

# Newsletter of the Australian Agricultural and Resource Economics Society Inc.

Volume 20, Number 2, August 2008

President's column.....	1
AARES 53 <sup>rd</sup> ANNUAL CONFERENCE: 10 – 13 February 2009.....	2
Reports from Branches .....	3
NOTICEBOARD.....	6
First Notice - Heading North AARES-AAEA Young Professionals Exchange.....	6
AARES prizes.....	6
Connections: Farm, Food & Resource Issues.....	8
Contact details for office bearers and central office .....	9
Deadline and advertising.....	11

## President's column

*Chris O'Donnell*

Welcome to the August issue of the AARES newsletter. A special welcome to the seventy-odd new members who joined the Society at the AARES annual symposium on "Climate, Water and Adaptive Responses" held in Adelaide in late May. As you may know, the annual symposium is one of the main vehicles used by the Society to engage with the broader community on issues of importance to the Australian agricultural and resource sectors, and it is difficult to imagine current issues of greater importance than water and climate change.

Speakers at the symposium reminded us of the potential for poor government policy-making in this area and of the need for our profession to inform, and become actively engaged in, the policy debate. It is pleasing to see more and more members of our Society answering this call to arms. I would like to thank Melissa Bright and the local organising committee for assembling such an impressive line-up of keynote speakers and for the efficient organisation of the meeting. Members of the LOC included Randy Stringer, Andrew Manson, Jeff Connor, Sarah Wheeler, Wendy Umberger, Andrea Cast, John Ward and Tian Shi. Of course, the meeting would simply not have been possible without the generous sponsorship support of Rural Solutions SA, the Murray-Darling Basin Commission, Primary Industries and Resources SA, the CSIRO, the SA Department of Trade and Economic Development, the SA Department of Transport, Energy and Infrastructure, EconSearch and ABARE.

As I write this column, an AARES symposium on invasive species is being run at the American Agricultural Economics Association (AAEA) meetings in Florida. I hope to provide a report on this symposium in the next issue of News and Views. The next major event on the AARES calendar will be the New Zealand Agricultural and Resource Economics Society (NZARES) annual conference to be held in Nelson from 28-29 August, and I hope to see many of you there. This will be the last major event on our calendar before the 2009 AARES annual conference to be held next February in Cairns. Preparations for the Cairns conference are already well advanced. Now is a good time to start thinking about contributed papers on any topic, but especially papers on the conference theme of "Tracking North: New Challenges in Resource and Environmental Issues".

Finally, I can report that there is a small amount of "behind-the-scenes" work being done by Federal Council on opportunities for promotion and development of the Society, including corporate branding. A small committee is expected to bring some ideas before the Federal Council meeting at the end of August. The general membership will be invited to provide feedback on these ideas through their local branches and via a survey that will be administered later in the year. In the meantime, if you have any views about the positioning and current direction of the Society, please send me an email.

# AARES 53<sup>rd</sup> ANNUAL CONFERENCE: 10 – 13 February 2009



ABN: 96 079 246 304

<http://www.aares.info/>

The 2009 Conference of the Australian Agricultural and Resource Economics Society will be held in Cairns, Australia. The venue at the Cairns International Hotel is located in the centre of Cairns, close to the waterfront (see <http://www.cairnsinternational.com.au/> for more details). The event will commence with preconference Workshops on Tuesday 10th and the conference proper will run from Wednesday 11th to Friday 13th February. There will be a welcome cocktail party on the Tuesday evening preceding the conference.



Conference attendees have the opportunity to experience some of the great activities and scenery in the North Queensland region before and after the conference. A key attraction will be the proximity to the Great Barrier Reef and rainforest areas.

