts. So, what will happen to petrol stations when only 20% of vehicles require in-journey charging because the other 80% are charged overnight at home or hotels; will mechanics have much to repair with no engines or gear boxes to break down; will insurance crash claims and legal bills become almost non-existent because they record their every move; how will the federal government change the current petrol excise tax to maintain road budgets; what will happen to current freight and courier driving jobs; and how will all this affect the way society goes about its daily business and how extension is delivered? One thing is for sure: there'll be a fair few extension officers out there who will love not having to do relentless hours of driving to engage client. Perhaps it'll make some time for the second edition of *Shaping Change* to become a reality?

Dr Jess Jennings

Lead Editor, *Shaping Change*

*Dr Jess Jennings has been consulting in extension design and delivery in agriculture and NRM for the past 15 years and is currently Research Consultant to the coming Australian Milling Museum at Tremain's Mill in Bathurst and a local government councillor.*





# What tools does the agricultural consultant use to effect change in primary industry production and profit? - A personal perspective

John Stantiall



The most effective tools to bring about change in primary production are personal trust with the client; financial, technical and farm systems analytical skills; and the ability to provide a range of options and decision-making criteria, which enable and encourage the client to learn and make better decisions. To multiply up this process, funding is required to encourage those not engaged in significant learning to join in and take advantage of the tools that are available.

**Farmer Investment in Self-Learning**  
*(the tools and skills of relationship-building, understanding farming systems and being able to help others to learn, given the opportunity)*

When a consultant works one-on-one with individual clients, he or she is responding to the needs of the client (the person who pays the bill). Incrementally, by working with clients, over time an effective consultant can bring about significant change within an industry. I have seen this with the clients I work with – both individually and in farm business groups. But this is not done on an industry good basis, because no-one else is funding it. This is simply farmers wanting to learn and improve - and being prepared to pay for it to happen. They make a leap of faith in the person they choose, as not all consultants philosophically want to help their clients to learn. (Some consultants simply want to provide a service month after month. Some want to provide a supervisory service and make the decisions for the client. Neither of these operating modes necessarily help the client improve their own decision-making ability.)

My clients choose me, I don't choose them. They are motivated to learn. Building a personal rapport is essential if we are to work together on their business, and especially if

changes to their system are likely (or needed). Defining the current situation is a necessary starting point. This includes the whole farm system, including land, environment, people, finances, enterprise mix and the physical performance being achieved. The next step is to define the issues and opportunities – firstly as they see them (often the symptoms) and secondly as I see them based on the analysis of the current situation (trying to identify the base causes). The third step is usually the most time-consuming; to identify a range of options moving forward that will help address the issues and take advantage of the opportunities. Considerable time needs to be spent in this phase, sometimes to look at issues one-at-a-time and then to combine them and arrive at an agreed future direction ("Plan A"). Quantifying Plan A through feed planning and a financial budget will help check the feasibility of the plan and whether or not it will meet the financial goals is the next step (assuming that most non-financial goals will also be met or cannot be afforded).

These four steps are common consultancy practice. In the latter part of my career, where I have tried to make a difference and help clients to learn, I have encouraged them to commit to a monthly monitoring process whereby they update their financial budget two-monthly (to fit with their gst returns) and update the feed budget monthly, then review the options for the next few months. The first scenario is for an anticipated feed deficit – to identify the options and associated costs; and secondly if a feed surplus is anticipated, how to manage it or take opportunities to convert it into dollars. This is set up through a formal analytical process and it helps the client learn about

the costs of various options and the returns from a range of opportunities. From my experience, this is as much about learning as about the analytical process to find an answer.

Typically, the farmers who invest in learning for themselves also want to invest in learning for their staff. Hence for the last fifteen years I have facilitated up to eight farm business groups for farm managers and 2ICs (second-in-charge staff). Many of the 2IC staff and managers from the early days have remained loyal as they moved up through the ranks and now employ staff whom they place in my farm business groups. Some of our analysis and ensuing discussions have resulted in strategic decisions such as reducing stocking rate and achieving better per head performance. This sort of analysis and discussion has put the thinking of group members ahead of many who have not been part of these discussions, including other rural professionals. Hence, if the bank manager arrives and says "when are you going to increase your stock numbers again" its difficult to know where to start the explanation. Being at the leading edge of industry thinking can sometimes be a lonely place.

**Transposing My Experience for Industry Good**

*(funding as a tool, facilitation as a tool)*

My experience and skills can only be used for 'industry good' if someone funds me (the same applies for most other consultants). Hence, funding is a tool needed for an agricultural consultant use to effect greater change in primary industry production and profitability.

*Continues next page*

## What tools does the agricultural consultant use to effect change in primary industry production and profit? (continued)

In the past I facilitated three 'Monitor Farm' (MeatNZ, WoolPro) programmes between 2001 (when I re-started my consultancy career) and 2008. They came to a natural end because there was no new learning (from research) available for the regular attenders. While from time-to-time I did attempt some skill development (e.g. feed planning, ewe condition scoring, visual soil assessment) the large size of the groups and the intermittent attendance of participants meant that it did not lend itself to the next level of learning required – developing analytical skills and management processes.

