

**Agricultural Bureau**  
of South Australia Inc.  
**PATHWAY TO IMPROVEMENT**



**ADVISORY BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**  
**ANNUAL REPORT**  
**2013-2014**





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## **OVERVIEW OF THE AGRICULTURAL BUREAU OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA**

The Agricultural Bureau of South Australia (The Ag Bureau) is a not-for-profit organisation run by farmers for farmers.

With a proud history in South Australia, The Ag Bureau has assisted primary producers since 1888 and is the only farmer network group of its kind remaining in Australia.

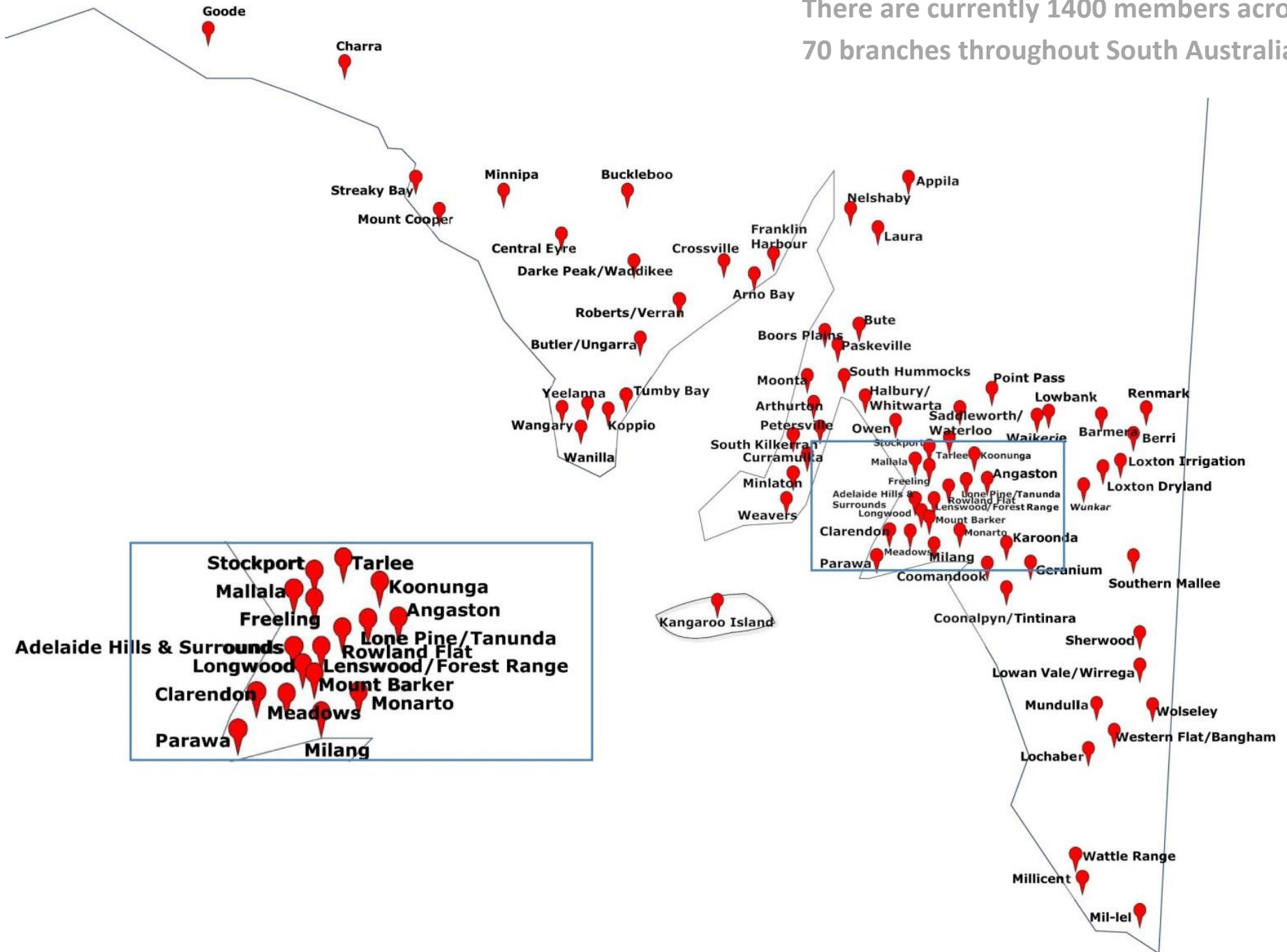
Membership is open to anyone who is associated with or has an interest in farming, agricultural development and education and an annual membership fee is charged.

The Bureau supports agricultural development through the provision of information and expertise to producers and the wider community via an extensive network and works in close co-operation with the Government of South Australia, namely Primary Industries and Regions SA (PIRSA) and Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

**The Bureau aims to bridge the gap between scientist, agribusinesses and primary producers by supporting current projects in regional South Australia.**

Branches meet regularly usually on a monthly basis to exchange ideas and information, discuss farming practices and issues and work on common issues and challenges together.

There are currently 1400 members across 70 branches throughout South Australia



## History

In 1887, an English-born printer named Albert Molineux suggested establishing an Agricultural Bureau in South Australia.

On the 27th of February 1888, the Government adopted his suggestion and the inaugural meeting of the Central Agricultural Bureau of South Australia was held on the 10th of April 1888.

