

## Fair Dinkum Extension Research

### Two Australian Agricultural Extension System Projects

Ruth Nettle, Associate Professor, Rural Innovation Research Group, University of Melbourne

The agricultural extension system in Australia has recently become a focus for research and development with two projects funded through the Australian Government Department of Agriculture and Water Resources as part of its Rural R&D for Profit programme. This article provides an overview of the key objectives of the projects and some of the implications for extension practitioners.

The Rural R&D for profit project "Extension and Adoption for Australian Farmers and Fishers: consolidating targeted and practical extension services for Australian Farmers and Fishers" is led by RIRDC (Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation) and aims to strengthen on-farm adoption and information flows and to date has:

- Consolidated existing extension knowledge into a searchable and updateable knowledge hub (<https://extensionhub.com.au/web/extension-practice/about>)
- Conducted an evaluation of Australia's extension circumstances to identify ways to enhance future coordination and leadership of extension
- Assessed farmers demand for information, advice and support and their perception of the extension system.

This project concludes at the end of the year and will provide recommendations for strategic future actions related to national policies and support to extension capability.

The second Rural R&D for profit project '***Stimulating private sector extension in Australian agriculture to increase returns from R&D***' is led by Dairy Australia and is a three-year project to develop and test models to build the capacity of the commercial and private sector in delivering extension services and connect them more strongly to the RD&E system. Involving 6 rural development corporations, 2 state governments and the University of Melbourne, the project aims to conduct research and trial new areas of action that:

- Increase private sector engagement with the latest research and industry best practice;
- Make research more accessible to farmers through a more integrated and co-operative extension system;
- Identify barriers to private sector involvement in agricultural extension;
- Stimulate growth in capability of the private sector in agricultural extension; and,
- Build stronger connections between end users and researchers

As part of the first 12 months of the project, a literature review and forums with farmers and advisers have been held along with a national forum in conjunction with the RIRDC project. This was accompanied by a national survey of farmers in collaboration with the RIRDC project (noted above) with over 1000 farmers completing the survey on-line or over the phone. The survey found:

1. There is increasing demand from farmers for extension to support both tactical and strategic decision making. Of farms surveyed, 76% said that identifying new opportunities in farming is essential yet only 40% knew where to get the information or advice they needed. A third of farmers expect to see their use of information, support and advice to increase in the next five years
2. Farmers use a wider range of sources for information and advice with the main source varying from sector to sector. **Independent fee-for-service advisers** were more predominant in cotton (58% of farmers), cropping/grains (50% of farms), mixed-cropping/grazing (45% of farms), dairy (36% of farms), sheep for meat (21% of farms), and pigs/poultry (37% of farms). **Farmer owned** information, advice and support organisations were more predominant in sugar (41% of farms). **Product resellers** were more predominant in horticulture (21% of farms) and beef cattle (22% of



#### IN THIS ISSUE

<b>Fair Dinkum Extension Research</b>	
Ruth Nettle	1-2
<b>To Bee or Not to Bee</b>	3
Chrissy Stokes	
<b>Word from the Editor</b>	3
Maryse Bourgault	
<b>APEN Annual Report 2016</b>	4
Roe Currie	
<b>APEN President's Report</b>	5-6
Jeanette Long	
<b>APEN Treasurer's Report</b>	7-8
Donna Lucas	
<b>Mark Stanley and Regional Connections Recognised as Climate Leaders</b>	8
<b>2017 GFRAS APEN International Conference</b>	9
Lawrence Di Bella	
<b>If only I knew then what I know now</b>	10
Jeanette Gellard	
<b>New Members</b>	11
<b>Contact Details</b>	12

# Fair Dinkum Extension Research: Two Australian Agricultural Extension System Projects (Continued)

farms). **Research and development corporations** were more predominant in farms with sheep for wool (28% of farms). **Government** was a main use for 21% of beef cattle farmers and 14% of sheep meat farmers which reduced to 3% for grains farmers.

3. The benefits of paying for advice was not clear to all producers. This reinforces the perceived low value of and the low willingness to pay for such services. Only 37% of producers felt that paying for advice would be beneficial to them. In addition, only 31% felt that paying for advice would be profitable. A large proportion of producers are 'fence sitting' (i.e. not overtly positive or negative) on this topic and appear to be waiting to be convinced about the benefits. Farmers using fee-for-service advisers use multiple advisers (average 2.3) and these farmers suggested independent advisers offered the greatest relevance (81%) and value (69%), while government services were most trusted (75%).

4. **Challenges exist in the perceived quality and effectiveness of non-government delivered agricultural extension services.** One third of farmers endorsed the quality of non-government extension services (33%) and felt they are effective in delivery (32%), however only 18% were willing to be involved with agricultural extension programs delivered by non-government organisations. Those sectors least willing to pay for private-sector managed or delivered extension services were beef farmers (40% not willing); sugar growers (39% not willing); pork and poultry (38% not willing), horticulture and sheep meat (29% not willing) and dairy (28% not willing).

5. **There is demand from farmers and service providers for greater direct interaction with researchers and research organisations.** 50% of farmers surveyed said they would like a little or a lot more contact than they currently had.

6. **A range of methods are used by farmers to obtain information/learn more about an area.** When unprompted, farmers main methods for getting information, advice and support included searching on the internet (43%), media sources (TV, Radio, newspapers) (41%) and talking to other farmers (32%). When prompted, 81% of farmers noted field days, workshops and training programs as preferred methods alongside these others. Only 2% of farms noted social media (i.e. twitter,

facebook or online discussion forums) as a preferred source of information, advice or support.

