



Livestock 2026 Conference Program

***FROM DATA TO DOLLARS:
TURNING AI INTO REAL FARM VALUE***

Date: Wednesday 21st & Thursday 22nd October

Location: The Range Function Centre, Wagga Wagga

Program

Wednesday 21 October 2026



09:00 AM – 11:00 AM **CSU Global Digital Farm Tour - OPTIONAL**

11:30 AM – 11:45 AM **Conference Welcome**

Dr Sue Hatcher
SALRC Chair

11:45 AM – 11:55 AM **Lead Sponsor Presentation**

11:55 AM – 12:30 PM **Keynote** - Harnessing AI and AgTech:
Opportunities and Challenges for
Southern Australian Livestock Industries

Vi Nguyen
Ryka Global

12:30 PM – 1:00 PM **Lunch**

01:00 PM – 02:20 PM **Livestock Productivity Session**
Exploring virtual fencing as a tool to
improve productivity, save time, and
reduce labour demands.
Session will include presentations and
a Panel Discussion with speakers.

Dr Megan Verdon
University of Tasmania

David Nation
Halter

Jenny Stanton
Producer, Kangaroo Island

02:20 PM – 02:45 PM **Early Career Researchers - Livestock AgTech Presentations**

02:45 PM – 03:15 PM **Afternoon Tea**

03:15 PM – 04:45 PM **Feedbase Session**
*Remote assessment of pasture quantity
and quality for smarter grazing decisions.*
Session will include presentations and a
Panel Discussion with speakers.

Ritchie Taylor
Producer

Prof David Lamb
Food Agility CRC

Dr Warwick Badgery
NSW DPIRD

04:45 PM – 05:10 PM **Early Career Researchers - Feedbase AgTech Presentations**

05:10 PM – 05:15 PM **Day 1 Wrap Up**

Dr Sue Hatcher

06:45 PM – 09:30 PM **Livestock 2026 Conference Dinner**
Rules Club, Wagga Wagga
SALRC Awards and Future Voices in Livestock Scholarship Panel Session

Program

Thursday 22 October 2026



08:30 - 08:35 AM

Conference Opening

08:35 AM - 09:50 AM

Animal Health & Wellbeing Session

Livestock monitoring technologies: enabling early intervention and improved animal health, welfare and productivity.

Session will include presentations and a Panel Discussion with speakers.

Luke Dunn
Producer

Dr Sabrina Greenwood
CSIRO

Dr Thomas Williams
Central QLD University

09:50 AM - 10:15 AM

Early Career Researchers - Animal Health and Wellbeing AgTech Presentations

10:15 AM - 10:45 AM

Morning Tea

10:45 AM - 11:30 AM

AI Supported Decision Making

How Beef + Lamb New Zealand leverage digital technologies to improve extension activity.

Aaron Meikle
Beef + Lamb New Zealand

11:30 AM - 12:30 PM

Panel Discussion

Exploring how AI and integrated data can support better livestock decisions, now and into the future.

Aaron Meikle
Beef + Lamb New Zealand

Chris White
Northern NSW SALRC Chair

Chris Jehu
Livestock Consultant

Vi Nguyen
Ryka Global

12:30 PM - 01:00 PM

Conference Wrap-Up and Close

Key learnings and take home messages.

Dr Sue Hatcher
SALRC Chair

01:00 PM - 01:30 PM

Lunch

02:00 PM - 04:00 PM

Pasture Trial Network - Presentation and Tour - OPTIONAL

Tours

CSU Global Digital Farm Tour



Pre-Conference Tour: Charles Sturt University's Global Digital Farm

Tour Facilitator - Jon Medway

Join us for a pre-conference tour of Charles Sturt University's Global Digital Farm, a commercial-scale farming enterprise and living laboratory showcasing the practical application of digital technologies in modern agriculture. Participants will gain insight into how livestock and feedbase data are collected, integrated and analysed across the farm's beef and sheep enterprises.

