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Australian Government  
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Future  
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University of  
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**vibrant regions, thriving communities**

## SQNNSW Innovation Hub Newsletter #23 - April 2023

### Hub visits the Granite Belt

Recently Hub Director John McVeigh and Manager Leia Grimsey joined Node Manager Wim Linström and the Granite Belt Growers Association on a visit to a local property. The Hub team heard about the experiences some farmers endured in the recent drought. Association members discussed some of the learnings and business decisions they made when in drought and the decisions they have made going forward about water conservation, implementing different crops, innovative irrigation systems that conserve water, soil conservation and changes to farming practices. The team discussed the continuing local challenges for growers in the region and the role that the Hub can play to assist.



### National Hub Directors Meeting

In Early April, Hub Manager Leia Grimsey represented Hub Director Professor John McVeigh at the Tas Farm Innovation Hub, alongside all Hub Directors for an informative two days. The National Directors gave presentations to the Tasmania Advisory Board and

field tripped to local research and farming sites where they witnessed firsthand some of the projects underway for the Tas Hub. This included a visit to the Forthside Vegetable Research Facility, on Tasmania's North West Coast. The farm is used for diverse research trials and teaching that directly contributes to agricultural sustainability and productivity. They also visited one of the Tas Farm Innovation Hub's project sites managed by [Ag Logic](#), which uses soil moisture sensors and current data to inform on-farm decisions.



## First Nations voice at SQNNSW Innovation Hub

Our Knowledge Broker – First Nations Engagement, Dr Raelene Ward, has been featured in a new case study from the Future Drought Fund.

Dr Ward is on a mission to build strong relationships between First Nations people and the SQNNSW Innovation Hub.

"I always say this is a unique opportunity at the Hub because we're creating leadership positions that allow us as First Nations people to be part of significant decision making," she said.

As a senior nursing lecturer at the University of Southern Queensland and expert in Indigenous suicide and social and emotional wellbeing, Dr Ward is helping the Hub include First Nations perspectives in its drought and climate change preparation planning. "Young, old, everyone has an experience to share, and it's up to us to position those stories in the right way without people losing their cultural intellectual property," says Dr Ward.

[Read more about Raelene's work >>](#)



## Lismore celebrates Earth Day

More than 60 regen ag students, farmers and researchers joined the Lismore Node at Southern Cross University to celebrate Earth Day on April 22.

Attendees heard from Regenerative Agriculture Alliance and Farming Together Program Director Lorraine Gordon, and Soil CRC CEO Dr Michael Crawford, NSW Department of Primary Industries climate research scientist Cathleen Waters, Kerry Cochrane from the Australian Institute of Ecological Agriculture, and Nuffield Scholar and SQNNSW Innovation Hub Next Gen committee member Jacob Birch as speakers.

[Couldn't attend? Watch the recording! >>](#)



## Saving water with dam covers

On the Granite Belt, the last drought really drove home the value of protecting our stored water from evaporation. Some of the most effective ways to protect this water can be seen with local growers employing evaporation mitigation technologies.

At Stanthorpe, Node Manager Wim Linström worked with local growers and Michael Scobie and Erik Schmidt from the University of Southern Queensland, to develop a factsheet and Granite Belt-specific case studies to help growers improve their drought preparedness. You can read these case studies [on our website](#).

[Read more about protecting your water >>](#)



## Farming Family Reboot success

Producers from across Queensland and NSW heard the latest on looking after their land and themselves, as part of the first session of the 2023 Farming Family Reboot at the Hub's Armidale Node last week. As Hub Partner John Warlters from Rural Aid says, their organisation is well-known for the critical support it provides farmers affected by natural disasters, but they also have an important role to play in helping producers prepare for those challenges, through events such as the Farming Family Reboot. He said 90% of the pilot cohort strongly agreed they were likely to either make practice changes or consider making changes because of attending.

[Check out our album >>](#)



## Science to Practice: register today!

The Future Drought Fund's annual [Science to Practice Forum](#), is on again, 6-8 June 2023.

The forum brings together farmers, researchers, government, industry, and the community to explore innovative tools and practices helping our farmers and regions prepare for future drought. Award-winning television journalist and presenter of ABC TV's Landline, Pip Courtney, is hosting this year's three-day forum and will facilitate engaging discussions with keynote speakers, presenters and panel members. Each day focusses on a particular theme:

- Tuesday 6 June – Research and development
- Wednesday 7 June – Producers
- Thursday 8 June – Community and policy

The online forum is free to attend, along with face-to-face workshops held within the Hub region. Register now for the 2023 Science to Practice Forum at: [S2P-Forum.eventbrite.com](#).



## Registered Soil Practitioner Training

The SQNNSW Innovation Hub's Regional Soil Coordinator, Cameron Leckie, has been one of the first people to undertake Soil Science Australia's new [Registered Soil Practitioner Training](#). The training ensures soil practitioners can implement fit-for-purpose soil sampling and interpretation.