In mid-December, a national survey of providers of extension services, information, advice and support to farmers is being conducted. The survey is aimed at understanding the factors impacting the supply of services, the types of farms targeted by service providers, business models of different types of providers and the extent of interest and engagement of the private sector with research and in delivery of extension. Results from the survey will assist in identifying opportunities for improving the connectivity of the private sector in agricultural RD&E.

The project is also conducting four pilot activities (called 'trials') over the next 18 months, exploring models for building stronger connections between the industry, private sector, researchers and farmers. Designed as 'co-innovation platforms in action', each trial involves a Rural RDC or government agency partnering with relevant groups in the private sector. Four areas have been chosen as the context for the activities: **The processing sector** (connecting the value chain with industry RD&E); **Precision Agriculture** (connecting farm advisers with digital agriculture applications); **Extension career development** (connecting new entrants and existing professionals with training and career pathways in the agricultural advisory and extension sector); and, the **Knowledge system** (engaging advisory and extension practitioners in knowledge curation and translation for supporting farm practice).

The project is also developing accredited agricultural extension training modules as a professional development pathway for greater engagement of the private sector in key functions in agricultural extension. The training modules will be further developed with input from advisers involved in the trials. The first two modules being developed relate to '*principles of extension project and program design*' and '*being an innovation broker – the importance of your personal networks as an agricultural adviser*'.

Extension practitioners can become involved in this project through signing up to the e-newsletter, responding to the adviser survey, becoming a participant in one of the pilot activities, attending annual forums or being involved in the training modules. Further details about the project: *Project Manager, Ian Linley, Dairy Australia, (ilinley@dairyaustralia.com.au)* or *Research Group Leader Assoc. Prof Ruth Nettle, Rural Innovation Research Group (ranettle@unimelb.edu.au)*

Both of these projects have implications for extension practitioners and investors in extension both now and in the future. First, the projects are an indicator of the importance of the extension function in agricultural innovation in Australia and provide an opportunity for increased national co-ordination in areas that cannot be progressed by farmers, extension practitioners, professional associations, industry, research organisations, the private-sector or government on their own. In the short term, the projects provide extension practitioners with easy access to information about a range of extension theories, methodologies and tools to assist their work. In the future, it is envisaged that researchers, RD&E program managers and extension practitioners will be able to join specific communities of practice that will link them in real-time to a network of support in extension practice to share learnings, gain input into challenging issues and improve practices. The research outputs also provide a base-line for how the extension system is operating now and this can be used for planning extension projects and programs or for understanding the impact of further changes in extension policy or investment. International comparisons with agricultural extension systems overseas have also been made a little easier with research outputs aligned to international studies.

These national, cross-sectoral and cross-jurisdiction projects cannot address all issues of agricultural extension, however with the support, interest and involvement of APEN and its members the importance of extension, the continual development of extension practice and the recognition of the contribution of extension to agriculture in Australia will be advanced.

Ruth has been an APEN member for over 20 years and leads the Rural Innovation Research Group in the Faculty of Veterinary and Agricultural Science at the University of Melbourne. Ruth's career has traversed the extension landscape from farm advisory and extension work, to leading extension teams, to extension research which is used in the design and development of extension programs and extension policy. The Rural Innovation Research Group is the lead research team for the current project under the rural R&D for profit program of the federal government "Stimulating private sector extension to increase returns from R&D". More information can be found here: [www.fvas.unimelb.edu.au/rural-rd](http://www.fvas.unimelb.edu.au/rural-rd)



# To Bee or Not to Bee

Chrissy Stokes

In late 2015, Zespri was successful in their application for funding from the Sustainable Farming Fund for a project that is the first to really utilise a community of practice approach in the kiwifruit industry.

New Zealand's Gold3 kiwifruit growers are increasingly covering orchards with hail nets to protect this sensitive variety from hail, wind and Psa infection. However the nets have a detrimental effect on honey bees and hive health, introduced for pollination. This project, carried out over three years, requires engagement of industry players including growers, beekeepers, hail netting installers and the research providers to successfully deliver solutions acceptable to all parties.

The research purpose is to establish pollination methods for covered Gold3 which do not impact honey bee health. The knowledge gaps identified by the various stakeholders fall into three key areas:

1. Why are hives being impacted under the nets;
2. Are there ways to modify the net design or beehive management under covered orchards; and
3. What are the options if I can't find a beekeeper who will supply beehives for my covered orchards?

The project will investigate how nets impede bee behaviour and health, and develop beehive management guidelines for enclosed environments. Alternative approaches for pollinating covered Gold3 in the absence of honey bees will also be established, building on existing knowledge to develop new methods/technology.



The findings and recommendations flowing out of the science objectives will be validated and developed into changed on-orchard practices the following pollination period by growers and beekeepers. The research will be validated by growers and beekeepers in commercial settings.

- Prior to each pollination season, between 5 and 10 growers will develop a pollination strategy in conjunction with their beekeeper which will aim to ratify the research programme results. The pollination strategy for each of the orchards will be documented and published for other growers to review prior to the following pollination period.
- The impact on honey bee health and the pollination effectiveness will be evaluated using monitoring tools which will include hive audits and hand pollination trials.
- The results of these practices will be evaluated, collated and presented to the community of interest in June of each year.

A final objective, but probably the most important, will be focussed on the development of tools to drive industry uptake. No one solution will fit every orchard, so the outcomes will be based around supporting decision-making, helping growers and their pollination providers to customise pollination strategies to best suit their orchard design, local climate and landscape. Where possible we will look to

use data visualisation tools to help distil key messages and deliver them to stakeholders in a digestible format – this may include: stand-alone visualizations, info-graphics, interactive powerpoints, timelines, videos (time-lapsed, motion, animation), webinars and photos.

