

PART OF UNE AG-WEEK

RuralFocus /2019

➤ 24–25 July, 2019

Family or Corporate Farming?

"Learning from each other. Benchmark to the best"



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This symposium is designed to help build stronger links between the research and educational platforms provided by UNE with industry and communities in rural Australia.

Ruralfocus /2019

Family or Corporate Farming?



“One day I'll be returning to run the family farm. I'm worried are they sustainable? How can we remain profitable? Do we have to get bigger to survive?”

- Are our Family farm models profitable, competitive, sustainable?
- Are our Corporate farmers really the big bad guys some people make out?
- How are leading family farmers measuring their business and what are they doing to remain competitive and ease the pressure?

**Let's learn from each other; Don't farm alone;
Benchmark to the best**

- Best practice examples
- Lessons from Family for Corporate farms
- Lessons from Corporate for Family farms

Suitable for students, researchers, academics, producers, wholesalers, industry suppliers, and investors.

Hear from and speak with some leading representatives in the Agricultural space. What are the issues they are confronted with and how are they dealing with them?

What are the latest management techniques these leading family and corporate farmers are using?

Come and learn from others' experience. Rural Focus will help you build your network with current leaders, other industry organisations and our future leaders.

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18th Annual

Robb Ruralfocus /Dinner

Black-tie event:

Wednesday **24 July** at Armidale Bowling Club

- 5.30pm** Cocktail commencement
- 6.15pm** Please be seated in the Conference Room
- 6.30pm** Welcome and Opening
- 6.45pm** Dinner



Guest Speaker:

David Brownhill, Merrilong Pastoral

"My Stories in Agriculture. Issues & Opportunities for the future"

David Brownhill completed a Bachelor of Applied Science - Agriculture degree at Hawkesbury Ag College and graduated with awards in leadership and sportsmanship. He jointly manages Merrilong Pastoral Company whose properties focus on dryland and irrigated grain and cotton production. David is also a founding director of a grower group of 24 farms, AMPS Commercial Pty Ltd, which is committed to information dissemination, structured farming and returning profits to research.

David and Gordon Brownhill are well-known for their pioneering work in zero tillage and controlled traffic farming and long-term involvement in agricultural research.

The Brownhills began farming in 1959 and within a few years had become involved in research with the University of New England and later with Sydney University. David attended University before returning home in 1992. He undertook a Nuffield Scholarship in 1997 and has since gone on to hold roles with the state, national executive, board chair and governance/finance Committee of Nuffield.

David saw the Weedseeker machine in California in 1998 and the Brownhills imported the first machine in 2001. After just one year of sales in Australia, it was estimated that the Weedseeker had generated an impressive \$20-25 million in chemical savings.

David is a past director of the RAS foundational board, is a regular presenter at the GRDC Grains Research Updates, been a member of GRDC Update committees and presented at ABARES and the Oxford Farming Conference on Australian Agriculture.

Current director of Merrilong Pastoral Company, AMPS Agribusiness Pty Ltd, Farming for Kids and is member of the Rabobank Client Council for Northern NSW.

The family's farming operation has grown significantly over the past 25 years, expanding from 1000 hectares in the 1990s to its current size of over 10 000 ha of dryland and irrigation farming.

David is married to Liz, they have three kids, two dogs, and Dave's mid-life crisis is his WB ute.

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RuralFocus Symposium:

Your Program for 2019

Thursday 25 July – RuralFocus 2019 Symposium “Belshaw” Lecture Theatre 1 – Economics, Business & Law Building	
8.30 am	Arrival and registration
8.45 am	Please be seated in the Belshaw Theatre 1
8.50 am	Welcome and introduction
8.55 am	Deputy Pro-Vice Chancellor UNE Official Welcome to UNE and RuralFocus 2019
9.00am	Speaker 1: Professor Derek Baker, UNE Business School What are the statistics on Australian Agriculture? Are Family Farms competitive? Are the biggest more profitable? How are families competing? International precedents.
9.25am	Speaker 2: David Sackett, CEO, Growth Farms Australia A corporate farming example. How we operate and our vision.
9.50am	Speaker 3: Jock Whittle, CEO, Paraway Pastoral Co. How we multi-farm manage. Our vision and values.
10.15am	Questions to Panel
10.30am	MORNING TEA/NETWORKING
10.55am	Please be seated
11.00am	Speaker 4: David Brownhill, Merrilong Pastoral/AMPS Agribusiness A farming business co-operative. Improving how we farm together.
11.25am	Speaker 5: Charles Coventry, Ag-Edge Using a farmers Board to stay competitive. A consultative co-operative model
11.50pm	Speaker 6: Simon Fritsch, Agri-Path Don't farm alone. The power of Benchmarking. Lessons from high profit farms.
12.15pm	Questions to Panel
12.30pm	LUNCH
1.25pm	Please be seated
1.30pm	Speaker 7: Sam Ditchfield, Ebor Beef The benefits from joining a marketing co-operative.
1.55pm	Speaker 8: Andrew Roberts, The Farm Owners Academy How to run a profitable farming business, and not burn out.
2.20pm	Chairing a Q&A Discussion: Dr Lou Conway, UNE SMART Region Incubator Learning from our experiences. Ask the Panel. Key Issues explored.
3.15pm	Close
5.30 – 7.00pm	IFAMA Celebration and Industry Mixer – Royal Hotel Armidale

