



# EXTENSIONNET

Newsletter of the Australasia-Pacific Extension Network Ltd

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## EXTENSION CHATting

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# The President's Corner

Dr Anthony Kachenko, APEN President

## Welcome to the 2022 year.

Where has 2021 gone?! It has been an extremely busy year with conference planning and organising APEN Board business, as well as a hectic work year and coping with Covid lockdowns and uncertain times. We have come through with flying colours.

APEN held a very successful **ExtensionChat – APEN Online 2021: Foundations of Extension Design and Practice** <https://www.apen.org.au/extensionchat-2021> Many thanks to Facilitators - Dani England and Jeanette Long (both keen APEN supporters); Panellists - Sarah Hain, Pete Newman, Angela Williams, Lab Wilson, at the Masterclass; others "behind the scenes" - Pat Hamilton, Jeanette Gellard and Roe Currie; and especially, everyone who enriched their learning experience. The need for the extension training was reinforced by a large response for registrations – so much so, that the initial one group for 2 workshops and a Panel session in November was extended to 3 workshops. We appreciate the generosity of Dani and Jeanette who gave their time to deliver all the sessions. A flow on effect was on our membership. We are delighted to welcome so many more members from a diverse group of extensionists and

industries.

The **APEN 2022 Conference, Facilitating Change and the opportunity from Disruption**, 9-11 February in Melbourne is shaping up to be a great event. We have had over 20 sponsors supporting the event and nearly 100 abstracts submitted. Registrations are also looking solid with new members joining the association as they register to attend the event.

I thank the APEN Directors, all Committee Members, and the Conference Organising Team for their amazing work this year.



Whatever 2021 brought you, we are grateful to have worked or connected with you via our communication channels and hope that we can do more (face-to-face!) in 2022 – especially at the APEN Conference in Melbourne.

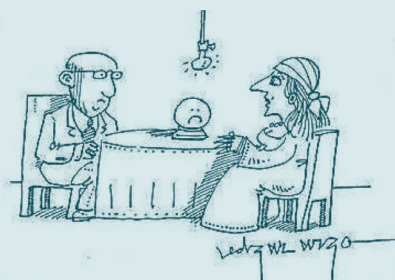
Regards,  
Anthony



## Editorial - Bringing it all together

APEN is about people – people with the aim of improving their professional skills – people who strengthen the relevance of extension in today's world –people who develop their insights, acquire their information, and encourage innovations - people who are motivated to achieve positive regional change. People who matter.

In this issue of *ExtensionNet*, the Editorial Team have gathered lots of these people who drive our network, who attend our events, who register for our conference, who share their stories and who act upon their learnings – a wealth of good reading. As we face the challenges of another year being disrupted by COVID-19, we do not



"I CAN'T GIVE YOU ANY GOOD NEWS... MY CRYSTAL BALL IS DOWN."

know what the future may bring - like the cartoon, our crystal ball is not 'working'. However, the APEN Board and Regional

Coordinators have planned some exciting events. As Charles Kettering shares with us, "My interest is in the future because I am going to spend the rest of my life there." May 2022 bring new happiness, new goals, new achievements and many more inspirations.

*My thanks to the talents of the Editorial Team (Adrian, Chrissy, Morag, and Roe) who keep finding these inspirational people.*

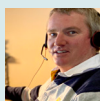
Warm regards  
Pat Hamilton



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# APEN Board News



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



## APEN Ltd 2021 AGM

was held at 12noon AEDT on Friday 22 October by Zoom.

Fourteen members attended and there were seven apologies. We are pleased to announce the 2021-2022 Directors: President, Anthony Kachenko; Vice President, Jeanette Gellard; Treasurer, Roy Murray-Prior; Company Secretary, Roe Currie; Les Baxter\*; Heather Collins; Patricia Hamilton; Peter Long; Nicole Sallur.



President –  
Dr Anthony Kachenko



Vice President –  
Jeanette Gellard



Treasurer –  
Roy Murray-Prior



Company Secretary –  
Dr Rosemary Currie



Les Baxter\*



Heather Collins



Patricia Hamilton



Peter Long



Nicole Sallur

\*Les resigned from the Board on 4 November due to workload pressures. His governance expertise and ready humour will be missed! Graham Harris, Immediate Past President, was warmly thanked for his service over many years.



A question regarding the 'make up' of members, e.g., what organisations do they come from? Our response was that members were advised to consult the [APEN Members' Directory](#) available in the Members' section of the website.

See the website for details of Board members:  
[www.apen.org.au/about/board](http://www.apen.org.au/about/board)

Further information can be found in the Annual Report - available here.

# VACANCIES

## APEN Board, NZ Regional Coordinator, Board Committees

- **Want to influence the extension agenda?**
- **Want to support members to develop their capacity and professionalism?**
- **Is being on the Board or on the Regional Activities Committee something that may be of interest?**
  - Become an APEN Director
  - Nominate for the NZ Regional Coordinator Role
  - Join one of the Board Committees which meet quarterly by zoom
    - Audit, Risk and Finance
    - Business Development
    - Governance and Strategy
    - Stakeholder Engagement
    - Regional Activities Committee (meets every two months).