The perfect opportunity has recently presented itself. The New Zealand Red Meat Profit Partnership (RMPP) is a consortium including the Government (through the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI)), Beef and Lamb New Zealand (the industry organisation funded by farmer levies), meat processing companies and two banks. It was set up in response to the Red Meat Sector Strategy published by the Meat Industry Association and Beef and Lamb New Zealand in 2011. Its' aim is "To drive sustainable productivity improvements in the sheep and beef sector to deliver higher on-farm profitability." More specifically the aim is to drive \$284m/year (\$117/ha/year) in pre-tax on-farm profit by 2025. One of the main strategies to do this is through farmer learning – by providing funding for two years to encourage farmers to join and participate in "Action Groups". These groups will be run by trained facilitators and there is sufficient funding to pay for 'subject matter experts'. The group members decide on their own programme of meeting activities and speakers (most will fit into the guidelines provided by RMPP).

At the time of writing I am facilitating five Action Groups. Out of the forty-four participants, seventeen are new

connections. Even for those whom I have previously worked with, we have had a different conversation about the issues they would like to investigate in the future. The conversations at the first meeting of each group provided me with some indications that it was possible to quickly add value to those businesses with whom I'd previously had no contact. I was also confident that we could continue to add value to all business using subject matter experts in specialised topics. There were a number of similar key topics that all groups identified as wanting to learn about. The most common ones were: animal health, genetic improvement in livestock, pasture improvement, feed planning, fertiliser use, cropping, financial analysis and environmental issues.

Learning Opportunities (an open mind and access to subject matter experts as tools)

At the time of writing three of the Action Groups have had their second meeting, all focussed on building personal skills in either feed planning or financial analysis. The use of a subject matter expert has enhanced the ability to help group members to learn skills in the short period available (6-7 hours). Time will tell how much other subject matter experts can add to the learning of members and consequent improvements in farm performance and profitability. It's a journey worth exploring. The experience of the RMPP trial farmers indicate that the gains were significant in many cases (RMPP 2017).

It is relatively easy, and fun, to help those who want to learn. RMPP still have a challenge to get more of those who are not engaged in significant learning into Action Groups. Of the 57 people I approached, eleven declined the opportunity to be involved (two were already in Action Groups and two are still wanting to be part of a group). Learning is a social activity.

None of us will live long enough to learn everything we need to know on our own. The funding of farmers into Action Groups by RMPP has created a fantastic opportunity for those who want to take it. If the facilitators do a good job, these groups should continue well beyond the end of the funding period (will end June 2020). Many of the tools to effect change in primary industry production profitability are well-known. We just need the opportunity to use them.

**References:** RMPP, 2017. Trial Farmer Booklet.

*John Stantiall is a consultant who works with individual clients and facilitated sheep and cattle farm business groups throughout the lower North Island, as well as contracting to research or local body organisations to undertake systems analysis for research projects, or complete environmental farm plans and consent applications for farmers. He has facilitated up to eleven farm business groups at one time, and currently has three long-standing farm business groups and five RMPP Action Groups.*

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Expert

# The Upsides of Change

Jeanette Gellard



Did you know that between 2014 and 2018 more than 51,000 Australian workers will have headed overseas for work and approximately 330,000 Australians will move interstate for the same reason?

As you can imagine relocating to a new country or city brings with it many changes and challenges.

Just ask me!

In 2014, I left Australia to become an expat spouse in Busan, South Korea and in doing so put on the backburner a lifetime of full-time employment and a consulting business that I had spent four years establishing. Along with the usual moving challenges of packing, unpacking, school enrolments and finding my way around a new neighbourhood, I also had to deal with setting up new foreign banking and phone accounts, learning to drive on the other side of the road and communicating in another language. Surprisingly one of my greatest challenges was finding something to do. All of a sudden, I had this piggy bank of time that I could spend how I chose. I hadn't realised how much of my identity was wrapped up in my work, and with no work to do I started to feel a bit like a boat without a rudder. Filling my day with domestic duties and social activities was one option but I didn't want it to be my only option.

And so I started my transformation.

I was liberated. Changes brought new beginnings, like closing one chapter in my life and opening another one. I had the

ability to let go of things that I had been tolerating and form new approaches to life. I had justification for resigning from some of those committee's that I had accumulated over the years and thinking really critically about where I wanted to put my energies instead. The change allowed me to kick some old habits and develop some new ones. Change helped me grow. Every time I encountered something new or different I learned something and grew. I discovered new insights about myself and my life. I learned new skills, developed my strengths and discovered some new ones. I found new opportunities such as delivering professional development programs to expat partners and adding professional coaching to my business services. I never knew what each change would bring and was often bumped out of my comfort zone only to discover an opportunity waiting for me that I normally wouldn't have encountered or considered. Changes brought new choices for happiness and fulfillment.

