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## **EVENTS**

### **Webinar – Taking stock of feed quality**

**2 December**

Making metabolizable energy and protein work effectively. It is known that variable seasonal conditions impact quality and quantity of available pasture, silage, hay and grain. Now is the time to look at what 'fuel' – metabolizable energy (me) and crude protein (cp) – is available to manage livestock productivity through the season ahead.

Join Dr Jill Kelly to explore the fundamentals of ruminant nutrition to drive performance of the rumen to support good productivity. Making the most of me and cp in conserved fodder, grain and standing feed is vital in running an efficient production system.

When: 2 December

Where: online

Time: 12:30 to 1:30 pm

Hear from Julian Carroll and Ed Weatherly using in-paddock weighing for cattle and sheep that assists understanding feed and animal performance. There are a limited number of free feed

tests available to Victorian farmers attending, so register early. For more information, contact Greg Ferrier on 0438 738 634 or [greg.ferrier@agriculture.vic.gov.au](mailto:greg.ferrier@agriculture.vic.gov.au).

### **TPP Webinar Update for fruit industries and nursery**

In October 2025, Tomato Potato Psyllid (TPP) was detected outside the current Restricted Area in Victoria. Restrictions will come into effect from Monday 8 December 2025 and growers and businesses will need to comply with these restrictions if they are sending plants and produce interstate.

Upcoming Webinars:

Agriculture Victoria will hold a fruit industry webinar on Wednesday, **December 3 from 2 - 3pm** to guide businesses through the new requirements. In particular, the webinar will focus on fruit with stems and/or calyx attached.

[🔗 Fruit industry tomato potato psyllid webinar registration – Fill in form](#)

The webinar to explain requirements for host produce and nursery stock is still occurring on **Tuesday 2 December from 2 - 3pm**

[🔗 Host produce and host nursery stock tomato potato psyllid webinar registration form.](#)

For further information please contact [publicinformation.STPTEPP@agriculture.vic.gov.au](mailto:publicinformation.STPTEPP@agriculture.vic.gov.au).

For more information about TPP visit [agriculture.vic.gov.au/tpp](http://agriculture.vic.gov.au/tpp)

### **Soil Health Expert & Angus Leader Simon Falkiner**

**2-3 December**

Renowned soil health innovator and livestock genetics leader Simon Falkiner will be in Gippsland in early December to deliver practical, in-paddock sessions on soil productivity, subsoil amelioration, feed efficiency and high-performing livestock systems.

With more than 30 years across soil improvement, Angus and Merino seedstock development, and sustainable farming, Simon brings deep, hands-on experience to local producers.

#### **Deep ripping & Double Cropping – Worth the effort or a waste of time? Winnindoo Ute Drive**

Practical paddock walk looking at deep ripping, double cropping, and soil amelioration, and how these are affecting soil health, the performance of his maize crop and carbon and nitrogen cycles.

When: Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 9:30am To 11:30am

Where: 919 Ross Rd, Winnindoo (Use Google Maps Not Apple Maps)

Register: Click Link <https://bit.ly/4qvrszf> or text Nat 0436462559

#### **Beef Cattle Workshop – Know your numbers BAIRNSDALE Yard Walk**

This session will be a hands-on visual assessment of the heifers and unpack what key EBVs mean in practice. Simon will also share his record-breaking MSA 71.06 steer results and the latest on feed-efficiency trials that are cutting costs and emissions.

When: Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 5:00pm to 8:00pm

Where: Gippsland Ag Centre – Bairnsdale Airport

Register: Click link <https://bit.ly/3Jx0pKj> or text Nat 0436462559

#### **What to do when it hasn't worked? Ute Drive – Giffard West Hall**

An open and honest chat about what happens when things don't go to plan. Come along to share experiences and ask questions about soil amelioration works, tackling soil challenges, lifting livestock performance on pastures, making the most of herd genetics, and boosting feed efficiency across your operation.

When: Wednesday 3rd December 8:00am to 10:00am

Where: 3917 South Gippsland Highway

Register: Click link <https://bit.ly/4qVsrzF> or text Nat 0436462559

### **Red Meat Road Map – Back to Basic Forward to Profit**

**16 December**

Producers and industry professionals are invited to join the Red Meat Road Map: Back to Basics – forward to profit event — a practical, full-day program designed to connect global insights with on-farm application.

Hosted by the Mawarra family at Mawarra Genetics, 103 Kellys Road, Longford, this event will explore the fundamentals of breeding, business, and profitability in the modern red meat industry. Attendees will gain valuable perspectives on how to link paddock performance to processor premiums and market success.

Event highlights:

- Opening panel: global, national & local perspectives  
Angus Gidley-Baird (Rabobank), Steve Chapman (JBS Australia), And Morgan Davies (Elders Bairnsdale) Share Insights on Current Trends Shaping Profitability.
- Keynote session: back to basics – forward to profit with PJ Budler  
global lessons for functional, profitable herds.
- Paddock round robin: hands-on sessions with cows, calves, bulls, and heifers
- Live carcass demonstration:

This is a valuable opportunity for red meat producers to strengthen their knowledge, refine breeding strategies, and connect with leaders across the supply chain. Tickets are \$35, and spaces are limited. Register below by 3rd December to secure your place.

**Tickets: \$35.00** Click link or scan QR  
<https://events.humanitix.com/red-meat-road-map>  
**\*\* Limited spaces available \*\***



### **FUNDING / SUPPORT**

## Dry Seasons Support Extension

At December's, Drought Response Taskforce meeting, Minister for Agriculture Ros Spence announced an extension of key drought programs, bringing the Government's Drought Support Package to more than \$146.5 million.

Farmers from across the state will have access to a second Farm Advisory Service one-on-one consultation with a technical specialist. Community wellbeing support will continue with a new round of funding for the Look Over the Farm Gate grants program opening in February 2026, administered by the National Centre for Farmer Health.



Across Victoria, more than 100 Look Over the Farm Gate events have brought communities together, engaging around 13,000 people. So far, more than 700 farmers have participated in consultations through the Farm Advisory Service, and RFCS wellbeing counsellors have supported more than 100 farming businesses. [Drought support | Farm management | Agriculture Victoria](#)

## Farm Drought Support Grants – Expense Claim

What's available.

- [Grants up to \\$5,000](#) (ex-GST) are available for on-farm improvements and other business activities to help manage drought.
- [Household Financial Relief](#) payments up to \$1,000 to eligible farming families and those working on farms affected by drought conditions in southwest Victoria to assist with household expenses.
- [Farm management advice and planning help](#) is available across Victoria. [Service providers](#) are supporting the delivery of this statewide program; a further opportunity to submit quotes will open from Monday 17 November for the autumn program of group-based events.
- Farm debt mediation support, and a [duties and fees relief package](#).
- [On-farm Kangaroo Control Rebate Program](#).
- [Mental health and wellbeing events](#) are being funded statewide through the Look Over the Farm Gate program to help bring communities together and support farmers under stress.