The theme for the conference is 'Tracking North: New Challenges in Environmental and Resource Issues'. Invited speakers will include leading economists from Europe, USA and Australasia. The Conference Organiser is All Occasions Management, which can be contacted on: • Phone – +61 2 8354 2285; and • Email – [merilyn@aomevents.com](mailto:merilyn@aomevents.com). Professor John Rolfe from Central Queensland University is the Chair of the Local Organising Committee ([j.rolfe@cqu.edu.au](mailto:j.rolfe@cqu.edu.au)). Further information on the conference will become available on the AARES website at <http://www.aares.info/>

## *Paper Titles due 12 September 2008*

- Please submit your contributed or poster paper title(s) to [chantelle@aomevents.com](mailto:chantelle@aomevents.com) by the **12 September 2008** and place "AARES 2009 Paper Title" in the Subject line.
- Include the full title, author name(s) and the contact details of the person presenting the paper. An Abstract Guidelines and Presenters Information Kit will be sent to the presenter.
- Also provide up to 6 keywords to assist us in placing your paper in the most appropriate session.
- Poster presentation: Contributed paper presentation slots are limited. Please indicate if you would prefer to use the poster option. Final assignment of oral or poster presentations will be at the discretion of the Local Organising Committee.

Lodgement of a paper title does not mean automatic inclusion in the Conference program. Presenters will be advised by **10 October 2008** if and by what mode of presentation their paper is accepted. If you have submitted more than one title, please seriously consider whether you will be submitting papers for all the titles that you have sent. The Local Organising Committee will be using these titles to organise the contributed paper sessions.

With acceptance for poster paper presentation, you will be sent a specific Presenters Information Kit.

### ***Abstracts due 14 November 2008***

- Please follow the guidelines in the Abstract Guidelines and Presenters Information Kit.
- Please submit your contributed or poster abstract to [chantelle@aomevents.com](mailto:chantelle@aomevents.com) by the **14 November 2008** and place "AARES 2009 Abstract" in the Subject line.

### ***Papers due 16 January 2009***

- To ensure more widespread distribution of contributed papers, electronic versions of papers are required to be submitted prior to the Conference.
- Please submit your contributed or poster paper to [chantelle@aomevents.com](mailto:chantelle@aomevents.com) by the **16 January 2009** and place "AARES 2008 Paper" in the Subject line.

The preferred format of papers is PDF although Microsoft Word will also be accepted. Note that there is free PDF conversion software available on a number of Internet sites (see for example [www.pdf995.com](http://www.pdf995.com)). Please also bring 30 hard copies of your paper to the Conference.

### ***PowerPoint Presentations due 16 January 2009***

- Please send a copy of your PowerPoint presentation to [chantelle@aomevents.com](mailto:chantelle@aomevents.com) by **16 January 2009** or bring a copy on disk or USB Drive to the Conference and report to your Session Room **at least 40 minutes** before your session commences.

Proposals are also invited to for workshops to be held at the Conference on Tuesday the 10<sup>th</sup> of February. With the theme of the conference being "Tracking North: New Challenges in Environmental and Resource Issues", workshop topics that focus on challenges relevant to northern Australia will be particularly welcome.

Professor John Rolfe from Central Queensland University is the Chair of the Local Organising Committee, and would be happy to discuss proposal ideas by email ([j.rolfe@cqu.edu.au](mailto:j.rolfe@cqu.edu.au)) or telephone (07 4923 2132). Preliminary proposals for workshops should be submitted to John by the 12<sup>th</sup> of October, 2008.

## **Reports from Branches**

### ***Queensland***

The Queensland branch has so far had two very good talks this year, as follows, with more planned for the rest of the year.