The tour will highlight a range of technologies used to monitor animal performance, pasture productivity and environmental conditions, as well as the systems used to record, manage and interpret these data. Attendees will learn how the farm management team uses real-time and historical information to support decision-making, optimise productivity, improve resource use efficiency and enhance the sustainability of commercial livestock operations. This experience offers a valuable opportunity to see data-driven livestock management in practice.



Jon Medway

Head of Digital & Sustainable Agriculture, AgriPark, Charles Sturt University

After more than 20 years working in agricultural consulting, Jon returned to Charles Sturt University in 2019 to focus on using spatial and digital technologies to improve the adoption of innovation across Australian agriculture. He is involved in projects relating to soil carbon, greenhouse gas emissions, agricultural data systems, and digital farming.

Jon plays a key role in the Global Digital Farm Initiative, which is transforming the CSU farm into a large-scale living laboratory demonstrating artificial intelligence, autonomous systems, and advanced digital technologies in commercial farming.

Jon is a member of the Integrity Systems Company Technology Reference Group informing ISC/MLA on applications of digital technologies to the Australian red meat industry and the President of the Society of Precision Agriculture Australia.

Tours

Pasture Trial Network Tour



Post-Conference Tour: Pasture Trial Network, Wagga Wagga

Tour Facilitators - Tony Butler and Jeff McCormick

The Pasture Trial Network (PTN) conducts industry-supported forage evaluation trials across temperate Australia, focusing on species used in red meat and dairy production. In partnership with Charles Sturt University, PTN hosts various trials of different species and maturity, including traditional yield trials and our grazing tolerance. This tour will introduce PTN, its methodologies, and feature visits to selected active trials.



Tony Butler

Executive Officer, Pasture Trials Network

Leading the Pasture Trial Network (PTN), Tony brings his passion for pasture science, the rural industry, and stakeholder engagement to showcase the latest germplasm performance to the market. Having worked with the PTN and its predecessor, PVTN, since inception, in recent years he has pursued in generating greater impact in the PTN's industry role and is committed to its ongoing growth to meet the industry's changing needs. Beyond the PTN, Tony is a board member of the Tasmanian Seed Industry Group (TSIG) and enjoys participating in various endurance sports.

Speakers

Chair & Keynote



Dr Sue Hatcher

Chair, Southern Australia Livestock Council (SALRC)

Sue has worked as an applied animal scientist in the Australian livestock industries for more than 30 years. Following a career in applied genetics research with NSW DPI, she now works through Makin Outcomes, a research, development and adoption consultancy based in Orange, NSW. Sue provides project management, data analysis, reporting, scientific reviews and technical editorial services to a wide range of agricultural and livestock industry clients. Passionate about translating science into practical outcomes, she focuses on improving the productivity and profitability of livestock enterprises. Sue is Vice President and a Fellow of the Australian Association of Animal Sciences and co Editor in Chief of Animal Production Science.



Vi Nguyen

CEO & Founder, Ryka Global - AI, Innovation & Digital Consulting Firm

Vi Nguyen is the CEO and Founder of Ryka Global, an AI and digital consultancy specialising in agriculture. With deep experience in AI and digital transformation, agriculture and innovation, she advises industry leaders, organisations, academia and government agencies on AI adoption, digital strategy, and future-focused capability building. Vi is a hands-on leader and has led initiatives on paddock to plate traceability in the APAC region, advises small and large farming operations on adoption of AI and develops on-ground AI tools for producers. She is the Chair of the Digital, Innovation and Technology Committee at the Australian Women in Agriculture. She has worked in Australia, Sweden, the Pacific Islands and Vietnam. Vi brings a practical, human-centred approach to demystifying emerging technologies and enabling real-world impact.