The Central Agricultural Bureau was the precursor to the Advisory Board of Agriculture, the present-day governing body of the Bureau. Set up to advise the Minister of Agriculture on farming matters and to act as the governing body for the Agricultural Bureau of SA, the Central Bureau had 10 members.

There had been a number of local agricultural associations and farmers' clubs in South Australia since soon after settlement in 1836. When the Central Agricultural Bureau was created, it set about encouraging the establishment of local Bureau Branches.

In its first 12 months, it supported the founding of branches in a dozen rural areas, including Mannum, Millicent, Nuriootpa, Stansbury, Burra and Gumeracha. Gumeracha, Millicent and Nuriootpa (now known as Angaston) are all still operating and are just three of around 80 active branches across the state with nearly 1400 members.

**In 2013 the Agricultural Bureau of South Australia celebrated 125 years of serving agriculture.**

## **GOVERNING BODY**

The Advisory Board of Agriculture (ABA) is The Agricultural Bureau of South Australia's governing body.

The Board comprises representatives from Bureau regions, government departments and the University of Adelaide. It provides policy advice and recommendations on agricultural issues to the Government of South Australia and when required, direct advice to the Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries.

A current project grant of \$455,000 from the Australian Government – Sustainable Agriculture Innovation Grant is providing a greater awareness and understanding of soil acidification and is providing innovative and cost-effective methods to encourage farmers to increase their adoption of liming.

The Ag Bureau manages the Spirit of Excellence Awards which comprises several awards which recognise achievements in the agricultural field.

As the governing body we are responsible for the following:

- Managing and administering finances, insurance, awards and projects;
- Preparing and distribution of submissions on industry relevant issues;
- Facilitating the implementation of research, extension and training programs that enhance agriculture, business management and sustainable natural resource management;
- Promoting the aims, objectives and achievements of the Ag Bureau and the importance of agriculture and sustainable resource management to the broader community; and
- Providing a view forward to industry bodies and Government Departments on behalf of members.

## **PURPOSE**

### **Goals**

The goals of Bureau network are to facilitate:

- An active and informed rural sector creating and managing changes in the industry.
- Innovation and adoption of agricultural best practice.
- An informed and supportive government that takes an active role in agricultural development.
- Farmers, landholders, educators and the wider community being informed and supportive of the work of the Bureau and its vision for rural SA.

## Aims

The aims and objectives of the Bureau are to:

- Provide farmers with access to up-to-date research and technical information with practical on-farm uses.
- Assist members in developing sustainable farming systems.
- Develop an active and informed rural sector that creates and manages change by supplying members with information relevant to their farming practices.
- Initiate innovation and adoption of best practice in the rural sector.
- Enable members to deal with management and production issues by providing opportunities to talk to other farmers and technical officers.
- Foster and support a strong Bureau network that works in partnership with government, education, research providers, agribusiness, industry and the community.
- Promote goodwill, friendship and understanding amongst its members and in the community at large.

**Valuing: knowledge – friendship – understanding –  
vision - leadership**



## CHAIR'S REPORT

I am pleased to present my report on the activities of the Advisory Board of Agriculture for the past year.

This year saw South Australian primary producers seeing their best annual financial returns in more than three decades. Favourable cropping conditions and near-record winter grain yields along with solid returns for livestock have been met with good demand. Great opening rains have set the State off to a good start to the current season.

On the downside the State experienced huge bushfires earlier this year with several significant fires with Bangor and Eden Valley the two that caused the most concern. We hope that our members that were affected by these fires are now progressing well through this time of recovery and I would like to thank everyone who assisted during these difficult times, whether it be in on ground fire mopping up, infrastructure replacement or donation of fodder.

Also primary producers in the Riverland were affected with a fruit fly outbreak in February which placed quarantine regions and restrictions on some producers. These restrictions have now been lifted. Broad-acre farmers across the State have also received mite and insect damage to a number of pulse and canola crops.

The 2012-13 AGM was held in the Riverland which provided the opportunity to see many aspects of rural production as well as a few changes of Board member positions – Janette Ridgeway (Upper SE) to Treasurer and Andrew Kitto (Upper North) to Executive.

Also new to the Board is Karen Baines who represents the Eastern Eyre Peninsula. Karen has been involved in farming for 12 years and she would like to see the Ag Bureau continue their involvement of grass roots farmers in the decision making of all tiers of government.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank outgoing Board member Prof Simon Maddocks for his contribution to the Board and welcome Pauline Mooney, Executive Director SARDI.

The Board were saddened with the passing of long serving Board member Dr Tony Rathjen. Tony has made outstanding contributions to the Board, South Australian agriculture and education sectors.

This year Rural Business Support (RBS) took over Board executive support, administration, finance and communications for the Ag Bureau. RBS have a long connection with rural communities across South Australia and it has opened up many opportunities including the establishment of a working group to scope and develop a potential new board structure as well as developing terms of reference, processes and procedures.

I would like to thank Kay Matthias and the RBS team for helping to make the transition a quick and efficient process and we look forward to continuing the partnership with RBS.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the outgoing contracted staff for their dedication and commitment - Brenda Anderson, Ann Price and Michelle Arbon.

The ABA remains a strong supporter of promoting careers in the agricultural industry and the commitment to excellence through the Spirit of Excellence Awards. The Peter Olsen Fellowship for Young Farmers has been going for 14 years and the Lois Harris Scholarship which recognises a first year student with the highest TER entering the Bachelor of Agricultural Sciences at Adelaide University is in its 15<sup>th</sup> year.