*Chrissy is an Orchard Productivity Extension Leader at Zespri International, New Zealand's kiwifruit exporter. As part of the Orchard Productivity Centre,*



*Chrissy's role is all about helping New Zealand's kiwifruit growers grow the world's best kiwifruit. After completing a BSc and PGDip in Plant Biology at Massey University in Palmerston North, Chrissy escaped to the coast, with various roles in a winery, a grapevine and avocado nursery, and in baby-leaf salad production in some of New Zealand's most beautiful sunshine spots, Gisborne and Nelson. After a couple of technical roles with Zespri, Chrissy joined the Orchard productivity Centre in the midst of the Psa crisis, in a role focussed on providing technical support about grafting, establishment and early cropping of a new kiwifruit variety which is now the star performer of the industry, Gold3. The role has evolved into a facilitation role that is all about getting growers to talk to each other and share their knowledge and ideas.*

ENET



## FROM THE EDITOR

It's funny, but I am not realising that this might be my last editorial for *ExtensionNet*. I've been fortunate to get a position with Montana State University which starts next February. I am leaving Australia next week, and though I have been travelling around, seeing people and saying goodbye, it does not seem to have sunk in yet.

Perhaps, it is because I have nothing but fond memories of my involvement in APEN. My first experience was attending the International Conference in Christchurch. I found that everyone was just so nice. It made a real contrast with the scientific conferences I usually go to. Not that scientists are not nice, but it is often harder to start a conversation with a stranger.

I signed up to be the editor after hearing about it at the AGM. I started to ask Austin, I think, Warren might have chipped in too, and I was encouraged to take on the job. It's been great.

Of course, there have been moments with technology (which I alluded to in previous editorials), but this has been more than compensated by the people I got to know through the job. I personally think that being the editor of *ExtensionNet* is the best role in APEN. As the *ExtensionNet* editor, I had the perfect excuse to contact anyone I wanted. It has been a real asset to me, especially as I was a new member. So, I would like to thank and welcome Patricia Hamilton who is taking on the role. I would also like to encourage you all to get involved too.

I'm sad to be leaving just as I feel APEN is ready to take off. I'm convinced that APEN is ready for a new level and we have the right people to make it happen. There will be plenty to report on in the near future, and plenty for us to reflect on as a network. I might not be part of it, but I'll be watching you with pride! (And, okay, now it is starting to sink in...).

Maryse

# APEN 2015-2016 Annual Report

Roe Currie

The Twenty-Second Annual General Meeting of the Australasia-Pacific Extension Network (Inc) was held by webinar/teleconference on Thursday 10 November 2017.

The APEN Management Committee were at a two day face to face planning meeting at Horticulture Innovation Australia, 1 Chifley Square, Sydney at the time of the AGM and they were joined by three members online. Those members were from Queensland and Victoria. This gave a total 12 members present with apologies recorded from three MC members and 10 other members.

Jeanette Long, APEN President, welcomed everyone to the 2016 APEN AGM at 2.00pm AEDT.

Jeanette's President's report and the Treasurer's report from Donna Lucas are presented below.

## Election of APEN Management Committee member

Chrissy Stokes was elected for a three year term as Regional Coordinators for New Zealand and Denise Bewsell, the outgoing NZ representative was thanked for her enthusiastic participation on the APEN MC for her two three year terms.

At the Management Committee meeting held after the AGM, the executive positions were decided upon.

The current committee is therefore:

President	Jeanette Long	Ardrossan, SA
Vice President & Queensland RC	Graham Harris	Toowoomba, Qld
Treasurer & Tas RC	Donna Lucas	Sandfly, Tas

Secretary & New Zealand RC	Chrissy Stokes	Mount Maunganui, NZ
South Australian RC	Lisa Stevens	Port Augusta, SA
New South Wales RC	Anthony Kachenko	Sydney, NSW
Victorian RC	Mike Weise	Warrnambool, Vic
Northern Territory RC	Warren Hunt	Darwin, NT
Western Australian RC	Rebecca Wallis	Crawley, WA
Editor	Maryse Bourgault	Creswick, Vic
Past President	Austin McLennan	Katherine, NT

(Contact details are on the back page)

The other official duty at the AGM was to appoint the Public Officer and the Auditor for 2016/2017. The APEN Public Officer is Rosemary Currie in her role as APEN Executive Secretary and the Auditor is again, Bob Travers and Associates, Albury NSW.

## APEN Governance

In General Business, Austin McLennan spoke about the MC discussion regarding the APEN Governance structure. Currently APEN is incorporated in Victoria and this has served the organisation well. The MC has been looking into APEN operations in all the states in Australia and internationally and is getting legal advice regarding a recommendation to change to a Company Limited by Guarantee. It appears that there would be value in moving to a company structure in terms of funding and that reporting requirements would be similar to what is done currently. At the same time the MC / Board structure will be considered and the membership will be engaged in the decision making through a communications plan that is currently being developed.

# APEN President's Report 2015-2016

Jeanette Long



It is with pleasure today that I present the APEN President's report for the 2015/16 year.

This report is being presented from Sydney where the Management Committee (MC) is enjoying an opportunity for a face-to-face meeting.

As a President who operates a private consulting business and a farm I have found it challenging to keep up with all that is required to undertake the role effectively. I would like to thank the MC for their support, particularly Graham Harris as Vice-President for picking up the chairing role in my absences and especially Roe for her untiring efforts ensuring APEN continues to deliver to members.

