



#AgExForum2024

FUTURE FARMING TURNING TRENDS INTO PRACTICE

FORUM & AWARDS

5 AUGUST, 2024

Marion Hotel, Adelaide, South Australia

Program

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PLATINUM PARTNER



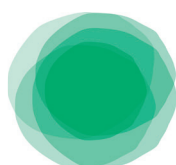
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A warm welcome to AgExForum2024! This year's program highlights the theme 'Future Farming | Turning Trends into Practice' with a focus on emissions management and use of technology to aid farm sustainability with discussion on ways to turn these trends into realities for farming businesses. Guest speakers will describe sustainability pressures while also providing practical examples of the impact on agricultural practices.

Agricultural sustainability has come into greater focus than ever before, with progressive demand for reporting and demonstrating credentials to varying degrees throughout the value chain. For landholders the management of productivity and natural resources can be aligned, e.g. soils, while corporate reporting on Climate Related Financial Disclosures can seem very far removed from farm-gate.

A major trending sustainability issue is emissions. The urgent need for global emissions reduction has brought both pressure and incentive to start factoring the on-farm sources of emissions and the most suitable responsive actions.

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Grower Groups are integral to the RD&E of farming communities, addressing local issues and aiding adoption. Forum 2024 is about turning this trending issue into a practical reality and assisting groups with identifying their role in addressing emissions reduction.

Ag Ex is pleased to acknowledge the broad representation of grower groups in attendance which further supports its endeavor to provide independent leadership, strengthen collaboration and be connectors in agriculture. Its dedicated committee is committed to supporting the current strategic plan in developing, delivering and governing support initiatives of value to key stakeholders in line with its Purpose, Vision and Values.

The Ag Ex team remains ably led by Executive Officer, Mark Stanley, who is supported by Administration Manager, Kerry Stockman. Emma McInerney has taken on a newly created role as Climate Smart Facilitator with her primary focus on coordinating a Carbon Farming Outreach Program. Tony Randall continues as Knowledge Broker and Rachel May as Farming Systems Adoption Officer in partnership with the SA Drought Hub. Both Tony and Rachel provide a valuable conduit between the grower group network and other industry and government agencies.

The Ag Ex committee continues to expand, bringing a new breadth of ideas and experience to the table. We are fortunate to have on board Paige Cross, Project Manager for Mallee Sustainable Farming; Jay Cummins, independent extension specialist; Sandy Kimber, Administration Manager for Hart Field Site Group and Alice Morley who heads up the Fleurieu Farming Systems group. They are supported by longer term committee members David Evans, Grains Manager, Long Seed Grain [Ag Ex Vice Chair]; Brett Bartel, General Manager Recovery & Resilience, Primary Industry Regions SA; and Naomi Scholz, Executive Officer with Ag Innovation & Research Eyre Peninsula [Ag Ex treasurer].