If you are interested in participating in any of these, please contact the APEN Secretariat with any enquiries:

**Roe Currie, +61 2 6024 5349, [info@apen.org.au](mailto:info@apen.org.au)**



## APEN Board Strategic Review & Forward Planning Day

*The Board met on Monday 22 November to discuss the strategies and outcomes of our Strategic Directions for the 2021-2022 year.*

**Influence. Relevance.**

**Professionalism. Organisational Stability.**

### **Our Purpose**

- to grow the engagement and reach of APEN through strategic programs so that we can influence the extension agenda and reputation of the profession and provide relevant services to extension professionals
- to develop diversified income sources to enhance APEN's sustainability
- to produce a realistic succession plan for the Board, including Directors, Company Secretary and Editors

*Each Director who Chairs a Board Committee reflected on the achievements, challenges, and concerns of the 2020-2021 year.*

### **APEN's Roadmap for 2022**

By the end of the meeting, the Board had developed a roadmap for the next 12 months

- Succession planning for the transition from *Creative Management Services* to *The Association Specialists* to manage our operations
- The APEN 2022 Conference
- Management of events, grants, activities – e.g. ExtensionChat 2022
- Seeking sponsorship

It was a very productive day. The commitment of the Board and the input of our talented members will ensure the success of our roadmap.



## Facilitating Change and the Opportunity from Disruption

9-11 February 2022, Melbourne, Victoria (hybrid)

Studies reveal that there are five main reasons why people attend conferences: to learn; to be inspired; to meet like-minded people and network; to solicit business; the location.

The [Australasia-Pacific Extension Network \(APEN\) International Conference](#) is being held at the University of Melbourne from 9-11 February. Extension professionals from across Australia, New Zealand, and South-East Asia will participate in the conference, which will be held in-person and streamed online with regional Hubs where people can get together to network and take part in the conference remotely. [A regional Hub is confirmed in New Zealand.](#)

The conference is a fantastic opportunity for professional development and networking. The conference will acknowledge the opportunities provided by the COVID pandemic and will present delegates with an unmissable opportunity to hear from leading experts, thought leaders and industry professionals as well as contribute their learning to the forum.

- **Interact with Speakers**
  - **Prof. Sharon Lewin AO** - Inaugural Director for the Peter Doherty Institute for Infection and Immunity
  - **Cathy McGowan AO** - former Independent for the seat of Indi (Victoria) and APEN supporter (rural)
  - **Dr Tom O'Dwyer** - Head Of Signpost Programme at Teagasc, based at the Animal and Grassland Research and Innovation (AGRI) Centre, Moorepark, Fermoy, County Cork
  - **The Hon. Mary-Anne Thomas, MP** - Member of the Victorian Legislative Assembly since 2014, current Minister for Agriculture and Minister for Regional Development
  - **Tangaroa Walker** – NZ dairy farmer, author, edutainer, face of Farm4Life
- **Attend one of the Masterclasses or field trip the day before**
  - *Extension & facilitation tools, techniques, and tips masterclass* with **Dani England and Jeanette Long**
  - *Planning, monitoring, and evaluating effective extension projects* with **Dr Jeff Coutts**
  - *Maximising online presentations and extension through engagement* with **Cynthia Mahoney**
  - *East of Melbourne/Gippsland field trip*
- **Join a presentation session**

The presentation program will showcase the following extension themes:

- Working in a pandemic: What worked and why?
- Supporting the digital agriculture (AgTech) wave: What are we learning?
- Planning & Design, Policy, Governance and Evaluation
- Supporting complex social and environmental change
- NRM, community resilience, rural health and safety, drought
- Engaging diverse communities
- Supporting farming systems and farm business strategy

**SEE YOU SOON**

*in-person in Melbourne*

*or in person at the NZ Hub (Mount Maunganui)*

*or on-line around Australia/New Zealand and overseas*



Delegates in action from the 2019 Conference in Darwin illustrate the reason to attend the 2022 conference in Melbourne