Since 2009, the Rural Youth Bursary, a grant for young rural people has assisted in the development of their chosen career and since 200, the Services to Primary Production has seen worthy recipients being rewarded for exceptional industry/community service.

Last year marked the 125 year anniversary and celebrations of the ABA and Ag Bureau. A very successful '125 Year Spirit of Excellence Dinner' was held in October showcasing a proud history and a vibrant future for the Agricultural Bureau of SA. Over 135 guests enjoyed the festivities which was hosted by the entertaining Ian Doyle and featured a local SA produce menu and the presentation of the Spirit of Excellence Awards.

ABA Board members, along with RBS staff and VIPs attended a luncheon presentation this year of the 2014 Lois Harris Scholarship which recognises academic excellence.

Hon Kyam Maher MLC, Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries Parliamentary Secretary presented the scholarship to William Fairlie, an ex-Urrbrae Agricultural High School student currently studying the Bachelor of Agricultural Sciences at the University of Adelaide.

I have attended a series of meetings including RBS AGM, Rural Media SA, Sheep Connect, Ag Ex Alliance annual forum where I presented on ABA and Ag Bureau.

Along with many of our Spirit of Excellence Awards nominees, I have attended several award presentations and it has been pleasing to see the continued support to rural communities across the State. One of these functions was the presentation of the RIRDC Rural Women's Award.

Discussions are continuing with Primary Producers SA and also Shadow Minister for Agriculture, Hon David Ridgway MLC and former South Australian Liberal leader Martin Hamilton Smith.

It was a pleasure to meet with the new Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, Leon Bignell with Kay Matthias and Sharon Starick (Chair, Rural Business Support). Discussions have also been held with the president of Women in Agriculture and Business (WAB) on opportunities of how our two organisations can collaboratively work together.

It was pleasing to receive the 2014 Ag Ex Sustainability Award sponsored by DEWNR for the Barossa Improved Grazing Group (BIGG) which is a project group working in the Angaston Ag Bureau. A range of research projects are continuing with Branches, namely through Caring for our Country and State NRM Community Grants which are valued at over \$420,000. A full list of projects is included in Appendix 1.

The ABA is pleased to be recipients of the state-wide Innovation Grant – ‘Innovative and cost-effective solutions to the treatment of acid soil in SA’. This project will address soil acidification in over 1.9 million hectares of agricultural land in SA that is susceptible to soil acidification which will provide a greater awareness and understanding providing innovative and cost-effective methods to encourage farmers to increase their adoption of liming.

The ABA submitted their paper, along with another 600 from around the country regarding the future of agriculture through the Agricultural Competitiveness White Paper. We will be watching eagerly as the ideas are taken towards the next stage of deliberation.

The Board members undertook many roles during the year, supporting industry boards, committees and projects such as:

- Bureau of Meteorology Agricultural Consultative Committee
- Ag Business Council
- National Livestock Identification Scheme

I would like to thank the Board for their support of these industry initiatives and thank them for their support, and to all the staff of RBS who share the common goals of supporting the South Australian agricultural sector.

As we continue or work in the agricultural industry, representing our membership in providing an independent voice to government departments, agencies and partners, and providing opportunity for information to be conveyed back to our members, we need to ensure that as a Board, we are providing the services as required by Bureau members. We must determine the most efficient and effective way to provide these services as we continue to grow our profile in the rural sector, the sector which has so much to offer our State.



**Mark Grossman**  
Chair

## WORKING GROUP CONVENOR REPORTS

### Government

The Government Working Group comprises Board members Geoff Page (Convenor), Richard Murdoch and Tony Loffler.

The working group reviewed the board's governance. One of the issues identified was the need to get extra information from potential board members. It was agreed that potential Board members are required to include in their applications whether they have been bankrupt and are a fit and proper person. They must also pass a satisfactory police check which will be covered by the ABA.

We also recommended that all new board members be encouraged to attend not for profit director training and that the board would cover the cost. We also recommended that new board members be provided with a mentor.

The working group also spent time reviewing spray drift issues and issues arising from the recent fruit fly outbreaks. These issues were discussed with relevant government officials.

### Submissions

The Advisory Board of Agriculture makes a number of submissions on issues affecting the farming community in South Australia.

Recent submissions have included:

- Agricultural Competitiveness White Paper Public Comment Submission
- SA Water - cost of water for broad acre farmers in South Australia
- Land subdivision in the light council area
- Protecting bee industry from Varroa mite



## Promotions and Membership

The Government Working Group comprises Board members Yvonne Correll (Convenor), Mark Grossman, Karen Baines, Roger Farley, Mark Fitzgerald and Communications Manager Sue Rogers (RBS)

### Spirit of Excellence Awards

The Ag Bureau presents several awards and scholarships each year which are:

- Peter Olsen Fellowship for Young Farmers
- Lois Harris Scholarship
- Rural Youth Bursary
- Services to Primary Production Award

**Peter Olsen Fellowship for Young Farmers** provides an \$8000 bursary for a farmer aged between 18 and 35 to pursue further study, undertake a study tour or run a special project which was sponsored by Primary Industries and Regions SA (PIRSA).

#### 2013 recipient: Celia Scott

Celia will use the bursary to assist her plan of setting up a “Paddock to Plate” enterprise in the State’s south-east. She would like to improve the image of agriculture through direct producer and consumer communication. Celia currently works on her family farm managing 200 Angus breeders and 3500 composite ewes.

