



AAFDA

Association of Agricultural Field Days of Australasia Ltd.

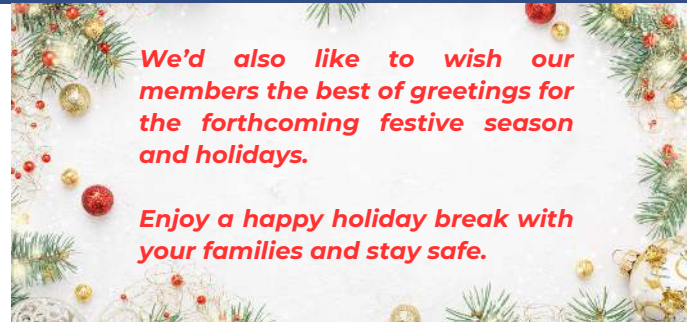
Newsletter

November 2025

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We have some have some important information to share with our valued AAFDA members in this newsletter, so please read on.....



We'd also like to wish our members the best of greetings for the forthcoming festive season and holidays.

Enjoy a happy holiday break with your families and stay safe.

CHAIR REPORT : Strengthening the Future of Australian & New Zealand Agricultural Field Days

The past year has seen the Association of Agricultural Field Days of Australasia (AAFDA) reach new heights in national advocacy and engagement. It has been a period defined by collaboration, strategic dialogue, and strengthening relationships that underpin our collective mission. This is designed to ensure agricultural field days across Australia (and New Zealand) can continue to thrive as the beating heart of regional business events leading the way to engage and showcase innovation, community, and connection.

A heartfelt thank you goes to every field day that provided letters of support directed to Julie Collins MP, as part of our ongoing campaign. These letters were vital to the critical in setting up the foundations for face-to-face meetings we held in Canberra, which have elevated our Association's voice and strengthened our advocacy across government and industry.

A Unified Voice for Regional Australia

Representing the AAFDA at a series of high-level meetings with Ministers, Advisors, Departmental representatives, and National Farmers' Federation (NFF) leadership was a true privilege.

These discussions, conducted under our Memorandum of Understanding with Agricultural Shows Australia (ASA), played a pivotal role in advancing the recognition of regional agricultural field days and shows as vital economic and social drivers for rural and regional Australia. Our meetings fostered collaboration and included valuable input from key leaders and stakeholders. We were joined by Jacqueline Wilson-Smith, ASA Chair; Toni Rolls, Royal Canberra Show President; Katie Stanley, ASA Executive Officer; Grace Collins, 2025 Australian Rural Ambassador; and Dylan Bellchambers, 2025 Tasmanian Rural Ambassador, whose expertise and contributions were instrumental in shaping our advocacy efforts alongside ASA as we continue to work with these and other key organizations.

Their involvement and contribution added invaluable perspectives from the broader agricultural shows and ambassador networks, reinforcing the strength of our shared advocacy.



We were also fortunate to meet with:

- Kevin Hogan MP – Nationals, Shadow Minister for Trade & Tourism
 - Advisor to Hon David Littleproud MP – Leader of the Nationals; Shadow Minister for Agriculture
 - David “DJ” Jochinke – Former President, National Farmers' Federation
 - The Hon. Kristy McBain MP – Minister for Regional Development, Local Government & Territories, Emergency Management Agency (photo)
 - The Hon. Michael McCormack MP – Former Deputy Prime Minister
 - Meryl Swanson MP – Chair, House Agriculture Committee
 - Sue McCluskey – Acting CEO, National Farmers' Federation
 - Advisors to Senator Anthony Chisholm – Assistant Minister for Agriculture and Regional Development
- Department of Agriculture, Fisheries & Forestry (DAFF) representatives including Alison Curran (Levies, Innovation & Livestock) and Paul Maisey (Food & Supply Chain Branch).

Each of these meetings reinforced that agricultural field days are not merely events, they are the living, breathing showcase of rural Australia's ingenuity, resilience, and community spirit.



A Shared Vision for Growth

The AAFDA's campaign sought to strengthen bi-partisan acknowledgement and highlight the need for targeted investment to support the sustainability and innovation of regional field days.

With event delivery costs having risen by up to 300% since the COVID-19 pandemic, our advocacy focused on securing resources to enhance field day capabilities in areas such as infrastructure, agtech, education, next-generation engagement, agricultural careers, and innovation.

This initiative represents the most significant and focused national advocacy effort by the AAFDA since the pandemic, and we remain committed to ensuring that field days across Australia continue to be vital platforms for agricultural excellence and regional prosperity.

Celebrating Excellence : AgriFutures Rural Women's Award

While in Canberra, it was also a privilege to attend the AgriFutures Rural Women's Award celebration at Parliament House—a wonderful evening showcasing 25 years of exceptional contributions by women shaping regional and rural Australia.

I was delighted to be joined at the awards dinner by Tom White from Murrumbateman Field Days, and we were both inspired by the calibre of the finalists and the spirit of collaboration that filled the room.