Friday 26 July Farming Futures Careers Fair	
9.30am	Farming Futures Schools Program – Lewis Lecture Theatre
10.00am	UNE Farming Futures Careers Fair – Lazenby Hall
6.00pm	Farming Futures Dinner – UNE Bistro Guest Speaker: Airlie Landale, Farm Table and Farmer Exchange

Your Speakers:

"Learning from both. Don't farm alone, benchmark to the best, best practice examples. Lessons from family for corporate and corporate for family farms".



"Let's Make Australian Farming Great..."

Derek Baker

**Professor of Agribusiness and Value Chains
Faculty of Science, Agriculture, Business & Law
University of New England.**

- What are the statistics on Australian Agriculture?
- Are Family Farms competitive?
- Are the biggest more profitable?
- How are families competing? International precedents.

Derek is an agricultural economist that has written widely on food, farms, agribusiness and the agricultural industries. He holds a First Class Honours Degree in Animal Science and Farm Management from Massey University, a graduate certificate in Research Management from the university of Melbourne, and a PhD in Agricultural Economics from Pennsylvania State University.

After undergraduate studies, Derek ran the family farm and worked as an agribusiness consultant in New Zealand during the pro-market reforms in the mid-late 80's. He has since worked in over 40 countries, in the private sector and number of international research agencies. Until late 2013, Derek led Economics and Value Chain research at the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) in Nairobi, Kenya. Prior to this he managed Danish Food Industry Innovation project while living in Copenhagen, Denmark.



"A Corporate Farming example. How we operate and our vision."

David Sackett

CEO – Growth Farms Australia

- Lessons from a successful corporate farm-manager.
- What are our key measures of performance?
- How can family farms can take advantage?

David is the Managing Director of Growth Farms Australia, a company that specialises in the acquisition and management of agricultural investments in Australia on behalf of separate account and pooled fund investors. Investors are from Europe, China, Australia and other Asian countries.

The business currently manages A\$500m of assets across a diverse range of sectors including cereal and oilseeds, sheep, beef, cotton, sugar and water. Growth Farms' track record since 2008 has been 10.4% net IRR.

Prior to joining Growth Farms, David was a founding partner of Holmes Sackett and Associates, which developed into the leading agricultural consulting business in South East Australia. He has also had various Board roles in agriculture related entities including in research, academic and commercial activities.



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"Large scale farming. How we operate. Our vision and values."

Jock Whittle

CEO – Paraway Pastoral Co

- How we multi-farm manage.
- What are our key measures and objectives?
- How do we add-value.

Jock joined Paraway Pastoral in January 2008 and was responsible for operations until his appointment to CEO in January 2012. As CEO he has led the company through a period of significant growth, which has seen the company add 12 additional properties totaling over 1,600,000ha to the portfolio since 2015. Jock also initiated a move of the head office of the company from Sydney to Orange, in regional NSW. The company now has assets across 3 states, consisting of 27 property aggregations, running some 220,000 head of cattle and 250,000 head of sheep.

Jock's prior experience includes leading a team providing financial services to farming and post farm gate businesses for National Australia Bank's Agricultural business. He was also Commercial manager for Clyde Agriculture, a subsidiary of the Swire Group. Jock holds a Master of Business Administration (MBA) and a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture (Hons) from the University of Sydney.



"A Farming Business Co-operative. Improving how we Farm together."

David Brownhill

Partner – Merrilong Pastoral Company

- Lessons from a successful family farm.
- How does AMPS work as a co-operative?
- How family farms can flourish.

David jointly manages Merrilong Pastoral Company whose five properties focus on dryland and irrigated grain production. David is also a founding director of a grower group of 24 farms, AMPS Commercial Pty Ltd, which is committed to information dissemination, structured farming and returning profits to research.

The Brownhill family farming business focuses on dryland and irrigated grain and cotton production. Dave's key interests are no-till farming, controlled traffic farming systems and high value crops. David has served as a director of the Royal Agricultural Society of NSW (RAS) Foundation and is a past Chairman of the Nuffield Australia Board.



An Initiative of the Robb College Foundation



"Using a farmers Board to stay competitive. A consultative co-operative model"

Charles Coventry

CEO – Achill Station

- How we have stayed sustainable as a family farm.
- What is Ag Edge and how can it help you?
- How do we view the future for family farming?

Charles is the Managing Director of Achill Station Pty Ltd, a sheep and cattle property on the Eastern side of Armidale run as a Joint Venture with Zegna.

Prior to moving to Armidale in 2014, he had spent 17 years with GrainCorp in grain marketing with most time based in Sydney head office and some time spent in NSW and VIC regional locations. His most recent role was Head of the Domestic Marketing Division. Throughout his career he has continuously been involved in the superfine wool industry.