[Learn more about the package](#).

## Help to replace water and septic tanks after the 2019-20 bushfires

If your home was damaged in the 2019-20 bushfires, you can get help to repair or replace your water and septic tanks. Up to \$25,500 of financial help is available for each household.

The money can help pay for:

- New water or septic tanks.
- Firefighting water tanks.
- Fixing or reconnecting old systems.
- Council checks and permits.

You can get this help if:

- Your home was damaged or destroyed in the 2019-20 bushfires.
- Your home is in East Gippsland Shire or Towong Shire.
- You need these systems to comply with regulations. Or to give access to drinking water and septic services.
- You are rebuilding in the same area.
- You have not already been paid by insurance or other programs for the same items.

To apply, you need to show proof that you own the home and bought the items. Applications close at **5pm on 29 May 2026**.

To learn more or apply, visit [Rainwater and septic tank replacement program](#) or email [recovery.rebates@deeca.vic.gov.au](mailto:recovery.rebates@deeca.vic.gov.au).

### **Water Efficiency Rebate Program**

East Gippsland Water has introduced a new Water Efficiency Rebate Program to assist residents and small business save water and costs.

The program helps customers reduce water consumption by providing incentives to save water and will run until 30 June 2028.

The Water Efficiency Rebate Program assists eligible customers to maximise their water savings by installing more water efficient products to replace inefficient ones and receive up to a maximum of \$1,500 in rebates for agreed/eligible products, such as mulch, showerheads, water tanks and more.

For more information on which products are eligible and for an application form, visit the East Gippsland Water [Rebates | East Gippsland Water](#).

## **COMMUNITY FUNDING**

### **FRRR Small Network and Social Outcome Grants**

**Closes 11 December**

Small Network Grants support is available for not-for-profit organisations in remote, rural and regional Australia to develop and deliver local projects or initiatives that will broadly result in strengthened social capital, wellbeing and connectedness to prepare for and build social resilience to drought.

Small Network Grants are open to eligible groups across rural and remote Australia. Grants of up to \$50,000 can support:

- community events
- learning and training activities
- small infrastructure upgrades
- initiatives that build local capability.

Social Outcome Grants are open for organisations in one of the 50 approved Regional Drought Resilience Plan (RDRP) regions. Grants of up to \$100,000 are available for projects that:

- strengthen community networks
- host events that bring people together
- run workshops or training
- upgrade small-scale infrastructure
- support leadership and personal development.

Please read the information at [FDF Communities – Small Network Grants](#) to make sure this is the right grant for your project. Contact Bill Meeker FDF Communities team member for any queries Ph: [1800 170 020](tel:1800170020) or email [futuredrought@frrr.org.au](mailto:futuredrought@frrr.org.au).

If you want to explore other grant options, please go to [Find Funding Now](#).

### **Grants available for community Australia Day events**

**Closes 10 December**

Are you part of a community group holding an event to mark Australia Day?

Council have small grants available for community organisations to help them celebrate Australia Day in a way that is meaningful to the local community.

To support as many towns as possible, we are only able to award one grant per town. We would like activities on Australia Day to be free, however, we understand organisers may seek some donations to subsidise other costs.

EOIs **close Wednesday 10 December** via the SmartyGrants portal:  
<https://eastgippsland.smartygrants.com.au/AustraliaDayGrants2026>

For details, contact the Community Development Officer: [03 5153 9500](tel:0351539500) or [communitygrants@egipps.vic.gov.au](mailto:communitygrants@egipps.vic.gov.au)



## **SURVEYS AND OPPORTUNITIES**

### **Gippsdairy jobs platform People in Dairy – practical people tools for dairy farms**

People are the key to a successful dairy business. The People in Dairy website is Dairy Australia's one-stop shop for farmers who employ staff or are thinking about it. It brings together practical, plain-language information, templates and tools on recruitment, pay and conditions, rosters, farm safety, training and managing your team through challenging seasons.

Through the site you can access the Employment Starter Kit (ESKi), the Dairy Capability Guide and other resources to help with contracts, position descriptions, record-keeping and staff induction – all designed to save time and keep you across current employment requirements.

You can also link through to the Dairy Jobs Matter jobs board to list local dairy roles for free and reach jobseekers interested in working on farms.

Visit [thepeopleindairy.org.au](http://thepeopleindairy.org.au) to explore the resources and tools available.

[The People in Dairy | Great workplaces. Great jobs. Great people.](#)

### **Next Gen Dairy program**

Staff, Student and Parents/ Guardians, EOIs are open for the new GippsDairy three day program. A Next Gen Dairy program is being planned. **Do you know someone aged 15-17 and curious about the dairy industry?**

GippsDairy is exploring interest for a 3-day program during the April 2026 school holidays, designed for young people who want to gain a deeper understanding of the dairy sector — from farm to factory and beyond!

Participants will:

- Visit leading dairy farms and processors
- Learn about animal care, technology, and sustainability
- Meet people working across the industry

- Explore career and training pathways

A bus will collect participants from a central location (details to be confirmed).

Expressing interest will require parent/guardian contact details and basic information about the young person, the form can be filled out at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NexGenEOI>

## EOI - Nowa Nowa Game Meats Hub Pilot – Partnership Opportunity Closes 31 January

Nowa Nowa Futures is seeking expressions of interest from businesses and organisations interested in partnering to establish a **Game Meats Hub Pilot** in the Nowa Nowa district. The pilot will explore the feasibility of a **micro-abattoir** (primarily focused on game meats but with capability to process farmed livestock) alongside a **value-adding processing facility**. The intention is to strengthen regional processing capacity, support industry development, and contribute to sustainable land management.

This initiative forms part of the Primary Industry Working Group under the Nowa Nowa Futures program and aligns with regional efforts to diversify industry as part of the Victorian Government's Forestry Transition Program.

### Project Purpose

The Game Meats Hub Pilot aims to:

- Test the technical, regulatory, market, and operational feasibility of establishing micro-scale processing in Nowa Nowa.
- Support the emerging game meats sector and improve local processing capacity.
- Create pathways for regional employment, training, and skills development.
- Demonstrate models that contribute to a circular economy and land stewardship.



The project is inviting EOIs from organisations or businesses interested in one or more of the following roles:

### Micro-Abattoir

- Operating or co-operating a micro-abattoir with capability for wild game and farm animals.
- Using the facility for processing harvested game or livestock.