I look forward to highlighting the achievements of APEN over the last 12 months.

## Management Committee

The hardworking Management Committee has managed the affairs of APEN to ensure we are delivering to members. We have been fortunate to have a full committee over the last 12 months.

This year Denise Bewsell our New Zealand representative will be moving on from her six year term. Thank you Denise for your contribution to the Extension profession we will miss your enthusiastic approach at our meetings.

We look forward to welcoming new member Chrissy Stokes to the MC today. Chrissy is based in Mount Maunganui and works as an Orchard Productivity Manager with Zespri.

I would also like to thank the Cluster Coordinators who play an important role in bringing regional activities to their area. Not all of these roles are currently filled which provides an opportunity for interested members to step into a role to ensure more activity in their region.

## Sub-committees

Under the APEN constitution we have the ability to use sub-committees to bring in members' expertise, talent and energy to assist with various activities and initiatives.

## 2017 International Conference sub-committee

I would sincerely like to thank the hardworking committee who are working towards the International Conference in Queensland in September 2017. There has been a lot happening and now with still nine months before the event the Conference website (<http://www.gfrasapenint2017.com>) has been launched with logos of the Sponsors who have already come on board and lots of information about the Ingham/Townsville region. This will be a unique event with the annual meeting of the Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services (GFRAS) being held prior to the APEN International Conference and a shared day of combined field trips for each event between. There is already interest from potential overseas participants

for both events and registration will open early in 2017.

Many thanks to Lawrence Di Bella the conference convener and the other committed members of the team, Roy Murray-Prior, MC members Warren Hunt, Graham Harris, Donna Lucas, North Qld and Hinchinbrook region representatives Mary Brown, Karalee Venturato, Sandra Coco, Carla Wegscheidl, Phillip Trendell and GFRAS representatives Natalie Ernst, Lorenz Schwarz and Kristin Davis and Roe Currie.

We look forward to a wonderful networking and professional development event and also look forward to meeting the 2017 APEN Excellence in Extension Award winners. The call for these awards will go out in February/March 2017.

#### **Education, Training and Accreditation Sub-committee**

This sub-committee organised a workshop/description at last year's conference which was reported in ExtensionNet and has appreciated receiving information on extension courses for the database on the APEN website. One of the sub-committee members, Ruth Nettle, held a workshop in Melbourne (and by teleconferencing) on Extension training opportunities as part of RIRDC's Extension and Adoption for Australian Farmers and Fishers project.

Peter Ampt from Sydney University leads the ETA Sub-committee. The other members include Rebecca Cross, Ruth Nettle, Scott Glyde, Helen Ross, Bruce Howie, Denise Bewsell, Cindy Cassidy, Donna Lucas and Roe.

#### **National Extension Policy**

##### **Sub-committee**

This sub-committee organised the APEN response to the standing committee green paper on agricultural competitiveness. Watch the eBulletin for opportunities to be part of any submissions. Members of this Sub-committee are Graham Harris, Warren Hunt, Jess Jennings, Roy Murray-Prior, Austin McLennan, Mike Weise, Trevor Ranford and Roe.

#### **Journal and International Initiatives**

##### **Sub- Committee**

Warren Hunt, Roy Murray-Prior, Maryse Bourgault, Denise Bewsell, Lisa Cowan, Sally Marsh and Roe make up this sub-committee. Their achievements this year have been the publication on-line and in hardcopy of the two issues of the Rural Extension and Innovation Systems Journal with papers from the 2015 Conference and working with GFRAS to increase international participation in next year's conference.

#### **Social Media Sub-committee**

This group includes dedicated members Cynthia Mahoney and Justine Severin who along with MC members Rebecca, Warren, Greg, Graham and Roe have continued to increased APEN's presence in social media.

Please take the opportunity to be involved and share activities and ideas about extension using these forums.

#### **Achievements**

##### **Communication**

ExtensionNet had one hardcopy edition and two on-line editions in the last 12 months. Our Editor, Maryse Bourgault, has developed an electronic version of the newsletter and our aim will be to produce 2-3 electronic versions each year with one hardcopy "Annual Report" edition being posted to all members following the AGM along with the hardcopy Members' Directory.

Maryse has accepted a position as Assistant Professor at the Montana State University Northern Agricultural Research Centre. We thank her very much for all of her work as the editor and will miss having her as part of the team. All the best Maryse with your new position.

Our electronic eBulletin has been sent to all members on a monthly basis keeping them up to date with extension activities and issues as well as training courses, conferences and positions vacant. The Reading Brace provided each month by Mike Weise, Victorian Regional Coordinator, has also helped to keep people up to date with publications in extension.

The eBulletin links to items of interest on the APEN website including the MC Blog with items of interest for members. The MC members are rostered to write for the blog which is updated as the articles become available.

#### **Roadshow**

Our 2016 roadshow workshops "Program Logic, a tool for more effective change programs" were delivered by Col Freeman

*Continues Next Page*

Y = Chairperson, R = resigned, A = Representing APEN

Table 1: Record of APEN MC meetings and member participation, 2015/16

Quorum: 4 Members														
Meeting	Date	Jeanette, P	Austin, PP	Rebecca, WA	Donna, Tas	Anthony, NSW	Mike, Vic	Lisa, SA	Warren, NT	Denise, NZ	Graham, Qld	Maryse, Editor	Roe, Secretariat	Members
#1600	13/11/2015	Y		Y	Y			Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	7
#1601	27/11/2015				Y	Y			Y	Y	Y			5
#1602	29/01/2016	Y				Y	A	Y		Y	Y	Y		5
#1603	26/02/2016			Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y			7
#1604	18/03/2016	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y			9
#1605	22/04/2016	Y			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	8
#1606	27/05/2016	Y			Y					Y	Y			4
#1607	24/06/2016	Y								Y	Y	Y	Y	4
#1608	22/07/2016	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	9
#1609	26/08/2016	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y			8
#1610	23/09/2016	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	5
#1611	28/10/2016		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	9
Total	12	10	3	5	9	8	5	6	7	10	12	5	12	

of Dirtygreen, Newcastle NSW. The program was delivered in NSW, SA, Qld, and Tasmania as well as the North and South Island in NZ with the final opportunity being in NT on 2 December. The workshops were well received and enjoyed by all who attended. (74 so far)