"Don't farm alone. The power of Benchmarking. High profit farming"

Simon Fritsch

Director – Agripath

- Are the largest farms the most profitable?
- Is there a difference between corporate to family run farms?
- 5 key indicators to test yourself.

Simon is a Director of Agripath who are farm business consultants with expertise in irrigation and dryland farming and grazing. Based in Tamworth NSW they provide Benchmarking to over 250 farmers with excellent data on irrigation and dryland farming systems. Agripath provides due diligence, management consulting to the family and corporate farming sector and strategic planning for agricultural businesses.



"Ebor Beef - a marketing co-operative example."

Sam Ditchfield

Marketing Consultant – Ebor Beef

- How a co-operative marketing model can add profit to the family farm.
- What is Ebor Beef and how can it help you?
- How do we view the future for family farming?

Sam and Jules Ditchfield trade as SJ Livestock Marketing. Sam has been the Marketing Consultant for Ebor Beef for the past 8 years. He has many years' experience in the cattle industry, particularly in the agency and feedlot domains. Together with his wife Jules and their three children, he has lived much of his life in the New England and Northwest regions and has an extensive network of industry contacts. Ebor Beef Inc. is a large innovative group of prime beef producers from the New England and Northwest regions. All share the commitment to produce top-quality grass-fed cattle.

Ag Week 2019
Bringing together families,
our future
and farming

UNE
University of
New England



"How to run a profitable farming business, and not burn out"

Andrew Roberts

Co-Founder – Farm Owners Academy

- The 6 key areas to focus on for profit & success
- How to keep expanding and not hit a plateau
- How to become more entrepreneurial to stay ahead of the game

Andrew is a leading farm business mentor and a strategic business specialist focusing on helping farmers succeed in business through the Farm Owners Academy. Since witnessing the grueling work, long hours and huge stress his father endured on their New England wool farm, Andrew has a deep-rooted passion to improve the lives of fellow farmers and their families.

He recently sold a successful business in coaching to concentrate on the Farm Owners Academy and delivering on-line courses. He utilizes his 20 years' experience, working with some Business Review Weekly top 100 companies, to teach the business skills farmers require to earn more money, gain more control, and achieve more freedom.



" Learning from our experience"

Chair of the Q&A Panel session.

Dr Lou Conway

Director of the UNE SMART Region Incubator

- Ask the Panel
- Key issues explored

Lou Conway is the Director of the UNE SMART Region Incubator which supports startup businesses across the New England North West region. Lou has led the development of the SRI from its inception in March 2017 and is passionate about supporting new business opportunities for agriculture and health using technology to solve a problem in the global marketplace.

Lou has worked in various roles within agribusiness, education and human service delivery and her research reflects this diversity of background. Since her early days as an Occupational Therapist, Lou has pursued a keen interest in regional development and a commitment to working with stakeholders to capture the benefit of innovation and technology in our regions.

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Our thanks go to our sponsors for enabling this symposium to occur and for their contribution towards lifting the future opportunities for producers and students and help fund the growth of rural Australia in efficient and sustainable methods.



Armidale Regional Council

Agriculture and education are two of the major drivers of economic prosperity in this Region which are, indeed, contributing to our nation. Technical solutions, practical knowhow and a trained, skilled workforce in this sector remain at the heart of our competitiveness and sustainability. A key to achieving these outcomes is the ongoing provision of well trained, talented and passionate young people. In this regard the University of New England has a proud and long history in producing some of the world's most outstanding graduates and researchers, many of whom have gone on to change the world through more sustainable resource stewardship practices and leading-edge production.

It is for these reasons the Armidale Regional Council is proud to sponsor UNE Ag-Week 2019 including both the Rural Focus and Farming Futures career events in 2019.

Home to the nation's first inland University, UNE, with more than 20,000 enrolments, TAFE New England and a number of highly regarded and leading private, independent and public schools, Armidale is one of Australia's leading regional education centres.

Armidale is set for a positive and exciting future with diverse industry sectors, confident growth forecasts, a vibrant economy and a regional Council driving crucial infrastructure and sustainable economic success, our City is a great place for you, your business and family.

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Being a regionally based firm, Roberts & Morrow has always focused heavily on services to the rural sector and today, primary producers remain one of the firm's biggest client groups. In fact, many of Roberts & Morrow Partners run their own farms and primary production operations, so they are passionate about providing quality specialist advice in this industry area.

We recognise, value and support our people. The personal contribution Roberts & Morrow staff make to the firm is integral to the success of our business and our clients. We work hard to build teams of highly trained and motivated individuals who are committed to offering outstanding service. Join us and enjoy continuous professional development, career progression opportunities and real work-life balance in a friendly, team-oriented environment.

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Rural Focus Bookings/ How to register

Ticket Prices:

	Early Bird	Late Bird	Student
Symposium	\$75	\$95	\$15
Dinner	\$110		\$45

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