Leighton Wilksch
Chair

Welcome

9.30 – 10.00am	Registration, networking & refreshments
10.00 – 10.15am	Welcome & acknowledgement LEET WILKSCH, CHAIR Ag Excellence Alliance DAVID EVANS, MC & VICE CHAIR Ag Excellence Alliance
10.15 – 11.00am	Global drivers of sustainability and emissions management PROF ANDY BARR, CHAIR South Australian Grains Industry Trust
11.00 – 11.45am	Mobilising local communities on emissions management CATHY MCGOWAN AO, CHAIR AgriFutures
11.45am – 12.00pm	Growing carbon farming pilot project – outcomes for landholders EMMA WINSLOW, SENIOR CLIMATE & ADAPTION PROJECT OFFICER Primary Industry Regions South Australia
12.00 – 12.10pm	Carbon Farming Outreach Program Update EMMA MCINERNEY, CLIMATE SMART FACILITATOR Ag Excellence Alliance
12.10 – 12.30pm	Ag Ex 23-24 highlights & grower group snapshot MARK STANLEY, EXECUTIVE OFFICER Ag Excellence Alliance RACHEL MAY, FARMING SYSTEMS ADOPTION OFFICER Ag Excellence Alliance
12.30 – 1.30pm	Lunch break
1.30 – 3.00pm	Facilitated workshop session - what is the role of grower groups in managing emissions JEANETTE LONG, DIRECTOR & FACILITATOR Ag Consulting Co TODD PRICE, SUSTAINABLE FIELD MANAGER Nutrien Ag Solutions JORDY KITSCHKE, FOUNDER & OWNER Flux Robotics
3.00 – 3.30pm	Afternoon break
3.30 – 4.00pm	Emissions management & reflections on discussion - group discussion TODD PRICE, SUSTAINABLE FIELD MANAGER, SA, VIC & TAS Nutrien Ag Solutions
4.00 – 4.30pm	Innovations in sustainability & reflections on discussion - group discussion JORDY KITSCHKE, FOUNDER & OWNER Flux Robotics
4.30 – 5.30pm	Panel session – opportunities for grower groups to engage in industry emission initiatives DR STEPHEN LEE, DIRECTOR SA Drought Hub DR LYNNE MACDONALD, PRINCIPAL RESEARCH SCIENTIST CSIRO TIM SIDES, DIRECTOR OF RESEARCH, EXTENSION & NATURAL RESOURCES PROGRAMS Dept of Agriculture, Fisheries & Forestry JO SULLIVAN, MANAGER SUSTAINABLE LANDSCAPES Kangaroo Island Landscape Board PROF TIM SUTTON, RESEARCH DIRECTOR CROP SCIENCES South Australian Research and Development Institute
5.30 – 5.45pm	Closing address DAVID EVANS, VICE CHAIR Ag Excellence Alliance



AgExcellence
ALLIANCE

Linking Grower Networks

Awards

Dinner

6.00pm - 7.15pm Agbyte networking drinks and canapés

7.30pm - 9.30pm Gala awards presentations & dinner



Dinner Speaker – Fiona McIntosh, Author

Fiona is one of Australia's favourite storytellers across various genres. She began her career in speculative fiction and after worldwide success in that genre, moved into lush, historical fiction where she regularly hits the National Top 10 with each new blockbuster released into the most congested and competitive sales season of Christmas.

She also writes crime and has just sold her entire Det. Jack Hawksworth crime series into the UK. 'Hawk' has been optioned for TV and is in pitch with a screenplay and several interested parties.

She hosts one of the country's most successful writing masterclasses that is highly regarded by the publishing industry, with an enviable strike rate, responsible for some of the newest popular authors in the country. Her Masterclass debuts internationally in the UK in the second half of 2024 and she will launch Masterclass NZ in 2025.

Fiona is married with adult twin sons. She divides her time between Wiltshire in the UK and enjoys working from an old farmhouse on the edge of the Clare Valley vineyards.

AWARD PRESENTATIONS



2024
PIRSA Grower Group
Award Winner

DR HANNAH BROWN, EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR
South Australian Research
Development Institute



2024
Ag Excellence Alliance
Perpetual Award Winner

LEET WILKSCH, CHAIR
Ag Excellence Alliance



2024
Ag Institute of Australia
Jim McColl
Young Consultant Award

CRAIG DAVIS, CHAIR
SA Division of Ag Institute

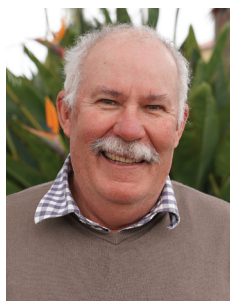


DAVID EVANS, MC & VICE CHAIR, Ag Excellence Alliance

David hails from a rural background having managed family properties in the Barossa Valley and South-East. Armed with a degree in business management, his passion for agriculture led him into a number of SA grain industry roles, becoming a well-recognised figure in grain marketing, agribusiness and advocacy.

David was engaged by AGA, Cargill & AWB for approximately nine-years followed by six-years with Grain Growers Ltd and more recently was the SA Manager for Farmers Business Network. He is currently the grains manager for grain marketing business, Long Seed & Grain.