**Lois Harris Scholarship** is a \$2000 scholarship for a first year student studying the Bachelor of Agricultural Sciences at the University of Adelaide.

#### 2014 recipient – William Fairlie, Tertiary Entrance Score (TER) 98.05

William is from Roseworthy, 10 kilometres north of Gawler where his Dad operates a second generation family farm who is currently transitioning out of sheep and into cropping only. William said the scholarship money would go towards paying his university fees.

**Rural Youth Bursary** is a \$5000 grant for young rural people aged 18-30 years in all types of employment to learn more about their chosen career which was sponsored by Primary Industries and Regions (PIRSA).

#### 2013 recipient – Chloe Shaw

Chloe works in the Riverland as Technical Officer for Jubilee Almonds. The bursary will be used for travel to the San Joaquin Valley in California where she hopes to build close networks with researchers gaining invaluable insight into the latest developments within the almond industry. Chloe is keen to implement field trials and improve orchard management techniques.

**Service to Primary Production** recognises the achievements of people who have provided exceptional service to primary productions.

#### 2013 recipients – Leighton Huxtable

Leighton who is from the Borrika Ag Bureau in the Murray Mallee has been active throughout his career in assisting local farmers in the reduction of operating costs.

#### Ken Solly

Ken from Lochaber Ag Bureau in the Mid/Lower SE has been instrumental in developing major events such as achievement days and managing interstate and overseas study tours, as well as developing and delivery industry courses.

### **Website**

The website has been refreshed with a new gallery and information for farmers on transport requirements, funding and agricultural blogs to encourage producers to see it as a 'one stop shop' for farmers providing timely information on a range of topics. Submissions by the ABA on relevant issues are included on the website, a list of current board members and their contact details as well as current news articles and media releases. It also features a map indicating the 70 branches across the State.

### **Social media**

The Ag Bureau has had an increased presence on Facebook with the announcement of the Lois Harris Scholarship reaching 596 people with 43 interactions.

### **E-News**

The quarterly Ag Bureau Bulletin continues to be the main resource for Ag Bureau members. The layout was redesigned in December and the new design has received accolades for its professionalism and easy to read format. Readers enjoy looking at the images and using the interactive links.

### **Media**

The media continue to be a supporter of the Ag Bureau with articles throughout the year including the Spirit of Excellence Awards.

### **Sponsorship**

ABA would like to thank Westpac for supporting 18 Bureau Bus Trips over their two year sponsorship (value \$20,000). A new Sponsorship Proposal and distributed to targeted businesses that are aligned with agriculture in South Australia. Several levels have been listed with amounts varying from \$10,000 to \$4,000.

The ABA were a key sponsor of the Agriculture Kangaroo Island Conference in August.

Primary Industries and Regions SA (PIRSA) kindly sponsored the Spirit of Excellence Awards providing funding for the celebratory dinner and the prize money for both the Peter Olsen Fellowship and the Rural Youth Bursary.



### Westpac bus trips

Over the past year, the following Ag Bureau branches have undertaken bus trips made possible by Westpac funding.

Branch	Trip date	Trip location
Buckleboo Farm Improvement Group	August 2013	Mid North (Booloroo Tillage Trial; 'Jeskes' Sevenhill; Balco; Hart winter walk)
Laura & Nelashby	September 2013	Mallee (Angove; Chris Hunt property in Millewa area; Speed Field Day; Jacko Kileys property near Speed; Bulla Burra cooperative farm in the Mallee district; 'Root Boot' seeding system)
Lenswood & Forest Range	September 2013	Riverland
Mallala	March 2014	A1 Mushroom farm; Konzag Durum TOS trial; Andy Barr (bean variety trial & barley variety trial); Gavin Schuster (Corbin hay press); Agpoint Freeling)
South Kilkerran	October 2013	Riverland (Bulla Burra Station; Century Almonds; Banrock Station)
Barmera	January 2014	Adelaide Hills wine region (Amadio vineyard; The Lane vineyard, Hahndorf; The Edwards' vineyard, Mt Torrens/Birdwood)
Lochaber	February 2014	Riverland (Bulla Burra Station; PIRSA Research Loxton; Gurra-Downs Date Farm; Chowilla Station and Wetlands; The Turf Farm)
Tumby Bay	February 2014	Kangaroo Island (KI Pure Grain; Island Pure Sheep Dairy; Emu Ridge Eucalyptus Distillery; Clifford's Honey Farm; Ben Pontifex property at Parndana; Steven Childs and Rodney Lade seed potato enterprise; Andermel Marron Farm; Richard Trethewey farming enterprise; Sam Mumford feedlot)

### Membership

It was recommended that membership fees remain the same as in the previous year which is as follows:

- Standard Membership \$55.00 (inc GST)
- Associate Member \$33.00 (inc GST)
- Student Member \$27.50 (inc GST)
- Introductory Member \$27.50 (inc GST)

Membership renewal packs are sent out to all Branches in June. Reminder notes have been included for outstanding fees.

## Long Standing Member Award

Long serving branch members are recognised annually with awards being presented to the following members during 2013/14.

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Branch</b>
<b>60 Years</b>	Mervyn Sonntag	Lone Pine Tanunda
<b>50 Years</b>	Dean Liersch	Lone Pine Tanunda
<b>40 Years</b>	Merv Lindner Robert Schiller Leon Koch Kym Lindner Kevin Browning Mervyn Baker Eugene Eden Herman Fuss	Rowland Flat Rowland Flat Rowland Flat Rowland Flat Boors Plain Boors Plain Boors Plain Boors Plain
<b>20 years</b>	Roger Francis Peter Kakoschke	South Kilkerran South Kilkerran

## Research Development and Extension

The Research Development and Extension Working Group comprises Board members, Janette Ridgway (Convenor), Andrew Kitto, Ron Milde and Peter Rose.