A special acknowledgement must go to Carol Mudford, the 2025 NSW/ACT AgriFutures Rural Women's Award Winner. Carol's leadership through "sHedway", a national not-for-profit focused on suicide prevention and mental health in the shearing industry, is an extraordinary example of compassion and community action. (Photo)

I encourage all members to consider attending this event in future years as it's not only a celebration of achievement but an outstanding networking opportunity that strengthens our rural networks and highlights the heart of Australian agriculture.

Looking Ahead

The AAFDA remains committed to building stronger partnerships, enhancing recognition of agricultural field days, and securing sustainable support from government and industry. The relationships forged through this campaign has positioned us strategically for the next stage of growth and impact.

Our collective strength lies in our unity, our shared vision, and our unwavering belief in the importance of agricultural field days to Australia's future. Together, we will continue to celebrate our heritage, champion innovation, and create opportunities that ensure the enduring success of our field day network nationwide.

Bruce Wright

Chair - Association of Agricultural Field Days of Australasia (AAFDA)

MEMBER WORKSHOP PRESENTATION – Empower Yourself & Your Key Exhibitors

We have organised for our AAFDA members a special presentation by U.S. trade show management software company '**MAP YOUR SHOW**'. This presentation is designed to offer our members a chance to review your own resources, but most importantly, have an independent expert in trade events (including US ag trade shows) to be able to raise the opportunities, strengths and benefits ag field days provide as trade events.

This presentation will hopefully assist with a check-list of the appropriate planning, communications and engagement for your exhibitors prior to and through to delivery and follow up which can maximise your exhibitors investment in attending your field day.

- We will send each AAFDA member an Outlook calendar (Teams Meeting) invitation to attend this webinar on **Thursday 20th November** (time TBA) - this is the eve of **National Agriculture Day** - Friday 21st November. We hope to 'see' as many members as possible for the presentation.

You will then have the opportunity to share this information with your exhibitors.

MASTERCLASSES – Australian Centre for Regional Events

Linda Tillman from the Australian Centre for Regional Events has invited AAFDA members to participate in their masterclasses. They have a session coming up - **Using AI to support event efficiencies** If you are interested, follow the link for further information : <https://australianregionalevents.com.au/masterclasses>

AAFDA – BOARD DASHBOARD & MEMBER VALUE

Supporting 28 Field Days across Australia & New Zealand

Strategic Leadership & Governance

- ✓ Implemented first Strategic Plan
- ✓ Expanded Board representation across AUS & NZ
- ✓ Updated constitution and governance framework

Advocacy & Industry Influence

- ✓ Signed MOU with ASA; progressing towards Strategic Alliance
- ✓ Engaged Federal Ministers, Shadow Ministers, DAFF & NFF
- ✓ Published AAFDA Advocacy Position Statement

Member Support & Professional Development

- ✓ Workshops & webinars on governance, volunteer engagement, risk & operations
- ✓ Introduced international expertise for member learning
- ✓ Strengthened Boards & management committees

Research, Impact & Data

- ✓ Commissioned destination research quantifying economic & social impact
- ✓ Standardised surveys & data capture across members
- ✓ Supports future advocacy & funding applications

Communication & Visibility

- ✓ Regular newsletters, EDMs, media releases
- ✓ Introduced AAFDA Field Days Awareness Week
- ✓ Promoted national awareness of regional field days

Networking & Collaboration

- ✓ Partnerships with ASA, ACRE, government & industry stakeholders
- ✓ Access to policy makers, sponsors, and peer event organisers
- ✓ Strengthened sector-wide collaboration & advocacy impact

Membership Value

- ✓ Influence national and regional policy
- ✓ Access professional development & operational resources
- ✓ Increase visibility, networking & impact
- ✓ Join a unified voice advocating for rural & regional events

NEW MEMBER

We welcome the **Seymour Alternative Farming Expo** (Victoria) to our membership. The organisers run a 3-day expo in April and you can check out more information from their website : <https://seymourexpo.com.au/>



YOUR FIELD DAY – YOUR INFORMATION

We encourage you to check the website and the details on the next page for your own field day information. Could you please ensure that your own field day information is correct, as there are opportunities for field day events and their dates to be circulated to a wider agricultural based audience in the near future.

For any amendments, you can contact either:

Kate Burns at Tocal Field Days : exhibitorsupport@tocalfielddays.com

OR

Pam Ryan : pam@lardnerpark.com.au

FIELD DAYS REPORTS, PHOTOS & STORIES

Thank you to those members who have presented their 2025 field day reports. The information in these reports is a useful and collaborative tool for our members to compare, gauge and assess the other field day events and the agricultural industry in their regions.

It would be great to receive these after your field day event where we can then pass on for other members to read and hopefully pick up any useful information.

We are proud to represent our field day member's and we would encourage you to display the logo below for placement on your website, emails and communications.



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