### Value-Adding Facility

- Operating or co-operating a value-adding processing facility.
- Using value-adding services for processed meat products.

### Complementary Roles

- Deer Harvesters.
- Refrigerated transport companies.
- Licensing and compliance specialists.
- Training organisations or skills providers.
- Industry bodies with interest in wild game, small-scale processing, or regional food systems.

We welcome interest from sole operators, collectives, existing processors, new enterprises, or cross-sector partnerships.

**Your Expression of Interest should outline:**

1. **Your organisation or business:** Experience, capability, and current operations.
2. **Area(s) of interest:** Micro-abattoir operations, value-adding, transport, training, or other relevant roles.
3. **Your proposed contribution:** Skills, resources, facilities, investment, or expertise.
4. **Alignment with project goals:** How your involvement supports regional processing, sustainable industry development, or community outcomes.
5. **Any site proposals:** If you wish to suggest or provide a site for consideration.
6. **Any early thoughts on commercial, governance, or partnership models.**

Shortlisted EOIs may be invited to hold further discussions or participate in a co-design process.

For more information please scan the QR and submit your EOI to **Nowa Nowa Futures**, Email: [info@nowanowa.org](mailto:info@nowanowa.org). If you have questions prior to submission contact Isaac Carne [hello@isaaccarne.com](mailto:hello@isaaccarne.com).

### **GippsLamb Project: Your Chance to Lift Lamb Performance in a High-Value Market**

Lamb values are sitting at some of the highest levels seen in years —and the outlook remains strong.

MLA's recent projections show:

- Lamb supply is tight, with the national flock down 6.2% year-on-year.
- Heavy lambs hit record prices in August, reaching 1,223 c/kg cwt, with forward contracts still above \$10/kg cwt.

Demand remains firm across domestic and export markets, and MLA forecasts suggest prices could strengthen again as supply rebuilds slowly.

In a high-value market like this, improving lamb performance is one of the fastest ways to lift profitability. MLA research shows that:

- A 10% lift in weaning rate can increase gross margin per hectare by 8–11%.
- Earlier finishing, improved growth rates and better genetics dramatically lift returns.
- Side-by-side comparisons and carcass feedback help producers identify what is working — and what needs adjusting.
- MLA Economic Analysis of Sheep Production Systems: [https://www.mla.com.au/contentassets/eb976dbe80354451b7fcf670b077ea24/scsb.051\\_final\\_report.pdf](https://www.mla.com.au/contentassets/eb976dbe80354451b7fcf670b077ea24/scsb.051_final_report.pdf)



### **The GippsLamb Project is officially open for producer EOIs**

After a dry spring, rain has pushed crops ahead and we now have 11 hectares of high-quality brassica and millet at the Gippsland Research Farm ready for lambs from late December.

This season, we are opening the project to up to 200 lambs and inviting Gippsland producers to enter teams of 10 lambs.

This is a rare opportunity to:

- See how your lamb genetics perform under the same conditions as other producers.
- Get full carcass feedback and MSA grading directly from the processor.
- Learn from leading specialists in breeding, nutrition, finishing systems, processing, market specs and MSA.

- Join a group of producers on a learning journey, comparing systems, gaining insights and building confidence in your decisions.
- Participate in professional presentations, group discussions and a trip to the abattoir to see your lambs graded.

This project is all about giving producers an edge in a market where well-finished lambs are worth more than ever before.

**Why participate?** Because high prices reward high performance. And because the producers who improve kg/ha, growth rate, dressing percentage and yield are the producers who bank the most when markets are strong. This project gives you the data, the comparison, the confidence and the support to do exactly that.

**How to get involved.** Producers interested in entering one or more teams of ten lambs are encouraged to submit an Expression of Interest. Spots are limited, and interest is already building — so get in early.

For more information contact [Alister Micallef 0418 576 957](tel:0418576957) – Gippsland Agricultural Group.



### **2025 Beef Producer Intentions Survey – Now Open**

Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA) is calling for grassfed beef producers to complete the Beef Producers Intentions Survey (BPIS) throughout November.

The Beef Producer Intentions Survey focuses on Australia’s grassfed cattle producers and delivers to the industry valuable herd demographic data, sentiment insights and other vital herd profiling information on Australia’s cattle herd.

The survey also provides an indication of producers’ intentions over the upcoming 12 months. This information is available at a national, state and herd size level, creating a valuable industry resource. The survey can be completed at [Beef Producer Intentions Survey - 07 - November 2025](#).

### **NCFH Support and Strengthen Rural Families research**

Be involved in NCFH new research to support and strengthen families living in regional and rural communities

Family life with young children can be rewarding and fun, providing some of the most meaningful times in one’s life. But family life is not without stress. Many families experience everyday stress related to family life, work demands, worries about money, relationship difficulties and lack of support from family and friends. Families living in regional or rural areas can also experience some unique challenges and stressful life events such as natural disasters.

### **About the Study**

NCFH are inviting families with children between 0-12 years living in country communities to participate in a project about different ways to support families in the face of stress.

NCFH would like to compare two forms of support:

- **Family Foundations**, an 8-session program to promote parent wellbeing, parenting partnerships and communication. All parents/caregivers/parenting partners in the family participate in sessions delivered by a health professional online.
- **Family Life Check In**, a brief 30-minute telephone call with a health professional to discuss family wellbeing and relationships, and identify any supports needed.

NCFH want to work out which of these types of support is the best way to support families. To be eligible to take part, at least two parents, caregivers, or parenting partners from each family must agree to participate in the project.

Half of the families within the project will receive Family Foundations, and half will receive Family Life Check In. The type of support families receive will be decided by chance, similar to tossing a coin. You have an equal chance of being in either group (Family Foundations; Family Life Check In). This is called randomisation. NCFH will compare the experiences of families in each group to work out which is the best type of support for families.

They are hoping that this project will help improve the supports available for families living in regional and rural communities. **If you are interested in taking part click on this link [Support and Strengthen Families Living in Regional and Rural Communities | SEED Lifespan](#).**

### **Accelerating CALD Workforce project grants for the MID district      Closes 5 December**

The Accelerating CALD Workforce project aims to reduce barriers for people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds to enter and remain in the agricultural industry, while building industry capability to attract, support, and retain a more diverse workforce. Through:

- **Creating** opportunities for CALD people to access employment in the agricultural sector.
- **Building** the capability of agricultural businesses to attract, retain, and support CALD workers through improved cultural awareness and inclusive practices.
- **Strengthening** place-based collaboration between local stakeholders, agricultural businesses, and CALD communities to identify and address regional workforce needs, ensuring programs are tailored to local contexts to enhance participation and retention locally.