## Selection of abstracts to be presented at the APEN 2022 Conference

Title	Authors	Short version of abstract
<i>The role of industry in 'industry-school partnerships'</i>	Molly O'Dea	A key aspect of the Raising Aspirations in Careers and Education – Gippsland project is the role of agricultural industry representatives in 'industry-school partnerships, which are one means to improve students' knowledge and aspiration to undertake employment in agriculture.
<i>Building a strong Knowledge and Innovation system for Beekeeping in Sweden with a global perspective</i>	Lotta Fabricius Kristiansen	Our 2018 project "Developing the advisory system within beekeeping in Sweden" led to a platform and an action plan for a structured, nationwide, competent, and professional advisory service, and a national collaborative council for beekeeping.
<i>Solving the collaboration conundrum – a meaningful approach to improving industry and government collaboration in biosecurity</i>	Callum Fletcher	An outline of the success of an industry and government collaboration delivered by embedding industry biosecurity personnel in a government department through secondment opportunities
<i>Stimulating private sector extension in a redmeat supply chain</i>	Bruce Hancock, Jacqui Knee, Mark Inglis, Nicole Reichelt	"Meeting market specifications", was a co-innovation trial between JBS Australia – Southern, Research and Development Corporations and collaborators to evaluate and stimulate private sector extension in a redmeat supply chain as part of a Dairy Australia led Rural Research and Development for Profit (RR&D4P) Program.  The success of this trial was the workshop style, self-empowering skills audit of the buyers, that was supported by the Management.
<i>Dealer-Customer Partnership in Rice Production Demonstration: Assessment of Private Extension System in Bangladesh</i>	Md. Safiul Islam Afrad, *Tanjina Parven, Shaikh Shamim Hasan, Sajia Sharmin, M. Ashraful Habib, Swati Nayak, Saidul Islam	Public extension system predominantly and traditionally exists in Bangladesh where private extension system is a very recent concept. The main objective of this study was to evaluate the private extension service rendered through dealer-customer cooperation.
<i>Webinars applauded by the chicken meat industry during the pandemic</i>	Felicity McIntosh, Rachele Osmond and Jillian Templeton	Online delivery isn't a substitute for face-to-face in the chicken meat industry, but it hasn't been all bad. The <i>Training and extension for the chicken meat industry</i> project, which is funded by the AgriFutures Chicken Meat Program, pivoted to online delivery of industry webinars and forums in response to the pandemic in 2020. This delivery format has an important role alongside face-to-face activities—pandemic or no pandemic.
<i>Participatory On-Farm Evaluations and Selection on Genotype-Environment Interaction and Stability Analysis of Yield and Yield-Related Traits of Selected Rice Varieties</i>	Muhammad Ashraful Habib	Regular access to seeds of climate-resilient and high yielding promising rice varieties is necessary to address the challenges of accessibility and availability, for which the supply of seeds through business channels is the only sustainable way forward. Information about new varieties is critical in catalyzing their adoption. To support this, the present study undertaken to fast-track awareness creation and build seed demand from dealers, agrovets, and millers to their potential suppliers (seed companies, seed cooperatives, etc.). This activity specifically termed as "Client-oriented varietal exhibition" or "Crop cafeteria"
<i>Learnings from a Nation-Wide Extension Program Operating Through the COVID-19 Pandemic</i>	Wycliffe O. Oyunga*, Ruth A. Nettle, Margaret L. Ayre, Michael Santhanam-Martin	Agricultural extension systems (AES) contribute towards agricultural development through the transfer of technology, information and other support services that help farmers make production decisions.  This study, conducted in Homa Bay County in Kenya, examined the dynamics of engagement amongst these collaborating organizations in the PAES.
<i>Using webinars and virtual meetings for engagement</i>	N. Ainsworth & J. Agnew	The COVID-19 pandemic has rapidly transitioned face-to-face workshops to webinars and virtual meetings. The authors use SHARP Strategies as guidelines - Segment stakeholders for separate, smaller meetings, Host small break-out rooms to debate the applicability of information presented, Agenda must be set, be clear and shared with attendees via pre-meeting contact, Rules of engagement (ground rules) must be stated and agreed at the start of virtual or hybrid meetings, so people know how they can participate, Polling is used to review how individuals valued the information and to express their interest in trialling the suggestions.

Visit [the Conference website](#) to keep abreast of the progress.

# New Zealand hub will be a hive of activity

When Covid threw cold water on plans for a New Zealand APEN conference in November 2021, we didn't expect an opportunity to connect in person in New Zealand would happen so soon after. However, when the Melbourne conference was announced, a few of us connected to discuss it as we had no idea whether we'd be able to travel. The idea of the New Zealand hub was conceived, and we're excited to bring it to life in Mount Maunganui in February.



Mount Maunganui Beach

We're starting the activities with **a day of masterclasses on Wednesday February 9th:**

- "Fearless facilitation and great group dynamics," delivered in Darwin in 2019 will be delivered again by Heather Collins, Denise Bewsell and Chrissy Stokes, and
- Toni White will be next door with "Extension evaluation in practice – pathways to impact".

The conference proper, held over **Thursday 10th and Friday 11th**, will feature: a field trip to Wai Kokopu, a community-led programme of action to replenish and revitalise the health of the Waihi Estuary; **interactive sessions, plenty of networking opportunities, the Beef + Lamb NZ conference dinner** (included in the ticket price) and **keynote sessions**

**streamed live from Melbourne:** this won't be your usual death-by-power point conference line-up.

Hosted at the Zespri head office, a five-minute walk from the beautiful Mount Maunganui beach, we're excited to get together in person and have a great few days. **Make it a long weekend and get your tickets booked ASAP.**



## Three New Zealanders, Heather Collins, Chrissy Stokes and Denise Bewsell wow us at the Fearless facilitation and great group dynamics workshop

Just under 50 people gathered in Darwin on Wednesday 11th September to be part of the Fearless Facilitation workshop! The aim of the day was to provide an interactive, hands-on workshop where the participants learnt from each other and the coaches. Topics covered included facilitation tools and techniques, with an emphasis on how groups work and group dynamics.