Cameron was recently interviewed for a video with agriculture teacher and communicator Tim Thompson, highlighting how the training "fills a gap" for people who are taking soil samples and providing advice for landholders.

"It gives you a broader understanding of soil as a system, and places into context (soil sample) results, so landholders can get better quality advice and make better management decisions."

Check out [the video below](#) or [read this article from Cameron](#) to find out more.

**Talk to Cameron:** In May, Cameron is attending a [Border Ranges Landcare dung beetle workshop](#) on May 18, and speaking at the [Landcare Adventure 2023](#) in Tamworth on May 26.



Coming up



**Regen Ag teacher training**

*Lismore, Coffs Harbour, online*

The May 2 & 3 and online (starts May 10) Regenerative Agriculture Professional Learning for Educators workshops are designed to inform science, ag, geography and general classroom teachers and educators about the science surrounding regen ag.

Register



**Business growth**

*Bingara & Warialda, May/June*

Wanting to set your business up for further success and growth? Action coach Mark Blume will be running business workshops to assist Gwydir Shire Council residents with all things business related.

Read more



**Agtech at Longreach Show**

*Longreach, May 12-13*

The Longreach Node will present an agtech showcase at the Longreach Show. Find the Node with Desert Channels, OPS Australia and others at the 2023 Longreach Show.

Show details



**Digitising Pasture Management**

*Roma, May 31*

Learn how go from the paddock to strategic planning, at this practical workshop that will help you better forage budget and introduce digital tools into your livestock operation.

Bookings open soon



**Farming for Resilience**

*"Banyula" Clunes, June 16*

A unique field day to inspire and educate farmers, industry and teachers to implement change.

Speakers include filmmaker Damon Gameau, Casino Food Co-op CEO Simon Stahl, the Regenerative Ag Alliance's Lorraine Gordon, and NSW DPI Hilbertus De Jure and Yan Zwieten.

Register



**Regenerative Rangelands 2023**

*Longreach, August 30-31*

This two-day event features international and national speakers, keen to help Western Queensland graziers boost their rehydration and grazing management practices.

Bookings open soon

**Quick bites from your Hub stakeholders**

**National project to boost soil organic matter**

An \$3.5 million farming system project is underway in GRDC's Northern region to investigate how Australian grain growers can increase soil organic matter levels and return carbon to their soil.

[Read more.](#)

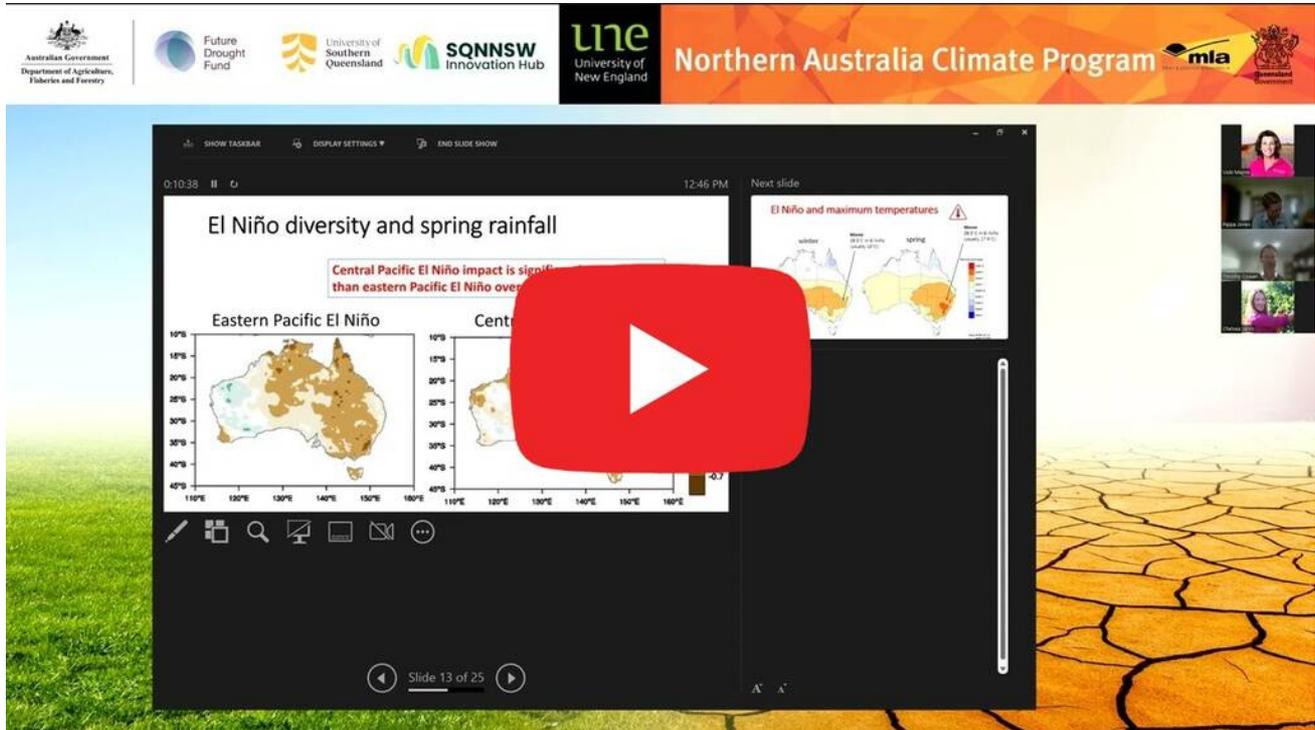
**Qld: Farm Business Resilience Plans**

The current focus for beef producer Adele O'Connor is preparing for the next drought. "We've been busy putting together a business plan that takes into account potential droughts and extreme

weather events," Mrs O'Connor said. Read more in the [Queensland Country Life](#).

