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SQNNSW Innovation Hub Newsletter #18

Worms & drones feature at Stanthorpe Node launch

Supporting the resilience of the Granite Belt community is a key focus of the Southern Queensland and Northern New South Wales (SQNNSW) Drought Resilience Adoption and Innovation Hub's Stanthorpe-based Node, which was officially launched this month. SQNNSW Hub Director Professor John McVeigh said the Node would leverage research and a highly involved and motivated farming and agribusiness sector. At the official Node launch, hosted by the Granite Belt Growers Association on 15 November, farmers, business and community members had the chance to hear more about current and upcoming projects.

"The Hub is supporting a proof-of-concept project, exploring the viability of using drones to identify downy mildew in grapevines," Professor McVeigh said.

"Our Stanthorpe Node is also working with industry and growers to trial the potential benefits on on-farm worm farms, including a comparison of soil, plant health and yields under commercial conditions."



[Read more](#)

[Event photo album](#)

Webinar: extension and adoption grants

The Australian Government's Future Drought Fund (FDF) is looking for eligible entities to work with farmers to drive large-scale adoption of proven and existing practices and technologies that improve drought resilience and agricultural productivity. Applications are close on January 9, 2023, for the Extension and Adoption of Drought Resilience Farming Practices Grants with between \$100,000 and \$3 million (GST exclusive) available per application. **The SQNNSW Innovation Hub is running an information webinar on the new grants, on Friday, December 2 at 11am AEST (noon AEDT).**



[Register today >>](#)

Quick bites from your Hub stakeholders

Planning for Success

As part of improving drought preparedness, producers at Teelba and Wallumbilla in Queensland's Maranoa region joined the teams from the SQNNSW Innovation Hub's Roma (Southern Queensland Landscapes) and Armidale (University of New England) nodes, the Queensland and Australian Government's GrazingFutures Livestock Business Resilience, Bush Agribusiness and Rural Solutions Queensland on November 2 and 3. The days were a great chance for producers to learn more about Queensland's new drought resilience planning process and available grants, teamed with information on how to create a plan for their rural businesses, available tools for record keeping and interrogating weather forecasts, and to improve skills in grazing management and forage budgeting. [More here.](#)



Grazing Naturally

The Stanthorpe Node worked with the Traprock Growers Association and Condamine Headwaters Landcare Association to run two Grazing Naturally workshops with Dick Richardson this month. Local graziers had the chance to learn about the basics of ecology, plant growth and the principles of Grazing Naturally, as well as the soil building process, the carbon cycle, and the functioning of ecological communities in relation to soil building. [More here.](#)

Mentoring program underway

The Lismore Node's Regenerative Agricultural Mentoring Program is underway, with participants at Lismore, Byron/Tweed, Armidale, Tenterfield, Bundaberg, Roma, Longreach and Toowoomba. This extension of the RAMP program is supported by the Australian Government's Agricultural Innovation Hubs Program.

Manna Institute launched

An innovative virtual research and training institute – the first of its kind in Australia – has been launched to improve the mental health and wellbeing of rural, regional and remote communities. Manna unites leading mental health researchers from seven universities, industry and community

to tailor regionally-based solutions for mental health and wellbeing challenges. [Read more.](#)

Soil carbon projects announced

Almost \$30 million in grant funding has been awarded to farmers and land managers across Australia to make it easier for them to measure the amount of carbon in their soils. Projects range from generating high resolution maps of soil organic carbon to commercialising an approach to deliver soil condition and soil organic carbon measurements. [Find the list here.](#)

\$19m investment in climate resilience

Agricultural Innovation Australia is investing \$19 million to help better understand and manage short-term climate risks and build long-term resilience. Agri-Climate Outlooks involves 10 research and development corporations, including Sugar Research Australia, Meat & Livestock Australia, and the Grains Research & Development Corporation. [Read more.](#)

Landcare webinar series: carbon

The next Landcare Farming webinar is *Maximising Ecosystem Opportunities to Fit your Business: Carbon*, on Thursday, December 1, 2-3:30pm (AEDT). Speakers include Prof Richard Eckard(Primary Industries Climate Challenges Centre), Dr Warwick Badgery (NSW Department of Primary Industries), Dr Stephen Wiedemann (Integrity Ag & Environment Pty Ltd), Dr Hayley McMillan (Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries) and Melinee Leather (Leather Cattle Co). [Register here.](#)

Opportunities & resources for you

Grants open

Wine tourism and cellar doors

Australia's wine and cider producers can now access a fourth round of grants to support the wine industry, attract visitors to wine regions and promote agri-tourism. Applications close January 31, 2022. [Read more.](#)

QLD: rural economic development

The Rural Economic Development (RED) Grants offer up to \$200,000 as a co-contribution grant to strengthen primary production sectors and bolster rural communities. EOIs close on January 30, 2023. [Read more.](#)

Upcoming grants

NSW: Farms of the Future

Grants will open in January 2023 for those who have completed the Farms of the Future training program. Criteria apply, and farmers need to be in one of the following LGAs: Orange, Cabonne, Byron, Ballina, Lismore, Armidale, Moree Plains, Narrabri, Carrathool, Griffith or Leeton. [More information.](#)

Consultations underway

QLD: livestock brands and earmarks

The Department of Agriculture and Fisheries is seeking community feedback on how livestock brands and earmarks will be managed in the future. [Read more.](#)

NSW: new soils app

The Soils Near Me NSW app, a project of the Department of Planning and Environment, shows you the soil classification, capability and risk of acid sulfate throughout our state. [More here.](#)

QLD: new pasture booklets

Graziers in the greater South East Queensland have two newly updated resources to assist with future pasture management decisions. You can [find the downloads here.](#)

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.*

December

- 1 – [Landcare Farming webinar](#) (carbon)
- 2-5 – [Australian Biological Farming Conference & Expo](#), SCU, Lismore NSW
- 5-6 – [Business EDGE Young Guns workshop](#), MLA, Toowoomba Q
- 6 – [MeatUp Forum](#), MLA, Casino NSW
- 8 – [Whole of system NRM](#), Bigambul Aboriginal Corp, Goondiwindi Q

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