To apply for a grant of up to \$50,000 to host this project, applicants must demonstrate: Alignment with priority identified themes of: access, communication, capability-capacity and cultural safety and inclusion. Have place-based coordination and engagement with local steering committees, networks and coordinators, and established partnerships and additional co-funding (cash or in-kind) and inclusive design informed by lived experience.

For further information, the grant guidelines or to apply, please contact Leongatha- Maffra – Gardiner Foundation Project Lead Mandy Bucholtz on 0407 792 558 or email: [mandy.bucholtz@gardinerfoundation.com.au](mailto:mandy.bucholtz@gardinerfoundation.com.au),

### **Reforming agricultural and veterinary chemicals licensing and fees**

Have your say on the proposed changes to agricultural and veterinary chemicals licence and permit frameworks and fees.

The Australian Agriculture Ministers' Forum (now known as the Agriculture Ministers' Meeting) agreed to national harmonisation reforms regarding the use of agricultural and veterinary chemicals. These reforms include minimum training and licensing requirements for fee-for-

service users of agricultural chemicals and criteria for licensing exemptions. To align with these reforms, Agriculture Victoria is proposing changes to the framework for licensing, permits and fees under Victoria's [Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals \(Control of Use\) Act 1992](#) (AVCCOU Act).

The changes proposed are to:

- Agricultural Chemical User Permits
- Commercial Operator Licences
- Licence and permit fees and terms, including aerial spraying.

The proposed changes aim to:

- align the framework with the national harmonisation agreement endorsed by all state and territory Agricultural Ministers
- make sure that all users of higher risk chemicals are appropriately trained and chemical use risks are managed
- update licensing and fee amounts to reflect cost modernisation and to continue to provide licensing and permit services for licensees and applicants.

The proposed changes to all fees and terms under the [Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals \(Control of Use\) Act 1992](#) are in line with the Victorian Government's [Pricing for Value Guide](#).

Anyone who holds, or is planning to hold any of the following licences or permits may be affected by the proposed changes:

- Agricultural Chemical User Permit (ACUP)
- Commercial Operator Licence (COL)
- Agricultural Aircraft Operator Licence (AAOL)
- Pilot Chemical Rating Licence (PCRL)
- permits issued under section 25A of the AVCCOU Act (1080 and PAPP)
- Agricultural Chemical Control Area Permits.



[Reforming agricultural and veterinary chemicals licensing and fees | Engage Victoria](#)

## **INFORMATION**

### **Tomato Potato Psyllid (TPP) movements restricted from 8 December**

In October 2025, Tomato Potato Psyllid (TPP) was detected outside the current Restricted Area in Victoria as a result Ag Vic are supporting growers moving tomato potato psyllid (TTP) host or carrier plants and plant products interstate to navigate new requirements set to be in place from 8 December 2025.

Tomato potato psyllid (TPP; *Bactericera cockerelli*) is a small insect that feeds on solanaceous hosts such as tomato, potato, eggplant, chili and capsicum, and was detected in Victoria for the first time on 12 November 2024 on the Bellarine Peninsula.



Ag Vic are working with the horticulture industry to rapidly implement arrangements to minimise trade disruptions and maintain market access. Growers can move their plants and produce

interstate if they have the right certifications in place and follow the necessary biosecurity practices.

Businesses can apply for an ICA-61 accreditation, by completing the attached Application for Accreditation and Authorised Signatory Form(s) and submitting the form via email: [biosecurityservicescentre@agriculture.vic.gov.au](mailto:biosecurityservicescentre@agriculture.vic.gov.au)

Note that fees for plant biosecurity services (application fees, audits, non-conformance reports) are waived until 30 June 2026, as part of the Victorian Government Drought Support Package: [agriculture.vic.gov.au/biosecurity/moving-plants-and-plant-products/fees-and-charges-for-plant-biosecurity-services](http://agriculture.vic.gov.au/biosecurity/moving-plants-and-plant-products/fees-and-charges-for-plant-biosecurity-services)

Victorian tomato producers and backyard gardeners are encouraged to monitor their crops and to contact Agriculture Victoria if they suspect TPP might be present. Reports can be made:

- via the website at [www.agriculture.vic.gov.au/reportpestsonline](http://www.agriculture.vic.gov.au/reportpestsonline)
- by emailing [plant.protection@agriculture.vic.gov.au](mailto:plant.protection@agriculture.vic.gov.au)
- by calling the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline on 1800 084 881.

Contact Ag Vic for tailored technical support for your business, or visit the Agriculture Victoria website [Home | Agriculture Victoria](#).

For more information about TPP visit [agriculture.vic.gov.au/biosecurity/pest-insects-and-mites/priority-pest-insects-and-mites/tomato-potato-psyllid](http://agriculture.vic.gov.au/biosecurity/pest-insects-and-mites/priority-pest-insects-and-mites/tomato-potato-psyllid)

For questions about this update: [market.access@agriculture.vic.gov.au](mailto:market.access@agriculture.vic.gov.au).

## Food & Fibre Gippsland New Drought team

Food & Fibre Gippsland (F&FG) has included a new Drought team structure designed to strengthen the sector's resilience and foster ongoing innovation in drought management across Gippsland as the sector faces both resourcing challenges and innovation opportunities in a rapidly evolving environment. The Drought team will focus on resilience and innovation - two pillars essential for growth, strong connections and long-term success.

**Rod Hayes – Senior Manager, Resilience and Innovation** will oversee resilience programs, including the Gippsland Regional Drought Resilience Plan (RDRP). His expertise and extensive networks will guide strategic initiatives that strengthen our sector's ability to adapt and thrive.

**Brodie Anderson – Project Manager, Resilience and Innovation** will lead in the South East Node as part of the Vic Hub of the Future Drought Fund. His work will ensure Gippsland remains at the forefront of drought preparedness and innovation.

*Rod*



*Brodie, Simon Johnson and Rod*

We're excited about the work we are doing together, being responsive to change and opportunities while building a strong future for Gippsland's food and fibre sector.

If you have questions or would like to connect with our CEO, Simon Johnson, please email [simon.johnson@foodandfibregippsland.com.au](mailto:simon.johnson@foodandfibregippsland.com.au). For news and knowledge sharing, email [info@foodandfibregippsland.com.au](mailto:info@foodandfibregippsland.com.au).



## Drought Declarations - What's changed & why it matters

Did you know formal drought declarations are no longer needed to access support?

Agribusinesses and farmers can get help from banks and government programs any time – without waiting for an official declaration.