I returned to Australia at the end of January 2017 and I recognise that my time as an expat was transformational on both a personal and professional level. I emerged from that period with a revised personal vision, a greater entrepreneurial spirit and a number of new projects on the horizon. In this world of global opportunities and mobile workforces, you might find yourself on the move. Just remember, change isn't easy but there are ways to cope with change that can make it feel less scary and allow you to be transformed in the process.



*APEN Director, **Jeanette Gellard**, the Principal Consultant and Owner of Innovative Influences, brings a wealth of skills, knowledge, experience and passion to extension. 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.*





# The motivation mystery – how do we encourage practice change?

Lucy Hyde, Natural Resources Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges, South Australian Department for Environment and Water

In the South Australia's Mount Lofty Ranges, a globally recognised biodiversity hotspot, the two-way relationship between sustainable agriculture and natural resource management is invaluable. At the Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges NRM Board, one of the most important skills of our on-ground staff is their ability to successfully convey to landholders the importance of sustainable rural land management, and the benefits that well-managed natural resources will have on agricultural productivity.

But how do we achieve that? How do we convince landholders, be it commercial, semi-commercial, or hobby farmers – that the knowledge and skills we want to share with them are worth their time and energy?

## Networks and champions

Our strong, broad networks are paramount to our success in enabling practice change and creating interest in sustainable practices. At a grass-roots level, our Sustainable Agriculture Officers and District Officers invest significant time in building positive relationships with private landholders, community groups and agricultural industry groups across the region. We seek out well-known, well-respected members in

our rural communities to support our mission by acting as 'champions' – key influencers and advocates of sustainable farming practices amongst their peers. We support and attend local conferences and forums to promote our services and resources.

## Approach

We are very conscious of focusing on topics of high relevance – topics that farmers are genuinely interested in or concerned about. When conducting individual site visits, we pay attention to what the owners are wanting to do with the land and what their biggest challenges are; rather than talking at them, we talk with them.

## Variety

Our education, training and awareness-raising events are a huge part of what we do. Our events are successful in part due to the variety of formats, topics and locations, and in part to due to our constant evaluations and improvements on past events. We deliver short workshops, seminars, field days and 6-8 week courses. Our presenters are usually a combination of our own staff, expert consultants, and often landholders themselves in the case of field days. Our events are normally run in collaboration with

industry or community groups as we find this frequently improves our reach and attendance rates. We also offer industry groups the opportunity to undertake trials and other innovative projects, with financial support from us. Being led by the industry group rather than our organisation creates a much greater feeling of ownership and investment into the work being completed.

## Resources

We continually develop new resources to build the capacity of our rural communities in managing natural resources and sustainable agriculture. We provide free written resources in hard copy and online such as fact sheets, text books, case studies, and species ID booklets. Our YouTube channel plays a variety of instructional and informative videos and is going from strength to strength. Our newsletters provide farming tips and advice, trial results, and funding opportunities. And we have a growing presence online, with our website, [www.naturalresources.sa.gov.au/adelaidemtloftyranges](http://www.naturalresources.sa.gov.au/adelaidemtloftyranges), and our Facebook page, [www.facebook.com/AdelaideandMtLoftyRangesNRMBoard](http://www.facebook.com/AdelaideandMtLoftyRangesNRMBoard), being frequently updated and improved.

Our approach to community engagement is successful because we appreciate that everyone learns in a different way, at a different pace. Instead of forcing and demanding change, we connect, encourage, and inspire our communities to implement innovative sustainable practices.

*Lucy Hyde is the Regional Landcare Facilitator for the Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges NRM region. She is passionate about supporting new hobby farmers and promoting the many benefits that proper natural resource management can have on agricultural practices.*





# Tips For Running Great Field Days

Jeanette Long

## *Tips for great field days ...*

- **Well located** – think about where the field day site is to be located. Is it easily accessible? If it's a very wet season will people still be able to access the site? What is the noise level like? Is there a busy highway or train line close to the site which will impact on people's ability to hear speakers?
- **Run on time** – start and finish on time, value the effort people have made to be there. This includes the sessions during the day – speakers don't feel valued if they have prepared for 30 minutes are then are cut short because the person prior has gone over time.
- **Know and "name" the outcomes to be achieved by the event.** A few well-formed outcomes are more achievable than lots and lots!
- **Local, relevant and topical** – what are the key issues being faced in the district right now.
- **Credible topics** – how can this be integrated into my farm business?
- **Recognised farmer** – utilise farmers where possible to tell stories and value add to the research with their first-hand experiences.
- **Evaluate** – follow up, how effective was the event? Were the agreed outcomes achieved? What worked well and what could be done differently next time?
- **Good agronomy** – make sure the trials are well presented and in line with district practice.
- **Interaction time** – ensure there is time for participants to view trials, ask questions and discuss what they might have learnt amongst themselves.
- **Good food** – this is vitally important! Poor food will be all that is reported on so get it right!
- **Focus** – not heaps of trials or topics.
- **Crop trial inspection time** – focus on a few trials is more effective than overwhelming people with lots to view. Think about how much you can take in during one session.
- Add something that is a **"bit left of field"** or **"blue sky"** to create some interest
- **BBQ & beer** to finish off the day and allow some very important networking time.