David has a natural empathy for farmers and rural communities and is known for building mutually beneficial relationships and networks directly with producers and across the industry. His roles have included working extensively with farming systems groups, chairing industry committees, facilitating events and running workshops, all with the aim of helping farmers achieve better outcomes for their business. David has been a valued Ag Excellence Committee member since 2019.



PROF ANDY BARR, CHAIR South Australian Grains Industry Trust (SAGIT)

Andrew was raised on a mixed enterprise farm in the lower north of South Australia. He completed his bachelor of agricultural science in 1976 and a PhD at the University of Adelaide in 1994. He worked for 27 years as a plant breeder in the South Australian Department of Agriculture / SARDI, University of Adelaide and Australian Grain Technologies including leading the SA Barley Improvement program from 1994-2003.

In 2003, Andrew returned to the family farm, growing bread and durum wheat, canola, malt and feed barley, oaten hay, lentils, peas, faba beans and chickpeas. Andrew continues his interest in agricultural R&D by hosting a range of research trials on farm, board roles with CIMMYT, GRDC (past) and AEXCO and SAGIT (present), and consulting to public and private sector plant breeding programs.



CATHY MCGOWAN AO, CHAIR, AgriFutures

Cathy came to national attention when she won the seat of Indi as an independent in 2013. The community backed her again in 2016. In 2019 Indi made Australian political history when Dr Helen Haines was elected as Indi's second, community independent. During her time as a politician Cathy actively worked in Parliament supporting agriculture and rural communities particularly the future drought fund and policy around regional development.

In 2019 she was awarded The Accountability Round Table award for political integrity and in 2022 The Australia Financial Review named her as one of the top 10 'covert' power players and No 2 cultural leaders in Australia.

Before she was in politics Cathy had a long and productive history within agricultural industries, leading the Women in Dairy Project, Women in Horticulture, Women in wool, and supporting many grains projects, as well as study tours to Ireland and the US. As chair of the board of AgriFutures she plays a leading role in the agriculture research and development. She is an Officer in the Order of Australia, a Churchill fellow and lives very happily on her farm in the Indigo Valley in NE Victoria.



EMMA WINSLOW, SENIOR CLIMATE CHANGE PROJECT OFFICER, Primary Industry & Regions SA

Emma is based in the State's South East as the Climate Change Program Manager at Primary Industries & Regions SA where she is delivering the Growing Carbon Farming Demonstration Pilot program, the Carbon Farming Roadmap for South Australia and works with industry to develop and implement a range of carbon farming and climate change initiatives.



EMMA MCINERNEY, CLIMATE SMART FACILITATOR, Ag Excellence Alliance

Emma coordinates a Carbon Farming Outreach project with the Ag Excellence Alliance, that supports industry knowledge building around emissions reduction. Emma has held a range of agricultural roles including research, regulatory, international development, start-up, and extension. She is based in the Clare Valley and is passionate about addressing the human impact on climate. In her current role Emma enjoys working with colleagues across organisations and agencies to achieve sustainable agriculture outcomes.

AG EXCELLENCE FORUM & AWARDS 2024

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RACHEL MAY, FARMING SYSTEMS SPECIALIST ADOPTION OFFICER, Ag Excellence Alliance

Rachel has worked closely with communities, farming systems and landcare groups on the Eyre Peninsula, Adelaide Hills and Murray Darling Basin regions, both in technical roles as well as project development, management and extension. Rachel was engaged in 2022 by Ag Excellence Alliance as its Farming Systems Specialist Adoption Officer for the SA Drought Hub. In her role, Rachel is integral in facilitating and developing relationships and networks to provide linkages and collaborative opportunities within the agricultural industry. She works closely with farming systems groups across South Australia to support the development and delivery of projects to build drought resilience on farm.



MARK STANLEY, EXECUTIVE OFFICER, Ag Excellence Alliance

Mark had a 33-year history working in the public sector in agricultural RD&E and natural resource management prior to setting up his company Regional Connections in 2012. He has extensive experience and skills in communication, extension, facilitation and community engagement, and detailed knowledge of agronomy, natural resource management and the southern grains industry.