Speakers

Livestock Productivity



Dr Megan Verdon

Senior Research Fellow at the Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture

Megan is interested in the development of livestock systems that achieve continual improvement in animal welfare and productivity. She established and leads the Animal production and welfare research group. Her research is aimed at redesigning livestock systems for the benefit of the environment, the people and the animals involved. Megan's expertise includes confinement free sow housing systems, the use of virtual fencing technology to manage intensively grazed cattle and alternative rearing systems for dairy calves.



David Nation

Head of Strategic Relations in Australia, Halter

David is the Strategic Relations Lead for Halter in Australia, working with industry and governments. David has led a wide range of commercial and industry-good activities, including as Managing Director of Dairy Australia, CEO of research institutes, and other executive experience. David will provide both a broad industry perspective and a close-up knowledge of virtual fencing for his presentation.



Jenny Stanton

Producer, Kangaroo Island

Jenny and her husband Will, operate Kangaroo Island Primal Harvest, a beef breeding and cattle trading business across three properties on Kangaroo Island. Located approximately 40 kilometres apart, the properties range in annual rainfall from 500 to 950 millimetres. The business manages up to 1,600 head during the spring peak.

Their Stokes Bay property was devastated during the 2019–20 Black Summer bushfires. With virtual fencing technology on the horizon, Jenny and Will chose to reinstate only a few key essential fences, using poly braid for temporary paddock subdivision for the remainder.

Their experience trialling virtual fencing collars has provided valuable insights into the opportunities, limitations and practical realities of adopting data-driven livestock technology. Jenny will share how virtual fencing and farm data can improve grazing management, labour efficiency, decision-making and productivity in commercial livestock businesses.

Speakers

Feedbase



Ritchie Taylor

Producer

Richard Taylor graduated from the University of Sydney with a Veterinary Science degree (First Class Honours) in 1987 and later completed a Master of Veterinary Studies focused on livestock production and genetics while working with Melbourne University's Mackinnon Project.

Since the early 1990s, he has managed his family's agricultural enterprise, producing lamb, wool, and beef across 18,000 hectares in south-east NSW and north-east Victoria.

Richard is a co-founder and director of Growth Farms, a farm management company that acquires and manages farmland for private and institutional investors. He played a key role in the growth of MH Premium Farms, which has developed into an agricultural business with assets exceeding \$800 million.

A strong advocate for science-based farming, Richard is the former Chairman of Monaro Farming Systems (2015-2019) and currently chairs Farming Forecaster, a collaboration between CSIRO, farming groups, and Local Land Services that provides probabilistic pasture forecasting to support better farm decision-making.



David Lamb

Deputy CEO & Chief Scientist with the Food Agility CRC

David is a physicist and has worked in precision agriculture for more than 30 years. He has co-designed or led more than 100 R&D projects and championed the concept of smart farming. He established Australia's first SMART Farm at the University of New England, the Global Digital Farm at Charles Sturt University, and at the Banff Innovation Summit in Canada 2024 launched the Global Smart Farms Network.

David currently serves as Australian representative for the International Society for Precision Agriculture. In 2016 he received the McClymont Distinguished Professorship (Research) at UNE in recognition of his ongoing service to agriculture innovation and research leadership, and in 2022 the Pierre C. Robert Award from the International Society of Precision Agriculture for his contribution to precision agriculture science and technology.



Dr Warwick Badgery

Leader Rangelands & Tropical Pastures with the NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development

Warwick has 20 years' experience in the application of system level thinking to improve profitability, reduce GHG emissions and enhance sustainability of livestock systems under a changing climate. He is leading the development of the Grazing Intelligence models, to forecast livestock and pasture production in commercial paddocks. He was the Program Leader for the Feedbase Theme of the national Livestock Productivity Partnership, is working across the MLA Carbon Storage and Emissions Avoidance Partnerships and is an Honorary senior fellow with Melbourne University.