What was the result? Well participants commented that developing a facilitation toolbox over the day meant that "everything I learned is now in one spot to draw on when I need it!". Another said that there were "many different methods for creating conversations between participants and switching groups throughout the day." Chrissy and Denise were very pleased that what stood out to some participants was the use of chocolate in facilitation – an underutilised tool in the toolbox!!

In APEN's "walk through the 2019 report", we wrote, "Given the success of the



Chrissy Stokes & Denise Bewsell

workshop it would be great to think about how professional development opportunities like this could be added into the next conference – so if you are working on something for APEN 2021 – add this into

your planning! We have done this! Enjoy the 2022 version of Fearless facilitation and great group dynamics in New Zealand. **[Ed. Hopefully, there will be chocolate.]**



# ExtensionChat

APEN Online

connecting with best practice



## 2021 - Foundations of Extension Design and Practice

In 2021 Extension has never been more complicated and exhilarating.

Extension professionals are being constantly challenged to respond to a complex array of social, environmental, economic and personal issues. Because of this, effective and impactful extension needs new perspectives and tools.

**ExtensionChat-APEN Online 2021** is part education, part motivation, part inspiration.

After an expression of interest process, APEN was delighted to engage **Dani England**, AgInnovate and **Jeanette Long**, Ag Consulting Co as the facilitators for our program.

Throughout the training participants were challenged to explore:

- frameworks and tools for planning an activity to be an effective extensionist
- building a foundation for positive influence and success
- learning powerful verbal and nonverbal communication skills
- navigating the challenges that we can face at work
- widening their networks.



## EXTENSIONCHAT 2021

### From the Organisers

From the planning stage to delivery, the facilitators successfully

- provided a space for participants to interact, listen and share their skills, knowledge, and experiences - all in an environment of trust
- encouraged thinking in processes to adapt to change
- challenged everyone to go away and action what they have learnt to do differently

*The Board thanks Dani England and Jeanette Long for sharing, with an enormous number of resources, their expertise. The involvement of the participants throughout the workshops and the Panel session was very motivating. You have achieved our brief in a fantastic way – reflected in feedback from participants.*



Dani England

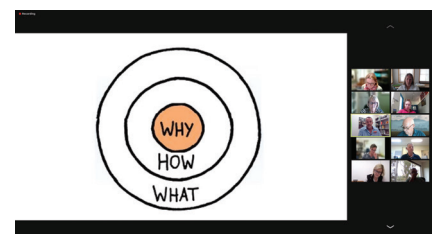
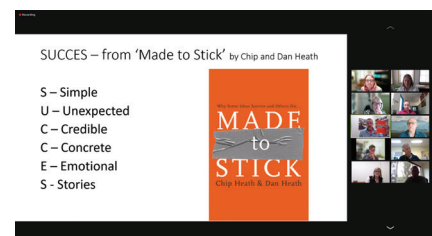


Jeanette Long

### From the facilitators

**To APEN:** Thanks a lot for the opportunity to work with you to deliver the 2021 APEN Online series of workshops.

**To the Participants:** It has been great to meet and work with you over the last couple of weeks. Thanks for taking the time to invest in developing your extension skills.





# WHAT'S YOUR STORY

## From the Master Panel Session

**The awesome Masterclass Panel, Sarah Hain, Peter Newman, Angela Williams & Lab Wilson shared their tips and tricks**

**Sarah Hain's** 'lessons learnt from the colourful world of mangoes' sent the following messages: build trust, give it time, what's your hook. As a young extensionist, Sarah has already built a reputation for achieving very positive results in her field by listening and following up requests and finding what is relevant to growers that will bring them economic advantage.

**Peter Newman's (Planfarm)** advice about the 'sexy stats story' for farmers, agronomists and scientists was based on 'storytelling being the number one leadership skill for the next decade'. Peter suggested that informed decision-making will lead to appropriate practice change which offers more profit to the business. His advice for *SUCCES – Simple, Unexpected, Credible, Concrete, Emotional, Stories* is courtesy of Chip & Dan Heath's book 'Made to Stick'.

**Lab Wilson (Bats)** Lab's mission in life is to help people experience the power of sharing knowledge. Lab is deeply interested in the conversations people need to have to develop mutually rewarding knowledge relationships. He views social learning as perhaps the most powerful vehicle to achieve these relationships. Lab's response to participants' questions: what's the one thing that you look for in an extension/training team member? What do all members need to bring to the table? were very practical. He is a strong supporter of the collective viewpoint and recommended reading *The Wisdom of Crowds* by James Surowiecki.

**Angela Williams (Canegrowers)** shared an Extension Model of Practice (EMoP) which guides practitioners. The EMoP is informed by and integrates the core concepts, theories, tools, interventions and elements of work in a profession. The goal is to guide and empower extension practitioners. Further exploration of this topic can be found in APEN's Rural Extension & Innovation Systems Journal 2021, Vol 17 No 1, pp -10-20. "The adoption of the EMoP will support the early-career professional to better understand their professional practice and provide

support mechanisms. The EMoP could also further raise the level of professionalism in agricultural extension, and better meet the practice change imperative in agricultural industries in Queensland, Australia and beyond." (Conclusion to the article)

*Our appreciation to Sarah, Pete, Angela & Lab for sharing their amazing stories – the session was too short – we could have listened for longer – we wanted more!*

## From the take home messages of the participants

- The importance of pre-planning "why, who, what, how" and the difficulties of making sure to allocate time to doing that given tight funding & reporting cycles (we often focus on what we did/produced rather than how it is effective long-term)
- Reminder about the purpose of extension. Importance of planning and bringing the audience along with the process
- how to deliver to people at different levels of attitudinal change, and of really understanding the background knowledge of the "who"
- New tips and tricks for engaging, building relationships, best practice extension

The following feedback from Felicity Harrop is a terrific read.