Mark has established networks in government, R&D organisations, universities, farmer groups and Landscape Boards. Mark served two terms on the Southern Panel of the GRDC, has led Ag Excellence Alliance in SA for the past 12 years, and worked for both the Commonwealth and State governments in Landcare / Natural Resource Management. Regional Connections has a proven track record in project development and delivering projects on spec, time and budget. Mark has led numerous D&E projects that have led to significant change in attitude, knowledge and skills of farmers and their key influencers.



JEANETTE LONG, DIRECTOR & FACILITATOR, Ag Consulting Co

Jeanette has been at the forefront of facilitating leadership training for over 20-years in her pursuit to develop the skills of people in regional and rural areas. Her passion lies in engaging people and influencing positive change in agriculture and natural resources management. Jeanette specialises in facilitation and delivery of training both with farmers and their professional advisors. She has provided extension and facilitation training to The Red Meat Profit Partnership in NZ, QDAF, Dairy Australia, Sugar Research Australia and the National Grower Group Collective and is currently the Master Facilitator with the NB2 Program funded by MLA. Her formal education includes a Masters in Business Administration, Graduate Diploma in Education and Bachelor of Applied Science in Agriculture. She has completed the Diploma from the Australian Institute of Company Directors, is a trained facilitator and coach and holds a Certificate in Workplace Training and Assessment. Jeanette is also an accredited "Building Team Resilience" trainer and accredited to deliver the Myers Briggs Type Indicator. Jeanette farms with her husband Bill and son Will at Undalya in the Clare Valley and at Tooligie Hill and Cummins on the Eyre Peninsula.



TODD PRICE, SUSTAINABILITY FIELD MANAGER SA, VIC & TAS, Nutrien Ag Solutions

Todd is Nutrien Ag Solutions' Sustainability Field Manager servicing SA, VIC & TAS. An Agronomist by trade, his role is to educate growers about all facets of sustainability, help quantify and measure the growers' emissions profile and offer profitable and productive emission reduction solutions.

Todd is a facilitator of the Melbourne University Carbon Neutral Agriculture course and is managing Nutriens' Low Carbon Canola, Potato and Dairy programs.



JORDY KITSCHKE, FOUNDER & OWNER, Flux Robotics

Jordy was raised on a mixed farming property near Jamestown. By leveraging his agricultural upbringing and his passion for robotics, Jordy has incorporated AI-driven technology to enable precise weed targeting and to significantly reduce pesticide reliance. His work contributes to the shift towards more sustainable, efficient, and innovative precision agriculture practices. Jordy's company, Flux Robotics, was developed in consultation with over 50 local farmers and his innovations, including a tractor-mounted precision sprayer and a new mechanical weeding system, embody producer-led collaborative design.



DR STEPHEN LEE, DIRECTOR, SA Drought Hub

Stephen is Director of the SA Drought Resilience Adoption and Innovation Hub which is focused on equipping primary producers and rural and regional communities to become more prepared for, and resilient to, future droughts. He has a strong track record of developing and leading collaborative multi-partner research and adoption programs spanning the whole of industry value chain. Stephen's work with primary producers and community have been recognised through the 2021 Jim McColl Australian Institute of Agriculture Young Consultant Award.



DR LYNNE MACDONALD, PRINCIPAL RESEARCH SCIENTIST, CSIRO

Joining CSIRO in 2009, Lynne currently leads a portfolio of work on soil carbon and low emissions agriculture. With a grounding in soil microbial ecology, she has broad research experience in sustainable agriculture from a soil science perspective. Lynne has particular interest in translating fundamental sciences into accessible tools/indicators to monitor and manage production systems, understand benefits and trade-off, and inform policy. Lynne has led several multi-stakeholder research programs addressing carbon sequestration, amelioration of sandy soils, use of amendments including biochar, and soil biological function.



TIM SIDES, DIRECTOR OF RESEARCH, EXTENSION & NATURAL RESOURCES PROGRAMS, Dept of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Tim is the Director of Research, Extension & Natural Resources Programs for the Future Drought Fund within the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. He and his team work closely with industry, research organisations and farming communities to deliver Future Drought Fund programs that aim to foster transformational change. A 5th generation farmer, Tim grew up on the edge of NSW wheat-sheep belt. He is an expert in sustainable agriculture, biosecurity, soil conservation, natural resources, rangeland management and climate change. Tim has built a career in providing advice, delivering programs, undertaking research, and developing policy, contributing to sustainable agriculture in both state and Commonwealth government departments.