#### **Mentoring Scheme**

The mentoring scheme has been operating again this year. Many thanks to Jeanette Gellard who is coordinating the scheme, from South Korea, with support from Roe. Thank you to our mentors for donating their time to develop emerging professionals.

This year a total of six pairs have participated in the program which is now drawing to a close. The scheme provides professional development to mentees and mentors alike and there is more information available on the website.

#### **Webinars**

Many thanks to Leanne Issacson for running our Webinars this year. Our aim is to provide professional development for all of our members from their office.

Thank you to our webinar presenters:

Cam Nicholson, *Helping farmers make better decisions.*

Robbie Commens, *Influencing the Influencers.*

Tonia & Paul Grundy, *Video and Extension.*

Simon Sankey, *Are discussion groups still relevant?*

The final webinar for 2016 will be presented on 12 December by Daile Jones, and her topic will be *Building a rural business network.*

All webinars are recorded and available through the APEN website. Attendance has averaged at about 40 per webinar.

#### **Regional Activities**

The Tasmanian APEN Cluster held a networking activity early in the year with another planned for later this month.

#### **Representing APEN**

Mike Weise represented APEN at a hearing with the Standing Committee on Ag Innovation early in the year.

APEN MC members have been involved in the RIRDC Extension and Adoption for Australian Farmers and Fishers project during the year. This has included Warren and Rebecca being members of the steering committee as well as attendance at regional and state forums by other members.

#### **Future plans**

Our main focus for the coming year will be the International Conference in Qld in September I look forward to meeting with members at this event.

#### **Review of structure & Strategic Plan**

We have begun a review of the structure of APEN to ensure that we are operating in the correct structure for the future direction of the organisation. Austin McLennan is leading the compliance and legal side of the review which will link into our strategic direction. Over the two days we are face to face in Sydney the MC is spending time reviewing our current plan which is due to complete in 2017. A new plan for the period 2018 – 2023 will be developed during the coming year.

#### **Thankyou**

I would like to thank the MC as a whole, Cluster Coordinators and other dedicated members for their valuable volunteer contribution. I would particularly like to thank APEN secretariat Roe Currie who does an amazing job of keeping the organisation functioning effectively.

As a volunteer organisation APEN relies heavily on the time and expertise of its members. I am always impressed with the commitment to the organisation by not only the MC but also many active members, thank you all.

I look forward to the year ahead.

#### **Kind regards**

**Jeanette Long**  
**APEN President**

ENET

*Members of the Management Committee at the face to face planning meeting at Horticulture Innovation Australia, November 2016*



# APEN Treasurer's Report 2015-2016

Donna Lucas

## Summary

This report is based upon an audit of APEN's finances conducted by Bob Travers & Associates, Chartered Accountant, Albury, NSW. The APEN financial position at June 30, 2016 was sound with total equity of \$93,403. During the year we received \$1,043 interest from our investments. There was a net profit for the 2016 financial year of \$3,428.

## The 2016 year

The 2016 budget versus actuals are shown in table 1 below.

Table 1 Income and Expenses

	Actuals 2014 - 15	Actuals 2015 - 16	Budget 2015 - 16
<b>INCOME</b>			
Advertising	-	-	297
APEN Conference	1,836	135,379	120,000
APEN Roadshow workshops	7,920	5,436	15,000
APEN webinar local event	-	-	-
Horticulture Australia (HAL) project	-1,940	-	-
Shaping Change Book	3,040	1,945	2,500
Membership	30,050	22,129	18,624
SELN funds (Interest)	296	268	300
Sundry Receipts (incl REIS J, Mentoring Scheme)	325	1,200	-
Sponsorship (13 000 2015Conf, 7 500 2017Conf)	23,250	20,500	-
Region Income	4,637	-	-
Interest Received	1,278	1,043	1,200
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>70,692</b>	<b>187,900</b>	<b>157,921</b>
 <b>EXPENDITURE</b>			
Accountancy & Audit Fees	1,383	1,384	1,400
Administration	32,423	31,997	34,009
APEN Award	-	4,074	2,500
APEN Mentoring Scheme	473	133	120
APEN Shaping Change book	2,522	2,369	2,500
Bank & Government Charges	1,263	1,216	2,065
Cost of Meetings	1,058	3,684	2,400
Conference/Forum Costs APEN (incl. VC to HAL)	10,465	127,311	100,000
EFS Journal (now REIS Journal)	368	-	3,000
ExtensionNet	4,486	3,942	4,000
Insurance	410	526	500
Not In Tender	232	24	500
Printing, Stationery and Postage	364	296	350
Promotion (Members Directory & membership brochures, APEN Banners)	1,068	2,139	3,000
SELN expenses	265	215	270
Region Events Payments/Roadshow	15,491	3,284	8,000
Small Grant Funding	-	309	2,000
Sundry Expenses	1,961	664	250
Tender payment	-	-	-
Website	817	905	2,500
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>75,049</b>	<b>184,472</b>	<b>169,364</b>
<b>NET PROFIT / (LOSS)</b>	<b>-\$4,357</b>	<b>\$3,428</b>	<b>-\$11,443</b>

## Notes

1. The net profit of \$3,428 was \$14,871 better than budget which was a -\$11,443 budgeted loss.
2. Membership fees were \$22,129 which was more than budgeted but less than the 2015 financial year (which was \$30,050).
3. The main differences between actual and budget were:
  - a. Conference surplus in this financial year was \$28,568, but note that some income and expenses for conferences cross over financial years. This profit was greater than the budgeted profit of \$20,000 which was a great result.
  - b. Roadshow profit of \$2,152 was less than the budgeted profit of \$7,000. This was due to a later than expected start and lower registration numbers than expected.