**Education** – tick.

**Motivation** – tick.

**Inspiration** – tick.



**Felicity Harrop Sustainable | Agriculture Project Manager, |North Central Catchment Management Authority**

These were the promises of the *Foundations of Extension Design and Practice Workshops* held over 3 online sessions during November and it certainly delivered. Having worked in agricultural extension for over 25 years, I value new ways of delivering extension programs and connecting with extension professionals to pick up new tips and tricks is always inspiring and motivates me to continue to improve. Although the workshops were delivered online, Jeannette and Danni provided opportunities to engage with the

other participants, share our knowledge and trouble shoot specific issues.

Starting with the reason we were all there – what is **Extension**? Participants were provided the time to discuss and reflect on their perspectives and definition of extension which included effective communication for adoption, marketing, best practice knowledge building, capacity to support change and adoption, a two-way flow of information amongst all stakeholders. The APEN definition was a fantastic reminder and set the scene for the workshop "Working with people in a community to facilitate change in an environment that has social, economic and technical capacity. This is achieved by helping people gain the knowledge and confidence, so they see the need for change and providing support to ensure it is implemented" - Influencing and engaging people to support change in a complex scientific and technical environment.

Extension is more than technology transfer providing data and information. Real practice change happens when people interact, participate and practice; thus, engaging the people through a variety of mediums such as research, mentoring, training, communication and adult learning principles.

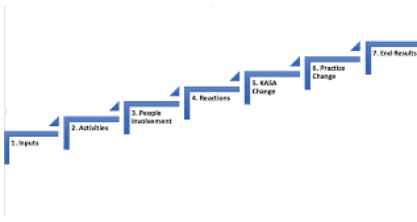
**Planning** is the key to delivering effective extension for a one-day workshop or program. Understanding: -

- **WHY** you are delivering the extension, what is the intended outcome, practice change or success?
- **WHO** is the target audience, the demographic, their current skills or knowledge, their motivations for engaging in the extension program, what is their **WHY**?
- **WHAT** are you delivering, content, knowledge, skills etc.?
- **HOW** will the extension program be delivered, this may depend on your audience, the topic and the outcome?

Always keeping at the forefront that understanding and engaging the people (WHO) is the key to ensure the intent is not lost. Although it may not always be possible, involving the people in the planning and delivery of the extension program creates a sense of ownership and commitment to participate, including identifying the hook to engage the audience, determining the benefit (what's in it for me?) and the how, for them, to continue to engage to then support the putting into practice and maintaining. This is a bottom-up approach to participatory action learning.

Bennett's Hierarchy (next page) is a fantastic tool to assist the planning process, linking the extension activities to the outcomes desired.

## “Real practice change happens when people interact, participate and practice”



### Bennett's Hierarchy Extension

#### Program Evaluation Model -

#### Extension Practice | Extension Practice

[extensionaus.com.au](http://extensionaus.com.au)

Working with stakeholders to define the issue e.g., exposed soil and the need to manage to maintain ground cover and what will people need to do differently to achieve the outcome of maintaining ground cover:

- knowledge (what I already know)
- attitude (how I feel)
- skills (I can)
- aspirations (I will)
- tools (I need)

with the stakeholders as they are now and where they want to be in the future to determine gaps and identify activities to fill the gaps in each of the points above to plan the extension program. This can be completed at a facilitated workshop, using a group survey or individual survey.

Listen with a curious mindset, what do they need to motivate them to engage and practice?

*The Regenerative Agriculture Project in North Central Victoria supported by the North Central Catchment Management Authority through funding from the Australian Governments National Landcare program delivers the project outcomes using these extension planning tools with stakeholder groups <http://www.nccma.vic.gov.au/projects/agriculture#node-2041>.*

Activities are delivered to facilitated learning groups working down the Activity Triangle (discussed at the workshop) stimulating awareness through providing information from expert speakers at workshops, other farmers, peer to peer discussions on how to put that new information into practice, with a call to action for on farm demonstrations with ongoing mentoring/support from the presenters or peers.

Not all participants will want to put into practice the new information they have learnt immediately, taking into consideration the well-known Adoption Curve [Technology adoption life cycle](#) - Wikipedia. However, this approach provides the opportunity for the early adopters to have a go and the later adopters to observe and continue to engage with the early adopters within their communities.

#### **The APEN workshop provided the opportunity**

- to discuss when each of the activities are most valuable to be used and the expected impacts from each of the activities, with workshop participants sharing their experiences which was highly valuable.
- to work through the planning process engaging us to think about our activities and discuss this with others in the workshop; breaking the process down considering what needs to be focussed on before, during and after the extension activity. All the ideas were brought together, shared and discussed which was valuable to learn from others.