JO SULLIVAN, MANAGER SUSTAINABLE LANDSCAPES, Kangaroo Island Landscape Board

Jo lives on Kangaroo Island and has over 20 years of natural resource management experience across South Australia. Since starting in his current role managing the Sustainable Landscapes program for the Kangaroo Island Landscape Board he has been focussed on growing the Boards sustainable agriculture program. Jo likes to bring a collaborative approach to his work, is a strong believer in the benefits derived from partnerships between government departments and agencies, the private sector and rural communities and has been a key contributor to the establishment and delivery of the state-wide Landscape Board led Soil Extension and Carbon Farming Outreach projects.



PROF TIM SUTTON, RESEARCH DIRECTOR CROP SCIENCES, South Australian Research Development Institute (SARDI)

Tim has over two decades experience leading and managing academic and applied R&D directed at the improvement of profitability and sustainability in the Australian grains and perennial horticulture sector. He is a trained plant molecular geneticist, respected for applied research outputs in cereals and pulses, having published as both lead and senior author in the fields' highest ranked scientific journals, Nature and Science. Through experience as a laboratory scientist, group leader and research director with executive responsibility, he has established and fostered enduring relationships across a broad range of primary industry stakeholders both in South Australia and nationally. As Research Director at the South Australian Research and Development Institute (SARDI), Professor Sutton oversees a large portfolio of Research and Development that delivers outcomes to key crop industries and addresses the current and future challenges of sustainable and profitable agriculture in our region.

Grower Groups



- | | | |
|---|---|---|
|  Agricultural Bureau of SA |  Fleurieu Beef Group Inc |  Mid North High Rainfall Zone |
|  Agricultural Innovation & Research Eyre Peninsula |  Fleurieu Farming Systems |  Murray Plains Farmers |
|  Agriculture Kangaroo Island |  Hart Field Site Group |  Northern Sustainable Soils |
|  AgriTech Meetup South Australia |  Grasslands Southern Society |  Society of Precision Ag Australia |
|  Barossa Improved Grazing Group |  Lucerne Australia |  Upper North Farming Systems |
|  Buckleboo Farm Improvement Group |  MacKillop Farm Management Group |  Women Together Learning |
| |  Mallee Sustainable Farming | |



ANNUAL REPORT

Prepared by Mark Stanley, Executive Officer
Ag Excellence Alliance

The annual report is presented under the four strategic priority areas of the 2022-2027 Ag Ex Strategic Plan. Ag Ex exists to support the SA grower group network to achieve its RD&E goals.

People and Structure. A responsive, independent organisation driven and directed by skilled, experienced and committed people.

The Ag Ex committee continued to provide strategic direction and support to the operations of Ag Ex. The committee now has strong representation from four grower groups – Sandy Kimber [Hart Field Site], Alice Morley [Fleurieu Farming Systems], Naomi Scholz [Ag Innovation and Research EP] and Paige Cross [Mallee Sustainable Farming]. The committee is further strengthened with Jay Cummins, extension specialist. Thank you to long-term Chair Leet Wilksch for his leadership and Vice Chair David Evans.

Strategic Priority: Grower Groups.

A dynamic and participative grower group network engaging with Ag Ex at multiple levels.

Grower Group Snapshot

In 2016 Ag Ex conducted a survey of the grower group network to ascertain its reach, relevance and priorities for the future. The survey has had a refresh in 2024, with the results demonstrating the growth and increased value of the network. A special thank you to all the groups in the network who responded to the survey request.

The results will be used to further substantiate the value of the network to key funders and stakeholders.

Grower Group Executive Officer Network

Meg Bell, Coleraine Livestock Consulting has continued to facilitate the EO network with funding support provided by the SA Drought Hub. The EO network has demonstrated its value by providing the opportunity for grower group EO's to come together in an open and inclusive forum to discuss and share information and experiences and develop new skills.