20 February (outgoing presidents' talk): Rob Cramb: "Palmed Off: The Political Economy of Oil Palm Expansion in Malaysian Borneo"

9 May Yu Aizhi (visiting scholar at the School of NRSM, UQ): "Measuring the comparative advantage of Chinese agriculture"

## *South Australia*

The South Australian AARES Branch has continued its tradition of informal gatherings where networking and open discussion with our presenters is ably facilitated by a relaxed pub environment. These sessions usually commence with pre-dinner drinks, followed by presentation and questions and the option to stay on for dinner. The generosity of our presenters (both visiting and local) to donate their time and experience to our Branch has been appreciated and has contributed greatly to the professional development of our members. The 2008 SA AARES Branch activities include:

- February: Assoc Prof Kurt Schwabe, *Bringing the Environment into Environmental and Agricultural Economics*
- March: Prof Tom Reardon, *Supermarkets and their Role in Emerging Markets*
- April: Prof Andrew Fearn, *South Australian Food and Wine Value Chains – How can Agricultural and Resource Economists Add Value?*
- July: Dr Julian Morison, *Practical Economic Modelling for the West Coast Rocklobster Fishery*
- September: Prof David Laband, *topic to be confirmed*

In May, South Australia also hosted the National Symposium *Climate, Water and Adaptive Responses*. The symposium was an important event for anyone interested in the adaptive responses to climate change and management of natural and environmental resources and consisted of invited papers with particular focus on water, climate change and adaptive management strategies and policies.

## *NSW*

The NSW AARES Branch has had the opportunity to attend a number of seminars from both local and international academics during 2008.

Jean-Marc K Kutschukian from the Department of Environment and Climate Change delivered the first seminar of the year on 'The Economic Evaluation of Environmental Science'. In June, Professor Kevin Boyle of Virginia Tech USA presented the findings of his study investigating 'Convergent Validity of Attribute-Based, Choice Questions Stated – Preference Studies'. Most recently, NSW AARES members and guests attended a seminar conducted by Associate Research Professor Henning Bjornlund from the University of South Australia and University of Lethbridge, Alberta, who discussed the socioeconomic impacts of Australian water markets.

## *New England*

The New England Branch has held two seminars so far in 2008. Both were held at UNE, were open to any interested folk and drew attendees from across the campus as well as AARES members.

The first, on 4 April, was presented by Branch President Oscar Cacho, Associate Professor in the School of Business, Economics and Public Policy at UNE. His topic was 'The Potential for the Agricultural and Forestry Sectors to Participate in the Carbon Market' and provided, inter alia, a timely overview of global experiences with carbon markets thus far.

The second, on 24 July, was presented by John Becker, Professor in Agricultural Economics and Law from Pennsylvania State University. His topic was 'Agriculture's Future: Succession Planning in Australia and the US'. The focus was on management succession on farms and included interesting comparative results from across the US, Australia and other developed economies. John is wrapping up a six months visit, on a Fulbright Fellowship, to the Australian Centre for Agriculture and Law (the AgLaw Centre) at UNE. (The AgLaw Centre has a link with Penn State U, and was visited last year by Jim Shortle.)

## *ACT*

The ACT Branch would like to thank all AARES members who travelled to Canberra for the national conference in February 2008 and contributed to its success. The event went smoothly, thanks to the efforts of the local organising committee and, in particular, its chair Herb Plunkett.

The branch has sponsored four other seminars in the first half of the year:

- Celine Nauges - Decoupled subsidies impact on-farm decision making
- Ray Trewin - Alternative futures for agriculture, in light of food security concerns
- Roy Brouwer - Water as an economic good
- Jay Shimshack - Health benefits associated with improved diesel emissions

The branch continues to maintain its links with other local micro-economic and agriculture associations, and regularly cross-promotes activities. These links serve to strengthen the branch and those associations that work in partnership with AARES. This is a deliberate strategy to strengthen the profession in the ACT region.

Finally, the branch Annual General Meeting was held on 31 July 2008, with many past office-holders taking a well earned break. The new office holders are: Thilak Mallawaarachchi (President); Andrew Hodges (Secretary); Patrick Doupe (Treasurer); and Thuy Van Mellor (Manager, Promotion and Development).