**The final Masterclass session** participants heard from extension professionals at different stages of their careers and across industries. It was fantastic to hear how others are delivering

extension, overcoming obstacles and sharing successes.

The resources provided at the end of each session will be invaluable to continue to refer to for planning successful extension, particularly reminding myself of the Six Pack of Skills – Interaction, Purpose, Engaging, Find Differences and Similarities, Focus and Time to close including A Call to Action (if appropriate).

Working in extension is challenging, as we work with people, communities, and stakeholders, all with different experiences and needs but this is why I love it, the variety of people and the challenge to deliver lasting positive change. Thanks, APEN for delivering another fantastic Professional Development event.



**[Ed. -The ExtensionChat Team thanks Felicity for her fabulous feedback]**

**The APEN Board is delighted with the outcomes of the two workshops (held three times each) and the responses to the Master Class Panel (Sarah, Peter, Lab and Angela) as the facilitators (Dani and Jeanette) presented new ways of effective extension, challenged participants to unlearn “safe/reliable” behaviour/practices and shared other people’s learning experiences. We look forward to seeing extension on the move in 2022!**

“Extension is more than technology transfer providing data and information”

# News from the Regional Coordinators Team



Following a planning meeting in December 2021, the Regional Coordinators developed their plans for 2022 - the following actions were included:

- We need a New Zealand Coordinator to make our team complete
- We will add a coordinated national calendar of regional activities to the APEN Calendar
- A National Book Club will be initiated
- Interested in producing some podcasts
- Will organise some online panel discussions
- Will gather information re the needs of members
- Will post information on APEN's Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter channels
- Looking at sponsorship for regional f-2-f and online activities
- Involvement in ExtensionChat 2022
- Assist with planning of the Building Better Regions Grant.

**"[Our] strength is derived from unity. The range of our collective vision is far greater when individual insights become one"**  
(Andrew Carnegie)



## **"National monthly book club is set to launch in March"**

2022, will be the APEN year of engagement! 2022 will start with the conference, which promises to be a great opportunity to share, exchange and challenge extension ideas. This will be followed in March by the start of a monthly book club. The book club will use zoom meetings to engage APEN members in an interactive forum to share ideas, particularly with those newer extensionists with less experience.

This will build upon the book club trialed with South Queensland APEN members in 2020. Seizing on Sharna Holman's idea, a book club was run to create connections between APEN members during the restricted covid travel arrangements. 97% of participants rated the book club as either good or excellent and all participants were either very satisfied or completely satisfied in using this event to connect with other APEN members. However, like any extension activity, the book club did not engage the majority of south Qld members and participation declined over the course of the monthly book club series. Hence, the concept is being expanded to the national pool of APEN members.

The monthly book clubs will be facilitated by the volunteer APEN regional coordinators. Watch out for more details and an invite to that first meeting.

**Noel Ainsworth (QLD RC)**



**CONTACT YOUR REGIONAL COORDINATOR AND SHARE YOUR JOURNEY – CONTACT DETAILS ON THE BACK COVER OF THIS ISSUE OF EXTENSIONNET**

# Making Connections - Building extensions capability in NZ - and beyond

## Beef + Lamb New Zealand's 'Facilitating Learning and Change' programme

Olivia Weatherburn; National Extension Programme Manager Beef + Lamb New Zealand.

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The Red Meat Profit Partnership (RMPP) was a large programme funded by meat processors, banks, Beef + Lamb New Zealand (B+LNZ) and the Ministry for Primary Industries, working with farmers and sector businesses to develop and test new ideas, new technology solutions and new ways of working across several programme areas including people and capability, data and systems, baseline assurance and extension.

In April 2021, B+LNZ adopted a number of the RMPP programmes following its completion in March 2021. These programmes fit well with the overall farming excellence strategy at B+LNZ in supporting farming businesses.

One of these programmes has been the **Facilitating Learning and Change programme** which is a key support tool for Action Groups and the sector as a whole. This programme is a two-day workshop aimed at improving the knowledge and skills for rural professionals and farmers looking at leadership roles within their communities. Through the workshop, participants gain an understanding of what facilitation is all about and learn the skills required to effectively facilitate groups and learning. These skills will enable them to work with farmers and rural communities to help them build the confidence they need to increase and support practice change across the red meat sector. Participants numbers are capped at 15 per workshop, which allows more robust discussions and utilising the small group learning principles.

We have teamed up with Lab Wilson (Bats Inc Ltd) who has run these workshops for RMPP in the past to ensure the quality and



outcomes are met. At the same time, as the National Programme Extension Manager for B+LNZ, I've been receiving inhouse training and mentoring from Lab. This will enable us to be able to deliver these workshops in the future, which gives the programme some long-term security and succession.

We see supporting rural professionals and rural leaders with the art and understanding of facilitation as a key to being able to have constructive conversations across the wider food and fibre sector and engage more farmers in conversations related to the sector.