- c. Areas of higher expenditure than budgeted were:
  - i. Cost of meetings
  - ii. APEN Award due to an additional prize being awarded
  - d. Savings were made on:
    - i. Website costs; however, the website requires a makeover next year.
    - e. Most other expenses were similar to budget.
  4. The equity of \$93,403 includes \$11,231 of SELN funds. Note that SELN expenses of \$1,323 still need to transferred out of this account.

Table 2 (below) represents the net profit/(loss) and equity for the past five years.

As Treasurer I would like to thank the Management Committee who make substantial contributions to the APEN organisation. We should recognise the time

that Management Committee members commit to APEN, many contributing their own time, and also their employers that provide support including in-kind support e.g. meeting venues at no cost.

I would like to congratulate the 2015 Conference committee for delivering an excellent event and also returning a profit.

I would like to offer my appreciation and thanks to Roe Currie for her management of the organisation's finances.

**Donna Lucas**  
**APEN Treasurer**  
**10 November 2016**



ENET

*Table 2 Profit and Accumulated funds*

Financial year	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Net profit/(loss)	\$-(31,663)	\$16,999	\$-(16,970)	\$-(4,357)	\$3,428
Equity	\$94,303	\$111,302	\$94,332	\$89,975	\$93,403



Mark Stanley from Regional Connections with Ian Hunter, Minister for Climate Change

Mark Stanley and his business, Regional Connections, were recognised on November 28th by the Premier's Climate Change Council through the South Australia Climate Leaders Awards. The awards recognise individuals, groups and partnerships who are involved with: (1) adapting to the effects of climate change and taking advantage of the opportunities of climate change action, (2) reducing greenhouse gas emissions, (3) supporting South Australia's low carbon transition and (4) raising awareness of climate change issues and actions to address them.

Port Lincoln business Regional Connections was named overall winner of the awards and winner of the Industry and Business category for their work with farm advisers to engage with more than 600 broadacre farmers about the effects of emissions from

farming, and how they could incorporate carbon farming technologies into their operations.

"It goes beyond getting a 'research message' out to farmers – it is working through a complex topic, understanding its implications for farming enterprises and having a significant number of advisers equipped to engage and support producers in carbon management into the future", says Mark Stanley.

Climate Change Minister, Ian Hunter, said that, "These individuals and organisations prove South Australia has strong, passionate and inspiring leaders who are helping the community prepare for and combat climate change."

Premier's Climate Change Council Chair, Bruce Carter, said that, "Our SA Climate Leaders Award winners are to be congratulated for their pioneering

## Mark Stanley and Regional Connections Recognised as Climate Leader

actions to address and respond to the impacts of climate change. Their work is helping to build the State's resilience to climate change, and inspire other individuals, business and organisations to take action to support SA's transition to a low carbon economy."

We had the pleasure of publishing an article about this project in our last edition of ExtensionNet (available at <http://www.extensionnet.online/articles/engaging-farmers-in-south-eastern-australia-into-carbon-farming-through-trusted-independent-advisers>). Regional Connections were competing against Goodhouse Architecture, SA Water and SA Wine Industry Association who were also finalists in the Industry and Business category.

**Our warm congratulations to Mark and his team for this well-deserved award!**

ENET

# 2017 GFRAS APEN International Conference in Tropical North Queensland, Australia

Lawrence Di Bella

We wish to formally invite you to participate in the upcoming International Conference of the Australasia-Pacific Extension Network, to be held from the **12th to the 15th of September 2017**, at the 'The Ville' Hotel in Townsville. The conference is on the doorstep of the Great Barrier Reef and Tropical Rainforests.

Our conference will also be hosting a range of international delegates from the Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services (GFRAS <http://www.g-fras.org/en/>), who will be participating in a 3 day pre-conference meeting at Ingham, in the Hinchinbrook region.

The theme of the conference is '**Facilitating balanced change for rural and urban communities**'. The conference is an international meeting for rural advisory practitioners, researchers and academics that combines the best extension research and practice from developing and developed countries.

Key themes for the conference are:

- **Gender balance and affirmative action**
- **Planning, monitoring and evaluating**
- **Developing agricultural innovation systems**
- **Building social capital and resilience**
- **Incorporating new media in extension**
- **Policies and trends in rural advisory services**
- **Achieving health, NRM, production and social outcomes**



While you are in the region, consider staying a little longer to experience what the region has to offer. There is lots to see and do! In North Queensland we have both wet and dry tropical agriculture and a very large marine park that is managed for a range of uses. We will showcase the integration of production and natural resource management extension in the wet and dry tropics that focuses on achieving outcomes that meet the environmental needs of the rainforest and reef as well as the economic and social needs of dryland and irrigated agricultural production in the tropics.

We look forward to hosting you in the beautiful tropical regions of Hinchinbrook and Townsville, in 2017. See you at the **2017 GFRAS APEN International Conference**.