Australia's updated approach draws from decades of rural experience, emphasising early planning, financial independence and is tailored help for those facing hardship. Banks now have dedicated teams, and support options are always available to keep communities resilient.

To know how this shapes support for Victorian farmers go to: [Drought declarations: what's changed and why it matters – Victoria Drought Resilience Adoption and Innovation Hub](#)

### **bagMUSTER: A Simple, Reliable Way for Farmers to Recycle Agricultural Bags**

Agsafe's **bagMUSTER** program is Australia's first not-for-profit stewardship initiative dedicated to collecting and recycling 100% of eligible single-use polypropylene bags used for fertiliser, seed, grain, stock feed, and pet food.

**Why Participate?** By joining bagMUSTER, you help:

- Reduce plastic waste in rural communities.
- Support the circular economy.
- Recover valuable resources for new products like pipes, planter boxes, and bumper bars.

Responsible disposal contributes to a cleaner environment, sustainable farming practices, and a steady supply of quality material for regional recycling in Victoria. At drop-off, you'll receive a declaration certificate to support QA program requirements.

**How to Prepare Your Eligible Bags for Drop-Off** [Eligible bags | bagMUSTER](#)

- Empty bags completely and shake out any residue.
- Ensure bags are clean and dry.
- Remove non-PP components such as liners or labels.
- Roll or fold bags for easy handling and transport.

Bags can be dropped at the **Lindenow Transfer Station** during advertised opening hours. Please book first by ringing **5157 1574**.

Funds raised through container inspections support the activities of the **Lindenow CFA**, providing a non-competitive source of income for the brigade.

### **Tackling silage waste across Gippsland**

Local government leaders across Gippsland have partnered with industry and community stakeholders to address the growing challenge of agricultural plastics—particularly silage wrap—at the **Agricultural Plastics Workshop** hosted by Sustainability Victoria.

Currently, silage wrap in Victoria is rarely recycled. Most ends up in landfill or is illegally burnt or buried on farms. Research by Dairy Australia shows farmers want to do the right thing, but limited recycling options mean this valuable material is lost from the economy.

The workshop focused on identifying **circular economy solutions** to reduce silage wrap waste and improve recycling outcomes across the region. Financial modelling revealed a stark comparison:



managing one cubic metre of silage wrap in landfill costs around **\$350**, while recovery and recycling costs approximately **\$150**—highlighting the economic case for change.

#### **Key Presentations Included:**

- Dairy Australia’s silage wrap recovery trial in Southwest Victoria.
- East Gippsland Shire Council’s local recycling scheme in the high country.
- Agsafe’s stewardship programs, including DrumMuster and BagMuster.
- Integrated Recycling’s conversion of soft ag plastics into infrastructure.
- Sustainable Plastic Solutions’ grain cover recycling in Western Victoria.
- Sustainability Victoria’s work on developing end markets for recovered plastics.

The session provided a collaborative platform to explore practical solutions for improving collection and recycling of agricultural plastics, including logistics for transporting waste from farms to recycling facilities. It also identified opportunities to boost recycling rates across the agricultural sector through partnerships with local agencies such as Landcare. Find more information at: <https://www.sustainability.vic.gov.au/news/media-releases/councils-collaborate-to-tackle-agricultural-plastics-at-gippsland-workshop>

#### **Trees on Farm webinar recording**

Discover how integrating trees into livestock systems can deliver real productivity gains and help reduce farm emissions.

This webinar recording unpacks key findings from a recent Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA) funded study by the University of Melbourne, which shows that strategic tree planting can cut net farm emissions by up to 33% over 30 years — while improving shelter and productivity. Explore practical tools, case studies, and planting scenarios that support climate-smart decisions for graziers and advisors.

View recording from 24 November here: [Recording Registration - Zoom](#) 64 minutes *Password: Climate*. If you have a follow-up question for speakers, please email: [climate.webinars@agriculture.vic.gov.au](mailto:climate.webinars@agriculture.vic.gov.au)

#### **Australia’s National Climate Risk Assessment**

The Australian Government via the Australian Climate Service recently released Australia’s first National Climate Risk Assessment.

The assessment covers climate risk across 8 key systems and 11 regions, including Victoria.

Key systems identified in the assessment include:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island People
- Communities – urban, regional, and remote
- Defence and national security
- Economy, trade and finance
- Health and social support
- Infrastructure and the built environment
- Natural environment
- Primary industries and food

The purpose of the assessment is to identify who or what might be at risk from a changing climate. The assessment provides a nationally consistent way that all levels of government, communities, industry and business can use to drive adaptation at national, state and local levels.

Detailed information can be found on the [National Climate Risk Assessment | Australian Climate Service Website](#) which includes a list of reports and interactive [data explorer](#)

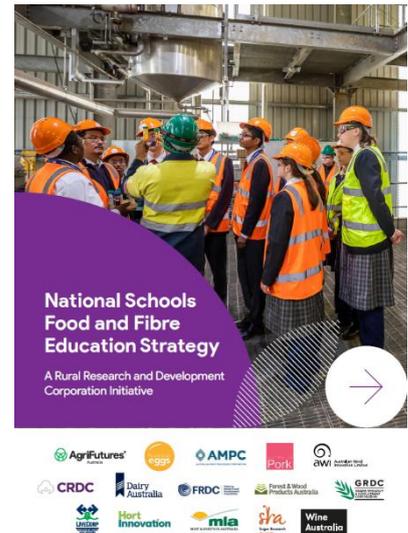
## National Schools Food and Fibre Education Strategy Launched

The Strategy, developed with 15 rural research and development corporations, aims to transform how Australian students learn about the nation's \$80 billion food and fibre sector. It seeks to inspire the next generation with knowledge of modern production and showcase diverse career opportunities.

Research highlights a major knowledge gap: 80% of primary students cannot identify current dairy practices, and most Australians live in cities, disconnected from agriculture. This threatens the sector's future workforce and social licence.

### The key priorities are:

- Strengthen school–industry connections.
- Provide targeted support for educators.
- Secure government backing for curriculum and infrastructure.



The collaborative approach spans grains, livestock, dairy, horticulture, wool, cotton, wine, seafood, and forestry. It will deliver teacher training, curriculum-linked resources, and hands-on experiences to connect students with modern food and fibre production.

By fostering curiosity and highlighting careers, the Strategy positions agriculture as innovative and essential to tackling global challenges like climate change, food security, and sustainability.

