

Climate Change Research Program

Australia's Farming Future

Research Case Study

At a recent workshop held in Canberra, the Climate Champion farmers were able to hear firsthand and ask candid questions of scientists who are working on projects in the Climate Change Research Program.

Farmers and scientists connect in Canberra for climate talks

More than 30 of Australia's most progressive farmers are members of the Climate Champion program, an initiative of the Managing Climate Variability (MCV) program, Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA) and the Grains Research and Development Corporation (GRDC), looking at climate risk management.

Through this program, these farmers work with scientists and industry to provide relevant tailored information, feedback on research results and adaptation options for agriculture.

This group of farmers, who are at the forefront of their industries commit their own time and networks to contribute to managing climate risk and formed part of the influencer group for the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) Climate Change Research Program (CCRP).

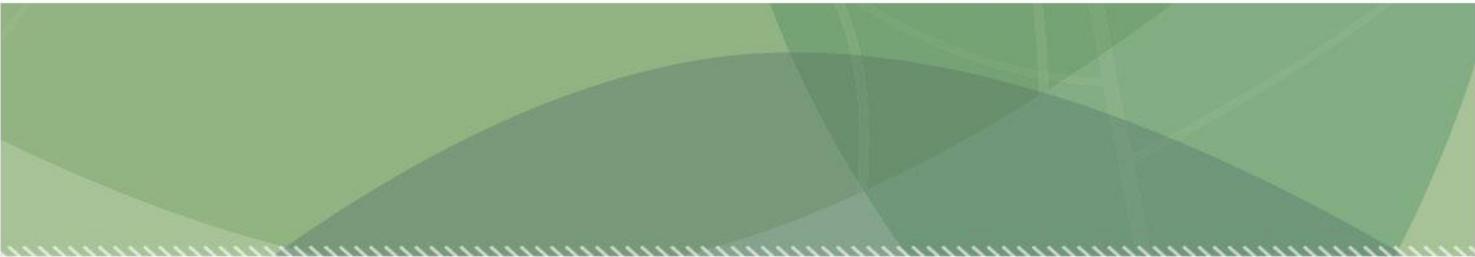
At a recent workshop held in Canberra (pictured left), the Climate Champion farmers were able to hear firsthand and ask candid questions of scientists who are working on climate projects, including the CCRP.



Dr Beverley Henry, Science Manager for the Managing Climate Variability program, said the Climate Champion workshops like this one in Canberra are a vital opportunity for farmers and researchers to come together.

“The Climate Champion farmers are working alongside the scientific community advising researchers about what farmers need to manage climate risk,” Dr Henry said.





Leading climate and agricultural scientists including Dr Peter Hayman, Associate Professor Richard Eckard, Professor Snow Barlow, together with Ms Maya Stuart-Fox from the Australian Government Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency met with this group and shared their insights.

Dr Richard Eckard's work in nitrous oxide and methane reduction in Victorian scenarios was presented alongside Dr Peter Hayman's modelling for cropping and viticulture in South Australia, during the visit to the National Press Club in Canberra.

Each Climate Champion workshop includes farm tours, and the Canberra schedule included a visit to Pele Cannon's family beekeeping enterprise at Urella and John Ive's superfine merino operation at Yass.

These farm visits offer a unique opportunity for the Climate Champion farmers to gain a greater understanding of how local farmers are managing climate variability on their own enterprises.

Andrea Hannemann, who runs a mixed farming operation with her husband Mark in Cleve on the South Australian Eyre Peninsula (pictured right) said the formal and informal activities during their tours provide great learning opportunities.



"Every time we meet, every time we talk to anybody on the program, we learn things and are sharing our experiences, whether it's with other farmers or researchers.

"It's a very inspiring place to be and every conversation you learn something. Sometimes in farming, you know, you have your down days and it's really nice to be surrounded by inspiring company.

"I feel we are becoming a real conduit between the researchers and the farmers," Mrs Hannemann said.

Simon Wallwork, from the Central Wheat Belt in Western Australia agreed with Andrea.

"Probably the best bit is the people involved. We are like-minded people from all around Australia. We are trying to do our best in sometimes difficult circumstances and I think we motivate each other by being a part of this program and obviously being armed with information that we can take to better our local area is also a good thing about the program."

The Climate Champion program is supported by Managing Climate Variability, Grains Research & Development Corporation and Meat & Livestock Australia. MCV's partners are the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, GRDC, MLA, Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation (RIRDC) and Sugar Research and Development Corporation (SRDC).

Australia's Farming Future: Climate Change Research Program

The Australian Government's Australia's Farming Future: Climate Change Research Program is a significant research effort aimed at providing practical solutions for our primary industries to adapt to the changing climate. The Climate Change Research Program (CCRP) has provided funding for research projects and on-farm demonstration activities under the three priority areas of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, improving soil management and research into adaptation management practices.

The CCRP has laid the vital groundwork for further research, demonstration and extension that will now occur through the Australian Government's \$429 million Carbon Farming Futures Program.

For further information on the CCRP or any of the funded projects, please phone 1800 638 746 or visit www.daff.gov.au/aff.

This case study is part of a series produced by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry as part of the Climate Change Research Program.



**Image: Climate Champion farmers
visiting Pele Cannon's family
beekeeping enterprise**