**The key topics that the 2-day programme aims to cover are:**

- The Art and Science of Facilitation
- The Ways We Learn
- Learning Design
- Becoming an Agent for Change
- Design your event

These workshops have follow-up learning opportunities following their completion to ensure learning and development continues.

Two workshops were held over 2021 and have been a great success, and the wait-list numbers show the appetite and need for the sector at present. Three more programmes have been scheduled for early

2022. We thank the Ministry of Primary Industries (MPI) for supporting these workshops through subsidising registration costs for participants.

One request from participants, and a gap we are looking at filling in 2022, is enabling facilitators to keep connected and share their learning experiences. In early 2022, we aim to launch the 'B+LNZ facilitators hub', this will be an online platform linked to [www.beeflambnz.com](http://www.beeflambnz.com).

The platform objectives and purpose include:

- sharing practice and developing relationships across the sheep and beef sector
- enabling learning partnerships and ongoing development
- creating effective facilitation & communication
- leveraging investment already made for long-term future gains

We will also be hosting online and face to face learning opportunities for facilitators. These will also link to the B+LNZ action group programme. Another busy year is expected in 2022!

**[Ed – Many thanks for the update, Olivia. Contact Olivia at [olivia.weatherburn@beeflambnz.com](mailto:olivia.weatherburn@beeflambnz.com) ]**

# Extension goes global at Zespri

Zespri's growers produce kiwifruit around the world, and while the interests, issues and languages of our grower-facing teams may differ they all communicate through extension. The aim of providing a consistent experience with consistent content and quality for growers, industry members and stakeholders prompted the creation of the **Building Extension Capability programme (BEC)**.

This course, launched in late 2021, is tailor made for Zespri's Global Extension Teams. Participants are encouraged to assist in the co-development of the course, taking an active role by using their own resources and experiences as examples of the content. The course is designed and led by five extension experts from around New Zealand, nicknamed the "Tight Five". With around 140 years of combined extension expertise **Ian Tarbotton (Extension strategist and team leader of the BEC course), Mark Paine (PhD in extension), Michelle Rush, (consultant), Tafi Manjala (senior consultant at Agfirst), and Toni White (social researcher and evaluator at Plant & Food Research)** – names likely to be familiar to APEN members - are well placed to lead participants through the five modules that make up the course.

The modules mirror the development of an extension program starting with identifying the change, moving through the principles of adult learning, programme design, implementation and evaluation.



program with a global team with varied experience levels across five time zones? Communication and participation are the key. Making sure everyone, participants and leaders stay connected, not just during the modules, but in between plays a big role in carrying everyone along on the journey and making sure they are getting the most out of it.

"Providing extension training across staff in NZ, Asia and Europe means the Kiwis have to donate their evening to interact with their global colleagues. But it's worth it. The buzz you get from working with appropriate like-minded individuals keen to learn about implementing positive change keeps you energized right through the next day," says **Shane Max, Zespri's head of Global Extension**. Shane is passionate about extension, and despite his own extension expertise, is a participant in the course. Having managers included in the course means there is buy-in on all levels. The knowledge and skills gained are built into existing programs providing forward momentum which allows teams to continue

to develop beyond the completion of the course.

This forward momentum has also been included in the design of the program. The Tight Five will lead two cohorts through the six-month course, while the third cohort will be led by participants from the Extension team. The first cohort consists exclusively of Global Extension Team members, but the second also includes people from other Zespri teams in grower-facing roles.

**Mary Black**, Zespri Global Resource Development Manager and champion for the BEC course explains the reason for including people outside the Extension Team.

*"It's about upskilling those that are in grower-facing roles so that these people know how to successfully package their information, target the right people and have more of an impact from their efforts. Also, as a secondary goal, we'd like industry to go along to any Zespri meeting and get a consistent high-quality experience."*



The Zespri Global Extension team [Facebook]

## APEN's Webinars

APEN's Webinars hosted on APEN Zoom and held on the third Monday of every second month at 2pm AEST/AEDT.

In the last 12 months, we have been fortunate to have five impressive

presentations on a wide range of topics – all to add to your extension 'tool kit' in advancing your extension career.

If you would like further details on the webinars or would like to present or have a suggestion for a suitable topic,

please contact Dr Roe Currie at the APEN Secretariat on [info@apen.org.au](mailto:info@apen.org.au).

We are pleased to share a summary of the webinars. Each webinar can be accessed via APEN's You Tube Channel on the APEN website.

Date	Topic	Presenters	Resources	APEN YouTube Channel link
December 2021	<b>"Communicating Climate Science to Different Industries"</b> .	Doctor Chelsea Jarvis, Senior Scientist at the University of Southern Queensland's Centre for Applied Climate Sciences	Chelsea's work focuses on communicating advancements in climate science to primary producers to assist in on-property management. Chelsea works closely with the pastoral industry across northern Australia.	<a href="#">here</a>

# APEN's Mentoring Scheme

## Learning from one another

Adrian Englefield



Have you ever reflected on your extension experiences, skills and knowledge, and how they have evolved throughout your career? Maybe you are in the early stages of your extension career? Either way, no one is born a brilliant extensionist, every day we learn and continue to develop our extension skills, experience and knowledge. The APEN mentoring program is an excellent opportunity for inexperienced and experienced extensionists alike to network and learn a thing-or-two from your extension peers.