[Click to download the National Schools Food & Fibre Education Strategy](#)

## Resources for the older generation

Compass have a range of resources for the older generation, these include:

Understanding your duties and responsibilities under an Enduring Power of Attorney is essential for protecting the older person's interests- [How to be a good attorney under an Enduring Power - Compass](#)

Making and enduring power for financial decision guidebook - [You decide who decides](#)

Staying hydrated is more important for health, wellbeing and enjoyment of life than many people realise [The ABCs of dehydration - compass](#)

Living with your adult child? Co-purchasing property? Or building an extension or granny flat with family? Learn more about the value of setting up a formal family agreement. - [Family Agreements - Compass](#)



## Rural Leadership Unearthed

This episode of Rural Leadership Unearthed explores what it means to build resilience during challenging times, from coping with drought and trauma to tackling community-wide issues. Sally Williams has an open and honest relationship with resilience. Using the 'adaptive cycle' as her framework, Sally shares her strategies for navigating crises, finding strength in adversity and creating opportunities for growth and renewal.

### **Episode highlights**

- Learn how Sally and her community actively work to create community resilience through connection
- Take a look at how the 'adaptive cycle' can help individuals and organisations manage periods of change and renewal
- Personal and professional examples of finding strength in adversity
- The peace in understanding what we can and can't control, seeing a collaborative approach to events as a tool to build resilience

[Resilience in Challenging Times - Rural Leadership Unearthed | Podcast on Spotify](#)



### **[AgVic Talk - The power of farmer networks with Simon Lawler and Chris Mirams](#)**

This episode explores how joining farmer groups can transform farming businesses and personal well-being.

Gippsland farmer Simon Lawler and consultant Chris Mirams share how networks like BetterBeef help farmers learn from each other, adapt to challenges, and build supportive communities [The power of farmer networks w... - AgVic Talk - Apple Podcasts](#)

### **COUNCIL INFORMATION**

#### **[Skeene Creek Farm: A Major Step Forward for Innovation, Productivity & Regional Resilience](#)**

##### **What is going to happen there?**

Gippsland Agricultural Group will manage the Skeene Creek Farm — a 360-acre property that will become a landmark site for large-scale agricultural demonstration, innovation, and sustainability in East Gippsland.

This marks a significant milestone in GAGG mission to drive productivity, profitability, and resilience across the region. With the strong support of East Gippsland Shire Council, and through partnerships with industry, community groups, and research organisations, Skeene Creek Farm will become a place where producers can see ideas in action — not on paper, but in paddocks.

##### **A Living Laboratory for East Gippsland**

Agriculture underpins a major part of East Gippsland's economy. The success of our region depends on the strength, adaptability, and innovation of our farm businesses. Skeene Creek Farm will be a living laboratory, where profitability and stewardship work together.

Across the farm, producers will be able to see:

- Large-scale soil improvement demonstrations
- Precision agriculture technologies including digital monitoring and virtual fencing
- Pasture and grazing innovation
- Biodiversity corridors and revegetation works
- Carbon farming, natural capital projects, and adaptive water management

Skeene Creek will also host field days, workshops, producer groups, and student learning opportunities, helping farmers translate research into practical action.

## First Projects Launching in 2026

### **Grow More Topsoils – Paddock-Scale Expansion**

Following two years of promising results at the Gippsland Research Farm, three soil-building treatments will be scaled up to real-farm paddocks. This phase will focus on measuring long-term economic returns, water-holding improvements, and system resilience.

### **African Lovegrass Suppression & Recovery Project**

A multi-year trial will explore biological, mechanical, grazing and soil-function approaches to manage African Lovegrass and restore productive pasture landscapes.

Together, these projects will give our region the knowledge, datasets, and confidence to respond to some of our biggest landscape challenges.

Keep up to date on progress on the Gippsland Agriculture Group website [Gippsland Ag](#).

**Nominations open for 2026 East Gippsland Australia Day Awards**      **Closes 7 December**

We would like to invite you to nominate someone great!

Do you know an outstanding volunteer, community group, young person, teacher, citizen scientist, doctor, neighbour or anyone who makes a positive difference in East Gippsland?

Now is the time to celebrate their contribution and give them the recognition they deserve!

Award categories:

-  Citizen of the Year
-  Young Citizen of the Year
-  Community Event of the Year

For more information or to submit a nomination, [visit our website](#). Nominations close at 5.00 pm on Sunday 7 December 2025.

## **Buy Local This Christmas in East Gippsland**

The Buy Local campaign is gaining momentum across East Gippsland, and the community response has been fantastic. Over the past week, Council officers from Planning, Place Facilitation, Customer Service, and Economic Development have been sharing campaign materials with businesses and residents throughout the region. A highlight was the Omeo Show, where locals embraced the message and showed strong support for buying local.

Why does it matter?

Every dollar spent locally strengthens our economy, supports jobs, and helps maintain the unique character of our towns. When we choose local, we're investing in the future of East Gippsland –

keeping businesses open, families supported, and communities thriving long after the holiday season ends.

Everyone can play a part.

Start by looking local first when shopping, dining, or booking services. Share posts from local businesses on social media and use **#EastGippslandProud** to spread the word.

Businesses can access free campaign materials – including posters, stickers, and digital assets – via Council’s website or at any service centre.



Together, we can make this festive season and summer a true celebration of everything East Gippsland has to offer. Every purchase, every post, every share makes a difference.

## Your Say on Projects

Check out [Your Say, East Gippsland](#), a council online platform that lets you share what you think about the projects, services and places that matter to you. Your experience is important to help us understand community needs and interests.

- [East Gippsland Aquatic Strategy | Your Say East Gippsland](#) feedback and nominations for the Project Reference Group closes at 12pm, **Monday 8 December 2025**.
- [Swifts Creek public recreation amenity | Your Say East Gippsland](#) We’re upgrading the community and visitor facilities in Swifts Creek to deliver a modern recreational space and unique feature for the township, closes at 12pm, **Friday 19 December 2025**.

## HOW DID IT GO?

### Omeo Show

Council had a strong presence at the Omeo Show this year with Community Services, Waste and Sustainability, the library and Economic Development team present.

One activity got the locals attention – a silage wrap recycling time trail, which was very well received by the show goers with many a young man wanting to beat his mate and dad’s and sons or husband’s and wives taking on the challenge.

23 people took part in the challenge which involved shaking, separating, rolling and storing silage wrap in the quickest time possible. Congratulations to winners Dave Pooley with his time of 11.78 seconds and Rayden Pooley with his time of 17.65 seconds who won the adult and childrens divisions respectively.

“It was a fun way to highlight how quickly and easily farmers can separate out netting for recycling”, said Carina Turner, Waste Minimisation and Sustainability Officer with Council.

