



# 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

**PinAg**  
PARTNERS IN AG

# CHAIR'S REPORT

*Tracy Dart  
Board Chair*

Anyone in farming would relate to the fact that each year brings something new; that no two years are alike in farming. Supporting agriculture with education products requires Partners In Ag to be acutely aware of this and we must adapt our offerings in tandem with the real-time needs of farm businesses.

To do this successfully we need to be abreast of what's happening in the industry. Our board members, who are all involved in Agriculture, give us this insight and allow us to develop and test ideas before taking them to a wider audience. I'd like to thank the board members this year for their enthusiastic engagement and each individual's voluntary contribution. In spite of challenging circumstances as we continue to navigate COVID restricted operating environments, we are all committed to Partners In Ag remaining relevant and offering value to our participants and stakeholders.

Nickie and Katherine continue to demonstrate their commitment to Partners In Ag, our success is largely due to their unique set of skills and personal connections. I thank them for ensuring we are top of mind with our customers, for identifying opportunities and for their individual voluntary contributions. Thank you to our outgoing board members Annabel Mactier and Alastair Gabb for their significant and valuable contributions during their terms.

It has been gratifying that despite restricted movements, we have been able to form new partnerships and collaborate to develop fresh opportunities for professional development in agriculture.

Accessing grants which align with our direction and deliver value to the grantor, continue to be an important source of funding. In addition, we continue to offer contract services such as workshop development, event management and communications services. Developing partnerships is a great way for us to share resources, knowledge and networks as we strive for the betterment of Agriculture and all its participants.

Thank you to those who have engaged with us this year, if you have a skill gap in your community please get in touch for a tailored solution. We look forward to welcoming you to one of our programs in the coming year and encourage you to continue developing yourself and your professional approach to the business of farming.

# BOARD MEMBERS

*2020 - 2021*

Chairperson - Tracy Dart

Vice Chair - Robyn Gulline

Treasurer - Eileen Jorgenson

## General Members

Charlotte Aves

Erin Johns

Annabel Mactier

Fiona Chilvers

## Outgoing

Alastair Gabb (April 2021)



# A YEAR IN REVIEW

*Nickie Berrisford, Executive Officer*

What a challenging year this has continued to be with Covid 19. Lockdowns and interruptions have been challenging. I think especially of those in Melbourne and in particular country towns where businesses are really challenged. Fortunately, the Federal government funding which PinAg received was able to keep the organisation afloat.

Heading into online learning has had its challenges, but I am sure that we have all learned some new skills and wrested through challenges. Home schooling has been very challenging for many and certainly showed up the need for quality internet access for businesses and homeschooling. The Board was all very supportive of the ways in which we went about online delivery. Social Media proved very positive.

It was very exciting to be awarded the WorkSafe funding for the delivery of 20 workshops focussed on WHS employees. We were very adamant that we wanted to deliver this face-to-face. Delivering two out of the funded twenty workshops they were extremely well received. It was interesting to hear from employers and their interest in a workshop for themselves. WorkSafe was positive about us delivering two of our allocated 20 workshops for employers and their specific needs. We look forward to delivering these later this year and delivering the remainder of the employee workshops before June 2022.

Katherine has continued to provide a dynamic role within the organisation. Her IT and grant writing skills are highly valued. Katherine has also taken on the role of facilitating workshops which have been of great value to PinAg.

I would like to commend all Board Members for their contribution and input into Partners in Ag, without their support PinAg would not be the impressive organisation that it is. Partners in Ag faces many challenges but, as a small Not-For-Profit organisation, it is making a significant difference to the delivery of quality, appropriate professional development for the grains sector as well as agriculture as a whole.

Our Board is a passionate, proactive group of growers and industry stakeholders who continue to strive for improving our services for the ag industry. Their commitment to this committee on top of professional and personal pursuits is admirable. I look forward to working with you all in the coming year.