### Projects

The Ag Bureau of SA has a long and proud history of managing projects that benefit members from State to local level. Funding is provided by the Australian Government and the Government of South Australia.

Ag Bureau funds (including the Bureau Project Fund) have also been used to resource branch projects.

<b>Caring for our Country</b>		
30/8/2013 – 31/3/2015		
Improving claying practice through addition of organic matter	<i>Sherwood Precision Management Systems Group</i>	\$54,340
Four demonstration sites to trial adding organic material on sandy soils where clay has been added to overcome non-wetting issues. Ongoing monitoring of soil characteristics and development of new demonstration sites with clay modification with final treatments and incorporation to occur just prior to seeding. Identify changes to production levels and dry matter cuts collected.		
Ongoing effects of soil modification using clay	<i>Karoonda and Districts Agricultural Bureau</i>	\$53,570
The project will address lack of information about long term effects of soil modification by monitoring the existing sites. Over the past year, three existing trial sites were monitored and a crop walk was undertaken to look at the impacts of clay spreading and delving.		
Improving surface soil depth and subsoil conditions of soils	<i>Lochaber Agricultural Bureau</i>	\$45,540
Monitoring is continuing at a sandy site at Graeme Clothier's at Woolumbook and a new site at Bob Williams' at Lochaber will be established to investigate the heavier textured soil types found there. At the sandy site, a range of organic products have been applied to the surface and subsurface with the effect on general soil health and monitored as it responds to the addition of the various products.		
Increasing productivity on clayed sands	<i>Southern Mallee Agricultural Bureau</i>	\$54,780
Due to lack of funding early in 2013, the early trial measurements were delayed with the majority of project activity occurring during 2014. Sites were inspected and six potential sites were tested. Three of these were selected for replicated trials, and the other three will have farmer demonstration strips. The spreading of organic matter and spading has been organized and a subs-oiler from Victoria was used in late April to finalise the treatments in the trial. Planning of trial sites and trial plans. Selection of trial sites, sampling for soil characteristics. Implementation of 2014 pre-season trial treatments using organic matter and fertiliser on surface and spaded.		

Improved soil management and productivity in the Mid North	<i>Halbury Whitwarta Agricultural Bureau</i>	\$53,460
<p>This project has included a series of workshops, trials and demonstrations to improve knowledge and skills in soils and soil management, including soil and plant testing and the trialling of corrective macro and micro nutrient balances. Identify sites for trial and demonstrations, initial base sampling (October 2013). Two of the four sites have been identified with third and fourth sites requiring further soil sampling to determine the most appropriate site Established trials and demonstrations (June 2014) with project activity still ongoing.</p>		
Innovative sustainable land management at Stockport	<i>Stockport Agricultural Bureau</i>	\$49,390
<p>This project will look to examine, discuss, trial and demonstrate innovative and locally untried techniques to address soil condition issues. The sites will trial organic matter in restrictive clay soils for improved filtration rates and improved productivity. Three out of four sites have been identified with background information and site methodology being researched. The establishment trial and demonstrations are still a work in progress.</p>		
Improving soil structure in hard setting soils of Eastern Eyre Peninsula	<i>Crossville Agricultural Bureau</i>	\$44,990
<p>Project to trial and evaluate new technologies to address poor soil structure on the Eastern Eyre Peninsula. Demonstration sites have been selected with initial sampling to determine site variability undertaken. Gypsum application, deep ripping and mixing treatments applied with two field events held with landholder groups.</p>		

<b>State NRM Community Grant</b>		
30/9/2013 – 30/9/2014		
Improving water repellent sandy soils near Coomandook	<i>Coomandook Agricultural Bureau</i>	
<p>Sandy soils in the Coomandook area often have problems with water repellance and low fertility. Crop emergence is poor and there is limited growth, leading to higher wind erosion risk. Weeds are difficult to control due to staggered germination and problems in getting take-up of soil-incorporated herbicides. The main trial site had 30 treatments, replicated 4 times over 120 plots.</p>		

<b>Innovation Grant</b>		
1/2/14 – 31/3/16		
Innovative and cost-effective solutions to the treatment of acid soils in SA	<i>Advisory Board of Agriculture</i>	\$414,990
<p>Over two years this project will identify and evaluate new lime sources throughout South Australia. It will also look at developing decision making tools that will allow farmers to compare the cost effectiveness of different lime sources taking into account the quality and cost of lime, freight and mileage. With access to two soil pH mapping machines the projects will assess and evaluate. The project will commence in the Upper North, Adelaide Hills and South East and next the year on Eyre Peninsula and Kangaroo Island.</p>		

**New Horizons program**

22/1/14

New advances in soil science and management to increase crop production

*Collaborative project between PIRSA, NRM Boards, Mallee Sustainable Farming Group, University of South Australia, University of Adelaide*

\$850,000

This program will investigate ways to increase agricultural production in South Australia. Historically, research has generally focused on improving the top 10 cm of soil where most roots grow and standard agricultural equipment can reach. New research now suggests that by working to a depth of 50 cm, plant health and farm productivity could be significantly improved. This project will apply these findings to trial sites potentially increasing food production by up to \$800 million per year. Trial sites have already been set up in the Murray Mallee, South East and on the Eyre Peninsula. The program will also increase capability for the long-term storage of carbon, reduce soil erosion risk and provide the opportunity to develop a high value manufacturing industry in agricultural machinery.