## *What other ideas do readers have about what makes a great field day?*

*Immediate Past APEN President **Jeanette Long** is a facilitator, trainer and coach who focuses on developing people and business skills in agriculture. She is particularly passionate about developing the skills of rural women and is currently managing a Rural Women's Leadership project funded by PIRSA.*





# A snapshot of Extension through the eyes of GRDC

Lucy Broad , GRDC

As the Grains Research & Development Corporation (GRDC) gets ready to launch its new five-year R, D & E Plan, it's timely to reflect on the opportunities to improve Australian grain grower profitability through increased yield, reducing costs, identifying and capturing opportunities to increase price and assist growers in managing risk.

At the time of writing, lack of rain has meant much of the northern half of NSW, central and southern Queensland and other pockets of the Australian grain belt has sown a fraction of its annual winter crop. Despite being one of the largest investors in grains R, D & E in Australia, GRDC's ability to impact industry profitability can still be at the mercy of the weather. Over recent years however, there is no doubt GRDC investments in R, D & E have resulted in significant improvements on farm.

In the last 15 years, the Australian grain industry's gross value of production (GVP) has increased from a moving average of just over \$6 billion/year to over \$14 billion/year. The Australian Bureau of Agricultural Research and Economics (ABAREs) attributes the majority of this to technology adoption by grain growers. In this same time frame, GRDC and its research partners have facilitated the creation of a \$2 billion per year canola industry that has driven profitability in large parts of western and southern Australia, as well as a chickpea industry driving profitability in the north and a lentil industry driving profitability in parts of the south. Over this time, water use efficiency in wheat has almost doubled and there has been a major shift in the approach to managing herbicide resistant weeds, which has helped many grain growers remain viable while undoubtedly extend the life of some key crop protection chemistry. But as the current season reminds us, extremes in climate variability has led to increased risk, and in parts of Australia, profitability for some growers has plateaued or is even in decline. GRDC is responding by increasing our connectedness to our grain grower levy payers, and looking to continually improve the way we communicate the outcomes of our R, D & E investments.

Because extension is most effectively delivered at the local level, staff with skills in communication and extension are being placed in offices in all three GRDC regions (North, South and West). Placing communication and extension staff side by side with GRDC research staff and key collaborators ensures that the most appropriate path to adoption is being considered as a critical component of every R&D investment, from design to delivery. To ensure that its communication and extension activities have the greatest impact, GRDC will continue to strive to understand as much as possible about growers' learning preferences, attitudes to information channels, decision drivers and barriers to adoption. These understandings will be central in tailoring development and extension packages to meet the specific needs of different grain growers.

While still providing information in hard copy, GRDC will continue to expand its grower communications channels through existing and emerging digital platforms GRDC recognises that different growers prefer to receive information in different ways and that growers and their influencers will be increasingly able to access information via digital channels as technology connectivity and bandwidth improve. With around 80% of growers using adviser services to inform their decision-making on farm, the GRDC will also work closely with key influencers—including farming systems groups and other grower groups, farm advisers and agribusiness stakeholders—to ensure that all appropriate communication channels are being leveraged to get the right information to growers in a timely way and in the best format to help increase adoption and, ultimately grain grower profitability.

**Lucy Broad** joined GRDC in December 2017 as the General Manager of Communications and Extension with the Grains Research and Development Corporation, bringing more than thirty years experience in media, agricultural communications and behaviour change.

# Regional Roundup

## News from New Zealand

### Regional Coordinator Chrissy Stokes

Biosecurity issues continue to prove challenging in New Zealand. The government's announcement that it is aiming for total eradication of cattle disease *Mycoplasma bovis*, currently spreading through the dairy industry, has prompted a financial assistance package from ANZ bank and calls for food safety assurances from infant formula markets. The eradication programme is expected to cost around \$1billion. In the red meat sector, the Red Meat Profit Partnership (RMPP) is seeing progress with a large number of Action Groups established. Twenty-five of these groups, typically comprising 7-9 farming businesses supported by a facilitator, have had extension plans approved, and further 110 are in the pipeline. These groups facilitate farmers and rural professionals working together on areas of shared interest and focus on identifying ways to improve the performance of the farm business. The programme is also training facilitators, which is a critical part of the success of the programme. Kiwi APEN members are looking forward to the upcoming Roadshows on July 4 and 6 in Tauranga and Christchurch. They are a great opportunity to get together and improve our skills!