## *WA*

The WA AARES Branch would like to invite you to attend its weekly seminar series, held jointly with the School of Agricultural & Resource Economics, UWA. The seminars are held every Friday during the University teaching semester at 12 noon in the Agricultural Lecture Theatre, UWA. The seminars cover a wide range of topics in environmental and agricultural economics and policy. You can view the current seminar programme at: [www.are.uwa.edu.au](http://www.are.uwa.edu.au)

## *New Zealand*

Preparations are well advanced for the **2008 NZARES conference** to be held in **Nelson on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> and Friday 29<sup>th</sup> August** at the Tahuna Conference Centre.

This promises to be a great conference with 50 contributed papers to be presented in 16 sessions over the two days. There will also be three plenary sessions with four invited speakers. The draft programme will be posted on the NZARES website <http://www.nzares.org.nz/> shortly. The conference will start at 9.20 am (registration from 8.30 am) and will close at 3.30 pm on the Friday.

Our keynote speakers are:

- Ralph Townsend (Chief Economist Ministry of Fisheries)
- Julie Collins (MAF Manager, Climate Change Policy)
- Alex Sundakov (Executive Director Castalia),
- Chris O'Donnell (AARES President, Professor, University of Queensland)

Contributed paper sessions include Climate Change and Pricing, the Dairy Industry, Fisheries (Policy, Regulation and Valuation in four sessions), Agribusiness Success, the Waikato River Settlement, Environmental Valuation, Modelling and Micro-simulation, Policy and the Rural Sector, Forestry and Development, Lake Rotorua and Emissions Trading.

## NOTICEBOARD

### First Notice - Heading North AARES-AAEA Young Professionals Exchange

#### *Travel Award*

The Australian Agricultural and Resource Economics Society (AARES) and the Foundation of the American Agricultural Economics Association (AAEA) will jointly offer two travel awards during 2008. These awards are intended for Agricultural and Resource Economists of all ages but in the early stages of their careers. Thus, stage of career rather than age is what defines an appropriate applicant.

The objectives of the awards are to provide the winners with an opportunity for professional and personal development and international professional and cultural exchange. Each award will have a value of US\$2,000 to be used to assist the winner to participate in the annual conference of either the AARES or the AAEA. Applicants for both awards must be members of both the AARES and the AAEA.

The "Heading North" award will be given to members normally resident in Australia or New Zealand to support their participation in the 2009 Joint Annual Meeting of AAEA and ACCI.

Members meeting the stated criteria are now invited to apply for the "Heading North" award.

Applications should include:

- a paper for presentation at the AAEA conference, for which they are sole or first author and representing their original and unpublished work,
- a one-page biographical statement, and
- a one-page statement in support of their application, indicating what they would hope to accomplish through the award, and why they would be deserving of the award.

The winner of the award will be determined by a committee, based on the submitted materials, with some emphasis on the quality of the paper.

Electronic submissions (preferably in PDF form) should be e-mailed to Chris O'Donnell (c.odonnell@economics.uq.edu.au). Applications must be received by 30 November, 2008, and the winner will be announced at the AARES 2008 conference in Canberra. Please address any questions about the application process to Chris O'Donnell.

### **AARES prizes**

Federal Council is offering three publication prizes:

- The Quality of Communication prize
- The Quality of Research Discovery prize
- The 'Connections' prize for best article

Winners of the prizes will be announced at the annual conference dinner with the Communication and Research Discovery prize winners receiving \$500 and the 'Connections' prize winner receiving \$200.

The following outlines the conditions of nomination. Interested members should submit their nominations to the AARES Central Office manager (annie.hurst@anu.edu.au) by 15th of November.

Also, the winner of the Blackwell prize for best AJARE article will receive a \$500 cash award, a \$500 book voucher to Blackwell Publishing and a certificate to be presented at the Society's annual conference dinner. The conditions of entry are also outlined below.

## ***Prize for quality of communication***

### **Eligibility**

- Entries must have been published in the calendar year preceding the year of recognition.
- The nominee must have been a member of AARES when the work was published.