Mentoring can be defined as a relationship between two (or more) people with a goal of professional and personal development. The “mentor” is usually an experienced individual who shares knowledge, experience, and advice with a less experienced person, or “mentee”. However, I have been involved with the APEN mentoring program for three years and my mentees have provided many insights for my own development. Certain skills (such as public speaking and presenting) I am comfortable with have been complemented with mentee insights from their experiences, and there is always a new App or resource you were not aware of!!!

The 2021 mentoring cohort comprised of seven mentees, all with backgrounds in the Horticulture industry. The scheme is flexible, allowing mentors and mentees to individually set a meeting schedule and topics for discussion. However, over a nine-month period I met with my mentee at least monthly and shared experiences with

building networks and grower relationships, presenting (especially on-line), challenges faced with event cancellations and re-scheduling from COVID-19 and worked through many resources available on the ExtensionAus, APEN and other extension-resource websites.

The mentoring scheme also provides networking opportunities between all mentees and mentors through four mini-training webinars. During the 2021 mentoring scheme, three APEN Directors and a Regional Coordinator delivered presentations included

- Linking and Connecting – Pat Hamilton
- Project Monitoring and Evaluation – Adrian Englefield
- How to Stay Connected with Growers during COVID-19 – Roy Murray-Prior
- Delivering Extension during a Pandemic – Jeanette Gellard.

The mentees I have worked with have come from very different extension projects and levels of experience across the beef, kiwi fruit and plant nursery industries. I keep in contact with them regularly. Often, we share resources or just have a catch up to see how things are going and what is happening in their industry, project and extension experiences.

My biggest lesson has been – we all have strengths and areas for improvement – and they are different for everyone. I have worked on listening and understanding mentees requirements. Again, their extension projects and experiences are different from mine and gave me a

broader insight into the challenges and success other extensionists have within their projects.

With the consistently evolving COVID-19 situation and increasing case numbers, extension-delivery challenges will remain during 2022 (I hope to be wrong on this!!!) especially with workshops and farmer interaction. I encourage any extensionists who are looking for (or can provide) advice dealing with COVID-19 disruptions and maintaining contact with their extension-project audience to also consider joining the 2022 APEN mentoring scheme as a mentee or mentor.

**So, if you are interested in sharing your extension experiences, looking to develop new skills or looking at new extension methodologies in 2022 why not join the APEN mentoring scheme?**

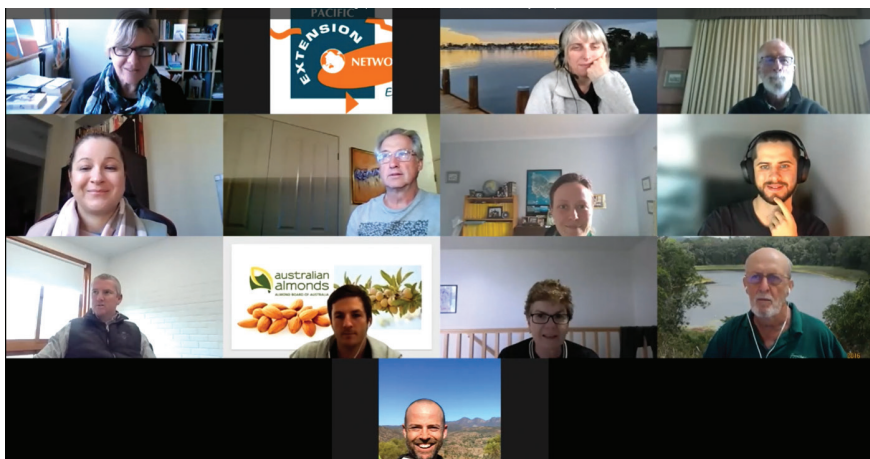
**Registrations ([click here](#)) are now open, closing on 18 February with an information session being held on 19 January at 12 noon (AEDT) – email [info@apen.org.au](mailto:info@apen.org.au) to register.**

The Scheme runs over 8-9 months and offers:

- On-line group induction session with program facilitator
- 6 x 1hr monthly mentoring sessions (as agreed with Mentor)
- 1 x group on-line progress sessions with program facilitator
- 4 x on-line group mini-training sessions with guest presenter and program facilitator
- 1 x group on-line end-of-program evaluation session with program facilitator
- 2 x evaluation surveys (mid-term and end-of-program)

The APEN Extension skills mentoring scheme is designed as a low-cost peer mentoring system, which will benefit the individuals involved, our organisation and our discipline as a whole. The APEN Extension skills mentoring scheme is available to all.

Check out the information on the [APEN scheme here](#)







# "28 Years & Flourishing"

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RC - Regional Coordinator

**Together, we have the power to inspire, connect and deliver on new opportunities and rich experiences that can open doors to innovation and progress while growing global economies and increasing well-being (Tae Yoo)**

## Guidelines and Deadlines

Submissions should be made in MS Word 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.

**Editor: 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.

**Stories and photos (next edition) due to Editor March 2022**