*the year's*

# FINANCIALS

Partners in Ag's goal of delivering high quality professional development is evident in the financial report, expert facilitators deliver superior learning comes. Operating overheads are purposely kept low in an aim to deliver the high quality at a lower cost to participants. Subsidising participant fees is done wherever economically viable for the group. Income to fund our activities is via paid participant fees, services provided or through highly competitive government and industry grant processes.

As a Not-for-Profit our financial capacity is at times, hand to mouth and we continue to shape our offering to show value to stakeholders, whilst filling the identified knowledge and skills gaps in the Victorian/Tasmanian agriculture sectors. Due to the ongoing pandemic and unstable environment for hosting face to face workshops, our ability to produce income has been minimal. Continuing to look for alternative avenues of funding will enable the group to harness the momentum which has built in the past 12 months.

It is important to note the ongoing, significant support from all board members. They collectively guide the organisation on a volunteer basis, at an in-kind contribution of around 400hrs per year.

Of note in the financial report, the \$10,000 cash boost from the Australian Tax Office has significantly contributed to the organisation's operational capacity for the year. Funding from the Victorian Government's Digital Innovation Fund and Horsham Rural City Council for the completion of the social media, Facebook Advertising and Branding workshops allowed Partners in Ag to keep the costs to participants minimal.

Funding from WorkSafe Victoria has been received in the 2020 financial year for the delivery of Farm Safety Staff Induction workshops, commencing early July 2021. COVID 19 continues to have a detrimental impact on the activities that Partners in Ag can safely deliver, however the low-cost model has enabled adaptive and innovative approaches as we continue planning for a future beyond restricted movements. With confirmed funding and the collaborations on the horizon for 2021-2022, Partners in Ag aims for a more financially favourable year moving forward.

I must thank Nickie for her diligence on keeping myself, and all of you, up to date on our financial position. Keeping track of where all our income comes from and the expenses go to is not as simple as it looks.

*Eileen Jorgenson*  
*Treasurer*

# A YEAR IN REVIEW

*Katherine Colbert  
Business Development Officer*

2020-2021 has been a year of extremities for Partners in Ag. It has again provided us with opportunities to expand our range of services all the while having restrictions and disruptions due to the ongoing COVID-19 situation.

With a slightly different slant on key topics, we saw the rise of social media use in agriculture as an opportunity to extend the range of workshops in this space. The Social Media for Ag, Facebook Advertising for Ag and the Branding your Business workshops proved to be popular for growers with a wide range of digital experience from an array of farming backgrounds and businesses. These workshops were supported by the Victorian Government's Digital Innovation Fund and Horsham Rural City Council. It was fantastic to be able to utilise the skills of Wimmera-based advertising agency Aubrey + Areegra for the delivery of these workshops, who have become favourites with participants.

It was disappointing but understandable to see the cancellation of the 2020 Australian Sheep and Wool Show and 2021 Wimmera Machinery Field Days because of COVID-19. We hope that 2022 is the year where large-scale events can proceed and succeed.

A game changing win for us this year has been the successful grant application through WorkSafe Victoria to host the Farm Safety Staff Inductions. This project will see the delivery of up to 20 workshops across the state. This has led to a higher level of awareness within the industry and further opportunities in the farm safety space moving forward.

We continue to adapt to the 'new normal' and look to the future for opportunities to expand our workshop offerings with a clear focus on farm safety, financial and risk management and office management. In addition, our flexibility and adaptability allow us to take advantage of other opportunities as they arise.

Thank you to Nickie for her unwavering support and understanding over the past 12 months. A big thank you to the Board for their support, assistance, and guidance over the year. I look forward to working with you in the coming year on some exciting projects.

I said this last year, but it still rings true; here's hoping that 2022 brings some normality (albeit the new normal) and allows us to get back to what we do best, facilitating quality learning opportunities to farmers across Victoria and Tasmania.