For those with a competitive streak here are the winning times:

*Mens -*

*First - Dave Pooley 11.78 seconds*

*Second – Toby Hill – 14.74 seconds*

*Third – Al Cummins – 14.96 seconds*

*Juniors -*

*First - Rayden Pooley 17.65 seconds*

*Second – Danny – 22.88 seconds*

*Third – Flether – 26.46 seconds*

*Womens -*

*First - Jill Hill – 21.94 seconds*

*Second – Kate 25.40 seconds*

*Third – Amanda Haze 26.82 seconds*

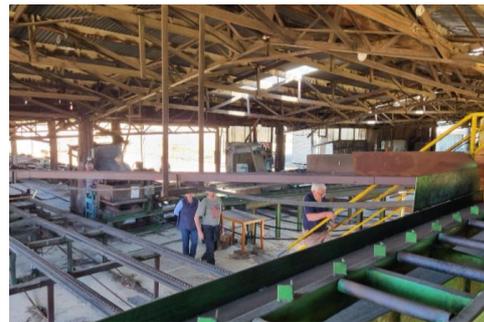
We also had face painting, library, craft and reading activities, chess, surveys that could be completed and an opportunity to let farmers know about the current funding from the state government to assist with the lack of feed on properties. The MBT team had a good presence until they were required on the track to assist with a rescue.



## Hemp Forum

In mid November the Agribusiness Officer and Futures of Orbost stakeholders toured disused timber mills as part of the Orbost Futures project to consider pivoting the facilities to be able to process hemp. At both sites we met with owners to consider opportunities and if adaption of mills could be fit for purpose. Council, hemp builders, interested farmers and engineers also met together to discuss the 'how to' take this from a concept to realisation. As a result, there is an opportunity to apply to the forestry transition fund to conduct a feasibility study to provide the business case to progress or hold the conversation.

In addition, last month the state government launched public consultation on proposed new legislation, hemp is a fast-growing crop, and fibres and seeds can be used for a wide range of products, including building materials, packaging, biofuels, textiles, seed oils and other food products. Industrial hemp is currently regulated under the Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Act 1981, which exempts licensed growers from cannabis-related offence when cultivating and processing hemp for non-therapeutic use, unlike marijuana, hemp contains only trace amounts of THC (tetrahydrocannabinol), the compound responsible for hallucinogenic effects. This means hemp cannot produce a "high" and is grown primarily for fiber, seed, and oil used in textiles, food, and sustainable products. So the proposed new stand-alone legislation will mean industrial hemp will no longer be directly associated with drugs and poisons laws – helping to reduce stigma and clarify its legal status.



## SHOUT OUT

### Benambra made the news for rainfall

To Benambra for making the Channel 7 National News last week with the most rainfall for the state. What a change for this community that has been feeling the effects of the dry season more than others in the Shire.

### Spirit Shine Award recognition Carlee Knight

Congratulations to Carlee Knight from Bairnsdale, who has been recognised nationally as the 'Spirit Award' winner in the prestigious Shine Awards.



Carlee and her supporters have raised an incredible \$900,000 over seven years for Dolly's Dream, a foundation set up by Northern Territory parents Kate and Tick Everett following the suicide death of their 14-year-old daughter Amy 'Dolly' Everett.

Her dedication began after learning about the tragic death of Dolly in 2018. Determined to make a difference, Carlee reached out to Dolly's family and began embroidering Dolly's Dream logos onto shirts and hats for the annual 'Do It For Dolly Day' campaign.

What started as a simple act of kindness has grown into a major community effort with Carlee personally financing all stock and donating a portion of every sale to Dolly's Dream.

Beyond fundraising, Carlee has also transformed her Bairnsdale Horse Centre into a community wellbeing hub, promoting kindness, awareness and positive mental health connections across Gippsland.

If you or someone you know needs help, support is available:

- ☎ Lifeline – 13 11 14
- ☎ Beyond Blue - 1300 22 4636
- ☎ headspace - 1800 650 890
- ☎ 13YARN - 13 92 76

Pix credit: Laura Ferguson/The Weekly Times



### **Buchan Bush nursing Association honoured**

Courage, collaboration, and community spirit were front and centre at the 2025 Gippsland Primary Health Awards, where Buchan Bush Nursing Association was recognised as the region's leading example of Courageous Innovation.

Presented by Gippsland PHN at Federation University, Churchill, on Wednesday, November 19, the awards celebrated organisations and professionals transforming primary healthcare across Gippsland.

Buchan Bush Nursing Association — Victoria's oldest operating Bush Nursing Centre — received top honours for its locally led approach to community wellbeing.



### **More updates available**

Other resources for Agriculture Victoria drought resources can be found here:

- [Catch up on events in November and December with AgVic](#)
- [The On-Farm Drought Infrastructure Grant program managed by Rural Finance.](#)
- [Farm Advisory & Technical support](#)
- [Importing fodder from interstate](#)
- [The Victorian Drought Freight Network](#)
- [Kangaroo Management](#)

Access Wellbeing, financial and mental health support:

- [National Centre for Farmer Health](#)
- [NEX Business Farming Wellness](#)
- [Flying Doctor Wellbeing](#)
- [RFCS Victoria West Wellbeing support](#)
- [Farm management deposit scheme](#)

[News and Events from Gipps Dairy](#)



*There are many more programs and projects being delivered in the region, contact your local agencies, production group or ag business to find out more.*

*This is compiled by Council for general information only.*

*If a friend or a neighbour would like to receive a copy of this newsletter, please email Kaylene Wickham Agribusiness Development Officer East Gippsland Shire Council at [kaylenewi@egipps.vic.gov.au](mailto:kaylenewi@egipps.vic.gov.au), call 5153 9450 or register online at [Agrinews Newsletter](#).*

*Nominate  
someone great*

**2026**

EAST GIPPSLAND SHIRE COUNCIL

**AUSTRALIA DAY AWARDS**



Scan the  
QR Code

This is your opportunity to nominate someone who makes an important contribution to our local community or a community group that's held an outstanding event that deserves recognition.

Award categories are:

- **Citizen of the Year**
- **Young Citizen of the Year**
- **Community Event of the Year**

A copy of the nomination form can be found on our website or at any of our Service Centres.

