

2014 AARES Distinguished Fellow

Donald MacLaren



Donald MacLaren's distinguished research career in agricultural economics has focused especially, but not exclusively, on the study of international trade in agricultural products, where he has made important analytical contributions. He is currently an Honorary Professorial Fellow in the Department of Economics at the University of Melbourne, where he has been a staff member since 1988, retiring from his teaching position in 2012.

Born in Scotland, Donald graduated in agricultural science from the University of Aberdeen in 1966 and then studied agricultural economics at Cornell, receiving his MS in 1968 and PhD in 1970. After returning to Scotland, he taught at the University of Aberdeen from 1970 to 1988, before moving to Melbourne. He has published approximately 100 refereed journal articles and chapters in books and has been a frequent consultant to AusAID, the World Bank, FAO, the WTO, OECD, the European Parliament and various private sector organisations.

A consistent feature of Donald's research has been its emphasis on both strong theoretical foundations and empirical quantification. A good example is his recent work on food grain policies in India, showing their differential effects on consumers and producers, their effects on food security in India and their international ramifications. A feature of this work is placement of food grain policies within an explicit welfare context, deriving the welfare implications for food grain policy from a clear theoretical framework, combined with careful empirical application.

A further outstanding example is Donald's recent work with Peter Lloyd on the impact that Australian trade protection has had on Australian agriculture. In this work, published in the *Australian Journal of Agricultural and Resource Economics*, Lloyd and MacLaren assembled data on the structure of Australian protection for agriculture relative to manufacturing covering the 110 years since Federation, a remarkable empirical achievement. Their results show that throughout this period trade protection discriminated heavily against agriculture, especially against the export-oriented wheat and wool sectors, lowering both national income and the incomes of agricultural producers.

In addition to his own academic research, teaching and consulting, Donald has been an advisor to the Chinese Centre for Agricultural Trade Policy of the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences, Beijing (2004–2012) and the National Council of Applied Economic Research, New Delhi (2004–06), as well as a Dispute Panel Member of the WTO, Geneva. He has been a visiting scholar at numerous institutions, including the WTO, the OECD, the University of California, Davis, Stanford University, Cornell University, the University of Munich, and the University of Guelph.

Donald is a former co-editor of the *Australian Journal of Agricultural Economics*, serving with Bill Malcolm from 1991 to 1993.