### **Entries**

- Entries are to be submitted to the AARES office manager, and should include one hard copy and one electronic copy of the publication.
- Up to three pages of other supporting evidence—including items such as a statement about the nature of the work and why it is prize worthy, or letters of support by third parties—may be submitted as well.
- Entries must be received by 15th November of the year of publication (for items In Press, page proofs may be submitted along with a letter from the editor or publisher, indicating the date when the work will be published).

### **Basis of Award**

Entries must demonstrate superior communication of concepts or knowledge in any subject matter of professional specialization (i.e., teaching, research, policy analysis, or extension) in agricultural and resource economics to a specified audience. The publication may communicate the author's original research or include that of others, and the communication may be directed to audiences inside or outside the profession.

Six major areas are to be considered in evaluating nominations as follows:

- Importance of topic
- Timeliness of topic
- Value of communication to its intended audience
- Significance of contribution to the literature or other media
- Organization and presentation of material
- Economic content of communication

A maximum of one award will be given per year; however the Society reserves the right to make no award in the event that no entry is judged to be of sufficient merit.

### **General**

The decision of the Council of the Society will be final and no correspondence will be entered into with entrants. Submission of a publication to be considered for the Prize implies acceptance of all of the conditions of the Prize.

### **Amount of Prize**

The winning nomination will receive a \$500 cash award to be presented at the Society's annual conference dinner.

## ***Prize for quality of research discovery***

### **Eligibility**

- Entries must have been published in the calendar year preceding the year of recognition.
- The nominee must have been a member of AARES when the work was published.

### **Entries**

- Entries are to be submitted to the AARES office manager, and should include one hard copy and one electronic copy of the publication
- Up to three pages of other supporting evidence—including items such as a statement about the nature of the work and why it is prize worthy, or letters of support by third parties—may be submitted as well

- Entries must be received by 15th November of the year of publication (for items In Press, page proofs may be submitted along with a letter from the editor or publisher, indicating the date when the work will be published).

### **Basis of Award**

The research must make a significant contribution to the field of knowledge in agricultural and resource economics. The work should demonstrate excellence in research methodology and may deal with conceptualisation of researchable problems as well as empirical findings. Seven major areas are to be considered in evaluating nominations as follows:

- Importance of topic
- Timeliness of topic
- Value of research to its intended audience
- Significance of research to the literature or other media
- Organization and presentation of research
- Economic content of research
- Policy relevance

A maximum of one award will be given per year; however the Society reserves the right to make no award in the event that no entry is judged to be of sufficient merit.

### **General**

The decision of the Council of the Society will be final and no correspondence will be entered into with entrants. Submission of a publication to be considered for the Prize implies acceptance of all of the conditions of the Prize.

### **Amount of Prize**

The winning nomination will receive a \$500 cash award to be presented at the Society's annual conference dinner.

## **Connections: Farm, Food & Resource Issues**

*Connections* continues in the stable of AARES products, with web-publishing support from Nanette Esparon at the University of Melbourne. Bill Malcolm and Glenn Ronan continue to work with interested authors to publish occasional notes and articles, rather than the original magazine format. If you have written about a current issue, perhaps for a local purpose, then you may like to think about sharing your material with others. Contact Bill or Glenn to discuss.

Also, AARES will be awarding \$200 to the author of the best article(s) contributed to *Connections*. The award to be announced at the 2009 conference will be for the best article for 2008.

Glenn Ronan & Bill Malcolm

Co-editors

Connections: Farm, Food and Resource Issues

<http://www.agrifood.info/connections/>

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## **Deadline and advertising**

The deadline for receipt of any items for inclusion in the next edition of AARES News & Views is 21 Oct 2008. Please send items to [Richard.Reeve@doir.wa.gov.au](mailto:Richard.Reeve@doir.wa.gov.au)

Advertisements in AARES News and Views are welcomed. The mailing list for News & Views exceeds 700. Advertising cost is \$55 (including GST).