### Forecasting for decision making

Did you miss the Northern Australia Climate Program webinar on forecasting for decision making? Organised by the Hub's Narrabri Node, this webinar covered the April to June Outlook, and how to best utilise forecasting tools to help with decision making.



## Opportunities for you

### Queensland digitrek

Year 10-12 students and businesses can learn about the digital skills required by the workforce of the future, as the demand for technology, cyber security and artificial intelligence specialists grows across the state. TAFE Queensland's roadshow will be in Roma on May 22 (launch) and 23, Chinchilla on May 24, Kingaroy on May 25 and Toowoomba on May 26. [Read more](#).

### Meat & Livestock Australia PDS

Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA) is calling for applications for its 2023-24 Producer Demonstration Sites program; applications close on 16 May 2023. This includes levy and co-contributor funding options for projects ranging from two to six years. [Read more](#).

### NSW: Improve your soils

As part of an Australian Government Smart Farms Small Grants Program project, a managing soil nutrition field day and workshop will be held near Hillston, NSW, on May 11. Topics: properties of soil, how to monitor, and tools to measure groundcover. All attendees will get access to soil sampling gear and three fully subsidised soil tests to measure soil nutrients. [Read more](#).

## Events calendar

*This calendar includes events from the Hub, its Members and Partners and Supporters, and events supported by the Australian Government. Please contact organisers for more information. Events in **bold** are organised or supported by the SQNNSW Innovation Hub, or include a Hub speaker.*

### May

- 2 – [Australian Organic Market Report 2023 Launch](#), Brisbane QLD
- 3 – [Regenerative ag: professional learning for educators](#), Lismore NSW
- 4 – [Regenerative ag: professional learning for educators](#), Coffs Harbour NSW
- 4 – **Bigambul Elders Gathering, Goondiwindi QLD**
- 5 – [Business growth in challenging times \(#1 of 2\)](#), Gwydir Shire Council, Bingara NSW
- 5 – **Bigambul Youth Summit Expo, Goondiwindi QLD**
- 6 – [Business growth in challenging times \(#1 of 2\)](#), Gwydir Shire Council, Warialda NSW
- 10 – [Regenerative ag: professional learning for educators](#), online course starts
- 11 – [Managing Soil Nutrition And Structure To Improve Groundcover](#), NSW LLS, Hillston NSW
- 13 – [Farm Business Resilience Program workshop](#), Narrabri NSW
- 22 – [TAFE QLD Digitrek Regional Roadshow \(launch\)](#), Roma QLD
- 23 – [TAFE QLD Digitrek Regional Roadshow](#), Roma QLD
- 24 – [TAFE QLD Digitrek Regional Roadshow](#), Chinchilla QLD
- 24 – [North West Beef Producers Forum 2023](#), NSW LLS, Gunnedah NSW
- 25 – [TAFE QLD Digitrek Regional Roadshow](#), Kingaroy QLD
- 26 – [TAFE QLD Digitrek Regional Roadshow](#), Toowoomba QLD
- 29 – [Top Fodder: Successful Silage Making](#), NSW LLS, Nabadac NSW
- 31 – **Maules Creek landscape rehydration field day, NSW LLS**

### June

- 2 – [Business growth in challenging times \(#2 of 2\)](#), Gwydir Shire Council, Bingara NSW
- 3 – [Business growth in challenging times \(#2 of 2\)](#), Gwydir Shire Council, Warialda NSW
- 5-7 – [Hort Connections](#), Adelaide SA
- 5 – [Sheep Supply Chain Tour](#), NSW LLS, Tamworth NSW
- 6-7 – [Sheep Droughtlot Tour](#), Armidale Node, Coonamble NSW
- 6-8 – [Science to Practice](#), online/various locations
- 14 – [Emergency animal disease workshop for vets](#), NSW LLS, Dubbo NSW

### July

- 24-25 – [Agmentation 2023](#), Armidale NSW
- 26-27 – [TERN Science Symposium](#), Brisbane QLD

### August

- 30-31 – **Regenerative Rangelands 2023, Longreach QLD**

### September

- 1-2 September – [Alejandro Carrillo Grazing Workshop](#), Longreach QLD

# SQNNWS Innovation Hub

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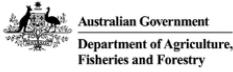
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