## News from South Australia

### Regional Coordinator Danielle England

Despite a dry start in a lot of places, seeding is finished, and lambing is well under way. The season rolls on. The only guarantee in farming is that it will rain one day. Making decisions is a normal part of farming – finding the right mix between crops and varieties (early or late season); paddock conditions (weed and disease burdens, sub soil moisture) and the seasonal outlook. This is complex decision making at its best!

There are three types of decisions: simple, complicated and complex.

- Simple decisions are those that involve only a yes or no answer – are my insect numbers high enough to spray?
- Complicated decisions are those that have a few competing factors – which mode of action in my weed control chemicals will give me the best weed management outcomes?

• Complex decisions are those we make where there is no clear answer or option. The decisions we make around the break of the season are definitely complex.

So how do we know if we've made the right decision? There is a difference between a good and a right decision. A good decision is one that is planned, where all the different outcomes have been considered, where you have applied the latest science and have chosen the most preferred method. But you won't know if it's the right decision until after the event.

Here's some useful links around dry seasons and decision making:

[http://pir.sa.gov.au/primary\\_industry/crops\\_and\\_pastures/crop\\_and\\_pasture\\_reports](http://pir.sa.gov.au/primary_industry/crops_and_pastures/crop_and_pasture_reports)

<http://www.grainandgraze3.com.au/>

<https://www.sheepconnectsa.com.au/technical-information/feeding-sheep-in-dry-times>

## News from New South Wales

### Regional Coordinator Adrian Englefield

With dry seasonal conditions occurring across New South Wales (and many other regions across Australia) it is timely to highlight support services available to the state's primary producers. Latest figures (obtained 20 June 2018) indicate 14.5% of NSW is experiencing drought and a further 47.9% experiencing drought onset (pictured below).

The NSW Department of Primary Industries has compiled an on-line resource Drought Hub ([www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/climate-and-emergencies/drouthub](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/climate-and-emergencies/drouthub)) as a one-stop-shop to help farmers, farming families and community groups. The website contains drought-related information, including seasonal conditions reports and primary producer/ community financial and health support services. If you are a farmer or know a farmer affected by the continued dry conditions, please encourage them to visit Drought Hub to access the full range of services boosted by the NSW Government's announcement of a further \$284 million drought support package in the state budget (a total commitment of \$584 million).

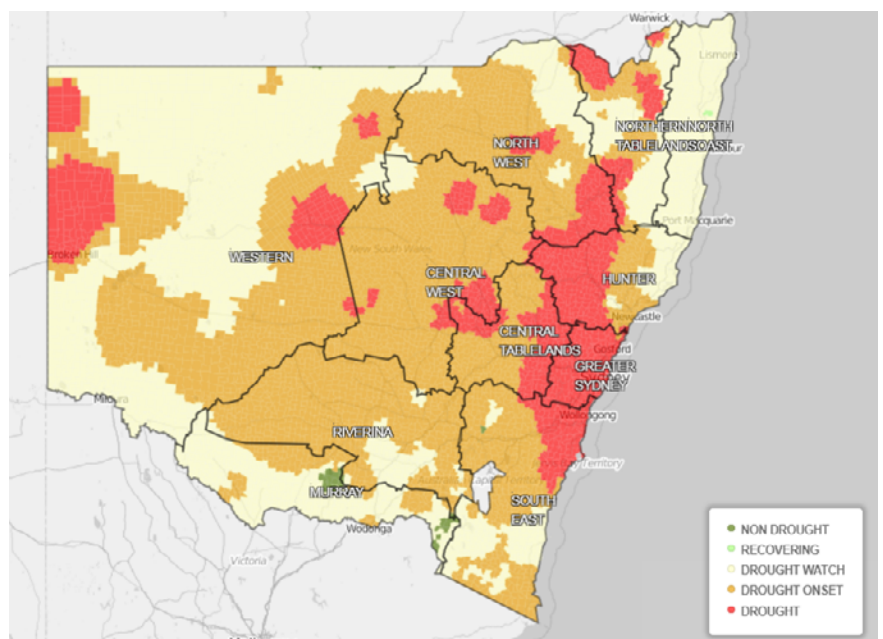
On a further note, I look forward to meeting NSW members at the 2018 APEN Wagga Wagga Roadshow on 31 August. Please visit the new APEN website ([www.apen.org.au](http://www.apen.org.au)) for further information and to reserve your place at the Tips, tricks and a little bit of magic workshop.

The Wagga Wagga APEN workshop will include a tour and wine tasting at the National Wine and Grape Industry Centre winery.