Speakers

Animal Health and Wellbeing



Luke Dunn

Producer, Reedy Creek Partners

Luke resides in Central West NSW on a multi-generational mixed farm. He lives with his wife, three children, parents, and uncle. Together in family partnership they run a mixed farming business that includes sheep production along with main season and grazing cereal/oil seed cropping. Their sheep operation consists of 3000 Merino breeding ewes, finishing wether lambs, and 2000 Merino ewes in terminal 1st cross program. Luke also sits on the Policy Council for Sheep Producers Australia, contributing producer-level insight into national sheep industry policy and advocacy.

Luke returned to the farm in 2019 after working in precision farming in Australia and the UK. His role involved developing, implementing, diagnosing, and marketing precision technologies. He is passionate about continuously improving and refining sheep production quality and efficiency through management, genetics, and technology.

Dr Thomas Williams

Senior Research Fellow, Central Queensland University

Dr Thomas Williams is a Precision Livestock Research Fellow within the Institute for Future Farming Systems at Central Queensland University. His research focuses on precision livestock management and the use of data-driven approaches to address practical production challenges. Over the past five years, Thom has worked with on-animal sensors, remote weighing systems and livestock location data to better understand animal performance, behaviour, movement, social interactions and responses to environmental conditions. He also works directly with producers to understand their experiences with agricultural technologies, the barriers to adoption and where future opportunities may deliver genuine value. His broader interest is in how multiple technologies and data streams can be integrated into practical decision-support systems that improve animal health, welfare, productivity and labour efficiency.



Dr Sabrina Greenwood

Principal Research Scientist, Team leader Digital Livestock team, with CSIRO

Sabrina leads research focused on developing innovative sensor and digital technologies that support more productive, sustainable and data-driven livestock enterprises. She has extensive experience working across industry, research and innovation to deliver practical solutions for livestock producers. Prior to joining CSIRO, she held academic positions in the United States and New Zealand, conducting research in ruminant nutrition, grazing systems, sustainability, biomarker development and emissions reduction. Originally from Canada, Sabrina combines strong scientific expertise with practical livestock industry experience.



Speakers

AI Supported Decision Making



Aaron Meikle

Head of Products and Development, Beef + Lamb New Zealand

Aaron Meikle is Beef + Lamb New Zealand's Head of Extension – Products & Innovation. 25 years after starting with New Zealand's then Wool Board, when faxes were a key extension tool, he finds himself looking after all sorts of exciting technology but still working on the same problem: what do people want, and how? This role is curator of B+LNZ's portfolio of extension products, resources and tools, and is focussed on how information travels, rather than what that information is.



Chris White

Nothorn NSW SALRC Regional Chair

Christine operates a family beef cattle and sheep wool/meat livestock business at Coolah, New South Wales jointly with husband, Henry, and daughter, Georgia. Christine has worked as a research agronomist in northern NSW, an advisory agronomist in the Coolah district, in project management within the Information Technology sector and in local government. She has held board member roles with the Catchment Management Authority, Veterinary Practitioners Board of NSW, and Central West Local Land Services.

Christine's background as a researcher, advisor and producer drives her interest in the diverse livestock farming systems across central and northern New South Wales, and SE Queensland. She has particular interest in linking research to on-farm practicality and innovation, and developing user-friendly tools for producers to aid decision making.



Chris Jehu

Farm Management Consultant & Director, Countryside Business Partners

Chris Jehu is a Farm Management Consultant and Director of Countryside Business Partners, working with livestock businesses across Victoria to improve profitability through practical, data-driven decision making. He specialises in whole-farm business analysis, helping producers integrate production, financial and operational information to make confident management decisions. Chris has extensive experience in livestock systems, business strategy, succession planning, benchmarking and cost of production, with a strong focus on turning complex data into practical actions that improve farm performance. Passionate about the adoption of technology and AI in agriculture, Chris works closely with producers to demonstrate how digital tools can support better decision making without losing sight of the practical realities of farming. His approach combines commercial expertise with hands-on industry knowledge to help farming businesses become more profitable, resilient and future-focused.