

**AGRIFOOD**  
SKILLS AUSTRALIA



## From the CEO

AgriFood Skills Australia has established a pilot program at Narrabri in north west NSW that is based on a 'whole-of-community approach' to the attraction and retention of a skilled workforce.



Arthur Blewitt

The proposal for the broader extension of the Narrabri model to other regions, together with a more flexible training funding model for regional Australia, has been given support by the Primary Industries Ministerial Council (PIMC). The PIMC in turn has now given its support to a proposal by AgriFood to develop a Regional Agrifood Skills and Workforce Development Strategy for Australia.

The regional model also provides a key theme for the AgriFood National Conference, being held in Melbourne in September: *Australia's Regions: Australia's Future*. This captures a tangible sense that our efforts in Narrabri - led by Russell Stewart and the locally-based North West Advisory Group Inc - can deliver results for communities elsewhere. We are still working hard in Narrabri. [See full CEO Report](#)

[>>](#)

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## Cross industry traineeships

Ten Cross Industry Traineeships are now being offered in Narrabri as a result of work undertaken by AgriFood Skills Australia to set up a regional pilot program in Narrabri in north west NSW.



The project, or model, was initiated by AgriFood Skills Australia in 2009 and it has won broad support from regional employers, industry and community leaders, and the NSW Department of Industry Investment is jointly funding the initiative for two years.

The Development Manager, Russell Stewart, said the traineeships pilot program was for 12 months and would allow the trainees to work across a number of different industries and work places. In most cases, he expected the traineeships would lead to full-time employment.

The initiative is understood to be the first cross-industry traineeship scheme of its kind and a significant step in building a whole-of-community approach to the attraction and retention of skilled workers and their families in regional Australia. [Read more >>](#)

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## 'Growing Your Business' - new model on-line

AgriFood Skills Australia has developed a best practice delivery model designed to enhance engagement and business skills. The model, *Growing Your Business*, has been designed for industry, including enterprises of all sizes and types, managers and Registered Training Organisations (RTOs). The model seeks to equip business owners and trainers with the knowledge and skills to maximise business potential in four key areas:

- Financial Management
- Business Management
- Marketing
- Managing Staff.

The descriptions and documents are [available from our website](#) and can be downloaded and used - no charges apply. We would appreciate, however, being informed of any uptake for our records. Growing Your Business has been tested with enterprises from rural and related industries, food processing and seafood. Two pilot studies were implemented in the wheatbelt of Western Australia and the tablelands of north Queensland.

[Read more >>](#)

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## **Industry standing committees - update**

From Ansena Neilson - On 13 May, the chairmen of four of the five AgriFood standing committees met with the AgriFood Board as part of the enhanced governance and reporting arrangements that were implemented to provide more effective advice to the company.

Duncan Fraser (Rural and Related Industries), Sylvia Healy (Food Beverage and Pharmaceutical), Rod Thirkell-Johnston (Racing Industry) and Dexter Davies (Seafood) travelled to Canberra to attend a dinner with the Board prior to the formal Board meeting. John Hughes (Meat) was unable to participate due to an overseas commitment.

The challenge for AgriFood and our standing committees is to utilise the inherent experience and knowledge residing in the committees to generate meaningful industry intelligence to inform Board decisions. Standing committee members, through their industry networks, are in a key position to provide evidence to support AgriFood with the case for policy change in relation to the national system for VET as well as advice and comment on training package implementation matters. The chairmen gave an overview of issues within their sectors which was well received by the Board. [Read more >>](#)

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## **EBPPP update (Productivity Places Program)**

Applications have closed for the second round of funding under the Enterprise Based Productivity Places Program (EBPPP), an expansion of the successful National Enterprise Productivity Places Program (PPP) conducted through 2008 and 2009.

AgriFood Skills Australia has submitted 17 applications to the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations for 720 training places across a range of agrifood industry sectors. The results of the applications are expected before the end of the financial year.

Applicants who were unsuccessful in either round of submissions, or were unable to submit a proposal, are encouraged to contact AgriFood for advice on accessing state Productivity Places Program funding. [Read more >>](#)

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## **AgriFood survey on NSW skill needs**

AgriFood's NSW Primary, Food Processing and Racing Industries Training Advisory Committee recently called for information on skill shortages and training needs information from industry. This information gathered was to

assist the NSW Department of Education and Training (NSW DET) decide where to spend their funding in the 2011 and 2012 training tender. It will also be used to determine where funding for programs such as the NSW Productivity Places Program, Strategic Skills Program, Green Skills program and traineeships and apprenticeship program will be spent for the next 12 months.

The survey was well subscribed to with over 40 responses from industry organisations, as well as submissions from peak industry groups in NSW. NSW DET will now analyse and prioritise this information in order to determine where to spend their funding in our industry.