## News from Victoria

### Regional Coordinator Shayne Hyman

Seems like the long, dry weather pattern has finally broken with good rainfall in the West of Victoria and some much-





# Regional Roundup

needed moisture in the East. Hopefully, it will keep coming steadily and purge our fears of drought. Your Regional Coordinator is writing this brief report from a breezy, chilly Brisbane, where she is attending the Hort Connections 2018 convention. Not that the climate has anything to do with Queensland as the locals are saying the Southerners have brought the cold weather with them! This year's AUSVEG Horticulture Field Trip (the day before the convention gets underway in earnest) was to the Brisbane Markets, John Deere, and two vegetable growing operations in the fertile Lockyer Valley, Windolf Farms and Koala Farms. It was terrific, particularly the farm visits.

Two sleeps away from finding out the winner of the National Women in Horticulture Award at the convention's Gala Dinner (just quietly, the Victorian Regional Coordinator has been nominated and she's humbled by the honour).

Lock in to your diary all day on **Wednesday 29 August**, when "Tips, Tricks & a Little Bit of Extension Magic", the APEN Roadshow rolls into Melbourne Town. Greg Mills has a very engaging & exciting workshop planned for us. Please visit the new APEN website ([www.apen.org.au](http://www.apen.org.au)) for further information and to reserve your place

include the use of biological fertilisers, liquid fertilisers, more targeted use of mill mud and purchase of GPS systems to enable greater precision when applying nitrogen fertiliser. Wet Tropics Sugar Industry Partnership Extension Officers work one-on-one with growers to develop individualised whole of farm nutrient management plans. These are a good starting point for exploring what changes can be made on their properties to improve profitability and water quality run-off.

On a different note, the Australian Society of Sugarcane Technologists has formed a LinkedIn group called ASSCT Young Graduates. The idea is to share experiences on like-minded people working on projects and work towards getting a number of papers/posters to ASSCT 2018 in Toowoomba.

Over the second week of June Queensland Federated Farmers (QFF) toured a group of mentored women around the Dry and Wet Tropics Regions of QLD. They were shown how targeted and coordinated extension can support large scale land management practice changes in the different catchments visited. The group is taking part in a 12-month pilot agricultural reef extension work placement program aimed at improving the capacity in extension services across the Great Barrier Reef (GBR) catchments.

## News from Queensland

### Regional Coordinator Andres Jaramillo Queensland Dry and Wet Tropics

SRA have taken major steps forward in the delivery of the industry-led Adoption Strategy for the Australian sugar industry with the appointment of Regional Coordinators in six regions.

The Adoption Strategy has been developed in consultation with the Australian sugarcane industry and SRA's Government investors and stakeholders over the last 12 months. It aims to provide a more strategic focus to increase the uptake and implementation of new and existing technologies in the sugar industry.

Forty-one Wet Tropics growers have received funding through the Australian Government's Reef Trust IV Tender program which began in early 2017 and is in its final round of grants. The funding is for a range of land management practice changes geared to both better profitability and efficiencies as well as improved water quality flowing to the Reef. Some of the projects being funded

## News from Northern Territory Regional Coordinator Jacob Betros

Jacob, who is on an overseas trip, will catch up with everyone in the next issue.



# 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.

## Roadshow - Tips, Tricks & a little bit of Extension Magic

APEN proudly presents the 2018 Roadshow

**Tips, Tricks, & a little bit of Extension Magic**

In association with **Greg Mills, GoAhead Business Solutions**

**Build confidence in a workshop environment where we'll share success strategies and learn foundational and current extension methodologies.**



- How the brain processes information & how this understanding can be used to increase the uptake of information by your target audience and improve personal professional performance
- The strategies for professional sharing, networking & mentoring that maximise extension results
- The application of social licence & values based messaging concepts to enhancing audience engagement, and how to use this to embrace non-traditional market segments
- The pain/pleasure complex & how this impacts on your target audiences' responses
- Key tools (eg, Plickers, market segmentation, mind mapping etc) that can enhance extension delivery & targeting
- The "WIIFM or WOFTAM" framework for designing extension activities
- Utilising Success Measures and Active Actions to drive extension outcomes

**July to October - Register now!**

2018 Roadshow – Registration open and workshop fliers available on the bottom of the webpage. Please pass the flier on to anyone in your networks!

**[www.apen.org.au/roadshow](http://www.apen.org.au/roadshow)**

## Country of Origin Labelling

**The new Country of Origin Labelling requirements come into play from 1 July 2018 – make sure you're prepared!**



Do you grow, produce, manufacture, distribute, import or sell food products? If so, your business has until 1 July 2018 to comply with the new Country of Origin food Labelling requirements. The two-year transition period commenced in July 2016 and the new labelling requirements are mandatory from 1 July 2018.

### What do the new labels mean for your business?

The laws mean:

- Food products sold in Australian supermarkets and other retail outlets must display a label which clearly identifies where the food comes from.
- Labels on most foods grown, produced or made in Australia need to feature the symbol of a kangaroo in a triangle and indicate the percentage of ingredients that are Australian.
- Requirements for using claims like 'Product of', 'Made in' and 'Packed in' have been made clearer.