## EXTENSION OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND ONLINE WORKSHOPS

DIGITAL INNOVATION FESTIVAL / HORSHAM RURAL CITY COUNCIL

AUGUST, SEPTEMBER, OCTOBER 2020, MARCH 2021



## EXPANSION OF PARTICIPANT LOCATIONS

PARTICIPANTS LOCATED IN VIC, SA AND NSW FOR ONLINE WORKSHOPS



## COLLABORATIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

GREATER AWARENESS OF PARTNERS IN AG HAS SEEN AN INCREASE IN OPPORTUNITIES TO COLLABORATE WITH INDUSTRY STAKEHOLDERS

# MARKETING STATISTICS JULY 2020 - JUNE 2021

### Facebook

33.8% increase in likes (272 - 364)

74.5% of fans are female (down from 79%)

Top Rating Posts (paid):

1. Staff Safety Inductions (4.1k)
2. Longerenong Staff Safety Induction (3.7k)
3. Social Media workshop (2.3k)

### MailChimp - Email Marketing

335 contacts (up from 278)

Average 41.2% open rate (19 emails)

1.2% increase

Top Rating Emails (organic):

1. Branding workshop
2. Branding workshop - past SM participants
3. July 202 Newsletter

### Twitter

18.6% increase in followers (548 - 650)

Top Rating Tweets (organic):

1. International Rural Womens Day (3.8k)
2. Tracy Dart - new Chair of PinAg (2k)
3. Farm Safety Workshops (1.7k)

### Website Analytics (July 2020 - June 2021)

Total Unique Visitors: 11,622

Avg Monthly Unique Visitors: 968.5

Total Number of visits: 21,366

Avg Monthly visits: 1,780.50

2020-2021

## **ONLINE WORKSHOPS (SOCIAL MEDIA, FACEBOOK AND BRANDING FOR AG)**

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Topics covered included:

- The importance and application of social media in the agricultural industry
- Introduction to Facebook, Instagram and Twitter
- Setting objectives and developing a content plan
- Risk management and responding to negative comments
- Setting an objective for a Facebook advertisement
- The different types of Facebook ads
- Identifying and saving your target audience
- When to use custom audiences
- Using different Ad sets to run tests
- Understand why branding is important
- Understand how branding works
- How to create a brand identity

## **WORKSAFE VICTORIA FARM SAFETY STAFF INDUCTION**

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Topics covered include:

- How to stay safe on the farm
- What risks to look for
- Using machinery and equipment safely
- Understanding weather conditions and fire safety
- OHS Policy and processes
- Road and vehicle safety
- Workshop safety
- Risk Assessments
- Employer V employee responsibilities
- Chemical Safety

Classroom style session followed by an on-farm safety tour.



*the year to come*

# 2021-2022 FOCUS

The ongoing COVID-19 situation presents many uncertainties as to how 2021-2022 will transpire, but with a flexible and proactive approach, Partners in Ag strives to continue providing quality training workshops to rural communities in Victoria and Tasmania.

The potential opportunities to collaborate with the Victorian Government, WorkSafe Victoria, Wimmera Catchment Management Authority and the Wimmera Machinery Field Days are in the pipeline and if all successful will provide a steady and comprehensive suite of workshops for the coming 12 months. In addition to these partners, we are continuously looking for funding streams to develop new methods of workshop delivery.

The ever-increasing demands on farmers and changing landscape of agriculture in Australia stresses the importance of continuous learning and refining processes and as a result, we continue to work towards the goal of being a leader in the agriculture industry for quality and customised training opportunities.

Partners in Ag workshops cover both in-paddock, on-farm and administrative topics that not only help farmers be more effective and efficient with resources but provide safe workplaces for staff and family members.

Planning continues in developing new workshops and refining existing workshops to best practice and industry standards, ensuring participants receive the most up-to-date, relevant and accurate information at hand.

From an administration perspective, 2021 - 2022 will be a year to focus on completing the Strategic Plan and recruiting new Board Members in addition to updating the website and integrating new online services for participants to gain maximum value from Partners in Ag workshops.