**Lawrence Di Bella**  
Conference Convener

Lawrence Di Bella is the Manager of the Hebert Cane Productivity Services Limited (HCPSL). During his working career has been employed by BSES, Terrain NRM and HCPSL on 2 occasions. Lawrence manages a team of ~15 staff focusing on technical services, research, development and extension in the Herbert cane growing region in North Queensland. Lawrence has had the opportunity to travel to review cane and agricultural industries in South Africa, Swaziland, PNG, Brazil, Kyrgyzstan and the USA during his employment history. He was also a guest speaker at the Global Forum for Rural Advisor Services (GFRAS) in Kyrgyzstan in 2015. He has a keen interest in sustainable farming (especially sustainable cane farming) and agronomy.



For further information concerning the conference please visit <http://www.apen.org.au/IC-2017>

If only I knew then what I know now.....

Jeanette Gellard, Facilitator, 2016 APEN Mentoring Scheme

I think we've all spoken (or at least thought) these words at some time in our lives. Hindsight can be a wonderful thing and if we approach our past experiences with curiosity and a desire to learn from them, our future can be incredibly enriched.

Wouldn't it be great then, if we could learn from our experiences before they actually happened? This all sounds a bit 'back to the future-ish' doesn't it? In some ways, this is what mentoring can offer us. We can't travel in time to tap into our own future life lessons, but having a mentor gives us the opportunity to learn from someone else about their experiences, someone who can act as a 'wise guide' as we travel along our own path into the future.

No matter who we are, we can learn from those with more experience. If you're in a new job, you can learn from people who have been in that role a while. If you want to develop a particular skill, you can get valuable advice from someone who has mastered it. This applies to both our professional and personal situations where mentoring can be equally valuable.

The challenge for many of us is actually finding a mentor.

APEN offers a Mentoring Scheme that helps overcome this challenge. The scheme has been running since 2007 and this year I had the privilege of being involved as its on-line facilitator.

Through 2016 the scheme has provided an opportunity for six extension professionals to experience the many benefits of having a mentor. According to this year's mentees, this has included having access to a sounding board to try out new ideas, increasing their own knowledge base and gaining more confidence to deal with work situations.

And let's not forget the mentors, who so willingly offered their time and expertise to help another person grow and further develop. Mentors get a lot of benefits from the scheme as well. Along with some personal satisfaction, mentors often comment about their own growth and development arising from their relationship with their mentee, and they also experience a sense of optimism



about the future of extension having had a personal connection with someone entering the profession.

With participants from almost every Australian State and Territory, the format of the scheme has made it accessible for everyone. Using the good old fashioned telephone or other more recent communications technologies, mentors and mentees connected with each other in ways, and at times, that suited them best. For our group sessions we used Zoom, a free online video-conferencing platform that had some extra features allowing us to share screens for power point presentations and record sessions if desired.

The APEN Mentoring scheme runs over a 12 month period and follows some simple steps;

- Mentors volunteer and mentees subscribe to the scheme
  - Mentors and mentees are matched by the APEN Secretariat
  - Training is provided to mentors and mentee separately through video-conferencing
  - Mentors and mentees formalise their relationship by completing a mentoring agreement
  - Mentors and mentees meet and work together on a mutual learning journey
  - A mid-term evaluation reviews progress and satisfaction
  - Concluding evaluation and end of formal relationship

This year's program is about to wind up, with our final group sessions taking place in mid-December.

Being involved in the scheme this year has been an enjoyable and enlightening experience for me. As I have sought to reconnect with industry and extension professionals prior to my return to Australia in January 2017 (I currently live in South Korea), the APEN Mentoring Scheme has introduced me to a group of dedicated and experienced professionals seeking to reinvest their passion and wisdom into the industry, and also a group of emerging extension professionals who are enthusiastic and committed to their own development and growth.

If you are interested in ‘getting back to the future’ and don’t have access to a modified DeLorean car that can take you there, you might want to consider signing up to the 2017 APEN Mentoring scheme and being matched with a mentor. Of course if you’re interested in guiding and supporting extension professionals of the future, then climb on board APEN’s Mentoring Scheme for the ride as well.

For more information visit <http://www.apen.org.au/mentoring>

*Jeanette is an engagement specialist, facilitator, coach and strategist and owner of Innovative Influences. She is passionate about working with established and emerging leaders and innovative organisations. Jeanette has over twenty-five years' experience in the rural and environmental sectors. Her qualifications include a Master's in Business Administration, Graduate Diploma in Agriculture, Diploma of Applied Science in Agriculture and IAP2 Certificate in Public Participation. Jeanette was a recipient of the Centenary Medal in 2003 for her contribution to the rural sector and was awarded the Rural Industry Research & Development Corporation's (RIRDC) South Australian Rural Women's Award in 2001 for her commitment and involvement in the agricultural sector.*



# New APEN members

If you've recently joined APEN, welcome! You'll reap plenty of professional and personal rewards. If you've been in APEN for a few seasons now, be sure to say hello to the new members.



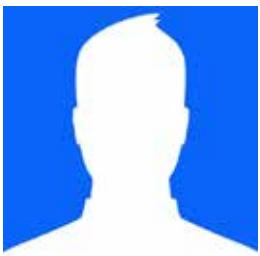
## Callen Thompson

Callen Thompson is an Extension Agronomist working for the Northern Territory Department of Primary Industry and Resources. His role is focused on agricultural industry development, and diversification of pastoral enterprises and Territory agriculture in general. This includes improved pasture, seed crops and broadacre and horticulture field crops. Callen is based at the Katherine Research Station. Prior to working with the NT government Callen spent ten years working as an agronomist in central west NSW advising on pasture, and summer and winter crop agronomy. He also ran a contract sowing business predominantly sowing improved pasture. Callen has a degree in Science from the University of New England.