### Resources to help you get it right

There are plenty of tools and information available to help you understand and use the new labels correctly. To help you get it right, you can:

- use the Country of Origin Labelling online tool to help you work out if you need a new label and customise your label
- access the resources available on the Country of Origin food Labelling page including the Style Guide
- go to the Country of Origin Label library to download labels for your food products
- watch the Country of Origin food Labelling tips and traps webinar series from the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC)

# APEN's News Update

## What's happening in the Wildcatch Fisheries Sector?

Franca Romeo

*Franca Romeo, CEO Wildcatch Fisheries SA, shares with us how they are implementing strategies to tailor the skill set of fishers to meet the needs of industry.*

Seafood is vital for our health and well-being as a rich source of omega 3 and 6 essential fatty acids which are critical for a healthy heart, immune system, brain function and overall health and longevity. The South Australian Seafood Industry is an integral component of the South Australian community and way of life. Access to the health benefits of seafood is provided through the commercial fishing licence holders. Fishers are "on-the-water" daily. They are also the custodians of the marine environment. They have a vested interest in the long term sustainable harvest of the resource and they take their responsibility very seriously. Along with the direct jobs (catching, processing and retailing seafood), there are supporting industries that rely heavily on the commercial seafood industry, e.g. ship chandlers, fuel, transport and packaging companies.

Recently, SA partnered with NSW, VIC and QLD to receive Federal funding to develop material to enhance the skills of fishers in the areas of leadership, business improvement and community engagement. Franca has been concerned that, in the past, it has been difficult for fishers to attend face-to-face (f2f) long courses. And so, the new 'training' will centre on a 90% on line course which can be downloaded onto mobile devices and can be accessed anywhere (on the boat, in the home), anytime. The remaining 10% is a f2f 2-3 hours assessment. Franca says, "There is a need to stop focussing on a single qualification. It is important for fishers to access different skill packages from different providers to meet the needs of the industry". The biggest challenge is to encourage fishers to take up the new innovation. Visit the Wildcatch Fisheries website: [wfsa.org.au](http://wfsa.org.au)



**"We must learn from farmer's experience. Pragmatic, field-based and farmer centric education can and must play a key role in making agriculture stronger and more sustainable"**

Jose Graziano da Silva, Director-General, Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO)

## Buzz Words in Agriculture



"As farmers are called on to increase production while reducing costs, with limited water and space, they are going to need all the technology they can access, whether it's advancements in robotics, drones, aerial mapping, the latest in software or technical support for decision making." (Alex Sampson, The Weekly Times August 9, 2017)

- **"Think out of the box"** – why are you in a box to begin with?
- **Sustainable** - farmers are the original creators of the idea of sustainability. "Sustainable agriculture is the production of food, fibre, or other plant or animal products using farming techniques that protect the environment, public health, human communities, and animal welfare."
- **Resilience**: the ability to recover from setbacks, adapt well to change, and keep going in the face of adversity. Building better resilience takes time, effort, commitment, and focus (Harvard Business Review)
- **Innovative**: something that is actually brand new – i.e. Hasn't been done before
- **Organic**: "Organic food is produced by farmers who emphasise the use of renewable resources and the conservation of soil and water to enhance environmental quality for the future" (USDA National Organic Program)
- **Digital agriculture**: creating innovative ways of putting together existing ones (CSIRO)
- **e-Extension**: how we link farmers with the most relevant and knowledgeable agricultural advisor anytime, anywhere
- **Agtech**: is "about smart farmers getting smarter using digital technology" (James Nielsen Monsanto Australia technology)





# APEN's News Update

## Training our youth



### Hay Inc – Sandra Ireson

Dwindling numbers of jackaroos and jillaroos training on properties throughout eastern Australia led to the launch of the Hay Inc Rural Education program in 2014. Hay Inc (supported by Australian Wool Innovation (AWI)) is a volunteer committee which consists of enthusiastic local Hay District community members who are focused on providing a unique and sustainable “on farm set of skills” in a “hands on” practical method of training, primarily for young women and men to be employed on rural properties. Hay Inc. is a great opportunity for school leavers who want to gain skills, learn with a group of other like-minded young people, gain industry networks and mentoring from people with vast industry knowledge and skills. The program is a three-week course, delivered in three blocks of five days, spread over a five-month period (February, March and June)

Information [www.hayinc.com.au](http://www.hayinc.com.au)

Email: [info@hayinc.com.au](mailto:info@hayinc.com.au) Ph: 0439 938 119



### Country to Canberra - Hannah Wandel

Country to Canberra is empowering young rural women to reach their leadership potential. Distance, time and funding barriers can isolate rural and remote students from education & career opportunities. And so, C2C Country to Canberra currently runs:

**Leadership Competition:** a nationwide leadership competition about gender equality for high school students in rural and remote Australia. After having their work published, the competition winners are awarded a [Power Trip](#): to Canberra where they meet with politicians and influential role models, connect with mentors, undertake leadership and public speaking training, tour Parliament, connect with other young trailblazers and much more!