**State NRM Community Grant projects undertaken directly by incorporated branches:**

- *Angaston – Barossa producer groups sustainable pasture challenge paddocks*
- *Koonunga –Improving poor soil health in North Barossa vineyards*
- *Monarto –Pasture improvement and no-till interface*

## **BOARD MEMBERS**

### **Mark Grossman, Chair**

Mark Grossman represents the Barossa Valley region and has been a Bureau member of the Angaston branch since 1982 where he held all office positions. He operates a family primary production partnership with enterprises including sheep, cattle, cropping and viticulture. The sheep enterprise includes self-replacing merinos, 1st cross ewes, prime lambs and operating Koonawarra white suffolk and border leicester studs. The farming properties are situated in the Angaston and Sedan regions. Other community involvement includes Federal President of Australian White Suffolk Association, State President of SA Border Leicester Sheep Breeders and President of Angaston AH&F Show Society.

### **Geoff Page, Deputy Chair**

Geoff Page represents the Adelaide hills region on the Advisory Board of Agriculture which is where he resides and has his own farming business that produces cut flowers, certified organic vegetable and herb seedlings which are sold at farmers markets. The farm also produces prime lambs and hay for sale. Geoff works part-time at the University of South Australia as the student Ombudsman. Geoff has academic qualifications in education, agriculture, agricultural economics and land valuation.

### **Janette Ridgway, Treasurer**

Janette is Board representative for the Upper South East Agricultural Bureau branches. As a farmer, Janette works on a mixed farming enterprise with her husband and son. Their farm is east of Bordertown, in the district known as Pine Hill. They grow broad acre crops, have a sheep enterprise as well as a horticulture business growing gladiolus bulbs. Janette has a passion for agriculture, community and family and brings these skills and understanding to the Board along with a desire for learning and sharing of information.

### **Tony Loffler, Executive**

Tony represents the Riverland and Northern Mallee, a major horticulture region and areas of dry land farming. Major crops include almonds, citrus and wine grapes with lesser production of fresh stone fruit, table grapes, dried fruit and vegetables. Tony and his wife operate a small mixed fruit growing property with their main production being dried stone and vine fruit with connections with several industry organisations and the community. He brings experience in horticulture and dry land farming practices and River Murray issues to the board as well as an understanding of meeting procedures and an ability with words to record and edit reports. Tony's vision is for a more viable and effective Ag Bureau movement for SA.

### **Yvonne Correll, Deputy Treasurer**

Yvonne Correll has been the Mid/Lower South East representative since 2006 and has been involved with primary production all her life. Initially Yvonne lived on a farm property at Moonta and later with husband Trevor on their cropping property at Kulpara. Since 2004 they have lived north of Lucindale on a grazing property producing prime lambs. Yvonne's role has been predominantly administration within the business. Her particular interest on the ABA has been the scholarship awards for young people, serving on the Board with her administration skills and knowledge on three working groups (Government, RD&E and Communications) and networking with Bureau members.

### **Ron Milde**

Ron represents the Lower North region of Freeling, Mallala, Owen, Stockport, Tarlee, Halbury-Whitwarta and Point Pass. Residing at Eudunda, Ron farms 1200 ha between Eudunda and Robertstown with just over two thirds crops and the remainder sheep and an additional 2300 ha, 30 km east for crops (wheat, barley, oats, lentils and canola). Ron has been a member of the Point Pass Ag bureau for 45 years and has held most positions. He currently sits on the silo committee and previously, with the SA Farmers Federation, was chairman of the Eudunda Branch and the Lower North Zone. To keep active Ron plays lawn bowls and enjoys travelling.

### **Richard Murdoch**

Richard represents the Hummocks, Northern Yorke and Yorke Peninsula regions and has been a member of Warooka (in recess) and Weavers branch. He has held the Chair position in 2009/10 and represents the farming community on the State Agribusiness Council for the past three years. A farmer himself, Richard grows wheat, barley, canola, faba beans and peas and runs self-replacing murray greys and merino sheep. Highlights on the Board have included the drought task force strategy, the grain cost of production model and the State Agriculture Plan.

### **Mark Fitzgerald**

Mark is from Tumby Bay and represents the Lower Eyre Peninsula. He has been a primary producer for 25 years farming wheat, barley, chick peas and sheep. Mark is a current member of the Butler Ungarra Ag Bureau which has over 30 members and has held all positions spanning over the past 25 years. Mark's expertise to the Board is in local knowledge of the Lower Eyre Peninsula and the dissemination of research outcomes through his involvement with the EPARF group (Eyre Peninsula Agricultural Research Foundation).

### **Roger Farley**

Roger Farley represents the Fleurieu region of South Australia on the Board and is a member of the Monarto branch. He is involved in two farms, the main one is at Kybybolite where around 10,000 x bred ewes are mated for prime lamb production along with some 600 ha of cropping for both forage and grain production. At their home base they manage 1100 merino ewes for prime lambs with 40 ha for grain. Roger is currently on seven local organisational committees and has been on several boards with SAFF over the past 20 years.