## M Esakkimuthu

Dr M Esakkimuthu is currently working in the capacity of senior researcher in the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, under the All India Coordinated Research Project on Home Science (Extension component) at AICRP centre, Madurai, India. He has completed his Bachelor of Science in Agriculture from Tamil Nadu Agricultural University with meritorious scholarship, Master of Science in Agricultural Extension from Kerala Agricultural University with Junior Research Fellowship and Doctoral program in Agricultural Extension and Communication from Govind Ballabh Pant University of Agriculture and Technology, Pantnagar (Uttarakhand) with Lectureship award from University grant commission of India. He also published research papers in reputed journals in India and overseas. He works in the areas of agricultural systems innovation, rural entrepreneurship and gender development issues in agriculture.



## Doug Drysdale

Doug comes from a rural teaching principal background spending many years teaching in rural areas of New Zealand. At the end of 2014, he took on the challenge of becoming a PhD candidate at Massey University. His PhD aims to explore the relationship between a farmers' self-efficacy and their learning within the context of perennial summer forages. This research will provide the opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of conditions that better support farmers' learning leading to their decisions making when considering adoption of innovative technologies or not. Measuring self-efficacy needs to be domain specific which is the reason for working within the domain of perennial summer forages in this case, however the results from this research may provide future insights for those developing agricultural extension programmes in other domains.

Welcome to these new members who have joined since last edition. We're glad to have you all on board.

Sally Balmain	NSW
Nicola Wright	Tas
M Esakkimuthu	India
Francis Ojok	Uganda
Mandeep Pujara	India
Arshad Ali	Pakistan
Trudi Oxley	NT
Doug Drysdale	NZ
Jenny Ekman	NSW
Adam Goldwater	NSW
Gordon Rogers	NSW
Chris Brady	NT
Peter Lacey	WA
Andrew Turner	NT

# Seasons' Greetings

## WHERE TO CONTACT APEN:

### MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

**Jeanette Long** (President)  
Ph: 08 8837 3993  
[jeanette@agconsulting.com.au](mailto:jeanette@agconsulting.com.au)

**Graham Harris**  
(Vice President & Qld RC)  
Ph 0427 929 103  
[graham.harris@daf.qld.gov.au](mailto:graham.harris@daf.qld.gov.au)

**Donna Lucas** (Treasurer & Tas RC)  
Ph 0459 047 478  
[donnal@rmcg.com.au](mailto:donnal@rmcg.com.au)

**Chrissy Stokes**  
(Secretary & NZ/OS RC)  
Ph: 64 7 572 7735  
[chrissy.stokes@zespri.com](mailto:chrissy.stokes@zespri.com)

**Maryse Bourgault** (Editor)  
Ph 03 5321 4144  
[maryse.bourgault@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:maryse.bourgault@unimelb.edu.au)

**Austin McLennan** (Past President)  
Ph: 0488 764 592  
[austin.mclennan@nt.gov.au](mailto:austin.mclennan@nt.gov.au)

### Regional Coordinators

**NORTHERN TERRITORY**  
**Warren Hunt**  
Ph: 0409 809 610  
[warren.hunt@nt.gov.au](mailto:warren.hunt@nt.gov.au)

**NEW SOUTH WALES & ACT**  
**Anthony Kachenko**  
Ph: 0429 221 443  
[Anthony.Kachenko@horticulture.com.au](mailto:Anthony.Kachenko@horticulture.com.au)

**SOUTH AUSTRALIA**  
**Lisa Stevens**  
Ph: 0438 720 429  
[lisa.stevens@sa.gov.au](mailto:lisa.stevens@sa.gov.au)

**VICTORIA**  
**Mike Weise**  
Ph 0423 716 453  
[jersey@jersey.com.au](mailto:jersey@jersey.com.au)

**WESTERN AUSTRALIA**  
**Rebecca Wallis**  
Ph: 0400 681 054  
[rwallis@gga.org.au](mailto:rwallis@gga.org.au)

### CLUSTER COORDINATORS

**SE Queensland & N NSW**  
**Ann Starasts**  
Ph 07 4631 1614  
[ann.starasts@usq.edu.au](mailto:ann.starasts@usq.edu.au)

**Western Queensland**  
**Gerry Roberts**  
Ph 07 4658 2523  
[gerry.roberts@tpg.com.au](mailto:gerry.roberts@tpg.com.au)

**NSW, ACT, NT, SA, Melbourne, Far North Qld**  
**Vacant**

**Tasmania**  
**Tony Butler**  
Ph 0407 912 761  
[tony.butler@utas.edu.au](mailto:tony.butler@utas.edu.au)

**Perth**  
**Bronwyn Walsh** Ph 08 9368 3666  
[bronwyn.walsh@agrict.wa.gov.au](mailto:bronwyn.walsh@agrict.wa.gov.au)

**Policy**  
**Greg Leach** (Qld)  
Ph 07 3423 0873  
[gleachg@optusnet.com.au](mailto:gleachg@optusnet.com.au)

### APEN SECRETARIAT

Rosemary Currie, PO Box 1239,  
WODONGA VIC 3689, AUSTRALIA  
Ph: 02 6024 5349, Fax: 02 6056 1967, [info@apen.org.au](mailto:info@apen.org.au)

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

## 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: Maryse Bourgault**

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

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

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

**Stories and photos (next edition) due to Editor 27th February 2017**