NSW DET will publish industry training priorities in the first week of August 2010 for registered training organisations (RTO) to tender for. AgriFood Skills Australia will have information on the training priorities in July 2010.

Organisations should continue to ask their local RTOs about FREE training places that they have available. For more information on this process, the availability of FREE training places or how you can get involved, please contact: Melissa Wortman, Manager of Industry Liaison [melissaawortman@gmail.com](mailto:melissaawortman@gmail.com) on 0421830056. [Read more >>](#)

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## Language, literacy, numeracy update

The Australian Industry Group (AIG) is undertaking a National Workforce Literacy Project looking at employer's perspectives on workforce literacy and subsequent trialling of solutions directly with companies. From this work, AIG anticipates that the outcomes of the trials would contribute to policy formulation as part of a broader national strategy to address workforce literacy and numeracy.

Some key findings:

- More than 75 per cent of respondents reported that their business was affected by low levels of literacy and numeracy
  - Some reported that labourers and process workers were the occupational group most affected by low levels of literacy and numeracy – 45 per cent considered that labourers were affected
  - Wide range of impacts resulting from a lack of literacy and numeracy skills, most frequently cited were: poor completion of workplace documents and time wasting through repeated work
  - Saw a role for government, employers, education authorities and individuals in improving workforce literacy and numeracy skills – 38 per cent thought employers had a role [Read more >>](#)
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## **Training packages update**

### **ACM10 Animal Care and Management Training Package**

The Animal Care Training Package has reached the final stage with sign-off from the National Reference Group and receipt of support from all State Training Authorities. AgriFood Skills Australia is pleased to advise the ACM10 Case for Endorsement was submitted to the National Quality Council (NQC) secretariat on 4th June 2010. You can download full details of the Case for Endorsement and Volumes 1, 2 and 3 from our website. Our sincere thanks to all who contributed. [Read more >>](#)

### **FDF03 Food Processing Training Package**

The Food Training Package is being reviewed as a combination of a review of current endorsed FDF qualifications and the development of new qualifications under the AgriFood Skills Australia Continuous Improvement Strategy.

Information and status of each activity is now available on the website for: Food Processing, Pharmaceutical Manufacturing, Plant Baking, Retail Baking, and Food Processing (Sales) Qualifications. [Read more >>](#)

### **AHC10 Agriculture, Horticulture and Conservation and Land Management Training Package**

The Agriculture, Horticulture and Conservation and Land Management Training Package is moving into the final stages of review progress. All feedback has been considered and appropriate action has been taken to ensure all stakeholder concerns have been addressed. Most points have been addressed within the current project work. However, in some cases issues have been moved into the Continuous Improvement Register process to enable more comprehensive consultation to take place. AgriFood Skills Australia's response to feedback can be accessed from the AgriFood website along with the current [2010-11 Continuous Improvement Plan](#) [Read more >>](#)

### **SFI04 Seafood Industry Training Package**

The Seafood Training Package will be posted very soon. Please keep checking on the website or email Barbara McPherson at [barbmc@r-m-t.com.au](mailto:barbmc@r-m-t.com.au) to be emailed direct once the update is posted. [Read more >>](#)

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## **Australia's Regions: Australia's Future - AgriFood National Conference**

Our National Conference will be held in Melbourne on 23 September at The Langham in Melbourne. We are in the process of finalising the program.

However, the conference dinner will be held this year on Wednesday night rather than Thursday, and the conference will be held on Thursday. The registration page should be on-line this week and we encourage you to book early as we do expect to reach our capacity very soon. The theme this year will explore the work we have carried out in the regions promoting attraction and retention. [Read more >>](#)

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## **AgriFood seeks experienced managers**

AgriFood Skills australia is seeking two experienced managers to join the company:

- [General Manager Training Packages](#)
- [Research and Analysis Manager](#)

The General Manager will be responsible for maximising the impact of the reformed training products and services, their continuous improvement and enhancing uptake of skills development and qualifications.

The Research and Analysis Manager will capture and analyse information from all relevant industry and government sources. You would commission research surveys and contribute to company presentations, submissions, project reports and policy analysis.

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## **Racing Training Conference - program now available**

The conference program is now available for the National Training Conference for the Racing Industry. The conference is being held on Thursday 29 July and Friday 30 July at Allan Scott Park Racecourse in Adelaide. The guest speaker is Rory MacDonald, CEO of the British Racing School. The program includes leading industry personalities and great opportunities to network and to make your own contributions. The conference theme is *Solutions* and we are seeking to attract a broad cross section from across the racing industry: thoroughbred, harness and greyhound. A registration page is on the AgriFood Skills Australia website plus the latest program and a flyer. Please contact Julie Fiedler at [horsesa@horsesa.asn.au](mailto:horsesa@horsesa.asn.au) or on 0402 488 306. [Read more >>](#)

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