**Peter Rose**

Peter has been an active Agricultural Bureau of SA member for over 20 years and represents the Murraylands. His passion for the Murraylands, which runs from Coonalpyn/Tintinara in the south to Karoonda in the north and from east of the Murray to the border, makes him an effective and knowledgeable representative.

**Karen Baines**

Representing the Eastern Eyre Peninsula, Karen lives with her husband on 2500ha North West of Ungarra cropping mainly barley and canola and run about 1000 Merino's. Karen loves the farm life and is also a mother of two. She is a passionate Advocate, volunteer on several committees, treasurer, grant writer and farm safety and compliance consultant in her spare time. Karen brings to the Board a variety of business qualifications and experience, information, communication technology skills and a no nonsense approach to dealing with issues affecting agriculture. She has a Diploma in Rural Business Management and Occupational Health and Safety and is the administrator of the farms heavy vehicle accreditation in the National Heavy Vehicle Accreditation Scheme.

**Andrew Kitto**

Andrew represents the Upper North region and is a farmer himself. He is a current member of the Laura Branch and with Nelshaby being the only other Branch in his region his Board duties are somewhat reduced compared to other regional representatives. Andrew is a practical board member and since commencing on the Board in February 2013 he has helped organise a successful interstate bus tour for our region; organised a practical farm machinery/transport demonstration to DPTI representatives; represented the ABA at the Australian Government Ag White Paper meeting and established links with other representatives, eg NRM, GPSA, DPTI and Government of South Australia.

**Pauline Mooney**

Affiliate Professor Pauline Mooney is the Executive Director of the South Australian Research and Development Institute (SARDI), operating through PIRSA. Pauline joined SARDI in 2005 as its Director of Research and in 2009 was appointed to the new role of Deputy Executive Director. The role includes building strong relationships with industry and pursuing research excellence. Pauline has 29 years' experience in science, business and financial leadership, including extensive experience in strategy planning, research and project management for primary industries research across terrestrial, marine, livestock and food sectors. She has sat on a number of boards and as a member of numerous committees.

**Dr Tony Rathjen (deceased)**

Tony Rathjen originally from Birdwood in the Adelaide Hills, was an ex-officio board member representing the University of Adelaide through the School of Agriculture Food and Wine. Having served on the Advisory Board of Agriculture for many years, Tony was well-known as a wheat breeder, having worked on the breeding of 23 different wheat varieties over his career. Tony also assisted in enhancing the educational opportunities for many students undertaking rural studies. Sadly in June 2014 Tony passed away but will always be remembered for his contributions to our board, the wheat industry and the education sector.

**Tim Herrmann**

Tim Herrmann has worked in the areas of soils, land management, landcare and natural resources management for over 30 years. He currently leads the Sustainable Soils team in the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources (DEWNR) who are responsible for leading and developing strategies and programs that achieve the sustainable use and management of the soil and land resource in SA. Key programs include soil protection, soil acidity, perennial farming systems, soil carbon and productive capacity and are delivered through partnerships within the agricultural industry, NRM Boards, grower groups, research institutions and other agencies.

**Greg Cock**

Greg is Primary Industries and Region SA's (PIRSA) nominated ex-officio member of the Board. He has had a long association with the Bureau and the Board. Initially, in his roles in natural resources management in country locations he interacted a lot with branches of the Bureau, working together on projects and presenting at meetings. In later years he was the Executive Officer for the ABA for several years and initiated a process to reshape the business of the Board to work to a sustainable model where it no longer relied upon public funds for its operation. As the current member, Greg works to maintain the connection between the Board and the Bureau and to explore areas of common priority.

**Kay Matthias**

Kay, originally from a farming background, has been employed in the agricultural sector since 1997 primarily in the communications and marketing area until becoming involved in the rural financial counselling network in 2004. In 2006 Kay was appointed the inaugural Chief Executive of Rural Business Support, successfully leading the organisation through significant change from 12 regional services to one State-wide service. In 2010 Kay established a projects division which looks for ways to collaborate with government and industry to better support a strong and resilient primary industries sector.



## MEETING DATES

### 2013

26 August	AGM and Annual Regional Dinner	Loxton
27 August	Board Meeting	Loxton

### 2014

10-11 October	Board Meeting	Adelaide
4 February	Board Meeting	Adelaide
3 February	Planning Day	Adelaide
7-8 April	Board Meeting & Lois Harris Scholarship presentation	Adelaide

	From	To	BOARD MEETINGS	
			Eligible to attend	Meetings attended
<b>Mark Grossman</b>	Jul 13	Jun 14	4	4
<b>Geoff Page</b>	Jul 13	Jun 14	4	4
<b>Janette Ridgway</b>	Jul 13	Jun 14	4	4
<b>Yvonne Correll</b>	Jul 13	Jun 14	4	3
<b>Tony Loffler</b>	Jul 13	Jun 14	4	4
<b>Ron Milde</b>	Jul 13	Jun 14	4	3
<b>Richard Murdoch</b>	Jul 13	Jun 14	4	4
<b>Mark Fitzgerald</b>	Jul 13	Jun 14	4	2
<b>Roger Farley</b>	Jul 13	Jun 14	4	4
<b>Peter Rose</b>	Jul 13	Jun 14	4	4
<b>Andrew Kitto</b>	Jul 13	Jun 14	4	4
<b>Karen Baines</b>	Feb 14	Jun 14	3	2
<b>Simon Maddocks</b>	Jul 13	Jan 14	2	0
<b>Tim Herrmann</b>	Jul 13	Jun 14	4	3
<b>Greg Cock</b>	Jul 13	Jun 14	4	0
<b>Tony Rathjen</b>	Jul 13	Jun 14	4	1
<b>Pauline Mooney</b>	Jan 14	Jun 14	2	1