Ag Ex E-news and Calendar

Ag Ex continues to keep the grower group network informed on issues and opportunities through the regular Ag Ex e-news and events calendar which is compiled by Ag Ex Administration Manager, Kerry Stockman. This service is kindly supported by the SA Drought Hub.

Farm Gross Margin Guide support

Ag Ex produced and distributed the Farm Gross Margin Guide in early 2024. There was exceptional uptake of the guide through the Ag Ex networks, with 1,000 hard copies being taken up in the first week post release. Thank you to Michael Wurst for compiling the guide, and both the SA Sheep Industry Fund and SA Grains Industry Trust for their generous financial support.

Grower Group Alliance “Liftoff” forum

Mark attended the Grower Group Alliance (WA) “Liftoff” forum in Perth in February 2024, prior to the 2024 EvokeAg conference. The Grower Group Alliance fills a similar role to that of Ag Ex, but at a much larger scale. It supports 65 grower groups from across WA and receives significant support from the WA Government. It leverages this with projects worth \$60M (cash and in-kind value) and leads the South-West WA Drought Hub. The Liftoff event featured presentations from GRDC, MLA, AgriFutures and Landcare Farming. Ag Ex have had a long-standing relationship with the GGA, including the current Carbon Farming Outreach project.

SA Drought Resilience Adoption and Innovation Hub

Ag Ex continues to work collaboratively with the University of Adelaide, PIRSA and grower groups in supporting the growth of the SA Drought Hub. Tony Randall (Knowledge Broker) and Rachel May (Farming Systems Adoption Officer) are both highly valued and respected members of the Hub team. Commonwealth Government funding for the current Drought Hub program has been extended by two years to June 2026, with a further six years following.

Strategic Priority: Advocacy and Partnerships.

Further develop recognition by industry and funding bodies as the trusted go-to organisation representing the collective interests of grower groups.

Ag Ex plays a key role in responding to requests from industry, government and groups on advice in the development of new strategies and programs. Some of these during 2022-23 have included:

AIA Student Compendium

Ag Ex has continued to support the development of the Student Compendium by the SA Division of Ag Institute Australia (AIA-SA) in association with The Adelaide University Agricultural Student Association (AUASA). The quality of this resource has increased significantly under the guidance of Bruce Hancock and the Ag Science student committee that drives this initiative.

The Future Drought Fund Advisory Group

This group is an executive level committee formed to enhance the effectiveness and integration of the Future Drought Fund Programs in South Australia.

Ag Ex is represented on the committee by Mark Stanley. GPSA, LSSA, GPSA, Landscapes SA, SARDI, DEW and the University of Adelaide are also represented on the committee, chaired by PIRSA appointee Sharon Starick. The group works closely with the Commonwealth Government in providing advice and feedback on the effectiveness of the FDF program.

Climate Smart Sustainable Agriculture program consultation

Ag Ex was consulted by DAFF to inform them on the design and key investment focus of the new climate smart program which is a key feature of the sustainable ag component of the next five-year NHT (LLP) program which commenced in July 2023.

Strategic Priority: Climate Resilience.

Grower groups adequately engaged in carbon farming opportunities.

Emma McInerney has provided significant leadership within the state by instigating the engagement of key representatives in the emissions management space. This culminated in facilitating a meeting with key industry and R&D organisations to create a more collaborative approach to addressing the challenges of moving toward net zero emissions in agriculture.

Ag Ex is a tier four member of the recently announced Net Zero-Ag CRC being led by the University of Queensland, that also involves SARDI (tier two) and the University of Adelaide (tier three).

Ag Ex is one of 39 partners in the Grower Group Alliance successful application to the Commonwealth’s Carbon Farming Outreach program. Emma is leading the southern Australia region. The Ag Ex component involves upskilling 29 independent farm consultants from across the state, and then rolling out a series of events with grower groups to educate and inform the broader farming community on emissions reduction benchmarking and practices.





Linking Grower Networks

www.agex.org.au

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