Five ways to improve the agrifood innovation system in Australia

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What’s currently not working?

• Low rates of conversion of research outputs to outcomes
• RDC model encourages leverage and co-investment, reducing flexibility for longer-term science
• Commodity focus limits work on “systems”, value chains and environmental sustainability
• Public-private partnerships are under-explored
• IP protection and competition limits spread of innovations
• Purchaser-provider mindset rather than dynamic partnering
• Confusion about leadership roles of government, industry and knowledge institutes
• Narrative framed in terms of research inputs (rather than value and outputs)
Increase the emphasis on innovation
Our current culture

- My idea
  - Get funding
    - Customer
  - Test my idea
  - Results
    - “Throw it over the fence” for end users
      - Publish
        - Reputation
          - Rewards & awards
            - End user outcomes
What we aspire to

- Idea
  - Test idea
  - Customer has a need
    - Results
      - Publish
        - Reputation
Develop market roadmaps for higher value capture from Australia's major commodity sectors
Opportunities for Australian Agri-food

**DRIVING MEGATRENDS**
- Health on the mind
  - Choosy customers
- A less predictable planet
  - Smarter food chains
  - Choosy customers
- Choosy customers
  - One world
  - Smarter food chains

**THEME**
- Products for health and wellbeing
- Sustainable solutions
- Premium / high end products

**OPPORTUNITIES**
- Free-from and natural foods
- Supplements
- Fortified and functional
- Personalised nutrition
- Waste conversion
- Alternative protein sources
- Sustainable packaging
- Green and ethical value chains
- Convenience without compromise
- Luxury products and gifts
- Experiences and tourism
- Novel tastes, smells, textures
Recognise and embrace the evolving role for government
Question involvement when there is a strong private interest

Prevailing paradigm

Create public goods from targeted public-private investments

A new paradigm
The majority of investments are early and small value.

Higher value and later-stage seed investments ($500k-$1.5M) largely absent.

Australian investor interest high in digital agriculture. Low interest in novel crops, feed, and animal genetics.
Develop a set of national targets and a learning platform for agri-food sector growth and innovation
• How much does Australia spend on agrifood R&D?

• How are funds leveraged through the public and private systems?

• How much has a commodity focus versus cross-system?

• How does the spend match the targets?
Recognise and embrace changing modalities for agricultural extension for the 21st century
In conclusion…our vision

• Innovation culture nurtured and rewarded

• Clear targets, roles and priorities informed by comprehensive information

• Partnerships characterised by a focus on creating value, IP sharing, public – private activity

• Increase emphasis on value capture, sustainability, cross-commodity
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