## YEAR IN REVIEW

Activities aligned to aims and objectives of the Board:

To **encourage excellence** in agriculture, business management and sustainable natural resource management:

- Spirit of Excellence Awards
- Long serving member award
- Projects run by the ABA and Ag Bureau branches
- Branch meetings and activities across the state

To **work in close co-operation** with government departments which have regular interaction with agricultural producers:

- Submissions relating to:
  - Agricultural Competitiveness White Paper Public Comment
  - SA Water – cost of water for broad acre farmers in South Australia
- Applications for Caring for Our Country projects
- Applications for Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources and Natural Resource Management Board projects
- Letter of support to South Australian Apiarists' Association Inc. re: Varroa mite

To aid in the **development of vibrant community and industry networks**. Valuing knowledge, friendship, understanding, vision and leadership:

- Spirit of Excellence awards and dinner
- Long serving member awards
- Branch meetings and activities across the state
- Attend Rural Business Support AGM
- Attendance by ABA members at the Ag Excellence Alliance Forum and Dinner and presentation of report at that Forum
- Attendance at RIRDC Rural Women's Award

To advise relevant Ministers through the Board on **issues raised by members** and visa-versa:

- Regular meetings with Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries
- Submissions relating to:
  - Agricultural Competitiveness White Paper Public Comment
  - SA Water – cost of water for broad acre farmers in South Australia

To **lead, coordinate and foster the Bureau**, representing Bureau Members' best interests:

- Long serving member awards
- Liaison between regional Board representatives and branches
- Regional meetings
- Support for, and administration of, branch projects

To **submit to the Minister** such recommendations as the Board may consider desirable in the interests of agricultural industries of SA:

- Submissions relating to:
  - Agricultural Competitiveness White Paper Public Comment
  - SA Water – cost of water for broad acre farmers in South Australia

To **deal with other organisations and government departments** that the Board considers of relevance to Bureau members:

- Regular meetings with Primary Industries and Regions SA (PIRSA) Chief Executive
- Meetings with other industry groups ie. Primary Producers SA and Women in Agribusiness
- Westpac sponsorship
- RSM Bird Cameron sponsorship

To **make such rules that are necessary** from time to time for the administration of the Board and the Bureau:

- Engaged:
  - Executive Officer
  - Administration Officer
  - Communications Officer

To **facilitate the implementation of research, extension and training programs** that enhance agriculture, business management and sustainable natural resource management:

- Projects run by the ABA and Ag Bureau branches

To **promote the role and achievements of the Bureau** and the importance of agriculture and sustainable resource management to the broader community:

- Regular meetings with Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries
- Regular meetings with Chief Executive, Primary Industries and Regions SA
- Media articles (ie. Stock Journal and regional papers)
- ABC Radio interviews
- Spirit of Excellence Awards dinner
- Continue to update website
- Regular posts on social media site, Facebook

## INDUSTRY REVIEW AND RURAL ISSUES

<b>Field Crops</b>	South Australian primary producers experienced a pleasing season producing a total of 8.6 million tonnes for the 2013/14 harvest, an increase of 31% and the third highest production level on record for the state (ABARES). The winter season produced above average rainfall in many areas and despite challenging conditions during harvest was of reasonable quality.
<b>Wine Grapes</b>	For wine grape growers, 2014 was not an overly successful year - opening with uneven flowering and fruit set, strong winds, frost, hail, fruit fly quarantine zones, bush fires, powdery mildew and significantly lower grape prices.
<b>Sheep Meat</b>	Total lamb exports surpassed volume and value expectations in 2013/14. Asian markets, particularly China, thrived with a remarkable increase in shipments to the region. Lamb exports to other key markets also rose although more modestly than Asia. Domestic lamb markets saw the consolidation of a very robust demand trend.
<b>Horticulture</b>	In 2012/13 horticulture industries (excluding wine grapes) contributed \$2,605 million to South Australia's Gross Food revenue. This comprised around 18 per cent of the total food revenue contribution of \$14.4 billion. Limited chill time during winter resulted in low yields in the stone fruit and almond sectors. Some of which was offset by higher prices received by growers.
<b>Beef</b>	Close to 1.2 million tonnes of beef were exported in 2013/14 which is a 17% increase on the record levels set in the previous year. Value of beef exports also reached an all-time record of A\$6.27 billion underpinned by a 10% increase in beef values. While exports were booming, Australian domestic cattle prices remain subdued due to the relentless dry spell in Queensland and northern NSW causing high turn off and slaughter rates.
<b>Wool</b>	The 2013/14 season saw the Eastern Market Indicator average 1070 cents per kilo clean compared to 1035 cents in the previous year. With low prices for super fine wool and limited demand from Chinese markets causing producers to question their future in their industry and some are focusing more on meat production.
<b>Dairy</b>	The National Dairy Farmer Survey showed that 75% of dairy farmers are positive about the future of their industry compared to 43% at the same time last year. This is as a result of favourable weather, reasonable input costs and strong farmgate milk prices. Australian milk production in 2013/14 was 9,238,601 million litres compared with 9,200,702 last year with South Australia up 5.3%.

**Agricultural Bureau**  
of South Australia Inc.  
**PATHWAY TO IMPROVEMENT**



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