**NOMINATIONS CLOSE SUNDAY 7 DECEMBER 2025**

For enquiries call 5153 9500  
or email [civicevents@egipps.vic.gov.au](mailto:civicevents@egipps.vic.gov.au)



# Beef Cattle Workshop

## Know Your Numbers

**TUESDAY 2<sup>ND</sup> DEC**

**5pm to 8pm**

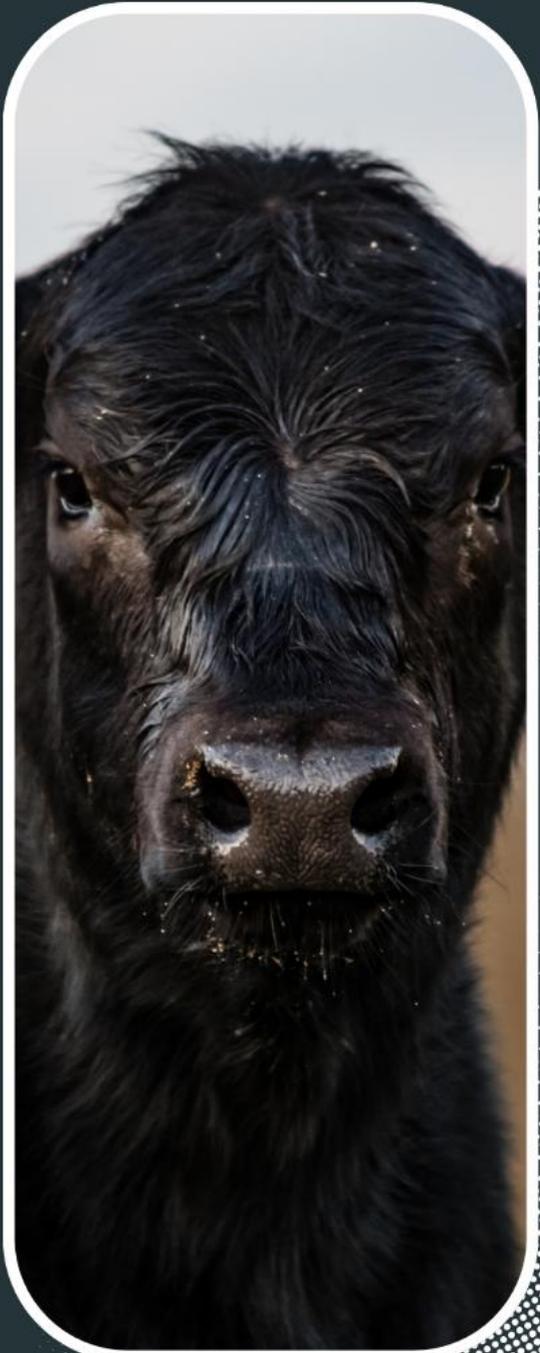
Gippsland Research Farm

Bairnsdale Airport

*\*Dinner Provided\**

While in the yards with the Gippy Ag heifers, you'll hear from Simon Falkiner an award winning soil and livestock innovator. With 30+ years at Murdeduke Angus, Simon brings a powerful mix of genetics expertise, feed efficiency know how, and soil health insight.

In the yards we'll carry out a hands on visual assessment of the heifers and unpack what key EBVs mean in practice. Simon will also share his record-breaking MSA 71.06 steer results and the latest on feed-efficiency trials that are cutting costs and emissions.



### **Please Register**

Scan QR Code

Call / Text: Nat 0436 462 559

Click link: <https://bit.ly/3Jx0pKj>



Supported by the Australian Government through funding from the Climate-Smart Agriculture Program under the Natural Heritage Trust.

# Farmer Ute Drive

## with Simon Falkiner

Simon Falkiner is an expert in both soil health and livestock performance. Simon has spent 30+ years transforming soils, using raised beds and subsoil techniques to improve structure, water holding, and carbon, while also leading Murdeduke Angus and developing Australian Meat Merinos. Hear how 18 steers achieved a record MSA 71.06 and learn practical strategies for feed efficiency, productivity, and sustainability.

### **WINNINDOO** 919 Ross Rd

Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> Dec: 9:30am to 11:30am

#### **Deep Ripping & Double Cropping: Worth the Effort or a Waste of Money?**

Join local producer Ton for a practical paddock walk looking at deep ripping, double cropping, and soil amelioration, and how these are affecting soil health, the performance of his maize crop and carbon and nitrogen cycles. It will be an open discussion on what's paying its way and what's not!



### **GIFFARD WEST HALL**

3917 South Gippsland Highway

Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> Dec: 8am to 10am

#### **What To Do When It Hasn't Worked?**

Join local producer Trent on farm for an open and honest chat about what happens when things don't go to plan. Come along to share experiences and ask questions about soil amelioration works, tackling soil challenges, lifting livestock performance on pastures, making the most of herd genetics, and boosting feed efficiency across your operation.

**Join Us**



**Please Register**

Scan QR Code

Call / Text:

Nat 0436 462 559

Click link: <https://bit.ly/4qVsrzF>

**Jump in the ute,  
bring your boots and  
your questions.  
It's a straight talking, on  
farm session for farmers.**



Delivered with funding support from the Commonwealth of Australia through the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water under the Carbon Farming Outreach Program and with the Producer Demonstration Site funded by Meat & Livestock Australia



# Red Meat Road Map

## BACK TO BASICS : FORWARD TO PROFIT



*From breeding fundamentals to global market forces connect the dots between paddock, processor, and profit.*



*PJ Budler – Internationally acclaimed cattleman sharing powerful, practical insights on building adaptable, efficient, and profitable herds.*

### TUESDAY 16 DECEMBER

**Mawarra Genetics, 103 Kellys Road, Longford**

Join us for a day that connects global trends, local markets, and practical breeding decisions to drive profitability in the red meat industry. From global market insights to on-farm fundamentals, the program links data, genetics, and decision-making to real-world profit. Hosted by the Mawarra family, this event brings together leading voices across the supply chain, including banking, processing, auctioneering, breeding, and education – to share how “Back to Basics and Forward to Profit” can be applied in practice on your farm.

- Opening Panel:** **Global, National & Local Perspectives**  
Angus Gidley-Baird (Rabobank), Steve Chapman (JBS Australia) & Morgan Davies (Elders Bairnsdale)
- Keynote Session:** **Back to Basics - Forward to Profit**  
Global lessons for functional, profitable herds with PJ Budler.
- Paddock Round Robin:** **Hands-on sessions : Cows & calves, bulls, and heifers**  
Peter Sykes, PJ Budler, Logan Sykes, Lincoln McKinlay, Morgan Davies, Brandon Sykes
- Live Carcass Demo:** **Live Carcass Demonstration**  
See how paddock decisions translate to processor premiums with Aimee Bolton (JBS Australia)

**Tickets: \$35.00** Click link or scan QR  
<https://events.humanitix.com/red-meat-road-map>

**\*\* Limited spaces available \*\***



### RSVP 3<sup>rd</sup> December

Priority access for red meat producers.  
Industry Rep's to express interest in tickets to [jen.smith@gippslandag.com.au](mailto:jen.smith@gippslandag.com.au) / call 0409 436 133



**WELLINGTON**  
SHIRE COUNCIL