**Project Empower** is a national ‘workshop roadtrip’ that will empower teenage girls in rural and remote Australia to reach their leadership potential. educate about gender equality, build self-esteem and encourage girls to embrace their leadership strengths. It’s an uplifting and educational workshop series. driving over 15,000km to run Project Empower in high schools and clubs. We’ll be on the road from May-August 2018, travelling to regional, rural and remote towns in every state and territory. Check out our [interactive map](#) and [timeline](#)! As they interact with 3,000 young women in 80 communities.

Visit [www.countrytocanberra.com.au](http://www.countrytocanberra.com.au)

## AgriFutures Horizon Scholarship

AgriFutures Australia is committed to supporting the next generation of leaders that will drive the future prosperity of Australian rural industries and communities. The AgriFutures™ Horizon Scholarship is awarded to students studying an agriculture-related degree or a Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths/Finance (STEM) degree with relevant majors which align to agriculture.

The 2018 AgriFutures™ Horizon Scholarship brochure contains further information on recent changes to the program, and the benefits students receive:

[www.agrifutures.com.au](http://www.agrifutures.com.au)

### APEN's New website was launched in June –

Many thanks to Ilana & Craig from Snap and Graham, Roe and Pat (APEN Board)

Please check it out and let us know what you think!

Login Username: your email address

Password: APENMemyour member no  
(e.g. APENMem007)

## NEWS SNIPPETS

- The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) came into effect May 25 – impact on what companies do with people's data
- Check out [farmtable.com.au](http://farmtable.com.au) – a national platform to connect farmers
- Check out [futurefarmers.com.au](http://futurefarmers.com.au) – focused on building the engagement and agricultural network of the 18-35-year-old
- Gippsland Women In Horticulture Conference 2018 - Thursday 23 August
- The 9th GFRAS Annual Meeting will take place on the topic of “Addressing Challenges and Seizing Opportunities: Developing Effective Partnerships in RAS”, from 22-25 October 2018 in Jeonju, South Korea. Find more information on the Annual Meeting website: <http://www.g-fras.org/en/am18.html>
- “Growing Agriculture at 41° South”. IFMA22 - CALL FOR PAPERS & POSTERS For information go to: [www.ifma22.org](http://www.ifma22.org)
- The Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience (ADIR) recently launched the updated Community Recovery Handbook providing a comprehensive guide to community recovery in Australia. It can be used by planners, managers and those working in communities to design and deliver recovery processes, service, programs and activities.
- APEN Blog  
APEN encourages you to write a blog and /or provide feedback on someone else's blog. Send your blog to [info@apen.org.au](mailto:info@apen.org.au)  
A blog encourages us to write in a different way to attract different audiences. Because it is relatively short, less formalised and is a self-contained piece, a blog enables us to experiment with sharing our information, our research, our opinions, a vignette, a review ... The blog can include images, videos, slides and sound.
- **APEN Celebrating 25 years at the AGM in October 2018**

# New APEN members

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.



## Juliane Kasiske

Meet Juliane (Julia) Kasiske who migrated to Australia in 2008 following a strong fascination for Australia and its diverse sea, landscapes and unique wildlife. Currently, as the Regional Agriculture Landcare Facilitator (RALF) for the Mackay Whitsunday Isaac region, Juliane connects and informs landholders to promote sustainable practice-change in grazing, sugarcane, horticulture and forestry. Her extension work, based on strong connections, helps farmers build their understanding of sustainable and innovative practices that can also benefit efficiency and productivity. Together with farmers, she has lifted the profile of sustainable agriculture, and soil health regionally. Ultimately, land-to-sea work aims to help improve water quality, including to the Great Barrier Reef Lagoon.

When asked why she decided to join APEN she commented, "I came to realise that it is impossible for one person to be an expert across all facets of environmental health and agricultural productivity. Instead, it is vital to recognise the importance of building strong and supportive networks, connecting with people with diverse backgrounds and expertise who I can learn from and collaborate with to assist me in empowering others to take up change and as a result protect our life-sustaining resources."

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

<b>Jane Ticknell</b>	<i>Qld</i>
<b>Sandra Ogbuagu</b>	<i>Overseas</i>
<b>Fuji Astuti</b>	<i>Nigeria</i>
<b>Hugh Wardle</b>	<i>Indonesia</i>
<b>Juliane Kasiske</b>	<i>Qld</i>
<b>Matt Hall</b>	<i>NT</i>
<b>Janine Alfeld</b>	<i>New Zealand</i>

"25 Years & Flourishing"

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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**

**Layout: Ross Tasker, Snap Albury Wodonga, Victoria.**

**Production management: Dr Rosemary Currie, APEN, Wodonga, Victoria.**

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

**Contributions most welcome for stories and photos reflecting and celebrating the 25 years of APEN - due to Editor 3rd September 2018**